

2006 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

Homepages: webs.lanset.com/carmichael and www.preachersnotes.com

(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@comcast.net>

DEACONS:

Frank Ayers, 966-4979; Bill Kizer, 745-1043; Carl Romine, 773-4402; Rick Rittenhouse, 728-5077;
Bill Schultz, 543-0206; Brad Shuck, 530-677-9474

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THE SIN OF MURMURING

by Earl Fly

The word "murmur" is defined as "low, muttered complaints; grumbling" (Webster). It is condemned by God as being sinful. We are commended to "*do all things without murmuring and disputings*" (**Phil 2:16**). The apostle Paul warned Christians against this sin in his letter to the Corinthians: "*Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured and were destroyed of the destroyer*" (**1 Cor 10:10**). The sinfulness of murmuring is vividly illustrated by God's severity of punishment toward the guilty Jews, as shown in the following account.

Korah, Dathan, Ahiram, fifty princes of the congregation and others rebelled and murmured against God's servants Moses and Aaron (**Num 16:1-11**). The earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up--they, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them, and they perished from among the congregation" (**vss 32-33**). "*And there came out a fire from the Lord, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense*" (**vs 35**). When the Jews murmured that Moses and Aaron were responsible for the deaths, God killed fourteen thousand, seven hundred of them by a plague (**vss 41-49**). This is written for our admonition and should cause all murmurers in the church to repent and reform, lest they suffer a "sorer punishment" (**Heb 10:28-29**).

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A murmurer can do great harm and irreparable damage in a congregation by creating discontent, discouragement and apathy among members, by sowing discord among the brethren (which God hates - **Prov 6:19**), by undermining the work of the preacher, teachers, deacons, and the rule of elders. This many times creates a general attitude of dissatisfaction and loss of interest, enthusiasm and zeal, resulting in decreased attendance, contribution and impairment of all work in general. The murmurer may then be the first to criticize the lack of growth, and may use the preacher or someone else as the scapegoat to bear the blame, not realizing or ignoring the fact that his own sin is responsible.

The murmurer does not truly love God and is not really interested in the welfare and growth of the church, but in his own selfish desires and opinions. He is either woefully ignorant of or willfully disregards God's word regarding his sin, and is a dangerous threat to the cause of Christ. He can and does destroy or greatly lessen the influence and work of those who happen to be the object of his disgruntled attack. It is difficult to deal with such a situation because often times the murmurer does not have the courage or character to honorably discuss his complaints with the proper ones, but whispers them in secret to others. Christians should not lend receptive ears nor endorsement to murmuring, but exhort the guilty one to cease his sin. Remember, if one will murmur to you, he may murmur about you, because many times he is a pharisaical faultfinder, a chronic

complainer with a hypercritical attitude who is usually never satisfied very long with any arrangement.

We earnestly exhort all murmurers everywhere in the name of Christ to repent of this sin, to cease and desist in tearing down the work of God, and to get busy in the kingdom to build it up. Those who truly love God and his church have no desire to be hypercritical faultfinders, wandering about murmuring to all who will listen. If anyone should persist in this sin after proper warnings and efforts to restore, then scriptural discipline should be brought about to protect the flock of God and its work. The work of our Lord is too important to allow murmuring to run and ruin the church.

-- Via Gospel Power, 2/11/96

Your Teacher

Novelist James Michener was once invited to dinner at the White House with President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Michener graciously declined the invitation in a letter that contained the following words:

"I received your invitation three days after I had agreed to speak a few words at a dinner honoring the wonderful high school teacher who taught me how to write. I know you will not miss me at your dinner, but she might at hers. ***In his lifetime, a man lives under fifteen or sixteen presidents, but a really fine teacher comes into his life but rarely.***" *

According to the story, Eisenhower wrote back to say that he understood perfectly. Christa McAuliffe said: ***"I touch the future, I teach."*** -

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All of us have had teachers that have made a difference in our lives. They have helped to prepare us for the rest of our lives. But the greatest teacher that YOU and I could ever have is one who points us to the Greatest Teacher of ALL- **JESUS CHRIST**. For it is the instruction of the Great Teacher that prepares us for ETERNITY!

Jesus taught the most important teachings in life that were centered upon the GREATEST NEED in our lives: a RIGHT RELATIONSHIP with God (cf. **Matt 22:37-38**). He exposed our greatest PROBLEM: SIN (see **John 8:24**). He also revealed the SOLUTION to our problem of SIN. In fact, He IS the Solution! In order to provide forgiveness, Jesus had to DIE on the cross for our sins: *"He Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness – by whose stripes you were healed"* (**1 Peter 2:24**).

In order to be **SAVED** from our sins, we must **FOLLOW** the instructions of the Teacher: believe in Him (**John 8:24; Acts 16:30-31**), repent of our sins (**Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30-31**), confess Him before men (**Matt 10:32; Rom 10:9-10**), and be baptized (immersed) into Christ for the forgiveness of our sins (**Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38**). Then, we must **CONTINUE** to follow the Teacher as a way of life (**1 Pet 2:24; 1 John 2:6**), and His blood will continue to cleanse us from our sins (**1 John 1:7**).

Indeed, *"a really fine teacher comes into his life but rarely."* Thank God that JESUS, the Great Teacher, has come and revealed the way to God (**John 14:6**).

Have YOU obeyed the Teacher?
---**David A. Sargent**,

"Walk in the light, as He is in the light..."

THOSE NEEDING PRAYERS (Please help keep each other aware)

Lucille Erickson

(3529 Walnut, Rm 206A
Carmichael, 95608)

Helen Gray

Margaret Holcomb

(recovering, shoulder surgery)

Chuck House

Cameron Johnson (still in a coma)

Jim Jones (surgery on hand)

Catherine Kay (Escalon)

Jean McCarty

Jeffry Pennant

Kaye Pennant

Marilyn Perry (Fair Oaks cong.)

Irma Rapier

Sven Raven (some better)

LaurieAnn Reagan

Caleb & Jacob Robertson

Taylor Romine

Mike Rude (in Missouri)

Karen Rusk

Rena Schultz

Geneva Shelton

Ken Sterling

(now near Jodie in N.C.)

Ola Thornburg

(stroke rehab)

Eskaton of Fair Oaks

11300 Fair Oaks Blvd,

Room has changed

Fair Oaks, CA 95628)

Nancy Valine

Bill Westphal

Donna Williams (Carol's Sis)

Ellie Williams

Gordon Wilson (improving slowly)

Glenda Wilson

TRAVELING IN THEIR WORK

Rick Rittenhouse

David Lovett

IN THE MILITARY

Jason Anderson

David Lovett

Michael Mendez

Aaron Robertson

Trent Walsh

IF WE WERE THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATES

Hebrews 10:25; 2 Cor. 9:7

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Sometimes when discussing a topic that's important to two different people, the discussion may become heated if each ambitiously pursues his personal political, or religious, or sports position while trying to make his point.
 - 1. Even if two hold the same position, it's often suggested (to make the discussion more interesting) "*Let me play the devil's advocate and suggest some thoughts.*"
 - 2. Then they will state an opposing view, (just as if it were their own), for the purpose of adding another perspective to the conversation.
- B. As those who strive to be united as believers in the Lord, we all agree on many things when we discuss the church relationships.
 - 1. But at times, we also may get caught up in the role of "playing the devil's advocate" and ask some opposing questions just in order to put a challenge into our studies...
 - 2. BUT ONE MORE THOUGHT, suppose you were the devil and you wanted to close down God's church as soon as possible? How would you do it?

I. SATAN ATTACKS THE IMPORTANCE OF WORSHIP WE ATTACH TO ASSEMBLING AT THE GATHERING TOGETHER OF GOD'S FAMILY

- A. NOW, how can Satan effectively go about doing this? Through those playing or just "acting" as his "advocates"!
- B. The people in this world who are serving God have received tremendous spiritual help by attending church services!
- C. While the Lord's godly people may rejoice over such a statistic as this, I can assure you the devil is not pleased and is trying to render us ineffectual!
- D. Sometimes I've heard people assert, "I believe in God, and I love the Lord, but I just don't attend church services."
- E. When talking about being at services some people have a WHOLE LIST of excuses why they're not there! Littany
- F. Of course every day is the Lord's day, but this is a special day of worship and service and mutual edification – and a day to rest and recoup from our work.
- G. The devil has attacked CHURCH ATTENDANCE by attacking God's day.

II. HE ATTACKS THE GIVING OF GOD'S PEOPLE: re. their TIME, MONEY & INFLUENCE

- A. God gives us His blessings all week, and when we come to the House of God we should not come empty handed.
- B. Giving does more than pay the preacher. Giving to God's work helps US!
- C. It takes money to finance a church and it takes the people who love the Lord to finance this spiritual war that the church is involved in today.

III. HE ATTACKS THE TESTIMONY OF GOD'S PEOPLE

- A. The way some of us practice Christianity you'd think we'd been ruined, physically!
 - 1. Our testimony should be that God has blessed us in such a way that our witness would cause men to come running to Christ.
 - 2. Not everyone who ATTENDS and GIVES knows the Lord in a right relationship!
- B. But we'd best attack those who attend consistently and give generously to the Lord!

SUMMARY:

- A. AGAIN, if we were the devil, "What would we do to stop God's church from growing?"
- B. And we have suggested the power of his efforts, and that we would probably do just what the devil does ... such as attacking the congregation's resources of time and money!