

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

Editor’s Note: Below is the letter I submitted to the Editor of the opinion section of the *Lodi News-Sentinel*, our local newspaper. Since one of the rules is the word count cannot exceed 350 words, this was a challenge. I have no idea if this letter will be printed, since I referred to the Bible and did not rely solely on opinion. Time will tell if it is published. Please watch our paper. – *tgmc*

Letter to the Editor

Lodi News-Sentinel

PO Box 1360
Lodi, CA 95241

April 14, 2020

Dear Editor:

Several comments have been made concerning religious leaders who ignore the “stay at home” order issued to hopefully reduce the spread of Covid-19. Political and religious leaders alike would do well to consider some Bible principles or Divine guidance at this critical time! Please consider the following:

1. **The Israelites were given a “stay at home” command.** To avoid the plague of death of the first born when in Egyptian bondage, the Israelites were commanded by Moses, “*And none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning*” (Exodus 12:22). This was only a short-term order!
2. **Lepers of the Old Testament were “socially distanced.”** Lepers were isolated and were required to dwell outside of the social make up of God’s people to avoid its spread. The law of isolation, cleansing, reintroducing of leprous persons back into society and cleansing of their homes were commanded by Moses (Leviticus 13 & 14). “Social distancing” and isolation were employed in the Old Testament. Political and religious leaders today need to be “Bible smart” and not throw caution to the wind! Only the sick and infected should be isolated!
3. **Christians are commanded to submit to civil law.** The apostle Paul revealed this in Romans 13:1-7. The “stay at home” order is not an attack on a specific faith, even though there have been reports of governmental overreach in some cases. Most members of our society are under this order, with specified exceptions. Civil rulers have a duty to uphold the Constitutional rights of the citizens who elected them!
4. **Christians are to “Walk in wisdom toward them that are without...”** (Colossians 4:5); to “*Let your light so shine before men...*” (Matthew 5:16); and obey Jesus who said, “*Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets*” (Matthew 7:12). My fellow civil leaders, many are praying you will make wise decisions during this crisis (1 Timothy 2:1-3); consequential decisions you never realized you would have to make when you were elected!

Respectfully,

/s/ Glendol McClure

Note: I am the evangelist (not pastor) for the Washington Street church of Christ, Lodi, CA 95240. ■

RELIGIOUS PROFANITY

By John Edwards

Profanity is more than only the bad language one may hear. Whatever profanes the truth may be considered religious profanity. Religious profanity is uttered when it is said:

“THE CHURCH IS NONESSENTIAL.” If the church of Christ is not essential, then the blood of Jesus is not necessary! The church was purchased with the Savior’s blood (Acts 20:28). To degrade the church of our Lord is to defame His blood! The Bible teaches, **“...the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved”** (Acts 2:47). Christ **“...is the saviour of the church”** (Eph. 5:23).

“THERE’S NOTHING IN A NAME.” If you think there is nothing in a name, have your employer put my name on your paycheck rather than your name! Spirit-filled Peter said, **“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved”** (Acts 4:12). That is, **“...the name of Jesus Christ...”** (v. 11). To say there’s nothing in a name is to speak religious profanity!

“ONE CHURCH IS AS GOOD AS ANOTHER.” This is contrary to the truth. The Ephesian letter points out: **“There is one body...”** (4:4) and **“the church...is his body”** (1:22-23). It is also revealed: **“One Lord”** and **“One God”** (4:5-6). If one church is as good as another, is another god as good as **“God our Father”** or another lord as good as **“the Lord Jesus Christ”** (1:2)?

“IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE WHAT ONE BELIEVES.” Does the one who so states so believe? If so, why should we care if it makes no difference? Tell the young prophet of 1 Kings 13, who was slain by a lion, that it makes no difference what one believes! Jesus must have thought it makes a difference. He taught: **“...that whosoever believeth in him should not perish...”** (Jn. 3:16) and **“...if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins”** (Jn. 8:24). Ephesians 4:5 says, **“...one faith...”**. It is written, **“That they all might be damned who believed not the truth...”** (2 Thess. 2:12).

“WE DO NOT UNDERSTAND ALIKE.” The Ephesians were instructed: **“Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ”** (Eph. 3:4). **“Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is”** (Eph. 5:17). Where do you read of the Ephesians understanding differently? If they understood, they understood alike! There is no such thing as understanding the truth differently! Either we understand it or we do not. Either it is the truth or it is not. It takes **“the knowledge of the truth”** (1 Tim. 2:4), **“belief of the truth”** (2 Thess. 2:13), **“the love of the truth”** (2 Thess. 2:10), and **“obeying the truth”** (1 Pet. 1:22) for us to be saved. When you and I do that, we will be together!

Religious profanity would come to a halt, if every man would simply **“speak as the oracles of God”** (1 Pet. 4:11). ■

Self-Control

By James Hahn

The Bible clearly teaches that Christians are to exercise temperance or self-control (2 Pet. 1:6) if we are to make our calling and election sure (2 Pet. 1:10). There are those who profess to being Christians that do not exercise self-control and as a result they lose their temper; they use speech not fitting for a Christian to use or engage in actions unbecoming to one wearing the name of Christ. How can we develop self-control? Paul gives us the answer in 2 Corinthians 10:5, **“...bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”** When our every thought is controlled by the desire to be obedient to Christ in all things we will be able to exercise the self-control expected of followers of Christ. ■

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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