

IT IS HIGH TIME TO AWAKE! Continued from page 1.

There are many elders, preachers individual Christians, and congregations of God's people who need to be told, "*It is high time to awake out of sleep!*" The devil is by no means sleeping, but he has been able to cause many of us today to sleep. We need to wake up regarding:

(1) The danger of drifting. Often movement away from God and the Truth comes very gradually. It comes as a result of neglect more often than as a deliberate radical departure (Hebrews 2:3). The warning is clear, "*Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip (lest haply we drift away from the, ASV)*" (Hebrews 2:1). There is the danger, which is ever present, of wanting to become like the nations round about us. When we yield to this desire, we can expect change to be slow and the result will always be destructive. The road to ruin is walked one step at a time. Trace the consequences of this desire in ancient Israel. God's people today are called out of the world to be a people uniquely belonging to God. God's people are to follow God's Word and not the people of the world. Many congregations have become like the denominations and are no longer following God's Word. It is high time that these congregations and their elders wake up and return to the old paths.

(2) The danger of false teachers. We have some smooth-talking (Romans 16:18) ravenous wolves in sheep's clothing (Matthew 7:15), within the flock of God today. Instead of their mouths being stopped, their "*good words and fair speeches*" are itching the ears of multitudes. Sometimes our brethren will travel many miles to the Jubilee in Nashville, to the Tulsa Workshop, or to other places just to have their ears tickled with the "feel-good" philosophies of men and to be entertained by the show men of the brotherhood but will not go across the street to hear the Truth of God's Word proclaimed. It is high time that we wake up to the fact that it is the truth that makes us free! The church of Christ is not in the entertainment business; souls are not saved by the teaching of error, even if these lies cause the hearers to feel good. Sin deceives, and error destroys. We need to oppose false doctrine and false teachers, not support them with our money and our presence. We need to stop inviting false teachers into the flock to hold Gospel Meetings or otherwise fill our pulpits. We need to stop buying their books and going to hear them speak. We need to wake up!

(3) The danger of fellowshiping those who are not in fellowship with God. Those who teach error and/or practice false doctrine are not in fellowship with God (II John 9). Paul warned, "*And have no fellowship with the unfruitful workers of darkness, but rather reprove them*" (Ephesians 5:11). Paul did not say we could have a little fellowship with error; he did not say we could have much fellowship with error; he said NO fellowship. Brethren who encourage by their words and by their behavior fellowshiping denominations and those who have gone out from us have departed from the truth. We cannot fellowship such without becoming partakers with them in their evil ways (II John 11). Fellowshiping those in error is a departure from Truth; it is a departure from God. It is high time that elders, preachers, individual Christians and congregations wake up to the error of such fellowship!

"*Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit ye like men* (Be courageous!, *English Study Bible*), *be strong*" (I Corinthians 16:13).

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BELVEDERE BEACON

"*Ye are the light of the world*" (Matthew 5:14)

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IT IS HIGH TIME TO AWAKE!

"*And that knowing the time, that it i high time to awake out of sleep: for now is salvation nearer than when we believed*" (Romans 13:11).

It is a dangerous thing to be asleep spiritually! In the parable of the tares, Jesus stated that "*while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares...*" (Matthew 13:25). We are admonished repeatedly in the New Testament to "*watch*" (see Matthew 24:42; 26:41; I Thessalonians 5:6; I Peter 4:7; II Timothy 4:5). It is impossible to "*watch*" and sleep at the same time.. The devil and his cohorts are always awake seeking opportunities to "*devour*" (I Peter 4:8) us through deception. Paul admonished us, "*Watch ye, stand fast in the faith...*" (I Corinthians 16:13). Sin can lull us into apathy, sleep. When we depart from the truth, sin has a deadening effect. Sin sears our consciences (I Timothy 4:2) and causes us to sleep spiritually (I Corinthians 11:30). This can happen to individuals and to congregations (Revelation 3:15). To protect ourselves from evil and to keep in the narrow path that leads to life eternal we must be awake, alert.

Elders, have a special obligation to be awake and watchful. The Hebrew writer tells us that they "*watch for your souls*" (Hebrews 13:17). Paul tells us that these men are to protect the church from false teachers by "*holding fast the faithful word*" and thereby exhort and convict the gainsayers. Furthermore, he tells us that these elders have the responsibility to stop the mouths of those who teach things they ought not, subverting whole hoses by their false doctrines (Titus 1:9-11). there are false teachers. "*But there false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction*" (II Peter 2:1).

Individual Christians also have the responsibility to examine those things that they are being taught and to compare them to the teaching of Scripture (Acts 17:11). members of the church must, therefore, be alert and wide awake. Even if the elders of the congregation of which they are a part are not watching and protecting the congregation from harm, every member has the responsibility to protect himself with the "*sword of the Spirit*" (Ephesians 6:17).

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY:		WEDNESDAY:	
Bible Classes for all ages	10.00 am.	Bible Classes for all ages	7.00 p.m.
Morning Worship	11.00 am.		
Evening Worship	6.00 p.m.		

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FLEXIBLE CHRISTIANITY

Recently, I received a bulletin that had an article under the above title. At the beginning of the article, the writer gives a quote from Daniel Sommer, a gospel preacher at the time of the apostasy that led to the formation of the Christian Church/Disciples of Christ, recognized the the United States government a hundred years ago in the census of 1906. Sommer lived through the period when the false teachings regarding instrumental music and the missionary society were hotly debated. In 1897, he analyzed the pressures of the previous twenty years that led to the schism. He concluded that one of the contributing factors was personality differences, he saw a difference between disciples and disciples. He wrote, *"...I saw there was a difference between disciples and disciples. It became evident that some disciples were of the primitive or apostolic type, while others were of a modern or plastic type. Those constituting the former class I saw had stability, while those constituting the latter class had flexibility. The former disciples held that the world should bend to the church; the latter disciples held that the church should bend to the world"* (Matthew C. Morrison, Like a Lion, Daniel Sommer's Seventy Years of Preaching, p. 19).

The write of the article I received stated, "There are still those who believe that the church should bend to the world." He illustrates this by pointing to the recent debate in the Episcopal Church in the United States regarding the appointing of homosexuals as "bishops" within that denomination. He points out that such appointments are "nothing less than the acceptance of homosexuality as an alternative lifestyle" and points out that the acceptance of homosexuality is nothing more than a compromise with the world, and a "Christianity that bends with the world around it." That such is a compromise with the world is true, however, that the Episcopal Church represents "Christianity," I have a problem with, unless one uses the term "Christianity" in its widest application with respect to the Episcopal Church.

However, when one examines the Lord's Church in 2006 - one hundred years after the recognition by the government of the apostasy that formed the Christian Church/Disciples of Christ, it is clear that the description given by Daniel Summer between disciples (Christians) is still in existence. Sadly, we have "modern or plastic" Christians today that have this "flexibility" who are no longer satisfied with a "Thus saith the Lord." Some desire fellowship with the denominations and, as a result, have rejected some of the teaching of Christ in order to have such a fellowship. However, there is a more dangerous group than that who, although they reject fellowship with the denominations and still hold to many of the truths of the Scripture are willing to be "flexible" when it comes to the matter of fellowshiping unrepentant false teachers in our midst. In some instances this is occurring because they desire to receive support for their projects and programs and, in order to gain sufficient support, they will fellowship those who are not in fellowship with the Lord.

Brethren, we cannot be more "plastic" or more "flexible" than the Lord in His Word gives us liberty to be. We **must** uphold the truth of God's word and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather rebuke them (Ephesians 5:11). Let us be known as disciples (Christians) who are of the "primitive and apostolic type" and not those who would be known as "modern and plastic" as they desire to be flexible and bend to the world or false teachers.

Ken Chumbley

NEWS AND NOTES

Let us continue to keep in our prayers Helen Culpepper, Pam Gossett and her mother, Kathy Treadway's mother, Lanny Niver's father, Tim Arnold's father. Parys Mitchell is still in Palmetto Hospital in Columbia. Visitors are still limited to family at this time. Keep her and her family in your prayers. Steven Wilson was sick and unable to be out Sunday. Ron Wilson was sick Wednesday evening.

LISTEN TO THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST RADIO PROGRAM
1050 AM -- WFAM
Sundays 8.00 a.m. to 8.30 a.m

PREVENTATIVE MEDICINE

The field of medicine has long recognized the fact that it is far easier to prevent a sickness than to cure it. Such is the case when we are talking of spiritual disease as well. Sin, in the beginning is easier to overcome but harder to detect. As it advances however, if unchecked, it is easy to detect but difficult to be cured.

Why do we uphold what Jesus taught on divorce and remarriage (Matthew 19:3-9)? Does God love the divorced? Yes! Does God love the children who suffer in divorce cases? Yes! Does the church have compassion for the divorced? Yes!

To teach on God's plan for the home, the responsibilities of husbands and wives, of parents and children, to uphold the values of family, is not to deny compassion and love to those who suffer from sin's effects upon the home. Teaching on these subjects is preventative medicine so that men and women, boys and girls might avoid the suffering of son.

To teach our children to bring purity to their marriage, to bring fidelity to their marriage, to bring perseverance, love and forgiveness to their marriage, is to hopefully prevent having to deal with feelings of denial, anger, guilt, depression, rejection, etc. To model these things before our children is to prevent recurring cycles of divorce and generations of broken homes.

We all need to do better in giving support to those who are suffering from sin. The church needs to be the place to go to when people are hurting. Let's remember that Jesus is the remedy for sin. We will not be cured until we uphold and live by what Jesus wants us to do. And, it is far less painful to prevent the ravages from sin than to cure them.

Author unknown