

# 2008 Proclaimer

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

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

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## **THE PRINCIPLE OF TRUE LOVE**

*by Alan C. Wade*

Aside from the fact that we all make mistakes from time to time, it is a sad commentary, when a defining moment can show forth a distinction between those who are just members of the church and those who are true believers, that is, Christians. For some members of the church, when problems come into their life that affects their selfishness, out goes the usefulness of godly principles. Christian living for them is living by principles as long as things are going *their way*. It is living by a high standard, but only when it is convenient for them. This is the fair weather "Christian."

Godly principles are like clothing. You can put them on and use them for protection and covering. However, just like those who take their used garments and use them for rags or toss them in trash, in the same way a member of the church will treat his godly principles. He does this for he finds no more profitable use for them. For these individuals, godly principles are simply a means to an end, an end that does not have anything to do with God. Selfishness and self-centeredness becomes the principle of rule.

God is at work and He has a way to reveal the hypocrisy in those who are just playing church. Even for those who are sincere, God will allow their faith to be tested to see if they are faithful to His word. Overconfidence of a member of the church will

be tried, just like Peter when he walked on water and when he testified he would not deny our Lord (**Matt 14:29-31**; **26:34-35, 69-75**).

God certainly wants confidence in the members of His church, but not overconfidence. Principles found in God's word, put on in our lives and maintained through the storms of life, will help get us to where He wants us to be in the way of confidence. With the help of Jesus Christ, we can get there. When Peter made a mistake his only recourse was to repent and pray asking God for forgiveness (**Acts 8:21-22**); then, return to that journey in Christ (**1 John 1:7**).

Every church that divides, sin is involved (**1 Cor 1:10**). If a church divides over instrumental music, members of the church, wherever they are, might not hesitate to talk about it. However, if a church divides over the teaching of love in practice, some brethren don't want to talk about it. Some brethren will say, "Oh, it's because of personality." However, God has given us the solution to all problems concerning "getting along with another's personality." That solution is found in the doctrine of love. This is the real discernable and workable issue.

Many principles are attached to this doctrine. When members of the church begin to throw out the principles of love, they simply throw out love and this is sin in God's eyes. When members of the church express no more patience, no more kindness, no more joy for another's achievements, no more humility, no more forgiveness, no more faithfulness, no more hope, no more endurance, no more tenderness, or no more speaking truth (**1 Cor 13:4-7**), hating souls becomes the standard. Many are on the path to hell because of this behavior. Brethren must always have the kinds of communication that will stimulate love for one another!

When brethren cease to reach that goal of love from a pure heart, a sincere faith, and

a good conscience (**1 Tim 1:5**); and when members of the church toss it away when the preacher "throws it in their faces;" then their songs, prayers, and preaching is nothing short of a noisy gong and clanging cymbal. Without the principle of true love in their lives, the good deeds that they do are worthless before God (**1 Cor 13:1-3**).

We must love God with our whole being. God will measure that love we have for Him by many things. For this lesson, it is by our attitude toward our brethren. I am reminded of what love is, it is keeping God's commands and this is one of them: "If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. "And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also." (**1 John 4:20-21**)

God plainly teaches that all liars are going to be thrown into the lake of fire. (**Rev 21:8**) God is not mocked. (**Gal 6:7-8**)

Brethren, when it comes to the doctrine of love, we better start living it, and not only when things are going *our way*.

*(Alan C. Wade, Redding, CA)*

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## **SPEAKING OUR LANGUAGE**

**By Alan Smith**

"A friend was lecturing in Latin America. He was going to use a translator, but to identify with his audience; he wanted to begin his talk by saying in Spanish, "Good evening, ladies and gentlemen." He arrived at the auditorium a little early and realized he did not know the Spanish words for ladies and gentlemen. Being rather resourceful, he went to the part of the building where the restrooms were, looked at the signs on the two doors, and memorized those two words.

When the audience arrived and he was introduced, he stood up and said in Spanish, 'Good evening, ladies and gentlemen.'

The audience was shocked. He didn't know whether he had offended them or perhaps they hadn't heard him or understood him. So he decided to repeat it. Again in Spanish he said, "Good evening, ladies and gentlemen."

One person in the audience began to snicker. Pretty soon the entire audience was laughing. Finally, someone told him that he had said, 'Good evening, bathrooms and broom closets!' (Author unknown)

There is a world of difference between someone who merely pays a visit and someone who "speaks your language". And it's more than just knowing the proper vocabulary. If you have suffered the loss of a loved one, there are some people who can comfort you, but there are others who truly "speak your language" because they've experienced a loss themselves. If your marriage seems to be falling apart, there are some people who can give you advice, but there are others who truly "speak your language" because they have faced the same difficulties. If you're struggling to make ends meet, there are some people who can lend a hand, but there are others who truly "speak your language" because they have known hard times in their lives.

That's why the incarnation of Christ is so very important. One of the reasons that Jesus took on flesh and blood was so that we would truly understand that God "speaks our language." He has been through what we're going through, he has overcome the obstacles that we are facing, he has been tempted in the same ways that we are tempted. He didn't just come for a visit -- he was one of us, and he understands.

*"For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (Heb 4:15-16)*

-----Alan Smith

## **THOSE NEEDING PRAYERS**

Jason & Marie & Cayna Anderson  
Frank & Tina Ayers

Edith Ayers  
Jack & Dorothy Bailey  
Margie Buchanan  
Bill Cain

***Robert Erickson in Cal Vet Home (Mapa)  
Min Fox***

Helen Gray  
Chris Heffelfinger  
**(Christine's dad)**  
Margaret Holcomb  
Chuck House  
Catherine Kay  
Dale Lovelady  
Jean McCarty

R.B. & June Rankin  
Wendell & Irma Rapier  
Berniece Raven **(also her daughter  
Sharon Collamore is ill in SoCal)**

Rosie Reagan  
LaurieAnn Reagan  
Eli & the Roadman family  
Caleb & Jacob Robertson  
Taylor Romine  
Ray Rude  
Bill & Rena Schultz  
Troy Shadman  
The Brad Shuck Family  
Ola Thornburg  
June Meltzer  
**(Ola's daughter)**  
Nancy Valine  
Shirley Watkins  
**(Luke's mother)**  
Ellie Williams  
Kathy Wilson **(Folsom)**  
Gordon Wilson

## **TRAVELING IN THEIR WORK**

Karen Daly  
Aaron Robertson  
Gordon Wilson

## **IN THE MILITARY**

Jason Anderson  
David Lovett  
Aaron Robertson  
Trent Walsh

## **God's Hedge**

*(author unknown to me -vw)*

**Job 1:9-10** says, "So Satan answered the Lord and said, 'Does Job fear God for

*nothing? Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land.'"*

When my family and I were living in the Minneapolis area several years ago, a group of self-appointed do-gooders decided that the wolves in the Como Zoo in St. Paul needed to be set free so they cut open a hole in the fence where the wolves were penned. The wolves, however, did not come out, so these people decided they would coax them out by placing meat just outside of the hole they had cut in the fence. Still, those Minnesota timber wolves remained where they were, completely contented.

Also some years ago a group of educators decided to remove the chain-link fence that encircled their elementary school's playground. They believed the fence promoted feelings of confinement and restraint. But then a curious thing happened. They noticed that as soon as the fence was removed, the children huddled in the center of the playground to play. Unknown to the "experts," the children had actually gained a sense of security from the presence of the fence, just as the wolves in the Como Zoo had.

It was this same kind of security that Satan recognized in the life of Job. Figuratively speaking, God had placed a hedge or fence around Job and all he possessed in order to protect him from evil. Job was hemmed in on all sides by this hedge, but it was not a matter of constraint; it was a matter of security. He could live confidently, knowing that nothing could reach him without first having to go through God's hedge of protection.

Every believer today can have that same assurance. The Bible provides us with a

first line of defense. The commandments and exhortations that some people view as divine restrictions are really God's protection plans. Their purpose is to prevent us from engaging in behavior that will hurt us. In addition, we even have the omnipotent hands of God are encircling our lives each and every day. No disaster or calamity can touch us that will separate us from our Heavenly Father. Only those things that God knows ultimately will prove to be for our good are allowed to penetrate this divine hedge. So, do not recoil against the restrictions God places in your life. They are hedges for your security and for your protection. Rejoice that God has His arms underneath you (**Deut 33:27**) and His hands behind, before you and over you (**Psa 139:5**). You are totally encompassed by His hedge of protection. Inside God's hedge you are safe! Remember always that God's hedges are built for protection, not imprisonment.

May the Lord bless us all in His service!

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## **Men's Training Class**

Will meet on Sunday mornings at 9:00 AM during the Bible Class hour ~ in the back room of the old classroom building. The classes will be particularly focused on men's service during the worship of the congregation. **All younger male members are urged by the elders to attend this 4-week class.**