

Sound Speech or Sound Silence?

The book of Titus is a divine treatise on the subject of "sound doctrine." Sound doctrine is to be employed in exhorting and convincing the gainsayers (**Titus 1:9**). The word "sound" means literally, "in good health" or "wholesome." In reference to teaching it means free from any admixture of error. The design of "sound doctrine" is that the taught be "sound in faith" (**Tit. 1:13 and 2:1,2**). The fruit of "sound doctrine" is living "soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (**Tit. 2:12**). The vocabulary of "sound doctrine" is "sound speech that cannot be condemned" (**Tit. 2:8**). To employ "sound speech" is to speak "as the oracles of God" (**1 Pet. 4:11**). Doctrines that are sound can be expressed in language which is scripturally correct. It is when men have doctrines to uphold which are unsound that they must invent unsound terms with which to discuss these doctrines. Every religious movement has been characterized by its own peculiar vocabulary. A return to the faith and practice of the early church was, and is, impossible without a return to the language of the Scriptures in discussing religious topics.

By Connie W. Adams

But the writer would like to point out that the word of God requires sound speech, not silence. Whatever is included in the term "sound doctrine" is to be spoken, not silently contained within. Within the church of our Lord there are a number of practices in some quarters which are contrary to "sound doctrine"; practices which relate to the organization and divine mission assigned the church. There are some preachers who, in private conversation, talk pretty sound, but do not have the courage to speak publicly what they profess in private to believe. Such are greatly in error, for they suppose they shall be approved because of their sound silence. Brethren, if you have any convictions concerning "sound doctrine" then speak up, exercising the vocabulary of sound doctrine -- sound speech! A "sound man" ought to feel no hesitation in declaring himself openly on anything which concerns the whole counsel of God."



Brad Marshall (Allie Hosey's Cousin)	Owen Mauldin (Seth and Summer Mauldin's Son)	Frank Hand (Laura Humphrey's dad)	Louise Pack (Anna and Christopher's grandmother)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father)	Kate Miller (Daughter of Brandon and Erin Miller)
Betty Mcareavey (Mary Ann Roberts' mom)	Audrey Barnett (Joanetta's sister-in-law)	Patsy Rhodes (Relative of Toni Herd)	Jerry Foropoulos (Anna Jean's Uncle)
Tom Davis (Walker Davis' Uncle)	Quinton Addison (April Jerkins Grandfather)	Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother)	Yolanda Stewart (Michael Bassie's Sister)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	David Holcomb (Ben's granddad and Joanetta's uncle)	Rebecca Davis (Chuck Hahn's Niece)	Camden, grandson of Steve Pruitt (friend of Greg Lanier)
John M. Rhodes and Bonnie Rhodes Kirkley (Toni Herd's family)	Joe Perkins (Scott Perkins' Dad)	Aubrey Meeks (Toni Herd's Nephew)	Rebecca Davis (Chuck Hahn's niece)

June Birthdays

- 3-Philip Stephens
- 7-Spencer Borden
- 8-Mac Searcy
- 8-Joanetta Lauderdale
- 9-Kay White
- 12-Orie Cecil
- 14-Jeremiah Johnson
- 15-Connor Watkins
- 17-Brooks Pender
- 17-Sarah Norman
- 18-James Long
- 22-Paul Tam
- 24-Justin Bice
- 25-Corey Hunt
- 28-Craig Davis
- 28-Clint Davis
- 29-Lisa Lanier

News and Notes

- ☒ - Lets keep in our prayers our expectant mother, Nicole Pender!
- ☒ - Elle Vaughn, baby daughter of Scott and Genna, continues to develop well!
- ☒ - Our VBS will be this week!
- ☒ - Audrey Burnett, Joanetta's sister-in-law will have surgery on Monday to remove cancer. The prognosis is encouraging.
- ☒ - Please remember Sherry Weldon, Rusty's mother, as she will have a heart cath on Tuesday.
- ☒ - Please pray for Heath Donahue and Jessica Shaver as they are in the Philippines with Bob Buchanan and others for 3 weeks.
- ☒ - David Holcomb, Ben's grandfather and Joanetta's uncle, is home now and in hospice care. Please remember this family in your prayers.
- ☒ - Please continue to pray for Toni Herd's relative, Patsy Rhodes, who is now on life support.
- ☒ - Please remember the Jeremiah Johnson family as they grieve the loss of his grandfather, Austin Locke, who died last Monday.
- ☒ - Owen Mauldin is expected to return home on Monday into hospice care. Please pray for this family under these difficult circumstances.
- ☒ - Sarah Holliday had successful ACL surgery on her knee last Thursday.

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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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A Plea for Forbearance and a Willingness to Study

By A. Hugh Clark



Thoughts to Ponder

I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love

The church of our Lord has met and solved many serious problems since it was established in the city of Jerusalem on that memorable Pentecost so long ago. The New Testament itself is replete with the record of these struggles within and persecutions from without which occurred during the first century. Moreover, it is a matter of revelation that such would be the case with the church to the end of time.

No one therefore, conversant with the sacred writings, can be surprised at the difficulties and problems that have confronted the church through the centuries this side of the apostolic era, including the span covered by our own lives, though he may, at times, be greatly dismayed.

This writer, as many of you who read these lines will know, has been actively engaged for more than forty years in the preaching of the gospel of Christ. He has for thirty and six years without a break in tenure continuously engaged in regular work with local churches of Christ, while at the same time conducting six or eight gospel meetings each year well scattered over the entire nation. This need be recounted here only because it is felt that surely since what, in the very nature of the case, must be the greater part of the active years of his life has been spent in this sacred cause, right has been earned to be heard in an earnest plea on behalf of that cause.

Be not deceived, my brethren, since the days of the restoration and the great defection resulting in the birth of what is

now called The First Christian Church, with its extra biblical organizations and institutions, its unscriptural form of worship and its human practices, comprising as it does the whole system of redemption and undistinguishingly blending with denominationalism, the church of our Lord has not faced a time so fraught with real peril to its unity and progress as the present.

I recognize that there are many who will deny this statement, who are not cognizant of the dangers we face; but make no mistake, what I am saying is the truth! The church may be "On the march" but unless something is done to resolve the difficulties within our own ranks we are marching toward disgrace and disaster.

The great apostle Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus when the unity of the church there, as throughout the world, was seriously imperiled by a misunderstanding of the divine will on the part of many regarding the proper relationship of Jews and Gentiles, saying, "I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, FORBEARING ONE ANOTHER IN LOVE; GIVING DILIGENCE TO KEEP THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE." **Ephesians 4:1-3.**

That a similar condition of estrangement and unrest obtains throughout the brotherhood today, as I have already stated, no informed person would sincerely deny.

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday

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

Wednesday

Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

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And, contrary to the opinion of some, the number on either side of the issues involved is not inconsequential. Nor do they belong to any particular age group or measure of experience; the old, the young, the mature and the immature, are found on both sides.

Such a condition as this could have but one implication to a thoughtful mind. That is, that these issues about which the people are divided in mind at this time have not yet been studied sufficiently by all of us that we might understand just what the teaching of the Lord is.

This is not to say that there are not some who have studied the questions before us both earnestly and extensively, and whose position therefore is, with them, a real conviction; they are definitely sure, in their own minds, that they are right. But, let us remember, that no one knows everything about anything; that no one is infallible in his reasoning; and that any one of us could err in his application of the principles of divine truth to the myriad and complex problems common to the field of Christian service. It is possible therefore, that the most positive and fully convinced among us on either side of these issues could have overlooked some statement of revelation having bearing on these matters which, if it were brought to light and properly applied, in further study and brotherly discussion, would throw such light on the questions involved as would readily and easily resolve them; thus bringing about a general understanding among us all, and achieving that peace which we are commanded of God to endeavor to maintain.

Surely it is not too much to ask of brethren everywhere that they do with regard to these troublesome matters just what we continually plead with the denominational world to do regarding their religious differences with us, and which are much less complex than these; that is, in love of the truth to bear with one another in kindness, while we continue honestly to study our differences in the light of revelation, believing confidently in the power of truth to dissipate error, and ultimately to save all but those who wilfully rebel against it.

This is not a plea for compromise on the part of anybody, Truth can never be compromised on vital issues regardless of consequences, apparent or real, immediate or remote. But it is a sincere and soulful plea for that measure of love and forbearance on the part of us all which will suspend for the time, and because of the better understanding of truth to which our genial studies will bring us, we hope will suspend forever, that ultimate and final estrangement in the family of God which would separate brother from brother, brand us all with further and greater stigma in the eyes of the

world, and cover those responsible with the everlasting displeasure of the Father.

Further, let us remember that the particular practices out of which these differences have arisen did not grow up overnight, but had their small and apparently inconsequential beginnings among churches of Christ at least a half century ago. They will not therefore, be resolved overnight, wished away, nor dispatched by the interdiction of any man or set of men; Christ is the head of the church, and he alone has Lordship over the faith of the individual and of the church. The only prerogative any man, or group of men, may exercise without poaching upon the divine preserves of Christ as the head of the church, essentially inheres in that for which I am pleading, i.e. the disposition and the time for brethren in general to study and investigate, and thus to determine what the will of Christ is regarding the practices in question among us.

Further, we should all realize that if there is to be any change in the practices of brethren and the churches regarding these matters, since those changes must depend upon teaching and deliberation, a measuring of the practices by the divine injunctions, these changes will be gradual and all will have need for patience and forbearance. And if, on the other hand such study and deliberation shall show the practices in question to be authorized and in harmony with the will of Christ, then truth will have triumphed and peace and harmony will have been found again. Moreover, this is the only way in which it can be found.

Any man, or group of men, in any church, or among all the churches, undertaking to throttle this investigation and seeking after truth, and thus to force certain convictions on either an individual, a congregation, or on the church in general, in the very nature of the case is arbitrary in attitude, and is therefore, out of order. Truth has nothing to fear, and if "Crushed to earth, will rise again." Truth is invincible; error cannot contain it; it must be given its freedom or it will break through to find it.

So, until truth has been more generally ascertained and established in the field of our present difficulties it is far too soon for ultimatums and interdictions on the part of anybody. Let us instead, with kindness and brotherly regard for one another, renew our studies together, avoiding even the very mention of any eventuation other than the finding of the peace of God in Christ, lest by even the mention the thought of ultimate estrangement be fostered in the minds of any. - **Gospel Guardian, May 3, 1956**



A Richly Blessed Family

By Bill Hall

But the hospitable Christian will also use his home for conducting Bible classes, entertaining visiting preachers and other workers for the Lord, getting acquainted with newcomers in the church, comforting the bereaved and troubled, and for every good work.

"Pity the Smith family. Poor things, they have to keep the preacher every time the church plans a meeting. And Christians are always stopping in at their place. And they are about the only people in the church that ever invite people in after services. I just wouldn't put up with it myself. . . ."

Spare your pity! The Smiths are a richly blessed family. Oh, occasionally they entertain some ungrateful scoundrel, but the blessings of hospitality far outweigh the problems.

The Bible speaks of some wonderfully blessed people along these lines. For instance, we do not pity Mary and Martha for "having" to have Jesus in their home; we pity those who, not wanting Jesus, were deprived of this blessing. We do not pity Mary the mother of John Mark, in whose home "*many were gathered together praying*," we pity those homes where Christians never assemble for Bible study and prayer. We do not pity Philemon who was to prepare Paul a lodging; we would love to have Paul as a guest in our home. Christians need to learn the joy and blessings which come to those who are hospitable.

"We are hospitable," someone says; "we often have friends from church in our home for get-togethers and parties." That's fine! We encourage this! But Bible hospitality goes beyond having friends in for an evening which is at least partially for our own selfish enjoyment. "I was a stranger, and ye took me in," Jesus will say in the judgment (**Matt. 25:35**). Gaius was commended for helping "brethren" and "strangers" who were traveling for the Lord's

name's sake, and was told by John, "whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well" (**3 John 5-7**). Further, the Bible teaches that we become partakers in evil deeds of false teachers when we receive them into our houses (**2 John 9-11**). But does this not infer that we become partakers in the good deeds of faithful teachers when we show

them hospitality?

A Christian will want to make friends with other Christians, and consequently will plan enjoyable evenings with close friends in his home. But the hospitable Christian will also use his home for conducting Bible classes, entertaining visiting preachers and other workers for the Lord, getting acquainted with newcomers in the church, comforting the bereaved and troubled, and for every good work.

Our homes are blessings from the Lord. We must not use them selfishly, but rather to His glory. The result will be an occasional scratch on a chair, or a stain on the carpet, or a chipped glass — really a small price to pay, though, for the warmth that comes to the home from new friends, good influences, rich Bible discussions, participation in the Lord's work, and the satisfaction of knowing that one is pleasing God and preparing himself for eternity. No, it's not the Smiths whom we pity; it's those who do not know the joy of hospitality.

