

ACCEPTING CHRIST IS ACCEPTING THE WORD OF CHRIST

Only those who accepted the teachings of Christ while he was here in person accepted Christ. Likewise, all who come to Christ today must do so by the teachings and instructions by Him given. Christ draws all men through teaching (Jn. 6:44-45). When the apostles went out to preach the great commission they were thereby preaching Christ. This was the burden of all their discourses. The prophet said, *“They shall all be taught of God”* (Isa. 54:13). Therefore all who have been properly taught through the living oracles concerning Jesus of Nazareth, and have obeyed those words have come to Him.

Christianity has never changed. Its laws and ordinances are still the same as they were in the first century. It is ridiculous, absurd and sectarian to talk to people about coming to Christ, and leave the impression that they can do so without doing what Jesus taught. To deny that baptism is a part of the grace of God is to deny the Bible. If baptism does not belong to the grace of God, it belongs to the grace of the devil. If you have been baptized, your baptism is either of the grace of God or the grace of the devil.

Suppose you are sick and nigh unto death. Your beloved doctor diagnoses your case and tells you that he is positive he can be of assistance and affect a cure. You rejoice at hearing his words and then he picks up his pen and begins to write. You turn to him and ask, *“What is that you’re doing doctor?”* The physician replies, *“I am writing a prescription suited to your case which you should carefully take according to my instructions.”*

Then suppose you say, *“Doctor, I can have nothing to do with your pills and powders. I believe in you! I want you personally, but your pills and powders can have no place in my life and cannot be a part nor a means of healing. My confidence is in you.”*

The physician would likely reply, *“He that rejects my remedy, rejects me, and he that has no confidence in what I prescribe as a means of healing, has no confidence in me.”* (cf. Jn. 12:48).

The book of Acts was written to illustrate the laws of the kingdom of God and particularly those that relate to primary obedience. Such examples as the conversion of Saul and of the eunuch (Acts 22:16; 8:35-39) make the way of obedience so plain that no one but the most prejudiced can fail to understand what to do to be saved.

It should be our custom today to preach with the same vigour and force that was characteristic of pioneer preachers of previous generations. Human nature has not changed and it will ever remain the same. The needs of man are the same and the answer to those needs were revealed in the word of God 2,000 years ago.

As it did for the eunuch and Paul, the blood of Christ still cleanses men today who believe in Christ, (Jn. 8:24), repent of their sins, (Lk. 13:3), confess that faith, (Matt. 10:32; Rom. 10:10), and are baptized into Christ for the remission of sins (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38).

— G. K. Wallace
(deceased)

BELVEDERE BEACON

“Ye are the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14)

Volume 9 Number 37 September 14, 2008

A PUBLICATION OF THE BELVEDERE CHURCH OF CHRIST

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DON'T PREACH AGAINST ERROR

Over a number of years of preaching we have occasionally heard that someone is unhappy with preaching and teaching that refutes doctrinal error. Some may believe that we ought to leave error alone unless it appears at the congregation's front door. Others might believe that you should deal with doctrinal error privately and never from the pulpit. I heard one woman say that we should just preach God's Word and never call the names of those who are false teachers. Some object to calling names of denominations or congregations in error.

Of course, preachers could preach on error to the neglect of other topics needed by the hearers. To avoid extremes, it is a good idea for preachers to make a list of sermon topics to be addressed during the year, and to keep a log of what has been taught so as to cover the many areas that need attention.

Balanced preaching will cover the negative and the positive, the error and the right. It will tear down sin, and build us up in righteousness. It will afflict those who are comfortable in sin, and comfort those afflicted by trial and tribulation. Effective, sound preaching will make those in sin uncomfortable or contrite. They will either repent or get mad. Remember that for some folks, even one sermon refuting error is one too many—it just really irritates them.

So what should preachers do? Preachers should take a lesson from Jeremiah's commission to, *“pluck up and to break down and to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant”* (Jer. 1:10). Paul commanded the young evangelist, *“preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching”* (2 Tim. 4:2).

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY:

Bible Classes for all ages 10.00 am.
Morning Worship 11.00 am.
Evening Worship 6.00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY:

Bible Classes for all ages 7.00 p.m.

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ONE CUP FOR THE LORD'S SUPPER

As Christians we partake of the Lord's Supper each week as did the early Christians (Acts 20:7). We partake of the bread and the fruit of the vine. One question that is sometimes asked with respect to the fruit of the vine is: "Must there be just one cup?" The answer to that question is yes.

Why is this? When our Lord instituted the Lord's Supper as recorded in Scripture He clearly stated: "*And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it. For this cup is the new testament in my blood which is shed for many for the remission of sins*" (Matthew 26:27-28; see also: Mark 13:23; Luke 22:17, 20). Paul also said: "*After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come*" (I Cor. 11:25-26). Note, both the Lord and Paul used these expressions: "*the cup*," "*it*," and "*this cup*" – singular.

Clearly, both the Lord and the apostle Paul taught that there was but one cup in the Lord's Supper and to be in harmony with Scripture, we must teach the same. However, because of these statements some have concluded that the one cup is the container in which the fruit of the vine is contained and, as a result, would teach that it is erroneous to use more than one container for the fruit of the vine. Is such correct? An examination of the texts will show what both the Lord and Paul were speaking about.

Look again at Matthew 26:27: "*And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it. For this cup is the new testament in my blood which is shed for many for the remission of sins.*" Jesus commanded that they drink of the cup which is the New Testament in His blood. What is that to which Jesus is referring? Is it the container or the contents? Clearly it is the contents that are to be drunk, that is the fruit of the vine, to remind us of the blood that He shed for the remission of our sins. We sometimes use similar expressions we give our friends a cup of tea or a cup of coffee. Of what do they partake, the container or the contents? Clearly they drink tea or coffee, they don't devour the container! Tea or coffee cannot be served without a container, neither can one partake of "*the cup*," the "*fruit of the vine*" without a container. Further, it can be clearly seen that "*the cup*" that is drunk is the "*fruit of the vine*" from what Jesus states in Matthew 26:29: "*But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.*"

That one container is not bound is also clearly seen by examining Scripture. In Luke 22:17 Jesus states: "*And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves.*" How could the apostles "*divide it*" among themselves without separate containers? Again, if "*the cup*" were the container, how could they divide it without breaking the container? "*The cup*" therefore is the "*fruit of the vine.*" Whether we use one container or multiple containers is not bound upon Christians. What is bound is partaking of the fruit of the vine as a part of the Lord's Supper to remind us of the blood that our Savior shed on Calvary's cross. AS we partake of the unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine each Lord's Day may truly remember Him and the sacrifice that He made.

Ken Chumbley

NEWS AND NOTES

Keep in your prayers the following: Helen Culpepper, Pam Gossett and mother, Lavonne McClish, Linda Chumbley, and Rachel Fitzpatrick's aunt (Eula Baker) who has cancer, Maomi Aaron' sister who has having health problems, and Tim Smith.

The Wilsons have heard from Cynthia. She is doing well and staying with friends on the west side of Houston. She was able to see her apartment Saturday afternoon and it seemed fine. They, like most others in the affected area, have no power. Please keep her and others in the areas affected by the hurricane in your prayers.

We will have a pot-luck following the morning services on September 28. Plan to stay and eat together.

Don't Preach Against Error, continued from page 1

Now if someone says, just "preach the word" and leave error alone, we would have to ask this question: "Which part of God's Word would you have me leave out of my preaching?" You see, if I leave off preaching against error, I must leave out Colossians 2 for the second chapter of this epistle is directed at errors confronting the church (gnosticism, etc.). Almost all of the Galatian letter-6 chapters worth—refutes errors facing the church. Leave out refutation of error and you will have to edit the epistle of 1 Corinthians because Paul dealt with sin and error frequently there. And while we are deciding which passages to cut out of our preaching, we must remove several scores of verses from Hebrews and James. And by the way, we can no longer preach from either 2 Peter or Jude—they are almost completely devoted to refuting error. And the epistles of John (1st, 2nd, and 3rd John) simply must go because they are militant against error. The book of Revelation gets kicked out of our preaching because John called the specific congregations by location (rebuking five of the seven churches), and then called the name of a specific group of false teachers:

But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there some that hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also some that hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans in like manner. Repent therefore; or else I come to thee quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of my mouth (Rev. 2:14-16).

I doubt the Nicolaitans appreciated that mention but it is written there nonetheless!

I know of a congregation where the preacher and elders seldom spoke of error. Few warnings were given. And when finally error was at the "door," the congregation was unprepared to handle the matter. The congregation is now, for all practical purposes, dead in sin and error.

Brethren, refuting error, and calling the names of groups or individuals that teach error, is as much a part of Christianity as love, joy; and peace! It builds the faith, it protects souls, and it arms the Christian soldier with ammunition to battle against every false way (Psa. 119:104). Let us stand by the proclamation of the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27).

*Lynn Parker
New Braunfels, TX*