

About Your Attendance

By Dee Bowman

Preachers should never have to preach on attendance. It should be obvious that when a Christian does not care to attend all the services, his interest in elsewhere. It is foolish to assert that we have a passage which pronounces anathema on those who don't come on Sunday and Wednesday nights. We don't need one. All we need show is that interest and attendance are connected and that a person who is truly interested will attend.

Now you can try to explain that away all you want and when you are finished it will still say the same thing: a person who is able yet does not attend the services is not interested in what is going on at the services. Bring your excuses, pronounce your justifications, and rationalize all you want. And when you are done, the parable of the sower will still affirm the same thing: prepared soil is the only kind which results in good fruit.



Classes This Week			
Sunday 5:15 Kid's Class at the Building	Sunday PM College Devotional at the Hall's	Monday 7 PM Ladies' Class at The Smith's Home	Thursday 7 PM Joshua Study at Jillian's House

Sick			
Fran Snyder (Mother of Carla Humphrey)	Lori Holloway	Chick Wade	Sandlyn Fultz (Davis Fultz's Sister)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Carrie Chavers (Friend of Sharon Bailey)	Jared Nixon	Philip Locke (Jeremiah Johnson's Uncle)
Ross Folmar	Grandparents of Mary Ann Roberts	Joe Perry (Anna Miller's Relative)	Marsha and Lee (Toni Herd's Cousins)
Ed Mort (Friend of Sharon Bailey)	Quinton Addison (April Jerkins Grandfather)	Erlene Davis (Walker Davis' mother)	Mary Smith (Nathan Smith's Grandmother)
Gerald White (Christopher's and Wesley's Father)	Dave Brown (Friend of the Lanier's)	Bill Rhodes (Toni Herd's Uncle)	Larry Alexander (Friend of Phillip Box)
Marty and Aubrey Meeks (Toni Herd's Nephews)	Frank Johnson (Debbi Coleman's Uncle)	Herbert Missildine (Toni Herd's Uncle)	Jo Faust Williams (Manna Jones' friend)

April Birthdays
1 - Melissa Harrell
2 - Melanie Smith
2 - Missy Toombs
3 - Sharon Bailey
6 - Maci Guthrie
6 - Bethany Coulston
7 - Mike Johnson
7 - Mary Catherine Burns
8 - Hanna Owen
8 - Laura Humphrey
14 - Jesse Roberts
16 - Carson Fowler
18 - Spencer Sullivan
18 - Taylor Godwin
20 - April Jerkins
21 - Timothy Jones
23- Anna Miller
24 - Bob Simpson
25- Elizabeth Mosley
28 - Lynsey Armstrong
29 - Lottie Kate Smith

News and Notes

- We have an upcoming meeting with Mark Broyles on Marriage, April 15-17. Invitations are in the foyer.
- David Tant will continue his series on "The Institutional Controversy" tonight and will speak at the student devotional on "When Evolutionist Tell the Truth."
- Let us remember our expectant mothers in our prayers: Anne Morton and Jana Hall.
- Mike and Debbie Johnson's son, Matthew, is deployed overseas. Also David Golden will be deployed soon. Also Tim Morton is in Afghanistan.
- New Address: Holly and Caleb Law; 427 E. Magnolia Ave, Apt #15; Auburn, 36830
- Are you on our e-mail list for the Auburn Beacon? Give Larry your email address to be added to the list!

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Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

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Splendid Discontent

By James W. Adams



Thoughts to Ponder

Prejudices are the chains forged by ignorance to keep men apart.

If there is one peccadillo that characterizes this generation it is the mania for change. Change for the sake of change is thought to be a mark of liberation from "tradition" and of intellectual sophistication. Ella Wheeler Wilcox, though not necessarily advocating change for the sake of change, paid tribute to the desire for change when she wrote, *"The splendid discontent of God with chaos made the world; and from the discontent of man, the world's best progress springs."* However, she failed to note that *"not all of man's discontent is splendid."*

No Christian should cling to the old simply because it is old. Neither should the new be desired because it is new. *Many things are old because they have been tried, proven, and not found wanting.* Things are not right because they are old, but often are old because they are right.

troublesome changes without amendment and frequently for the worse" (Benjamin Franklin). It can be and often is "from bad to worse." Someone has likened this to a "farmer burning down his barn to get rid of the rats."

Do You Have a Bible Question?
Call (334) 734-2133 or E-mail: LarryRouse@aubeacon.com

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday	
Bible Class	9:30 AM
Worship	10:20 AM
Evening Worship	6:00 PM
Wednesday	
Bible Classes	7:00 PM
Ask about our home Bible Study Groups!	

Larry Rouse
Evangelist and Editor

A more practical and perceptive statement statesman, inventor and author said, *"All human inventions have their inconveniences. We feel those of the present, but see nor fear those of the future, and hence we often make*

While change is the law of growth, it is not always benign. Not all growth is healthy nor progressive. One can blow up a balloon to several times its normal size, but balloons often

(Continued on page 2)

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(Continued from page 1)

burst under pressure to which they are thus subjected. The result is destructive, not constructive.

Our generation has seen more changes than another in human history, but the "discontent" that has produced them has not always been "splendid," hence many of the changes have been malignant rather than benign. This is not only true in the secular realm, but professed churches of Christ have likewise undergone radical changes that have not always been benign and constructive but malignant and destructive.

Advocates of changes, the discontented, in congregations have the obligation to give an adequate reason why changes should be made. Of first consideration would be whether or not the current situation meets the demands of Scripture. If not, change is not only advisable but essential. Second in importance is whether the proposed changes would bring the situation into harmony with Scripture.

The question of Scripture having been settled, the proposed changes should meet the demands of expediency. Are they viable? Are they more effective in accomplishing the objectives of a congregation's work and worship? Are they spiritually motivated, or merely an effort to accommodate the pressures of modern subjectivism, emotionalism, and anarchism in religion? Do they constitute an abdication to the devotees to novelty, or will they actually promote edification and soul-saving influence upon the be-

liever and the unbeliever.

No Christian should cling to the old simply because it is old. Neither should the new be desired because it is new. *Many things are old because they have been tried, proven, and not found wanting.* Things are not right because they are old, but often are old because they are right. On the other hand, things are not wrong because they are new and different.

The old and the new should both meet the demands of *Scripture and expediency*, and the decision to change or not to change made on this basis. If "discontent" issue in benevolent change, it is indeed "splendid" If it merely bows to the spirit of novelty, it is neither benign nor progressive, only "worldly." The philosophy of the poet, Wilcox tempered by that of statesman, Franklin, would seem to be safe course in religious matters as well as secular.

The point of this article is well illustrated by three classes of persons noted in the Scriptures. The *scribes and Pharisees* were opponents of change by reason of their devotion to their purely human traditions. Jesus rebuked their attitude by saying, "No man having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith: The old is better" (**Luke 5:39**). On the other hand, *the philosophers of Athens* "spent their time in nothing else, but to tell, or hear some new thing" (**Acts 17:21**). The right attitude is exemplified by Cornelius, the Gentile Centurion, who said, "Now therefore are we all present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God" (**Acts 10:34**).



Advice to Those Who Defend the Faith

By John Waddey

A tragic war is raging within the kingdom of Christ. An alien spirit has taken hold on the hearts of many brethren. They have left their first love and gone after a new, changed way of serving God.

For some older brethren this is but the latest of many battles to be fought. Like seasoned soldiers, by experience they have learned valuable lessons about the best strategies of battle and mistakes to avoid. As we engage those whose mission is to change our faith, worship and the very nature of the church, there are some important things to remember:

I. We do not want to defend a faulty doctrine or practice. No matter how widely held; no matter how hoary with age, error is error. A misinterpreted verse is wrongly understood and can be wrongly applied. If we have been mistaken on any matter, honor and truth demand that we concede the faulty point and embrace the truth.

II. We must never fight over that which is merely a harmless matter of preference. Some things we have long practiced are not matters of faith revealed in Scripture. They are traditional ways of doing things, optional ways we have chosen to fulfill a divine requirement. For example, we have long assembled on Lord's Day morning. Since the hour of worship is not specified, if a group should chose to worship in the afternoon, we should not question them for so doing.

III. We should never penalize a brother who is exercising his liberty in Christ. Jesus came to proclaim liberty (**Luke 4:18**). Paul reminded the Galatians that "for freedom Christ has set the free" (**Gal. 5:1**). He manfully resisted the Jewish brethren who sought to spy out the liberty of the Gentile brethren (**Gal. 2:4**). In all areas where God

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has not specified the methods or manner of doing his will each disciple and each congregation has the Christ-given liberty to make their own choice about how to implement it.

IV. We must never be found promoting any practice or doctrine that is in any way contrary to God's revealed will. Errorists are quick to spot our mistakes and flaws. Don't give them the opportunity to

neutralize your efforts in defense of the kingdom.

V. May it always be our resolve and commitment to do no harm to the church of Christ. In carnal war it is often the case that those who are on the right side of the conflict do great damage to the very city or people they would deliver. Our goal must be to strengthen and build up the church. The mission of the false teachers is to wreck and destroy, ours is to fortify against their assaults and to rebuild what they have damaged.

VI. May we never intentionally wound or discourage any brother or sister who is faithfully striving to please the Master. They too are servants of Christ and answer only to him (**Rom. 14:4**). When we wound those innocent souls, we sin against Christ (**I Cor. 8:12**).

To avoid these mistakes we must search the Scripture daily (**Acts 17:11**). We must study to show ourselves approved unto God (**II Tim. 2:15**). We must weigh every thought, word and deed to be sure they reflect the spirit of Christ (**Phil 2:5**), love for our brethren (**I Pet. 2:17**) and love for the Master and his church. We must do these things lest we find ourselves weighed in the balances and found wanting when we stand before the Judge of all (**Dan. 5:27**).

