

Attitudes Towards the Weak

By Bill Hall

The Messiah's attitude toward the spiritually weak is pictured by Isaiah in the following words: "A bruised reed will he not break, and a dimly burning wick will he not quench" (**Isaiah 42:3**).

In our zeal for purity and strength in the church, we may be guilty of doing the very thing that our Lord does not want done. We create a mental image of what the ideal church ought to be, and then go about to establish one. Every member is going to attend every service. Every member will be "sound" in his convictions. Worldliness will not be tolerated. This church is not going to have the weaknesses that characterize other churches we know of. This is going to be a strong church, a model church.

A new convert is made, and immediately he is indoctrinated in what this church is, and the contribution he is expected to make to the maintaining of this ideal. Each newcomer is viewed as a potential threat. If he's not going to "line up," we don't want him. Weaker members are handled with a "shape up or ship out" attitude. People soon recognize that there is far more concern for the image of the church as an organization than for them as

struggling and weak children of God. While the Messiah is tenderly and delicately nursing the "bruised reeds" back to health, we may be there crushing them. While He cups His hand around these fluttering, dimly burning flames to protect what fire is left, we may be there quenching them.

We are not suggesting that unrepentant false teachers and immoral members ought to be tolerated. They must be warned, marked, and withdrawn from. Nor are we suggesting that the weak ought to be left alone in their weakness. They must be taught, encouraged, reproved, rebuked, and exhorted, but with all longsuffering, and with a view toward strengthening them. "Admonish the disorderly, encourage the fainthearted, support the weak, be longsuffering toward all" (**I Thess. 5:14**). Ask not what they can do for the church but what the church can do for them.

As long as there is a little life in that "bruised reed," there is hope. Don't crush it! As long as there is a little fire left, it might be fanned to burn more brightly. Don't extinguish it!



(Hebrews 12:12-14) - "Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed. Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord"

Sick

Jim and Barbara Kicker	Pam Dial (Laura Weldon's Mother)
Heather Adams (Luke Bridges' Cousin)	Rose Tate (Toni Herd's Cousin)
Adriana Mininno (Haley Chittam's Cousin)	Dave Bradford, Sr.
Blake Whatley (Hunt's neighbor)	Dave Brown (Friend of the Lanier's)

News and Notes

☒ Let's remember our expectant mothers: Jana Hall, Laura Humphrey, Rachel Bradford and Joy Liu

☒ Audio CDs of Today's Sermon will be immediately available

☒ Here are the new addresses of our families that are moving:
David and Lauren Dvorak
 Apt 2105, 13596 Feather Sound Circle W; Clearwater FL 33762
Tyler and Ashlyn Crawford
 3538 Erica Way
 Birmingham, AQL 35243
Matthew, Rachel and Claire Bradford, 543 County Rd 421; Killen, AL 35645

We will miss you and you will continue to be in our prayers.

The Auburn Beacon



Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (**Matthew 5:16**)

Volume 1, Issue 7

December 13, 2009



Thought to Ponder

It is an awful hour when the necessity of hiding anything comes. When there are questions to be feared and eyes to be avoided and subjects that must not be touched, then all sincerity is gone.

Do You Have a Bible Question?
 Call (334) 734-2133 or E-mail:
LarryRouse@aubeacon.com

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday
 Bible Class9:30 AM
 Worship10:20 AM
 Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday
 Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

Ask about our home Bible Study Groups!

Larry Rouse
 Evangelist and Editor

Accepting Christ

By G. K. Wallace

Words are signs of ideas. It is important then that we ask, "What is the idea conveyed by the words that are being used?" We constantly hear such expressions as "accepting Christ," "total commitment," "a full surrender," and "receiving Christ as your personal Saviour." What do men mean by these terms?

I have been listening to denominational preachers for 40 or 50 years and I think I know what they are saying. There was a time when sectarian preachers were constantly making fun of what Jesus said in **Mark 16:16** and what Peter said in **Acts 2:38**. They would refer to my brethren as "water ducks" and "mossbacks." They would laugh at **John 3:5** and say, "only three things are born of water. They are mosquitoes, tadpoles and Campbellites." Of course, Jesus did not say be born of water. He said be born of "water and the Spirit." I am neither a mosquito, tadpole, nor a Campbellite, and I was not born of water. I was born of "water and the Spirit."

In generations past and present, denominational preachers have

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; 8:35-37**) make the way of obedience so plain that no one but the most prejudiced can fail to understand what to do to be saved.

used special terms to deny that a person is to be born of water and the Spirit and that baptism is for the remission of sins. Their approach to this is by saying you must "accept Christ." By this, they mean you are to skip baptism because they say baptism "is not part of the grace of God..."

When they talk about "preaching Christ," they mean you are to disregard "the words of Christ." When they talk about a "total commitment," they skip the commandments of Jesus Christ and "let your conscience be your guide." When sectarian

(Continued on page 2)

Check Us Out On the Internet: www.aubeacon.com

(Continued from page 1)

preachers talk about "surrendering to Christ," they mean "avoid" obedience to the gospel of Christ. When sectarian preachers talk about receiving a "personal Saviour," they mean, "Christ comes into the life of the alien sinner separate and apart from obeying the gospel of Christ."

When the evangelist Philip preached Christ, the eunuch asked to be baptized (**Acts 8:35-36**). How can one preach Christ and not tell a man to be baptized? How can one accept Christ and, at the same time, refuse to be baptized? Accepting Christ has always meant accepting what Christ taught. When Peter concluded his great sermon on Pentecost, the record says, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized" (**Acts 2:41**). The people on Pentecost received Christ by receiving His word. All who rejected Peter's words rejected 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 (**John 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 calls to see you, diagnoses your case and tells you that he is positive he can be of assistance and effect 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'm 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. **John 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; 8:35-37**) 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**).



Are You A Heretic?

By Bob West

"A man that is an **heretic** after the first and second-admonition reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself" - **Titus 3:10, 11**.

"For there must be also **heresies** among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you" - **1 Corinthians 5:19**.

The word "heretic" has come to mean, in modern religious vocabulary, one who holds or advocates views which are condemned by human religious authorities. However, in the Bible the word means "a choosing, choice...then, that which is chosen, and hence, an opinion, especially a self-willed opinion, which is substituted for submission to the power of truth, and leads to division and the formation of sects." - W. E. Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words

One becomes a heretic when he chooses to exalt his views or opinions, sometimes making a test of fellowship over them, and always seeking to convert others to his views. It is truly a work of the flesh - **Galatians 5:20**.

There are various kinds of heretics and heresies. There are heresies which consist of doctrinal views which are directly opposed to the teaching of the Bible. Various denominational doctrines which reference their Creeds rather than the Bible are rather outstanding examples of this type of heresy. Ironically, in many such circles, failure to subscribe to the Creeds is itself marked as "heresy."

There are heretics among the churches who

Then there are heretics in local congregations who qualify as such by choosing to dislike the elders, preacher or other members. They seem to make it their career to dig up all the dirt they can, pounce on every new member and unload the entire heap on them.

choose to make tests of fellowship over matters of judgment. This is admittedly a difficult area, as opinions differ widely as to what constitutes a "matter of judgment." Great care needs to be exercised here. For when brethren pull into opposing groups over what is a matter of judgment, one or both groups can, by definition, become guilty of heresy!

Then there are heretics in local congregations who qualify as such by choosing to dislike the elders, preacher or other members. They seem to make it their career to dig up all the dirt they can, pounce on every new member and unload the entire heap on them. They seem to work day and night to establish their views in the minds of others, thus building a "party" around them. Many a division has been caused by this type of heretic. The tragic thing about these brethren is that they seldom realize that they are, by Bible definition, a heretic.

Consider, neighbor, are you a heretic? Do you hold some religious view not found in the word of God to which you are trying to win others? If so, you are guilty of heresy!

How about it, brother. are your disagreements with your brethren over matters of judgment a constant sore spot with you? Are you ever seeking to turn the enmity of others against them? Does your personal dislike of some member become the topic of your every conversation with other members? If so, then, friend, you are a heretic and the doors of Heaven are forever closed for you until you repent (**Galatians 5:21**).

