

# “THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

## Neither to the Right nor to the Left

By Greg Gwen

In referring to various congregations it is common to hear someone say *“they’re liberal”* or *“that church is very conservative.”* While those statements can be quite vague, most of us have an idea as to what is meant.

If *‘liberal’* means ignoring and openly violating the rules of Bible authority, then we definitely should stand against that. And, though we are far more inclined toward a *‘conservative’* approach to things, if this suggests the idea of binding what God’s law does not bind, we also should oppose that.

In truth, what we really need to be striving for is full and complete compliance with the pattern of work, worship, and organization for the church as is described in the Word of God. Most are quick to condemn those who are too *‘liberal,’* but the scriptures would also condemn those who demand things that the Bible does not demand – even if done in the name of *‘conservatism.’*

The proper balance is that which Moses urged for Israel of old... ***“Then Moses summoned all Israel and said to them: Hear, O Israel, the statutes and the ordinances which I am speaking today in your hearing, that you may learn them and observe them carefully...you shall observe to do just as the Lord your God has commanded you; you shall not turn aside to the right or to the left”*** (Deut. 5:1, 32 – NASV).

Jesus said that the correct way is ***“strait and narrow”*** (Matt. 7:13, 14). That being the case, we must exercise great caution – not deviating to the right or to the left. Think! ■

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## Our Passover: Christ

By Robert C. Welch

When the Israelites were in bondage in Egypt on the night before their departure they were to prepare a lamb and eat all of it, with the blood sprinkled upon the door posts. They were to eat unleavened bread and take unleavened dough with them. When this was done the Lord assured them that he would pass over that house, but that all others would have the first-born slain. Then they were to observe annually that passover with the slaying and eating of the lamb with the unleavened bread which was to be eaten for a week following (Ex. 12:1, 27). They were to explain to the generations afterward that ***“It is the sacrifice of Jehovah’s passover...”*** (vs. 27). That was a type or shadow of Christ (Col. 2:16, 17). The spiritual fulfillment of this type is described in these words which are in a setting which tells us to rid ourselves of unrepentant sinners even as the Israelites left Egypt: ***“For our passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ: wherefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth”*** (1 Cor. 5:7, 8).

There is a tendency to consider the Lord’s supper as the antitype or substance of the Old Testament shadow. It is true that Jesus is the sacrifice and that he said of the supper, ***“this is my body”*** and ***“this is my blood.”*** But the passage says that the unleavened bread is ***“sincerity and truth.”***

Our Passover Lamb, Christ, was without blemish or spot just as that original lamb was to be. He was

***“foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but was manifested at the end of the times”*** (1 Pet. 1:19, 20). It was in God’s eternal plan that Jesus should have this role in our deliverance from sin. In the development of the plan he typified it with the passover and its continued observance through the generations of the Israelites.

Our passover has been slain once (Heb. 10:10). There is not an annual slaying in our observance as with the Israelites. But we do have communion, or participation, with the body and blood (1 Cor. 10:16); and this is to be observed weekly (Acts 20:7) until he comes (1 Cor. 11:26).

When dough for bread is allowed to remain open for a period of time it can become contaminated with yeast spores from the air. With continual passing of this from one batch to another it can become so contaminated that it becomes the sourdough of the Canadian prospector. The church can become leavened with evil if we permit such unrepentant people to remain. The unwanted leaven of malice and wickedness can destroy the church. We need the new lump, and the maintenance of its purity, with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

The feast of unleavened bread was to last for one week as it was observed each year. In the fulfillment of that shadow we see that it is a continuous life of sincerity and truth and is to last all of our lives. It is not an observance to be attended at convenient times. Nor should we think that it will be all right to let in a little contamination now and then; it will contaminate the whole lump. Just a little good will neither save a person nor take him to heaven. But it only takes a little bad to sell ones soul to the devil and to contaminate and destroy oneself and others about us. – *Northern Kentucky Light*, July 1982. ■



## **False Teachers**

By Donald Townsley

False teachers are not something new among the children of God. They have always plagued His people. Peter said, ***“There were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you”*** (2 Pet. 2:1). Jesus warned of false teachers in Matthew 7:15, ***“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”*** Over and over in the New Testament, we are warned against false teachers. Let us look at a few of the characteristics and motives of the false teacher.

The false teacher is more interested in gaining popularity than in preaching the truth. He tells men what they want to hear instead of what they need to hear. He preaches, ***“peace, peace, when there is no peace.”*** He is like the professional politician, he puts his ear to the ground to find out what the people want, then preaches what they want to hear. This, of course, will cause him to be loved and praised by the unconverted, the unbeliever, digressives and worldlings. The false teacher is interested in personal gain (2 Pet. 2:3). He is on a constant search for a higher salary, and such a consideration will move him almost inevitably. Many times the false teacher is dissolute in his own personal life. Peter describes some in the first century as ***“having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray...”*** (2 Pet. 2:14, 15). The motive behind the false teacher is evil ambition (2 Pet. 2:3). It can be for power, popularity, money, or the person of someone (2 Pet. 2:14, 18; 2 Tim. 3:6). The method of the false teacher is ***“feigned words,” “good words”*** and ***“fair speeches”*** (2 Pet. 2:3; Rom. 16:18). His appearance is ***“sheep’s clothing”*** (Matt. 7:15) and as a ***“minister of righteousness”*** (2 Cor. 11: 15). By these means he deceives the hearts of the simple (Rom. 16:18). The ultimate end of the false teacher is destruction (2 Pet. 2:3ff; Phil. 3:19). ***“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world”*** (1 Jn. 4:1). – *The Expounder*, November 5, 1963. ■

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

Tommy Glendol McClure, Editor and Evangelist - 925-759-4357

Web Site: [www.lodiCAchurchofchrist.com](http://www.lodiCAchurchofchrist.com) - Email: [lodicachurchofchrist@gmail.com](mailto:lodicachurchofchrist@gmail.com) - Phone: 209-365-9250