

They Can't Live It

By Bill Hall

Many who have never entered the Lord's service explain their hesitancy with the words, "I'm afraid I just can't live it." We usually try to quell their fears, but the truth is they can't live it, for their concept of what it is they are trying to live is a completely false concept.

Consider the man whose wife became a Christian. He was sure she couldn't "live it." He watched her carefully, and sure enough, one day under considerable stress, she lost control, yelled at the children, and said some things a Christian ought not to say. "If she were a Christian," the man thought, "she wouldn't talk like that; I knew she couldn't live it." On another day the preacher came around, and in reaction to something someone said, he turned a bit red, although he otherwise controlled his temper. But the man saw that tinge of redness, and immediately concluded, "That preacher can't live it either." He eventually observed faults in other Christians, and finally concluded that none of them could "live it," that the whole church was a bunch of hypocrites. Of course he never even tried, for he knew his weaknesses all too well. He knew he couldn't "live it."

Poor man! He thinks that the Christian life is a life of perfection; that all "Christians" fall into one of two categories: either they are perfect or they are hypocrites. He knows he can't live up to perfection, to the standards he has set for others, and is thinking with an almost self-righteous attitude, "One thing about it, Preacher, I'm not going to be a hypocrite."

But there is pardon for the sincere Christian's imperfections. "If anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1). And that Christian who sincerely strives to live for the Lord, and daily seeks His forgiveness, though he should have a thousand weaknesses, is no hypocrite. There are hypocrites in the church, and we offer no defense in their behalf. But weaknesses do not necessarily imply hypocrisy.

Let the faithful Christian, then, not be intimidated by the constant charge of "hypocrites in the church." And let the sinner forget about living "it," if by "it" he means perfection, and let him come to Christ, through whom he can go to heaven.



The Auburn Beacon



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

Volume 3, Issue 12 January 22, 2012

Why Doesn't the Church Contribute to Businesses that Help People?

By Buddy Payne

The church we read about in the Bible belongs to God and was planned by Him before the creation of the world (Eph.3:8-11). It was to make known the wisdom of God (3:10). It was built by Jesus Christ, our Lord, (Matt.16:18), who is its foundation (1 Cor.3:11), and was purchased by His precious blood (Acts 20:28).

When God raised Christ from the dead, He gave Him all authority in heaven and on earth (Matt.28:18) and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is described as His body (Eph.1:20-23).

Jesus Christ commissioned His apostles to take His message to the whole world (Matt.28:18-20). He gave them the Holy Spirit to guide them into all truth (John 16:13) and reveal to them the things He wanted us to know (Eph.3:1-6). His apostles and prophets spoke and wrote what God revealed to them for our benefit (2 Pet.3:1-2), includ-

There is as much authority for the church to make a contribution to a grocery store because it provides food for hungry people as there is for it to make a contribution to a hospital because it provides medical care for sick people. Local congregations provided food for needy Christians, but they did not enter into the "food business."

ing how we should conduct ourselves in His church (1 Tim.3:15). Inspired letters were written to local congregations (Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, Colossae, Thessalonica, etc.) and to individuals (Timothy, Titus, and Philemon) instructing us in what He would have us to do individually and congregationally.

All of these points show the importance and value God places on His church and the emphasis He places on carrying out His will and purposes in His church.

(Continued on page 2)



Thoughts to Ponder

The cross of Christ is in itself an offense to the world; let us take heed that we add no offense of our own.

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



SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday

Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

Ask about our home Bible Study Groups!

Larry Rouse
Evangelist and Editor

Check Us Out On the Internet: www.aubeacon.com

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Sunday PM After Services College Devo and Singing at the Anderson's - Buddy Payne will be speaking on Evolution! | Saturday 6-8 PM 1st—6th Graders at the Robert's | Saturday 6:30-8:30 PM 7th-12th Graders at the Rouse's |
|--|---|---|

Sick

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| Richard Wood (Melanie Smith's Uncle) | Eli Williams (Friend of Sarah Norman) | Frank Hand (Laura Humphrey's dad) | Sandlyn Fultz (Davis Fultz's Sister) |
| Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters) | Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier) | Bill Rhodes (Toni Herd's Uncle) | Philip Locke (Jeremiah Johnson's Uncle) |
| Josie Keith (Friend of Heath Fowler) | Haylie Watson (Tyler Claxton's Relative) | Easton Alexander (Phillip Box's cousin's baby) | Jerry Sandlin (Megan Lee's Grandfather) |
| Gaylord Huffman (Jennifer Daniel's Grandfather) | Quinton Addison (April Jerkins Grandfather) | Erlene Davis (Walker Davis' mother) | Mary Smith (Nathan Smith's Grandmother) |
| Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father) | Dave Brown (Friend of the Lanier's) | Dale Herd (William Herd's brother) | Larry Alexander (Friend of Phillip Box) |
| Marty and Aubrey Meeks, Russell Dickerson (Toni Herd's Nephews) | Betty Bradford | Ann Robinson (Sharon Bailey's Mom) | Debra Lowe (Toni Herd's Friend) |

January Birthdays

- 1 - David Ogle
- 2 - Chuck Hunt
- 4 - Phillip Box
- 5 - Rusty Weldon
- 6 - Erica Seymore
- 6 - Daniel Rogers
- 7 - Hunter Collins
- 11 - Shepherd Hall
- 11 - Spencer Hall
- 14- Roy Liu
- 18 - Scott Vaughn
- 21 - Jacob Jerkins
- 23 - Conner Godwin
- 24 - Melanie Daves
- 25 - Caleb Daniels
- 28 - Clay Jones
- 30 - Ashley Tucker
- 31 - Jennifer Daniels

News and Notes

- Our meeting with Buddy Payne starts today! Invitations are in the foyer.
- All members are urged to obtain and fill out the Eldership forms.
- We mourn the death of our sister Audrey Fuller. Her funeral was on Thursday.
- Scott Perkins father , Joe Perkins, came home from the hospital.
- Let's continue to remember our expectant mother, Candy Long, in our prayers.
- CD's will be available after each service. Freely distribute these!
- Lets work hard for this meeting!

(Continued from page 1)

Thus, whatever we do in His church we should do it in the name of the Lord Jesus, or by His authority (**Col.3:17**).

From reading the New Testament we learn that local congregations carried out the following functions related to our subject at hand:

1. They sounded forth the word of the Lord – **1 Thess.1:8**
2. They sent out and supported preachers – **Acts 13:1-3; Phil.4:15-18; 2 Cor.11:8**
3. They equipped Christians for the work of serving and speaking the truth in love – **Eph. 4:11-16**
4. They cared for needy Christians both in their local congregations and in other places – **Acts 6:1-7; Rom.15:25-28; 1 Cor.16:1-4; 2 Cor.8:1-15**. God made a difference between individual and church responsibility in this matter – **1 Tim.5:3-16**.

God's design of His church was sufficient for local congregations to carry out His will completely in these matters. Nowhere do we find authority from our Head for the church to build and/or maintain separate organizations/businesses to carry out the work that the Lord gave the church to do—whether it be a missionary society to carry out the work of sending out preachers, a college to carry out the work of equipping Christians for the work of serving and speaking the truth in love, or a benevolent organization (hospital, orphans' home, etc.) to carry out the work of caring for needy Christians.

If we are to “speak as the oracles of God ...

that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ,” (**1 Pet.4:11**) we will preach and practice what God authorized in our local congregations. Local congregations will collect money by contributions of the Christians there and use that money to support preachers, to equip Christians for godly service and to help needy Christians. They will use that money in the local congregation for the purposes God ordained, or send it directly to the preachers or to the congregations where there are needy Christians. That is the pattern seen in the passages cited above and thus we know that is pleasing to God Who designed His church.

Individual Christians or groups of Christians are certainly at liberty to establish businesses, profit or non-profit, which do good things (grocery stores, hospitals, colleges, benevolent homes). There were masters (employers/owners of servants) who were Christians whose activities were regulated by God's principles in Scripture (**Eph.6:9; Col.4:1; 1 Tim.6:1-2**).

However, **you will search in vain for the authority from God for the church of our Lord Jesus Christ to establish or maintain a business with its contributions**. There is as much authority for the church to make a contribution to a grocery store because it provides food for hungry people as there is for it to make a contribution to a hospital because it provides medical care for sick people. Local congregations provided food for needy Christians, but they did not enter into the “food business.”

God established the purposes for His church before the creation of the world. He revealed them to us in His Word. Let us reverence Him by honoring and fulfilling those purposes in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord!



There is a Higher Standard

By Warren E. Berkley

There is a Higher Standard than parents, spouse or children. We should honor our parents, love them and care for them with compassion and warmth. God tells us plainly about the attitudes and duties He expects us to nourish and maintain in the home (**Psa. 127**). I owe a great debt of gratitude to my wife and love her with all my heart. I love my children and my grandchildren are a special treasure. But nobody, however dear, must ever be exalted to the place of God. We must steadfastly refuse to lower our standards based on emotional attachment to anyone. There is a Higher Standard.

There is a Higher Standard than friends. Friendship is a splendid blessing of life on earth (**Prov. 17:17**). To know people you like to spend time with and converse with. To enjoy and share various pleasures of life with someone who is special to you is relaxing and memorable. But we cannot allow the influence of friendship to overcome our good judgment and certainly not our loyalty to the Lord. It may be, one of the great tests of faith is to remain true to God when friends are weak and faithless. Friends are good but there is a Higher Standard.

There is a Higher Standard than scholars. It is intellectually and morally lazy to refuse to take the time for your own personal study and thought. It is also immature to simply embrace the word of a man because of his reputation and intellectual greatness as commonly measured by men. God never said a word suggesting to us that we hold scholars in such esteem that we turn our minds off or close our Bibles. Even if every man who is called “scholarly” agrees on a given proposition, that doesn't necessarily say anything about what we should believe and do. There is a Higher Standard.

There is a Higher Standard than editors, writers. Whatever our opinion or experience may be about written publications (tracts, periodicals, etc.), they

are here to stay and we must put them in their place. Today, there are the electronic avenues (e-mail, mass e-mail, internet, world wide web, fax), which are also unlikely to disappear. It will be valuable for us to remind ourselves that the writings of men carry no authority. What men write may reflect their conclusions and convictions, or passions and prejudices, but the fact that a human author puts something into print (paper or electronic), does not mean it is in keeping with the Scriptures, therefore worthy of our belief and action. I have personally benefited from the writings of many brethren for over thirty years. I am thankful to good men who have taken the time to write and have helped me in my study. For over a decade I have written on a regular basis and now write a weekly electronic message, a monthly column and co-edit an electronic periodical. So I'm not an outsider tossing out impulsive criticism. I've had to give this some thought, and I'm wholeheartedly persuaded that there is a Higher Standard than editors and writers.

There is a Higher Standard than preachers. There is a great need for good men, devoted to Christ and able to preach the Word. From my youth there have been many preachers who have helped me understand my duty. Good men have supplied me with both example and motivation to challenge me. While there is a place for preachers, they must be kept in their place. Early we must learn “not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other,” (**1 Cor. 4:6**).

There is a Higher Standard than majority belief and culture. We live in a time when polls and surveys are taken daily, then reported on the evening news. In our form of government there is great emphasis on what the majority of people want. Let us guard against the temptation of letting polls of majority belief or cultures determine what we teach and practice. “We ought to obey God rather than men,” (**Acts 5:29**).

