

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

LIBERALISM

Liberalism is an ongoing and serious plague among God’s people. When congregations of the Lord’s people promote various programs including those funded from the church treasury, such as church kitchens and “fellowship” halls, bus ministries and holiday programs for the young people, they do so without any positive Divine authority found in God’s word. Of a truth, *liberalism* is a tangled web which deceives and ensnares those who partake. When one analyzes *liberalism* using the standard of the Divine Truth of God, the dangers of *liberalism* briefly discussed below are evident.

Liberalism is a spiritual disorder. *Liberal* brethren bring shame, disgrace and despite on the Spirit of Grace and the sacrifice of Christ (Heb. 10:26-31). Christ did not shed his blood for the mission of *liberalism*, which satisfies the lusts of the flesh and promotes fun, food and frolic!

Liberalism exemplifies shame for the power of the gospel of Christ. Paul wrote, “*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek*” (Rom. 1:16). The Gospel needs no sugar coating. The power of the Gospel is rejected when one is drawn by and converted to tenants of *liberalism*. While there are many good brethren in *liberal* churches, most were drawn by and converted to the physical innovations of *liberalism* and not the pure, simple and saving Gospel of Christ.

Liberalism does not respect Divine authority and the pattern of New Testament teaching. Those who practice *liberalism* have the false conception that “silence allows.” Rather, the silence of the scriptures prohibits (Heb. 7:11-14). Positive Divine authority must be given for all that we do. The apostle Paul wrote, “*And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him*” (Col. 3:17, NKJV). Like the temple and its furnishings which were made “*according to the pattern*” (Heb. 8:5; Ex. 25-27), Christians must conform to the pattern of Divine teaching found in the Gospel in our worship and service to God.

Liberalism promotes self. Folks who are entangled in *liberalism* are like the children of Israel who did “*...that which was right in his own eyes*” (Judges 21:25). They reason that what they do, “*must be right in the eyes of the Lord because it seems so right to them.*” Jesus said, “*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity*” (Matt. 7:21-23, NKJV). Who is it that will enter heaven? – “*he that doeth the will of my father which is in heaven.*”

Liberalism rationalizes. They are convinced that they are doing what God says, although not able to produce Divine authority from the scriptures. They are like King Saul who tried to rationalize that he had obeyed the commandment of the Lord when he was commanded to “*...go and attack Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and do not spare them. But kill both man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey*” (1 Sam. 15:3), yet Saul and the people spared Agag the King and “*the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them: but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly*” (vs. 9).

Liberalism is not limited only to those who support human institutions. Many brethren and congregations who claim they are “conservative” or “non-institutional” are in reality *liberal*! The word “*liberal*” is defined by **Webster’s Dictionary** as “*not literal or strict: LOOSE...BROAD-MINDED, especially: not bound by authoritarianism, orthodoxy, or traditional forms.*” Therefore brethren who support and fellowship teachers on doctrinal errors such

as, but not limited to: no eternal hell; the guilty party is free to remarry; the grace-fellowship movement; the support and practice of “retreats” for men, women and young people and, the “house church” movement, are *liberal!*

Liberalism will not like this article, this issue of this bulletin or sound doctrinal preaching. They are like those of ISAIAH'S day who wrote “...*this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the LORD: Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits*” (Isa. 30:9-10). Paul also warned when he wrote, “*For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables*” (2 Tim. 4:3-4). Truly, *liberalism is a spiritual disorder.*

Especially commendable are sound Gospel preachers who have been fired, maligned, and labelled as “*orphan haters,*” “*antis*” and “*uncooperative*” by “*loving liberal*” brethren because of their stand against *liberalism.* The words of the Hebrew writer are applicable to such faithful servants of God (who have passed from this life) who warned brethren of the dangers of *liberalism* – “...*and by it, he (they) being dead yet speaketh*” (Heb. 11:4). It is my prayer that brethren will heed and respect the authority of God’s word and cast aside *liberalism!* – *tgmc* ■

THE TYPE OF PREACHING NEEDED TODAY

By John Edwards

The Bible is the best manual for preaching. It catalogs a number of great preachers. Also, it comprehensively tells preachers what to preach and how to preach it. Let’s notice the type of preaching that is needed in today’s pulpits.

Preaching Which Is From The Scriptures. We are not to preach from Reader’s Digest or any other human, fallible source. When Paul was in Thessalonica, he preached and reasoned from the Scriptures (Acts 17:1-3). It is a necessity that men preach from the Scriptures (1 Cor. 9:16).

Preaching Which Is Understandable. “*So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading*” (Neh. 8:8). There is a real need for preachers to preach with simplicity. The word of God is designed to be understood (Eph. 3:4). There is no reason for men to complicate it.

Preaching Which Exalts Christ. When the apostles preached the word of God, they declared that Christ was raised up, exalted at the right hand of God (Acts 2:22-36). Any type of preaching which does not exalt Christ should be exterminated from today’s pulpits!

Preaching Which Seeks To Please God. Paul said, “*But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts*” (1 Thess. 2:4). A preacher who preaches to please men should not be the servant of Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:10).

Preaching Which Is Bold. The apostle Paul “*preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus*” (Acts 9:27). God charged Ezekiel, “*Smite with thine hand, and stamp with thy foot...*” (Ezek. 6:11). We need some “hand smiting” and “foot stamping” preaching in today’s pulpits!

Preaching Which Pricks The Hearts Of Men. When those on Pentecost heard the preaching of the apostles, “*they were pricked in their heart*” (Acts 2:37). When the word is preached in its purity and simplicity, it will cut to the heart (Acts 5:33; 7:54).

Preaching Which Demands Repentance. It is written, “*We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God*” (Acts 14:15). The twelve “*went out, and preached that men should repent*” (Mk. 6:12). – *The Terre Haute SPEAKER*, October 25, 2020. ■

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

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