

A Test of Fellowship

When brethren begin to try to study an issue, the first question should not be, "Are you going to make this a test of fellowship?" There's a time when fellowship may need to be considered, depending on the issue at hand, but it shouldn't be the first order of business. The first order should be to lovingly work together and learn truth. That often takes time, and brethren are typically in different places of growth and understanding. As long as this process can be maintained without being ugly to each other **(Eph 4:32)**, brethren can generally get along pretty well. Patience, longsuffering, and love are staples of a growing relationship that fosters a better knowledge of truth and understanding **(Eph 4:1-3)**.

My experience generally has been that fellowship issues tend to work themselves out without being forced. Yet there are questions to consider. Is one being divisive and causing strife? Is one refusing to study while dogmatically holding a view? Is one attempting to go behind the backs of others (e.g., the shepherds) in order to teach a pet idea? These are always dangers that need to be avoided and handled. In these cases, swift action is in order **(Rom. 16:17; Titus 1:9)**.

by Doy Moyer

However, when an issue first arises, and brethren are genuinely wanting to work together in love, the fellowship question is a distant second. Why bring it up first? Why not instead simply seek to study, pray, and grow together? In time, the fellowship between brethren may indeed grow much closer, and this is a wonderful outcome.

Never look for excuses to divide and isolate; always pursue peace and love. Divisions happen, but let it never be because we have failed to do all within our abilities to bring others together first.



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)**

Another Form of Worldliness

By Lloyd Moyer



Thoughts to Ponder

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. **(Romans 12:2)**

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday

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

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

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Worldliness in any form is fatal to the child of God and the church of the Lord. The above statement simply means that any time a child of God or a church of the Lord engages in worldliness in any form their acceptability to God is forfeited. This being true, we need to study the subject of worldliness. I fear that when most people talk and think about worldliness, they have in mind such sins as drunkenness, adultery, lasciviousness and immorality in general.

However, there is another form of worldliness I wish to discuss in this article. It has to do with the idea of "peaceful co-existence." This term is used in reference to the existence of two (or more) opposite ideologies. To have this "peaceful co-existence" both sides are urged to "make concessions," "to be tolerant" and to avoid "absolutism," "radicalism," "extreme views" in either direction. By employing such terms and preaching such ideas the Communists have taken captive millions of people since 1917. By this example we can see the ef-

We have heard and seen much of this form of worldliness which has made deep inroads into the thinking of God's people. Many feel that one is a "radical," "intolerant," "extremist" and void of the Spirit of Christ, if he has strong convictions on anything religious and has the courage to preach what he believes.

fectiveness of this course in world events. It seems that there is something terribly wrong with one taking a firm stand on anything today. It is the "middle-of-the-roader" who is most popular. My definition of this type person is one who talks out of both sides of his mouth at the same time; makes concessions so as to lead others to believe that he is for both sides and yet, against both sides The "middle-of-the-roader" is one who has no strong convictions either way. Therefore, he is very popular. This makes a good politician but a very poor Christian.

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Lisa Carter (Luke's mother)	Jesse Godwin (Troy's father and Mac's grandfather)	Nell Holcomb (Ben's grandmother, Joannetta's aunt)	Louise Pack (Anna and Christopher's grandmother)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father)	Ruth Addison (mom of April and Julie)
Madeline Morton (Greg Lanier's g'daughter)	Alexander Locke (Jeremiah's cousin's son)	Betty Bradford	Hazel Gilliland and Sherry Carroll (Toni's relatives)
Jean Buchanan (Abbie Harrison's grandmother)	Ermogene Laxson (Sara Lail's grandmother)	Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother)	William Smith (Ken Sullivan's brother)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Arabelle Rich (Joannetta's aunt)	Sasha Rozier (Makenzie Reynolds' cousin)	Charles Hunt, chuck Hunt's dad
Bonnie Rhodes Kirkley (Toni Herd's family)	Howard Vaughan (Mary Ann's Granddad)	Aubrey Meeks (Toni Herd's Nephew)	James Palmer (Rachel Hobbard's grandfather)

March Birthdays

- 1-Amanda Cagle
- 2-Maddie Norman
- 2-Chase Harrison
- 2-Bryan Golden
- 2-Angela Fowler
- 2-Joy Powell
- 2-Connell Hodges
- 3-Shaun Oliver
- 4-Morgan Cavender
- 5-Sophie Borden
- 7-Josh Pender
- 8-Carmen Herd
- 9-Richard Zacarius
- 9-Austin Bartlett
- 10-Pepper Humphrey
- 10-Parker Godwin
- 12-Brad Hartsell
- 13-Adam Holliday
- 16-Taylor Godwin
- 17-Susan Sullivan
- 18-MaKenzie Anderson
- 18-Alaina Barham
- 20-Jimmy Roberts
- 21-Carter Hunt
- 21-Rachel Bobo
- 22-Will Hollis
- 23-Sarah Embry
- 25-Sawyer Hall
- 25-Ethan Chandler
- 27-Shelby Freeman
- 27-Katie Jasper
- 28-Jacob Hagedwood
- 29-Rachel Simpson
- 29-Makenzie Neeley
- 30-Amanda Stephens

News and Notes

- ☒ - Please continue to pray for Brooke Perkins' dad, as he is experiencing some swelling issues since his hip replacement.
- ☒ - Jared Johnson's cousin, John Duke, has improved and is expected to be moved to a rehab facility.
- ☒ - Please continue to pray for Fallon Hartsell as she recovers.
- ☒ - Please remember these family members of Orie Cecil as they battle cancer: his cousin, Tina Atnip, and her son, Caleb, and Orie's grandfather Charles Cecil
- ☒ - Please pray for our expectant mothers: Brooke Perkins, Fallon Hartsell, Ingrid Chavez and Jenna Vaughn.
- ☒ - Emma Ulrich's mom, Gay, has been diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia and will remain at Vandy a month receiving chemo and other therapy.
- ☒ - Jeremiah Johnson's dad, TJ, will have some tests done on his heart on Monday, possibly receiving a pace maker.
- ☒ - All audio is immediately posted on www.auchurch.com.

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We have heard and seen much of this form of worldliness which has made deep inroads into the thinking of God's people. Many feel that one is a "radical," "intolerant," "extremist" and void of the Spirit of Christ, if he has strong convictions on anything religious and has the courage to preach what he believes. A few years ago it would have been hard to find a preacher or a church of Christ who would not have been happy to engage in a discussion of their belief and practice. However, because of the form of worldliness I have been talking about, it is almost impossible to find a liberal preacher or a digressive church which will enter into an honorable discussion. Jesus and the apostles were ever ready to engage in religious controversy. No one could have accused them of being "middle of the roaders." Both, Jesus and the apostles expressed their strong convictions in strong words, Jesus called his own Jewish brethren "hypocrites," "ye serpents, ye generation of vipers." (**Matt. 23**) Paul called a man a "child of the devil" and asked him to "cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord." (**Acts 13:10**) In the second chapter of Galatians, we read of Paul withstanding Peter to the face, because he was to be blamed. And horrors of horrors, he did it "before them all!" (**Verse 14**). Had some of our brethren been present they would have accused Paul of "causing trouble in the church." They would have branded him as an "anti."

From these examples we learn that neither Jesus nor the apostles were "tolerant" of error. There can be no "peaceful co-existence" of truth and error, right and wrong or righteousness and unrighteousness. (**Eph. 5:11**), "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." From a study of the sixth chapter of Ephesians we learn that there is some fighting to be done by the people of God. They are to

put on the "whole armor of God." and after "having done all, to stand. Stand therefore..." (**Ver. 13-14**).

It is impossible to please God and make any concessions so far as the truth is concerned. A concession made at one point of the gospel leaves no ground upon which to stand at any other point of the gospel. The same ground for concession at one point of truth, arises at every other point.

God has stipulated the work of the church. He has proscribed the government of the church. He has set forth the items of worship of the church and He has outlined the plan of salvation. Now, if someone can make a concession and have the church engage in a work not stipulated, others can, with the same arguments, change the plan of salvation or alter the items of worship. There is no stopping place. We must, therefore, contend for the faith (**Jude 3**) and be "set for the defense of the gospel" (**Phil. 1:17**). We must always "speak as the oracles of God...." (**1 Peter 4:11**). We must "prove all things; hold fast that which is good." (**I Thess. 5:21**). To follow these and many other like admonitions, we will be branded as "radicals," "trouble-makers," and "extremists." Some brethren may lie about us and do all in their power to injure our influence. And when we raise our voice in protest against them and try to protect our influence, they will accuse us of dividing the church. That happened to Paul in the long ago — and will to faithful men always.

As we noted in the beginning of this article, these tactics succeeded in the political world. They did so simply because enough people did NOT fight against them. These same tactics will succeed in sweeping the church of our Lord into apostasy unless the people of God take a firm stand for truth and fight against this subtle form of worldliness. "And be not conformed to this world:..." (**Rom. 12:2**).

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An Uncertain Sound

By Greg Gwin

"For if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, who will prepare for battle?" (**1 Corinthians 14:8**)

In this context the apostle Paul was addressing the use of spiritual gifts in the first century church. The illustration is an obvious one: in a battlefield situation, the trumpeter must give clear signals so that the soldiers will know whether to advance or retreat. In regards to spiritual gifts, Paul was making the case that speaking in tongues (one of the miraculous gifts given by the Holy Spirit) would not be beneficial if there was no interpreter (another gift) to explain the message.

While we no longer have the miraculous gifts Paul was discussing, the principle of his illustration has important applications to many pertinent matters. We are concerned that uncertain sounds are emanating from many brethren. Just as the apostle explained, people will not be properly advised, and their correct reaction to spiritual dangers will be lacking. For example:

Social Drinking: Too often we hear brethren who express a disconcerting lack of conviction against all alcoholic consumption. They typically express it this way: "I don't drink, but I'm not sure we can say that it is absolutely wrong to do so." These folks need to realize that their unclear warning will be taken by the weak and the young as a full license to drink alcohol. Good and positive arguments against social drinking are available. Use

We do not need to hear uncertain sounds coming from our pulpits and Bible classes. To put it bluntly, if you don't know or can't be sure, please keep your doubts and reservations to yourself! On the spiritual battlefield we need to hear clear and certain sounds. Think!

them, and warn the people!

Dancing: A preacher was reported to have preached a sermon about dancing, and at the conclusion he stated that everyone would just have to make up their own mind if it was sinful or not. You guessed it — all the young people rushed off to the prom. You see, his "uncertain sound" left them unprepared to make a

right judgment — in fact it empowered them to make exactly the wrong decision!

Immodest dress: Again, we hear too many of our brethren expressing doubts about standards of modesty. They will be heard to say things like, "I don't think you can draw any absolute lines." They mean, of course, that no one can say for sure if this is too short, too tight, too low cut, etc. The implication is that everyone must just figure it out for themselves. We deny it! The Scriptures give clear teaching on what parts of the body must be covered to avoid "nakedness" — and modesty would keep one far away from those limits. Teach this, and help folks — especially young folks — know how to dress and act as God desires.

We need clear and plain teaching and preaching. We do not need to hear uncertain sounds coming from our pulpits and Bible classes. To put it bluntly, if you don't know or can't be sure, please keep your doubts and reservations to yourself! On the spiritual battlefield we need to hear clear and certain sounds. Think!

