

Information and Reminders—

Pray for: Janice White, The Ledgerwoods, Samuel Southall, and others with ongoing health battles or other trials, our brethren who are travelling, and new Christians whom Satan will certainly attack (Matt. 13:20-23).

The men meet on the first Sunday of the month to discuss our work and duties. There is a sign-up sheet at the back for items needing their attention.

Simple opportunities to teach the lost and assist each other.

- Can you post Scriptures on our signboard during Nov or Dec? Sign up!
- Future gospel meetings: Brett Hogland (Spring 2014), Ron Halbrook (Fall 2014), Donnie Rader (Spring 2015), Jimmy Stevens (Fall 2015).

We assemble each Sunday at 10AM, 10:45AM, 5PM & Wednesday at 7PM

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The Exhorter

Acts 11:23 *Exhorted them all... cleave unto the Lord*

Church of Christ--Quail Valley

September 29, 2013

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LET NO ONE JUDGE YOU

Heath Rogers

Paul told the Colossians, "So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ" (Col. 2:16-17). False teachers had come into their midst and had judged them as being less spiritual than themselves because they were not abiding by their false interpretations of the Scriptures and by their man-made rules (v. 22). These judgments were pronounced in an effort to make the Colossians feel like they were lacking in their faith and service. This was done as a means of intimidating them into accepting their errors. Paul told them not to allow anyone to judge them by things which were not of Christ.

There is, however, another side of this "let no one judge you" matter that must be considered. We are not to allow anyone to judge us with regard to the "shadow," but that does not mean we cannot be judge according to the things that make up the "substance of Christ." We are told to judge with righteous judgment (John 7:24), which means that we can be subject to such judgments ourselves. If I claim to be a follower of Christ, then everyone has the right to examine my life in light of my Master's teaching and "judge" whether or not I am living up to my claim to be a Christian. If something is amiss in my life, my brethren actually have an obligation to bring this to my attention and encourage me to make the needed changes (Gal. 6:1). If their judgment is correct and I need to make changes in my life, then I should be grateful for their judgment.

Christians are not to allow anyone to judge them by any standard other than the New Testament. However, no Christian is above the righteous judgment of those who are seeing his light shine. Let us learn to appreciate the honest concerns of those who want to help us get to Heaven.

THE FIRST FAMILY TROUBLE (1)

Billy W. Moore

Almost from the beginning of family life there have been family troubles. Trouble is defined as: "To agitate; disturb. To agitate mentally or spiritually; worry. To afflict physically; ail. To put to inconvenience." (Webster)

The Occasion for the First Family Trouble. Unto Adam and Eve were born two sons, Cain and Abel. Cain grew up to become a tiller of the ground, while Abel became a keeper of the sheep. Each of them "brought ... an offering to the Lord." (Gen. 4:3,4) They would not have known to bring an offering if they had not been taught to do so. Perhaps Adam and Eve had made many offerings, thus the boys would have observed such as they grew up. Your children will never know how to give unto God an offering of praise, of talent, or of money if they are not taught. In our materialistic society the first thing most people think about when they make more money is getting more "stuff and things" for self. (Cf. Luke 12:16-19)

Cain and Abel brought an offering because God commanded it. While the command is not recorded in the Genesis account, we know such was made. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." (Heb. 11:4) Since "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10: 17), it is necessarily inferred that God told Abel what to offer. Knowing that God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34), we also necessarily infer that God told Cain what to offer. God had no respect to Cain and to his offering because he did not offer what God commanded.

Being a tiller of the ground, Cain brought an offering of the ground. Thus, he substituted what he thought would be alright for that which God commanded. Cain did not do well (Genesis 4:7). There are still some who contend that it does not matter what you do in religion, just so you are honest and sincere. There is nothing in the text which infers that Cain was not honest and sincere in his offering. He just did not offer what God commanded. He did make an offering, which is more than some people do. In fact some church members do not make much of an offering. They do not give bountifully, but sparingly. After all we have to look out for ourselves, they say (Read 2 Cor. 9:6-7). Remember, "God is not mocked." (Gal. 6:7). Cain did worship God, which is better than some do. Some members of the church choose to tend to their business, gather their harvest, or pursue pleasure rather than worship God. Cain was not all bad, but out stripped many of today's citizens.

Jude wrote of some who "have gone in the way of Cain." (Jude 11) The way of Cain is the way of the transgressor. (Cf. 2 John 9-11) It is the way of vain worship. (Cf. Matt. 15:9) It is the way of rebelling against God. He evidently did not like what God commanded, or found it inconvenient to obey, so he rebelled against God and His way, and substituted his own way. Thus, the way of Cain is the way of substitution. God says, "Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain." The way of Cain is the way of woe.

The Trouble Itself. Cain's reaction upon learning that God did not respect his offering, i.e. that his worship was not acceptable: "Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell." (Gen. 4:5) His anger was against his brother, though Abel had done nothing wrong. How often when people learn that their service to God is not in keeping with God's way, they will become angry with those who are following the right way, rather than correcting their own lives. Thus, they make the matter worse. Cain's countenance fell. The word countenance comes from a Latin word "continere," meaning to hold together, repress, contain. The idea being that the expression of his face showed disapproval and anger. God said, "If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." Cain did not control his anger, but let it get the upper hand. "And it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him." (Gen. 4:8)

Why would he kill his brother? "Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous." 3 John 3:12) This is envy! Envy "is the feeling of displeasure produced by witnessing or hearing of the advantage or prosperity of others." (W. E. Vine) God has charged Christians, "Be ye angry and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath." (Eph. 4:26)

Cain's works were evil because they were not what God commanded; Abel's were righteous because they were what God commanded. Yes, it does make a difference what we do in serving God. What about the works of some men today who are acclaiming service to God? Consider: burning incense, making of images, instrumental music in worship, church sponsored recreation, etc. These are done by honest sincere people who are claiming to be serving God. (Truth Mag; May 25, 1972)

Ps. 70 Make haste, O God, to deliver me! Make haste to help me, O LORD! Let them be ashamed and confounded Who seek my life; Let them be turned back and confused Who desire my hurt. Let them be turned back because of their shame, Who say, "Aha, aha!" Let all those who seek You rejoice and be glad in You; And let those who love Your salvation say continually, "Let God be magnified!" But I am poor and needy; Make haste to me, O God! You are my help and my deliverer; O LORD, do not delay.