

# THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

December 14

2008

## Change And Its Destructive Path

We are hearing a great many of our brethren saying openly and loudly today that we need to make changes in the Lord's church and in the gospel message which we are preaching. Those who preach are being strongly encouraged to become change agents in the church, and they are being provided with an abundance of denominational propaganda to influence them to move in this direction. And it is very sadly recognized that a great many brethren who fill the pews are gladly buying into this error – hook, line, and sinker! And there are also many others who recognize the dangers involved, but they sit “fearfully” with their mouths closed for fear of being ridiculed or ostracized. This environment of willful ignorance, indifference, and lackadaisical involvement is rampant in so many places that these change agents are being most successful in moving Satan into the front pew of these churches.

It has been more than sixty years since I obeyed the gospel, and I have lived through a great many digressions which involved changes from the “old paths”! But I am seeing an attitude of rejection and repulsion toward the Truth today, the like of which has all of us stunned and amazed at what brethren are willing to accept and do in the churches of our present generation! The “old paths” preachers would hold up five fingers and scripturally identify the steps involved in obeying the gospel, or they would use the same five fingers to point out the acts of worship which God had authorized in His Word. But to the modern generation, these steps of obedience and these items of worship are “antiquated”, “out of step with our age”, and are nothing more than “old fashioned” traditions! Yes my friends, they

are truly traditions, but they are inspired, God given traditions which were given to us through the revelation of the Holy Spirit! *“Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you that ye remember me in all things, and hold fast the traditions, even as I delivered them to you.”* (I Corinthians 11:1-2). *“So then, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye were taught, whether by word, or by epistle of ours.”* *“Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which they received of us.”* (II Thessalonians 2:15, 3:6).

We now have a generation who are enamored with the liberal and apostate philosophies of “unity in diversity” and they do not hesitate to reject and even ridicule the concept of “authority” in the scriptures. They readily fellowship those who teach and practice soul destructive error, and to them, the only ones who are guilty of sinful error are those who would show them the error of their way or would call upon them for a return to the respect of God's authority as revealed in the scriptures! In place of seeking to find the Truth in God's Word, they are urging us to abandon the old ways for the new ways which they have learned and adopted from our denominational neighbors! They appear totally oblivious to any call to return to Biblical authority. *“And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”* (Matthew 28:18-20). *“Jesus therefore said to those Jews that had believed him, If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”* (John 8:31-32). *“Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works.”* (II John 9-11). These “pied-pipers” of change are marching to their own selfish drummer, and they are not only going to lose their souls in the process, but they will be responsible for so many brethren following them down this destructive path. Are you and I really aware of what

is happening and are we diligently preparing ourselves for this battle to uphold and respect the Truth? We had better give it a great deal of sober thought!

✍️ Dennis L. Reed



## "THEY" VERSUS "WE"

Historian Ken Burns makes an interesting observation about how people referred to our nation before and after the Civil War. Prior to the war, the normal expression was *"The United States are ..."* We know that the Civil War was fought largely over the issue of States' rights, and the current usage (*The United States is ...*) reflects the outcome of the war and the resultant emphasis on the union of States.

Words mean things, and we see something similar in the way certain people refer to the church. Specifically, we hear some who refer to the local congregation as *"they"* or *"them,"* and others who speak of it as *"we"* or *"us."*

Those who speak of the church as *"they"* or *"them"* are showing a certain detachment from the other members. These folks typically like to criticize and complain about what *"they"* are doing. And while such complainers are quick to find fault with *"them,"* they are very seldom found helping to resolve the problems. There is much discussion of what *"they"* did or didn't do, but there is precious little activity on the part of the one doing the criticizing. We think these members would do well to read what Jesus taught about *"beams"* and *"motes"* (Matt. 7:3-5). Do you refer to the church as *"they/them,"* or do you speak of *"we/us"*?

✍️ Greg Gwin



## "CHILDREN WILL BE CHILDREN"

Sometimes when something is said about the misbehavior of a child (or children) someone (often the parent of the child under consideration) will say, *"After all, children will be children."*

However, there are some children who behave themselves, are good mannered, and are obedient to their parents. If the child who misbehaves, is ill-mannered, and disobedient is *"just being a child"* what is the other child being? If we are going to look at the behavior of a child to determine what should be the expected behavior of all children which child are we going to observe, the well behaved child or the one who misbehaves?

The truth is that we must go to the word of God to learn what the right behavior for a child should be (Eph. 6:1-4). As parents, we have the responsibility of teaching and training our children to be what God would have them to be. When we see children misbehave and disobey and show disrespect let us not try to pass it off with *"children will be children."* If they be our children, let us recognize our responsibility toward them and provide whatever discipline is necessary to correct them.

Some seem to think that it is "cute" for small children to "talk back" to their parents or to learn some "dirty" word or to be a little "terror." However, these "cute" things don't appear so cute when performed by young men and women, and judges and law enforcement officers do not find their deeds very funny. Parents, wake up, before it is too late!

✍️ James Hahn

<b>Belleville church of Christ</b>	
5635 S County Rd 200E - Belleville, IN - (317) 539-5258	
<a href="http://www.bellevillechurch.net">www.bellevillechurch.net</a>	
<b>Schedule of Services</b>	<b>Elders</b>
Sun. Bible Study..... 9:30 a.m.	Charles Carpenter.... (317) 839-3873
Sun. Morning Worship... 10:30 a.m.	James Hahn. .... (317) 745-1507
Sun. Evening Worship. . . . . 5:00 p.m.	
Wed. Bible Study..... 7:00 p.m.	
<b>Evangelist</b>	<b>Deacons</b>
James Hahn. .... (317) 745-1507	Leon Nevins . . . . . (317) 272-2966
	Don Perry..... (765) 676-5825
	Alvin Stanley. .... (317) 831-3514