

View

A Publication of the Folsom Point church of Christ, 900 E. Natoma, Folsom, CA

December 9, 2007

Cultural Lies Believers Believe

Sometime ago, Moody Monthly had a fascinating and timely article under the title, "Cultural Lies the Church Believes" (I've changed the title here; see Robert Turner's article on page 3). Though the article appeared almost ten years ago, little has changed.

In the article, seven "lies" were explored and explained. The following is a summary of the article. Let me know if you'd like to see the entire article; we can order some reprints, if there is enough interest.

The introduction issues some strong challenges: "In the mind of the masses, the cross of Christ looks like a sanctified bulletin board; on it is tacked everything from tax breaks for families to term limits for congressmen. When we identify such legislation as "Christian," the masses get the impression that such convictions represent the heart and soul of the Christian message. The spirit of the world has even affected our interpretation of Scripture. When the culture emphasizes that mothers should pursue a career outside the home, we restudy our Bible and discover that, "Ah. yes, it is perfectly proper to do so," even if it is not an economic necessity." The author shows how many denominational preachers and writers have done the same on issues like ho-

"CHRISTIANS ARE NOT TO THINK OF SECRET SINS AS SOMEHOW LESS SERIOUS AND MORE RESPECTABLE THAN THE SINS EVERYONE SEES...OUR PRIVATE LIFE IS THE REAL TEST OF OUR CHARACTER."

mosexuality, and eliminating the distinction between the genders which allows women elders and preachers and even the removal of "sexist" language in calling God our "Father." He accuses many of turning their interpretation sail into the wind "to catch every breeze" (see Eph. 4:14).

The "Lies" We May Believe

Lie #1: We Can Reform the World. "We often confuse doing good in the world with making the world good. We will never make the world good, but we can be an example of what good is." (John Fischer)
Lie #2: Popularity Validates a Message: "Only one thing validates a message or a messenger: the whole counsel of the word of God. All that I am, all that I proclaim, and all that I do must conform to the Word of God regardless of what the populace thinks, wants, purchases, sings or applauds... 'What about God' you ask, 'Isn't He the one who validates?' 'Yes, but God does it through His written word, not through claimed revelations, the visions, the dreams, the 'God told me's'." (Kay Arthur)

Lie # 3: It Doesn't Matter What You Believe As Long As You're Sincere. "What must determine the object of

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our faith is the authority of Scripture. If that is laid aside, one is free to follow any self-proclaimed “messiah” – or even announce a new means of salvation... our greatest need is not to be truthful about our sincerity but to be sincere about God’s truth” (Larry Moyer).

Lie #4: Only Do What Brings Fulfillment. “Happiness and fulfillment are not bad things, but they should only be by-products and not objectives in life... Too many of us allow emotions to stand in the way of our obedience... God’s will is objective. It is something we obey, that we do...Paul told Timothy, “fulfill your ministry” (2 Tim. 4:5, NASB). He does not say, “draw fulfillment from your ministry... the goal of life is not happiness and fulfillment...it is obedience and surrender.” (Crawford W. Lorrits, Jr.)

Lie #5: Our Value Lies in the Role We Play. “When some people are wrong valued, others are unjustly devalued. Is the children’s teacher, who trains the next generation at a teachable age, of lesser value than the preacher or an elder?... the Bible teaches that every person...is inherently dignified and worthy of respect...that’s because every person is created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27). (Lanier Burns)

Lie #6: Appearance is Everything. “This sort of mentality has long been a plague in the church and has reached epidemic proportions...whole churches are being built on the philosophy that image is everything, while truth is to be downplayed or camouflaged so that the church can appear in more appealing dress... Christians are not to think of secret sins as somehow less serious and more respectable than the sins everyone sees...our private life is the real test of our character.” (John MacArthur)

Lie #7: Bigger is Better. “...many Americans believe that if one church is larger than another – if it has more people or a greater number of programs or a bigger budget or building – it must be superior. Such thinking is simply an extension of contemporary American thought and practice... our culture would crown the rich fool (Lk. 12:18ff.) as a king of success. But Jesus would not join in that coronation. Instead, He stated that God said to the man, ‘You fool!’ ...God loves the big and the small, the David’s and the Goliaths...the single talent believers and the multi-gifted servants of Christ.” (Paul Cedar)

Moody Monthly, May/June, 1998

The church of Christ

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Jeff Clark: 916/985-8689
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Jerry Deschler: 916/285-9115
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Services

Sunday Morning Assembly
9:30 AM

Sunday Evening: 5:00 PM

Wednesday Bible Study
7:30 PM

Classes for all ages.

Private classes arranged
at your convenience.

For more information,
visit our web site at:

www.folsomchurch.com

Agenda

The Lord's Day, December 9, 2007

9:30 AM: Worship: Singing, Lord's Supper, Preaching

Sermon: The Story

☪ Preaching: David Posey

5:00 PM: Lord's Supper, Singing, Preaching

☪ Sermon: David Posey

5:30 PM: Bible Classes, All Ages

Adult Class Offerings

☪ Room 11-12, SeedSowers

☪ Auditorium, Deuteronomy

Wednesday, December 12, 2007

7:30 PM, Bible classes for ages 18 months and up,

Auditorium: Deuteronomy (David Posey)

Notes

Most sermons are available in MP3 format on our website (www.folsomchurch.com) or on CD (see a deacon).

Could the Church Be Wrong?

Robert F. Turner

Could "the church" be wrong? Is it possible that a portion, or even all, of the members of a congregation (including their elders) could be in error with respect to doctrine and/or practice? Could several congregations be wrong? Could a majority of congregations be wrong?

One of the most basic fallacies of Roman Catholicism is its conception of the "infallible" church. But someone says, "The church of the New Testament could not be wrong!" WHICH ONE will you use as your example? The one at Corinth? Ephesus? Laodicea? But you say "I'm referring to the 'whole' church, the body of Christ." And I remind you that this organism, this relation of individuals to Christ, does not exist as a functional organization. The characteristics of the perfect church must be gleaned piece by piece from the divine records. By command, example, and necessary inference we learn what Christ would have us be and do as a local church. The divine purpose and intent alone is without fault. In all functional churches and here the N.T. allows us to speak only of individual congregations; the human element is present, and we are forbidden to use such a church as a pattern. (2 Cor. 10:12-)

The new testament, the covenant or law of Christ, is that which was set up on the first Pentecost after the resurrection (Isa. 2:1-2; Joel 2: Acts 2:) and the body of people who accepted this law, and by a practice of its instructions brought into being the Jerusalem congregation, were the product not the makers of a divine standard. The same principle continues to this good day, and both the First and Twentieth Century churches could and do err. (See Rev. 2; 3)

In every century, in every generation, each church must prove its right to the name "church of Christ" by showing identity with the divinely approved church characteristics found in the New Testament. We must pay more than lip-service to this principle. When we begin to think a thing is right because a "Church of Christ," or a majority of the "Churches of Christ," or ALL of the "Churches of Christ" do or teach it, we have become sectarian in our conception of the church, and need to revise our thinking.

God's word is the pattern by which a true church must be cut. Did you ever cut 2x4's to frame a wall, or pickets for a fence? If you obtained a pattern, cut the first by that pattern, then threw the pattern aside and cut the second by the first, and so on, you learned the fallacy of identity by succession. Any slight difference in the second was passed to the third, and the slight difference of the third was added to the error of the first, and passed on. To cut a true wall, or fence, we must measure each cut by the original pattern. This is no less true with reference to the church.

A crying need of our time is a firm resolve to determine right by an appeal to God's truth, rather than to "a well defined and clear-shown majority of the Churches of Christ in Texas." Cancellations will be received with as much grace as we can muster.

Robert F. Turner
Plain Talk, vol. 3, no. 3, p. 5, April, 1966