

2002 Proclaimer

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, .. to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord!" - Isa. 61:1-2

A teaching and exhortation medium by members of the Carmichael Church of Christ, meeting at 6044 Sutter Ave. Carmichael, CA 95608

Homepage: www.lanset.com/carmichael
(916) 483-9318

ELDERS / EVANGELISTS

Glenn H. Reagan - 721-9464; Ron Stewart - 771-2064; C. L. [Vern] Wilson - 961-6944
<lareagan@lanset.com> <rstewcrr@lanset.com> <vernwil@lanset.com>

DEACONS:

Brent Agee 786-0436; Frank Ayers, 966-4979; Jeffry Pennant, 331-1535; Carl Romine, 773-4402
Bob Sadler, 789-0547; Oliver Sasse, 723-4425; Bill Schultz, 771-0263; Brad Shuck, 990-0533

May 26th, 2002

LET THEM ALONE

Joe Fitch - Coppell, TX

Have you noticed folks who are busy doing good? They are often criticized. "Poor choice!" "Do it this other way." Well, listen to Jesus: "...Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me" (Mk 14:6). Obey Jesus. "Let them alone." They are doing good. At least, they try. "Why do you trouble" them. Don't pick at them! Don't add to their burdens! Don't add misery! They join diligent working hands with the woman Jesus commended and a host of others — like Stephanas' household "devoted....to the ministry of the saints" (1 Cor 16:15) or Dorcas making "tunics and garments" for the widows (Act 9:39) or Gaius who did "faithfully whatever you do for the brethren and for strangers" (3Jno 5) or Phoebe "the servant of the church" (Rom 16:1) plus hosts of quiet and unassuming workers today.

Would it be better if such workers just quit? I know that loafers and critics feel better if no one works — then they are not embarrassed by their own idleness.

"Leave them alone" is not the noble avenue — just the most basic. It would be far better to join them — to help them. Paul called for brethren at Rome to rise to a higher course concerning Phoebe — to "receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatever business she has need of you" (Rom 16:1). Gaius and company, by helping brethren, became "fellow helpers with the truth" (3 Jno 8). Titus assisted Paul and became "my partner and fellow worker

(Cont'd. on page 2)

concerning you" (2 Cor 8:23). Much more than "leave them alone," we could actually jump in and "help them out."

Look around objectively. You may see folks busy doing right — busy in spiritual work. The problem is they may not fulfill our expectation — may not do what we like the way we like it. So, we dub them enemies. The same thing happened in Jesus' day. "Now John answered Him, saying, "Teacher, we saw someone who does not follow us casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow us" (Mk 9:38f). Then or now, their flaw may not be failure to serve God. John did not say, "They did not follow you." He said, "They did not follow us." That is no small difference. While people are loyal to the Lord, we may feel they are not loyal to us. They may obey the Lord, but not honor our traditions — Jews had trouble seeing that difference. People may actually teach truth, but not in words and phrases we like — they sound unsound to us. But what does Jesus say? "Do not forbid him, for no one who works a miracle in My name can soon afterward speak evil of Me." Jesus said: leave them alone! They did not rebel against Him, nor speak ill of Him.

Jesus continued: "For he who is not against us is on our side" (v.40). We may be so paranoid watching for those who are "against" us that we actually shoot people on "our" — the Lord's side. Not all the Lord's followers march with their feet in our tracks. "Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls" (Rom.14:4). As with John's forbidding them, our estimate of His servants may differ sharply from the Lords. Be

careful! To his Lord he is accountable — not necessarily to us.

Some cry, "Leave us alone" as they march straight to hell. Sad! What shall we do? We try to warn; we try to teach. They will not listen. Nothing works. Now — finally, what shall we do? Nothing! For those who obstinately set their course on evil, no avenue of rescue works. You doubt it? Ask Jesus. "Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind" (Mt 15:14). You can not show a blind man — or one who shuts his eyes— the textual proof. You can not explain to a man with closed ears. You can not touch a heart of stone. Even God can not reach such. Their problem is attitude rather than information. "And this is the condemnation,.... men loved darkness rather than light" (Jno 3:19f). An old country proverb said, "God helps those who help themselves." A person with an obstinate attitude must first help himself — before others can help. Some are tightly "joined to their idols" (Hos 4:15f). Then Hosea echoes Jesus, recommending the only possible course: "Leave them alone." Much as we wish otherwise — we have no other option. We cannot force them; God will not.

Some retort, "Just leave me alone" I am sad considering they may get just that —left alone. Hell is defined by several figures — lake of fire, outer darkness, Gehenna. Hell's least figurative description is *left alone*. Rebels are "punished" by being banished — excluded from the "presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (2 Thes.1:7f). No one really wants God to leave them alone.

OUR NEXT PREACHING SERVICE IN THIS BUILDING IS AT 6:00 PM TODAY

THEN TROUBLE CAME

Some folks are ashamed to admit they have problems, yet the Bible says problems are an occasion for rejoicing. *“My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience”* (**James 1:2-3**).

Problems promote prayer, fasting and diligent Bible study. Our stomachs churn, and we cannot eat. We stay up late and wake up early. Like never before, we see how much we need to know the Book. Like never before, we realize how weak and helpless we are. Like never before, we know how much we need God’s help.

Problems can promote brotherly love. During the good times, we have our get-togethers, play trivia and enjoy each other’s company. But when trouble comes, we don’t care how many golf balls are on the moon. We may say we know each other and love one another, but we never really know each other, and we cannot really appreciate each other until it seems our world is caving in. During hardships, we develop an appreciation for faithful brethren that will be with us until we die.

Problems promote unity. Most people think problems divide. In some ways they do. But problems force us to look at what is right and wrong. When we know what is right after study, prayer and fasting, and if we love the truth, we will all rally around what is right. Thus we are united.

Problems make it possible for us to see our true colors. When things are smooth sailing, everybody can be kind and sweet and say they love the Lord. But in the heat of the battle, we see what kind of character we really have, and so do others. When trouble comes, it is impossible to hide what you really are.

It is not a shame to have problems. It is a shame not to be able to profit by them. It is a shame to use them as an excuse to become unfaithful. “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him” (James 1:12).

--- *Tom L. Childers*

=====

Sowing in Tears
by Os Hillman

*Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy. -- **Psalm 126:5***

The most difficult place to keep moving in faith is the place of extreme pain. Extreme pain, especially emotional pain, can become immobilizing to the human spirit if it is allowed to overcome us. The psalmist tells us there is only one remedy for overcoming painful circumstances that will result in joy. We are to sow in the midst of these times. You cannot do this if you live by feelings alone. It is an act of the will. This act requires that we go outside ourselves in pure faith.

I learned this principle during one of the deepest periods of my life. I had lost much that was dear to me. A mature man in the faith admonished me to reach out to others in spite of my own pain. “Invest in someone else,” he said. I did not realize what a place of healing and comfort that would become.

*“He who goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him” (**Psa 126:6**).* Pain can be come a source of joy if we take the first step by planting seed. There is a harvest that will come if we sow in the midst of tears.

A God Who Supplies All Our Needs

Here is a dilemma for your consideration:

You are driving along on a wild stormy night. You pass by a bus stop, and you see three people waiting for the bus:

1. An old lady who is about to die.
2. An old friend who once saved your life.
3. The perfect man (or woman) you have been dreaming about.



Which one would you choose, knowing that there is room for only one passenger in your car?

This is a moral/ethical dilemma that was once actually used as part of a job application.

You could pick up the old lady, because she is going to die, and thus you should save her first; or you could take the old friend because he once saved your life, and this would be the perfect chance to pay him back. However, you may never be able to find your perfect "dream person" again.

Think before you continue reading

The candidate who was hired (out of 200 applicants) had no trouble coming up with his answer, which was, "I would give the car keys to my old friend, and let him take the old lady to the hospital. I would stay behind and wait for the bus with the woman of my dreams."

Why didn't I think of that??? I was feeling pretty good about taking care of the needs of that old lady, and along comes an idea that meets **ALL of their needs!**

It's very much the way I feel before God. I am a person who gets pleasure from trying to meet the needs of people around me. But, so often I fall short. That's why I'm so very thankful to have a God who can not only meet all my needs, but also the needs of everyone else I come in contact with.

"And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Now to our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen." **(Phil 4:19-20)** Have a great day!

Alan Smith, Boone, North Carolina

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

REMEMBER, JUDAS LEFT EARLY TOO!

Use more tact and you will have less to retract.

The trouble with doing something right the first time is that nobody appreciates how difficult it was.