

Toning It Down

By Robert Turner

A "country meeting" had gone exceedingly well, and elders from another community asked the preacher to work with them the following year. He came at the appointed time, and found his reputation had spread, and the building was packed. The elders met him at the car, told him they had never had such a gathering of Methodists, Baptists, and no-church folk, so he must be very careful lest he offend someone with his forthright teaching.

Being young and brash, and having no more tact than to tell the truth, he reminded them of the undiluted lessons that had been given at the neighboring church in the previous year. He said that since he had not been in that section of the state before, the previous year's work must have drawn this year's crowd; and certainly was the reason he had been asked to come. He concluded, "If you expect to hold and convert these people with something other than the kind of preaching that brought them together, I'm afraid you have the wrong man. I'll get back into my car and go home."

With much confusion — "Oh no, you must have misunder-

stood us" etc., the preacher was persuaded to stay, and the meeting began. The preaching was strong, and seemed to get a little stronger; but the people continued to come, and several were converted.

I do not now believe, nor did I then, that "skinning the sects" is good preaching. Some folk will turn away from straight, plain truth, no matter how fairly we seek to present it. But we are dead wrong in thinking we can convert people to Christ with anything other than the Bible message. It will convict the world respecting sin, righteousness, and judgment; and many won't like that. But we are looking for the "few" who will like it, and will genuinely turn to God.

"Toning it down" will produce only "toned down" members of a "toned down" church. You may keep the money, the politicians, and silk-stocking row; but you will lose the backbone and fiber that is necessary for a church to prevail and please the Lord. And if "members" are not interested in pleasing the Lord and saving souls, why bother with any preaching at all?



Classes This Week

Sun 5:15 PM Kids Class at Building	Sun Evening College Devo at Jared Johnson's.	Monday 12 Noon Campus Study - Foy Cafeteria	Monday 7 PM Men's Class at the Davis'	Tuesday 7 PM Bible Reading at Hannah Alexander's	Wednesday 12 Noon Ladies Class at the Rouse's	Thursday 12:30 PM Campus Study - Foy Cafeteria	Thursday 7 PM Revelation Study at Caleb George's
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Sick

Fran Snyder (Mother of Carla Humphrey)	Lori Holloway	Chuck Wade	Sandlyn Fultz (Davis Fultz's Sister)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Carrie Chavers (Friend of Sharon Bailey)	Bill Rhodes (Toni Herd's Uncle)	Philip Locke (Jeremiah Johnson's Uncle)
Josie Keith (Friend of Heath Fowler)	Grandparents of Mary Ann Roberts	Easton Alexander (Phillip Box's cousin's baby)	Jerry Sandlin (Megan Lee's Grandfather)
Richard Call Seth Humphrey's Uncle	Quinton Addison (April Jerkins Grandfather)	Erlene Davis (Walker Davis' mother)	Mary Smith (Nathan Smith's Grandmother)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Dave Brown (Friend of the Lanier's)	Dale Herd (William Herd's brother)	Larry Alexander (Friend of Phillip Box)
Marty and Aubrey Meeks, Russell Dickerson (Toni Herd's Nephews)	Stacey Harrell (Marcus Harrell's Dad)	Ann Robinson (Sharon Bailey's Mom)	Mike Reed (Friend of Long's)

September Birthdays

- 1 - Ryan Seymore
- 2 - Denise Davis
- 3 - Trenton Anderson
- 4 - Kevin Anderson
- 10 - BJ Winslett
- 10 - Matthew Sullivan
- 10 - Joshua Carter
- 10 - Keeley Porter
- 10 - Eleanor Weldon
- 11 - Sheryl Fowler
- 12 - Jared Johnson
- 12 - Heather Bethea
- 14 - Patsy Ogle
- 17 - Laura Weldon
- 19 - Kayti Persall
- 21 - Sarah Chandler
- 24 - Wade Winslett

News and Notes

- Let us remember Matthew Johnson, David Golden and Tim Morton in our prayers as they are deployed overseas.
- We welcome the Dembowskis, Joel and Windy and their children Jonas, Addison and Tyson Kate to the University church!
- Chris Davis has a very favorable repost from his doctor!
- Please check the directories on the walls of entry to the auditorium.
- Jeremy Pashall will be leading the student devotional study tonight and will be preaching this evening!

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

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When Jesus Does Nothing

By Larry Rouse

“LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD.”

Thoughts to Ponder

Separate yourself from fellowship with the world, or the world will separate you from fellowship with God.

We would be wise to carefully listen to our Saviour who came from heaven to show us the way to God. Throughout His ministry Jesus emphasized His relationship with the Father along with the kind of heart required to know God.

It would take great humility for the Jews that heard Jesus to understand that they really did not know God and that they needed to hear the One who actually had come from God. Jesus stated the obvious to the unbelieving Jews when He said: "You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form." (Jn 5:37) Why would they resist listening to the One who came from Heaven and accurately testified of things that these men had never seen? They were blinded by their own relationships and religious pride so that they would not hear. "But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you. I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive. How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek the honor that comes from the only God?" (Jn 5:42-44)

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

Jesus Taught us how to Handle the Revealed Will of God

Jesus often told others what His relationship with God was like so that men could learn how to have that kind of relationship for themselves. Over and over Jesus described how He handled

Jesus demonstrated what it means to be committed to doing the will of God. If He did not hear instruction from the Father, Jesus did nothing. "I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me." (Jn 5:30)

God's will. His underlying attitude towards the will of God was exactly the attitude He had towards God Himself, one of a deep reverence for all that God spoke. "But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'" (Mt 4:4)

Jesus knew that His Father was perfect, therefore anything that God does or gives would be complete for the purpose it was given. This was especially true of the revealed will of God. Being a perfect revelation Jesus sought to only abide in what was revealed. Jesus did only what He saw or received from the Father. If He had no instruction Jesus did nothing! Consider some verses from the book of John.

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1. Jesus did only what He saw the Father do. If He did not see the Father do something, Jesus did nothing. "Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner." (Jn 5:19)

2. Jesus demonstrated what it means to be committed to doing the will of God. If He did not hear instruction from the Father, Jesus did nothing. "I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me." (Jn 5:30)

3. Jesus only taught and did the things that the Father taught Him. His sacrifice on the cross was evidence of the God-glorifying fruits of this attitude. If He had no teaching from the Father, Jesus did nothing. When Jesus was given instruction He yielded and obeyed. "Then Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am *He*, and *that I do nothing of Myself*; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things." (Jn 8:28)

Jesus Expects His Followers to Have the Same Attitude

When Jesus describes how you and I must receive God's will and not reject it, He points to the attitudes that He had already shown in His relationship with God. You and I must not speak or act without the authority of God. If we want everlasting life we must have the complete confidence in a perfect will of God so that we only speak when we have positive authority from the will of God. "He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him -- the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day. "For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. "And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak." (Jn 12:48-50)

This kind of humility and reverence towards God is how you and I can give Him glory. When we only speak as the oracles of God we glorify God in the same way that Jesus glorified God! When hear of teachings and practices that are not found in the oracles of God, then you and I should be silent and do nothing in these things. "If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever

and ever. Amen." (1 Pt 4:11)

Men Today Still Reject Jesus' Words

Religious practices will be dramatically impacted by how we approach the revealed will of the Father given through Jesus. One who makes Jesus their Lord will do nothing when there is no authority given. They also will be filled with good works as they abide in those things we are told to do. Do you want a God-centered faith or one centered in the theology of the great thinkers of today?

How many in their service to God really know Jesus as the one Lord? (Eph 4:4-6) What would happen in the religious word if men begin demanding authority for all that we teach and practice? What would be the outcome if modern practices were put to the test? I do know that those committed to the Lordship of Christ will only have the simple organization, worship and teachings that are found in the New Testament. This will glorify God.

A Warning for Our "Non-traditional" Advocates

Today I am seeing a large movement within churches to surrender fundamental attitudes because they are considered "traditional." The question of instrumental music in praises to God, the role of women, the work of the church and like things are now being described as issues of "freedom" where we can make choices with no consequences. Brethren that insist on book, chapter and verse (which is a simple way of expressing that we must have authority from God) are being ridiculed as "legalists" and are slowly being pushed out of local churches.

Ask Your Preacher

I am hearing from more and more sources that there is a rising flood of men in pulpits that cannot oppose instrumental music in local churches because they have made a fundamental shift in their view towards the authority of scripture. Rather than do nothing when God is silent, these men believe that they have freedom to act. However, a large number of brethren that support and hear these men are not told of this change of beliefs.

Sadly, many of these men do not have the basic honesty to tell brethren where they stand. Please ask your preacher and the eldership where you attend to address these basic fundamental truths. Sadly I am hearing of preachers when asked to preach on instrumental music and the silence of the scriptures, refuse.

Let each of us address the attitudes in our hearts and be sure that our goal is simply to glorify God by following Jesus as our Lord. Brethren, this is a truth worth fighting for! "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say?" (Lk 6:46)



Its Not How You Feel

By Aubrey Belue

Does it "feel good?" Does it feel "right?" If so, today's culture says, "go for it!" Thus, we make "right" what our feelings say it is, rather than what it really is. Somehow, we have reached the point in contemporary reasoning that most say that one can pursue his individual dream without having to confront the consequences of bad or wrong choices. Believe in God, or not; accept Christ, or not; live morally, or not--to those people, it is all the same. Do what you want to do, what you feel like doing, what you think is right in doing, and God will just set aside HIS rules to approve of you regardless. We confuse civic freedom with divine approval, and so long as it is "legal" (and some are not too "picky" about that), it is seen as acceptable.

The question is, "Is our standing *with God* determined by our feelings, or by the rule of divine law?" Is it a matter of God's will, or ours? Serious consequences follow the reasoning described above:

1) It nullifies the Bible as a defining book. In fact, the Bible becomes largely useless, since it can at any point be superseded by one's personal feeling. No doubt we "feel" like it has some value, but it can always be overridden by our feelings. There is no sense of responsibility to conform to its message.

2) It glorifies *human* wisdom and authority. The highest court of appeal becomes the human mind and thought, rather than the mind of God. If what I feel is right, even if it contradicts what God teaches in His word, then MY idea is seen as better than His; my authority as greater than His. In

In addition to being ill-equipped by nature and inclination to determine "right", we belong to Him, and are obligated to be obedient. Man's way never "fixes" anything important, nor moves us one step toward fellowship with God

so doing we minimize the greater wisdom and power of an Almighty God.

3) It results in anarchy and chaos. Rejecting a common source of authority -- the written word of God -- each becomes his own source. There are as many "rights" as there are people to think them up. No wonder we live in troubled times. No wonder our children are so confused as to morals

and religion. Countless competing human ideas bombard them (and us) with equally justifiable claims to what is "right".

4) It ignores God's place in our universe. He has defined right from wrong, sin from righteousness, truth from error. Any course conflicting with His "law" exacts terrible penalties.

The Truth? The solution to mankind's problems lie not in human minds, but in the unsearchable mind of an all-wise God. As we have observed before in this column, it is His world, we eat His bread, drink His water, and breathe His air. In addition to being ill-equipped by nature and inclination to determine "right", we belong to Him, and are obligated to be obedient. Man's way never "fixes" anything important, nor moves us one step toward fellowship with God. This may not be the popular line, but we are interested in TRUTH, not compromise, and all human objections aside, God's word is still TRUE, and His way is still the only way (John 14:6).

