

# THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

May 31

2009

**Editor's note:** More and more we see churches being caught up in the "social gospel" movement. Often this results from an abuse of something not wrong within and of itself. It is good for Christians to get together and enjoy a meal together and one another's company. More of this needs to be done, however some have come to look upon such social gatherings and activities as something to be planned and overseen by the elders. This misconception may come about with very subtle and innocent beginnings. The following article by Greg Gwin illustrates this point very well. Please note, Greg now lives in Tennessee where "Pot Luck" is the term used for such get togethers. His comments would apply to "Pitch Ins" as well. (JH)



## *A Question About 'Pot Luck' Dinners*

*"I have seen Pot Lucks done in various ways. I grew up as a Lutheran and they'd have quarterly Pot Luck's in the building and had a kitchen. A couple churches where I have worshiped would periodically gather together for a Pot Luck at members homes. No church funds were spent, and it was only announced that there was an invitation posted on the bulletin board. I have seen some groups that have regularly scheduled Pot Lucks with men designated on the official schedule to coordinate it. What level of oversight or involvement in such events by elders do you see as legitimate? How can such things be done properly or improperly? What level of fellowship could you have with these groups? For instance, if no church funds were spent, but the Pot Luck was organized under the*

*authority of the eldership; would you have a problem with that? Could you worship there?"*

Thanks for your question. Here's how I would approach this:

- We know that the church is not authorized to conduct common meals and social gatherings (1 Cor. 11:20-34).
- Church involvement is not limited to the expenditure of money from the treasury. If the church officially plans and coordinates such common meals, they are involved, even if no treasury money is spent.
- If the elders exercise oversight of such activities, then they are making it a work of the church.
- Announcements of such Pot Lucks may or may not constitute church involvement. This is a judgment area. But, where would we draw the line? Can we also announce baby showers, wedding receptions, retirement parties, family outings, birthday parties, etc.? All of these are in the realm of individual activities (no church involvement), and we wouldn't want such to be announced in the assemblies. For the same reason, it seems best to not announce Pot Lucks in the assemblies. It is a judgment call, but a bad decision has the potential to set a precedent that can then lead to other problems.
- Fellowship decisions ('can I worship with a church that does these things?') will have to be decided based upon the church's commitment to the Truth. If they are spending funds or exercising actual oversight of non-authorized activities, I couldn't be in fellowship with that. If they make a judgment call about the announcements or what's allowed on the bulletin board, I can submit to the decision even though I view it to be a poor judgment.

I hope this helps.

✍ Greg Gwin



## **I Shall Not Be Moved**

*"For David saith concerning him, I beheld the Lord always before my face; For he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; Moreover my flesh also shall dwell in hope:" (Acts 2: 25,26) (Psalms 16:8, 9).*

We are surrounded in this world by individuals and devices which

are totally intent on bringing pain, misery, heartache and discouragement to those who choose to fear God and keep his commandments. The ultimate desire and purpose of these constant efforts is to shatter our faith and move us to a desertion of the Lord's cause and purpose in our lives. These destructive tactics originate with the god of this world, but he cleverly uses men and women to fulfill his mission and purpose. Some of them come from the world of unbelief where living righteously is neither appreciated nor valued, and where their jealousy and resentment pours out in venom toward those who would have Christ as a priority in their lives. And, sadly to say, some come from our own brethren, those who profess to be God's children, who have lives filled with miserable experiences and ugliness, and they feel compelled to bring their destructive intrusions into the lives of those who are happy, faithful, and motivated in the service of our Lord.

You see, righteousness has a host of enemies who will use every weapon which Satan can provide to destroy and hinder anyone who would choose righteousness as a way of life. The Word of God clearly advises us that these forces of Satan will continually confront those who choose to live Godly, and the scripture also reminds us that no advantage should be gained over us by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his devices. (2 Corinthians 2:10). And so the whole determination and response of the faithful child of God is summed up in the straightforward expression, "I shall not be moved"! This simply says that we absolutely refuse to be intimidated or shaken in our faith, or hindered in our work to say and do everything which the Lord has appointed for us. Their threats will never deter us, their slander and falsehoods will not discourage us, their use of various kinds of abuse will definitely not prevent us in any way from doing the Lord's will. Our faith shall grow stronger and more intent every day. *"A good man shall obtain favor of Jehovah; But a man of wicked devices will he condemn. A man shall not be established by wickedness; But the root of the righteous shall not be moved."* (Proverbs 12:2,3). Only the Lord is our strength and hope! *"My soul, wait thou in silence for God only; For my expectation is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation: He is my high tower; I shall not be moved. With God is my salvation and my glory: The rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God."* (Psalms 62:5-7). Like the apostle Paul, we can always readily say, *"I can do all things in him*

*that strengtheneth me."* (Philippians 4:13).

These afflictions, disappointments, and persecutions will surely pour out upon us and we had better take stock every day of the quantity and quality of our faith. *"that no man be moved by these afflictions; for yourselves know that hereunto we are appointed. For verily, when we were with you, we told you beforehand that we are to suffer affliction; even as it came to pass, and ye know."* (1 Thessalonians 3:3,4).

Our trust in the Lord must grow with every passing day and our faith will continue to develop through our study and use of the Word of God in our daily lives. *"if so be that ye continue in the faith, grounded and stedfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel which ye heard, which was preached in all creation under heaven; whereof I Paul was made a minister."* (Colossians 1:23). With one voice and one purpose, you and I must boldly declare, **"I Shall Not Be Moved."** *✠ Dennis L. Reed*



## SUMMER BIBLE STUDIES

Only one more week (June 8-12) until our Summer Series of Bible Studies. I hope every member has made plans to attend and has invited friends, family and neighbors to attend also.

***Belleville church of Christ***  
 5635 S County Rd 200E - Belleville, IN - (317) 539-5258  
[www.bellevillechurch.net](http://www.bellevillechurch.net)

<p><b>Schedule of Services</b></p> <p>Sun. Bible Study... 9:30 a.m.          Sun. Morning Worship... 10:30 a.m.          Sun. Evening Worship... 5:00 p.m.          Wed. Bible Study... 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Elders</b></p> <p>Charles Carpenter... (317) 839-3873          James Hahn... (317) 745-1507</p>
<p><b>Evangelist</b></p> <p>James Hahn... (317) 745-1507</p>	<p><b>Deacons</b></p> <p>Leon Nevins... (317) 272-2966          Don Perry... (765) 676-5825          Alvin Stanley... (317) 831-3514</p>