

Preparing Souls To Serve The Lord

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Which Church Shall We Restore?

By

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In the confused and skeptical world of our day we are bombarded on every hand to question if not outright deny the foundation upon which to build faith. The skeptic exerts great energy in throwing out skeptical questions without providing satisfactory solutions.

We often read or hear said: "If we are to restore the New Testament church which will it be? Corinth? Jerusalem? Laodicea? et al." Attention is then called to the problems with each of these churches to support the position (while not explicitly stating it) that the idea of restoration of the one faith or system of belief is an impossibility. It is

Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God" (III John 11).

often asserted that the only faith possible is a faith that is willing

to accept the unjustified assumptions of modern skeptics. They would not word it so but prefer to entitle it "unity in diversity."

PROBLEM CHURCHES AND PROBLEM PEOPLE

Let it be understood that we are under no illusion here. History knows of no time when there were no problems with churches or people. Let us face reality. As long as we have free moral people there will be problems. As long as churches are composed of people there will be problems. It is not difficult to read in "Restoration History" and cite example of false teaching among people. It is not difficult to turn to the Bible and cite examples of persons that were less than they should have been. What do we do with such examples. Do we propose to do as some, cite these bad examples and call upon others to do likewise? Whoever dreamed up the loony idea to imitate the bad?

IMITATE THE GOOD

The Apostle John battled with problem persons that did not accept his writings nor did they fellowship with the faithful. Read the small letter we know as Third John. Diotrephes was unfaithful; Gaius and Demetrius were faithful; this church had a problem not unlike our day. Some want to comply with apostolic mandates; others will not have them. What do we do? Have unity in diversity? What did the Apostle John teach should be done in such circumstances? Read for yourself: "Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God" (III John 11).

If we would have God with us we must choose to follow what is right and to avoid the wrong. Is this so profound that we can not grasp its meaning? Would not we expect any first grade student to do this very thing in his school experience?

Let the skeptics cite all the problems they choose. Let the one that loves the Lord and truth simply recall John's admonition. "Follow not that which is evil, but that which is good." When this is done problems will be resolved. Unity will be automatic. Truth will be obeyed. Pointing to problems in churches as justification for doing evil will be shown to be what it truly is—foolishness.

WHAT ONE WAS TAUGHT ALL WERE TAUGHT

There was and is but one faith or system of doctrine which meets with God's approval (Eph. 4:5). Our same skeptical crowd would have us believe that since they may cite some person believing one thing and another believing something different that this calls upon us to let each do their own thing religiously. Such is not sanctioned by the Bible. We are often cited with examples that the letters of the New Testament were not to be understood as a pattern for conduct or doctrinal direction. Some would have them to be "love letters" from on high. They were written for a proper paradigm. Paul wanted Timothy to know how to behave himself in the church of God (I Tim. 3:14-15).

Paul sent Timothy to Corinth to instruct them in proper conduct. He wanted the Corinthians to know that what one church was taught, all were taught. His words are, "For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into

remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church" (I Cor. 4:17).

The importance of this principle can not be over emphasized. If what Paul and the apostles taught one church they taught all, then when I know what one was taught then I know what all were taught. Let us make brief application of this principle. (1) The churches in Galatia and Corinth were taught to lay by in store on the first day of the week as they had prospered; therefore all churches were taught to do the same (I Cor. 16:1-2). (2) The church at Colossae and Ephesus were taught to sing in worship; therefore all churches were taught to sing in worship (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). (3) The church at Troas met upon the first day of the week to worship; therefore all churches were taught to meet upon the first day of the week to worship (Acts 20:7). (4) The church at Ephesus was taught to select spiritual minded men to oversee the congregations therefore all churches were taught to have this as their goal (I Tim. 3:1-9). (5) The church at Ephesus was taught that there was but one faith; therefore all churches were taught that there was but one faith (Eph. 4:5).

Many other examples could be cited but this should help us to see that being what God wants us to be is no major problem. Self seeking persons may always "rationalize" their misconduct. But our Bible would have us do as the Spirit instructs the churches in Asia: "He that hath an ear, let him

hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22). How are your ears?

CONCLUSION

If it is possible to follow the good then it is possible to restore proper conduct in the church. If it is possible to follow the good then the individual who wills to do so may be personally what God expects all men to be.

If we know that all churches were taught what one church was taught; then we may know that what we are doing is the same things they did.

If we have no will to know what is right (nor to do what is right) we will not have God with us. "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (II John 9-11).

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The Harvesters

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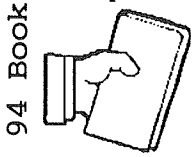
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Keep in mind the publication of the 1994 Lectures in book form this year. If we receive your payment of \$10.00 prior to the Lectureship dates and to be picked up during the lectureship we will have working funds for the printing and you will save postage and handling as well as \$2.00 off the list price.



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Earmark checks for
1994 Lectureship book.

**SYMPATHY
To
George K. French Family**

Brother French lost his mother in July. We express our heartfelt sympathy to the family at this loss.



Brother French is an elder of the South Florida Avenue Congregation and serves on the board of the Florida School of Preaching.

**IN THE HARVEST
FIELDS**

The Florida School of Preaching has as its goal to train souls to serve in the kingdom of the Lord. In the past year trips have been made to foreign soils for the purpose of evangelism. A group visited Guyana where they worked with Mike Dykes who went there to work at building up the church. Brother Carr, Glen Wilcutt and Don Matthews, both graduates of the school, have labored there and were also a part of this group.

Ted Wheeler is at the present time in Ghana. Ted is a graduate of the school and he and his wife worked there for a number of years as missionaries. Ted goes back each year to assist the local members in edifying the churches where he worked in the past.

At this writing graduates from the school and some who are completing their training are in Jamaica. There has been a group from the Florida School of Preaching who have returned for edifying the local church in Kingston. They are supported by the Central Church of Christ in Clearwater. This congregation is involved in the work in Jamaica and they are supporters of the school of preaching. Brother Billy Davidsion, their evangelist, is one of the faculty of the school.

These are but a few of the efforts to reach souls with the gospel that are a part of the fruits of the school. When you assist men to prepare to serve the Lord through their training in the school you are also assisting the cause of the Lord

in foreign fields.

The situation today is like it was in the days of Jesus. The fields are white unto harvest but the laborers are few. May God help us to encourage dedicated souls to prepare to enter the harvest fields of evangelism gathering precious fruit for eternity.

Keep you eyes open for dedicated souls that are willing to train to serve the Lord and help us have the necessary funds to provide the essential training they so desperately need.

ANTICIPATION

By the time you are reading this we will be no doubt under way with another school year. If things go as they appear at the present time we should an increased enrollment of full time students. Some who have graduated are planning to make extensive trips to continue to study with us by taking classes.

David Watson has graduated from the school, has taught in the school, and is completing course requirements for a degree from Southern Christian University. This school has asked that some of our classes be recognized by them in order that such requirements for graduation might be met. David will be studying Greek with us and will be receiving credit with Southern Christian University at the same time. David will be driving from Jacksonville, Florida.

We are happy to recognized by this university and want you to know it.

Registration Schedule

Florida School of Preaching

Fall Semester Begins August 23, 1993

Date _____

Phone _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Check Classes Desired

Hours	Course	Instructor	Credit
Monday <input type="checkbox"/> 8:30 to 12:00 <input type="checkbox"/> 1:00 to 4:15 <input type="checkbox"/> 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.	Life of Christ 11317 Logic 31370 Greek 31271	Davis Burgett Stearsman	3 3 2½
Tuesday <input type="checkbox"/> 8:30 to 12:00 <input type="checkbox"/> 1:00 to 4:15 <input type="checkbox"/> 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.	Greek 21323 Genesis-Exodus 11309 Psalms 31269	Stearsman Stilwell Blackman	3 3 2½
Wednesday <input type="checkbox"/> 8:30 to 12:00 <input type="checkbox"/> 1:00 to 4:15	Revelation 21359 Denominational Dogmas 11331	Stearsman Franklin	3 3
Thursday <input type="checkbox"/> 8:30 to 12:00 <input type="checkbox"/> 1:00 to 4:15	Romans 21361 I & II Corinthians 11335	Stearsman Davidson	3 3
Friday <input type="checkbox"/> 8:30 to 12:00 <input type="checkbox"/> 1:00 to 4:15	Isaiah-Jeremiah 11313 Bible Geography & Archacology 21329	Stearsman Franklin	3 3

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