

Announcements & Prayer Requests

- Let's keep the following in our prayers:
 - Kim Self: Stomach ulcers and weekly Chemo treatments
 - Angie Self: Arthritis and Parkinson's
 - Joann Larkin: Advanced dementia
 - Barb Agee's son (James)
 - Rick Parks' parents: Roy has prostate cancer; Helen has dementia
 - Jimmy Woodall's sister: Cancer
 - Dorothy Macon, Sandra Perez's grandmother: Dementia
 - Frank Wineinger, Sandra Perez's uncle: Stage 4 cancer

THE GOSPEL PLAN OF SALVATION

- Hear Gospel – Rom. 10:17; Acts 8:30-31
- Believe – Heb. 11:6; Mk. 16:16
- Repent of & Turn from Sins – Acts 2:38; 17:30
- Confess our Faith – Rom. 10:10; Mt. 10:32
- Baptism – Acts 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21
- Live Faithfully – Rev. 2:10

Let us draw near with a **true heart in full assurance of faith [Believe]**, having our **hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience [Repent]** and our **bodies washed with pure water [Baptism]**. Let us **hold fast the confession [Confess]** of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to **stir up love and good works**, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but **exhorting one another**, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching. – *Heb. 10:22-25*



CHURCH OF CHRIST

Invitation

'Therefore, go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.' – Mt. 22:9

Address

5080 Highway 70 East
Rockwood, TN 37854

Assembly Times

Sunday Bible Study – 10:00 AM
Sunday Worship – 11:00 AM

Please text/email any announcements, questions, or concerns to Bill Fix, (865) 934-9239 or fix.bill@gmail.com

www.hwy70church.com

January 24, 2021

We extend a warm welcome to all our visitors and members. If you have any questions or need any assistance, please let one of us know.

Adult Bible Class – Legal Principles and the Bible:
Introduction

Sermon Topic – Compromises in Religion

Soft Pulpits and Dusty Bibles

By Dickey Howard (GUARDIAN OF TRUTH, XLI, Dec. 4, 1997)

During the 1950s, the Lord's church divided over institutionalism, and there was a clear line drawn between truth and error. Many of God's people stood for the truth, and continue not to support institutionalism, but one battle does not win the war. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8). The devil must be very pleased so many are living in the past, and think the war has been won. Yes, the lines were clearly drawn in the past, but today those lines have become fuzzy and gray, because of soft preaching in some pulpits and dusty Bibles in the home.

The church today is in trouble because it is uninformed. How many know anything about the issues that are dividing the church today? How many even know there is a division taking place in the church? Soft preaching has left the church uninformed and has tickled folks' ears. When error is clearly taught, it is called false teaching by those who will stand for the truth, and is easy to recognize. Soft preaching is not error, but it does not teach the whole counsel of God, and is not as easy for many folks to see. It is dangerous because it allows the church to ease into apostasy. It doesn't point out sin in the congregation, nor expose error or the names of those teaching it, as did Paul in 1 Corinthians 5:2. Soft preaching is for those with itching ears (2 Tim. 4:3).

Many will say we are not in trouble. Let us look at this honestly. Are we not in trouble when there are those, in the Lord's church, who will condemn a gospel preacher because he exposes error and calls the names of those who teach it? Some may say he doesn't have the right personality, or his sermons are a little too long. No one would dare say he taught any error; in fact, everyone would say he taught the truth right down the line.

There are those who would say such a gospel preacher would cause dissension in the congregation where they preach, and also the surrounding congregations. God's word has always caused division, because the word clearly separates truth from error. The truth turned the world upside down in Acts 17:6. "Am I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?" (Gal. 4:16).

Soft preachers are not the only ones to blame for the softness in the church today. Hebrews 13:17 tells elders they will give an account of how they watched for souls. God will not overlook elders who do not have the backbone to stand for the truth, and to see to the feeding of the flock that

is among them (Acts 28:28). Be vigilant, which means to be alert or watchful (1 Pet. 5:8). Reactive preaching is like closing the gate after the mule is out. Elders and preachers must be watchful and listen to what is being taught and supported. God's people must be warned of the dangers that face the church.

There are those who want to hear hard or plain gospel preaching like Paul and the other apostles did. It was preaching that exposed error and called the names of those who did it. It was preaching that encouraged the brethren to love God and their brothers and sisters in Christ and to have unity according to the word. It was not unity in diversity by fellowship of any and everything for the sake of peace.

We must remember, no one can go to heaven on the group plan. Each of us will stand before God in judgment and give an account of himself. Mt. 12:37 says, "For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." Let us not let friendship or kinship cause us to say or do things that will cause us to lose our soul in eternity. I long for the day when folks will come to the elders and preachers and say, "Give us the truth and nothing but the truth." God told the Laodiceans that he would spew them from his mouth because they were lukewarm, and we had better check our temperature before it is too late.

Fixating on What's Important: *Plain Meaning*

By Bill Fix

Whatever happened to plain talk? When did our society, and especially the religious world, decide that a straightforward sentence could have multiple meanings and interpretations?

I believe the Bible was written so that mankind can easily understand it, regardless of one's education, background, biases, etc. When Peter wrote that God doesn't want "any to perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9), what is the plain meaning? That God wants all men to turn from their sins and repent. That if they do not, they will perish. That without repentance and obedience, man will perish. How much more plainly could a fisherman write it?

A soul who seeks the truth will not study the Bible looking to justify himself (like the lawyer before Jesus in Lk. 10:29); instead, honest individuals will look into the word to see what God says on a matter, believe the plain meaning, and strive to apply it to their lives.