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CHRISTIAN ARRAY

RESTORING THE RESTORATION
IN OUR GENERATION

AN INDEPENDENT PUBLICATION IN SUPPORT OF STRICT CONSTRUCTIONIST BIBLICAL TEACHINGS

NUMBER 15

APRIL & MAY, 1991

WITHDRAWING

CONCLUSION: Withdrawing is the refusal of one member to associate with another member for scriptural reasons. There are specific reasons in the New Testament requiring that a member withdraw from another member. There are also circumstances in which a public withdrawal from a member is required. Members to be withdrawn from are generally those guilty of publicly known unrepentant sins which tend to bring reproach on the church or to apostasize the church.

SCRIPTURAL REFERENCES: The following is a listing of all verses on this subject which we have found in the New Testament.

1. Romans 16:17 "keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teachings which you learned, and turn away* from them."
2. I Cor. 5:9 "not to associate with immoral people". (vs. 10 indicates to not withdraw from those in the world)
3. I Cor. 5:11 "not to associate with any so-called brother if he should be an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler - not even to eat with such a one."
4. II Thes. 3:6: "keep aloof from every brother who leads an unruly life and not according to the traditions which you received from us."
5. II Thes. 3:14 "And if anyone does not obey our instructions in this letter, take special note of that man and do not associate with him, so that he may be put to shame."
6. I Tim. 5:20 "Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest also may be fearful of sinning."
7. II John 10 "If any one comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting; for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds."

WHO IS TO BE WITHDRAWN FROM?: We all sin (Rom. 3:23), so just being a sinner doesn't qualify you for this special form of chastisement. The two general classes of members who are to be withdrawn from are:

1. Unrepentant and ongoing publicly known immorality or dishonesty, and
2. Members who will not follow the teachings of the Bible.

REASONS FOR WITHDRAWING:

1. Protect the purity of the church (I Cor. 5:6-8).
2. To restore the individual. II Cor. 2:7 indicates that the withdrawing of I Cor.

5:1-13 worked and the individual was restored.

3. To put the individual to shame. (II Thes. 3:14)
4. To encourage others to not sin. (I Tim. 5:20)

* **HOW TO WITHDRAW:** The verses listed above have the specific characteristics of withdrawal underlined for the reader's convenience.

WITHDRAWAL BY THE CHURCH (INDIVIDUAL CONGREGATION): Only in the verse I Tim. 5:20 is any reference made to a public withdrawal. It is for those who continue in sin after being rebuked. Logically, as the elders are in charge of the full congregation, the decision to make a public withdrawal would be the responsibility of the elders of that congregation.

WITHDRAWAL BY INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS: The bulk of the verses listed are directly applicable to individual members. For this reason, the individual member holds definite responsibilities for conduct even when the elders have not reached the decision for a public withdrawal.

It would follow that when an individual knows of a situation which requires personal withdrawal, the elders should be notified of the situation.

RECIPROCAL ACCEPTANCE OF WITHDRAWAL BY OTHER CONGREGATIONS: As a person is only a member of one congregation, it is not possible for any other congregation to withdraw from the person. If the withdrawn member is unrepentant and attempts to place membership at another congregation, the second congregation should logically refuse the member or withdraw from him also (after confirmation of the situation).

The fact that the a second congregation cannot withdraw from a member of a first congregation does not in any way affect the individual responsibilities of the individual members of both congregations. Any member of any congregation who is aware of the life-style of a member who should be withdrawn from, must withdraw from him or be guilty of the teachings of II John 10.

YOU CAN SIN ALSO: If a member of the church is living in an unrepentant life-style which would be subject to withdrawal and you do not withdraw, you are sinning. You have a specific instruction not to associate (I Cor. 5:11); if you associate, you are in open defiance of the scriptures.

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WITHDRAWAL - SPECIFIC EXAMPLE - UNSCRIPTURAL REMARRIAGE

Matt. 5:32 "But I (Jesus) say to you that every one who divorces his wife, except for the cause of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery."

Matt. 19:9 "And I (Jesus) say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another commits adultery". NASV

I Cor. 5:11 "...not to associate with any so-called brother if he should be an immoral person...not even to eat with such a one."

ASSUME IDEAL CASE: Husband begins an adulterous affair with a lady friend, divorces his wife, and marries the friend. Husband and new wife attend the church. There is no indication or accusation that first wife committed any immoral conduct.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. Husband and new wife are living in adultery. They live in open defiance to scriptural teachings.
2. I Cor. 5:11 specifically instructs that they are not to be associated with - not even to eat a meal with such a one.
3. I Cor. 5:11 is addressed to saints (vs. 2) not elders. Individual responsibility is not dependent upon a decision by an eldership.
4. If you choose to associate with them, you choose to live in unrepentant open defiance to the scriptures also.
5. If you choose to associate with them, you choose to set an example of unrepentant open defiance to the scriptures for your children and the next generation.

TYPICAL RESPONSES TO THIS SITUATION:

Whereas the preceeding was commonly understood in the church in times past, there are an increasing number of sisters and brothers in the church who do not teach those conclusions.

Responses to this situation have been:

1. **DISTURBING THE COVENANT:** Adultery is not the sex act, it the "disturbing of the covenant". When the remarriage occurs, the first marriage covenant is disturbed. After the remarriage, one must repent of the premeditated disturbing of the covenant and then he/she can freely continue in the benefits of the second marriage. (Note: By this odd logic the innocent party who remarries would also be guilty of adultery for disturbing the conenant and be required to confess faults.)
2. **LACK OF SUPPORTING RULES:** If God really meant for adultery to stop in unqualified remarriages, He would have given rules for how to do it, what to do with the children, how to divide the property. (Places your personal judgment in a superior position to God's word. Assumes He didn't mean what He said.)

3. **LACK OF EXAMPLES:** If God really meant for adultery to stop in unqualified remarriages, He would have given specific examples of withdrawals in the Bible. (Places your personal judgment of the situation in a superior position to God's word. I Cor. 5:11 gives instructions to withdraw from several types of people without specific Biblical examples of such withdrawals.)
4. **LOVING GOD:** Several have told me that they could not worship a God who expected such difficult decisions. (See Gen. 7:21-23, Exo. 32:28, and Joshua 6:21 and see if we don't have a God who means business.)

WITHDRAWAL - ABUSES

Withdrawal is a major responsibility, especially for elderships. The decisions by elderships influence many individuals and set precedents for future generations. I have seen 2 cases in which elderships seemed to abuse the power of withdrawal (a personal judgment). I do not question the sincerity of the individual elderships, just relate the cases to show limits.

1. **COLLINSVILLE CHURCH:** A public accusation of adultery was made against a woman who had withdrawn herself from membership of the congregation. The elders felt a person cannot remove themselves from a congregation, the only way out is death or moving to a new eldership. Almost a million dollars later, they learned that they did not have permanent lording control over the woman. It seems reasonable and sufficient that the congregation announce that the woman was no longer associated with the congregation.
2. **NON-ACCEPTABLE CONFESSIONS:** A brother was guilty of repetitive illegal business activities. On Wednesday night he went forward and repented of wrong doings. On the next Sunday morning the eldership read a letter withdrawing from him. No explanation was given for not accepting his confession of faults. Even if you were sure that he would go and sin again, it seems that the 70 times 7 concept would require acceptance of a public confession.

REBUTTALS

In climate of religion today, there are probably those who will disagree with points in this article. We would be happy to print rebuttals to this article under the following conditions:

1. The rebuttal needs to be limited to 750 words.
2. Your hermeneutic needs to be stated in the article or separately.
3. Acts 2:38 and the general topic of baptism will be held up to your hermeneutic.

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INSTRUMENTS IN BUILDINGS

Clearly, scripture and history tell us that instrumental music was not a part of the early church. Anyone desiring to follow the New Testament pattern will not allow instrumental music in the church.

However, "church" is a collection of saints, not a building. What of instrumental music in the church building on other occasions, i.e. socials or weddings?

If someone asks to use instrumental music in the building, and if you say a weak member might stumble if instrumental music is used in the church building, and if you stop there; then:

- a. You personally know that there are weak members who hold erroneous understandings of the scriptures.
- b. You reinforce their error by simply refusing to allow instrumental music in the church building.
- c. You thereby participate in their weakness by erroneous teachings.

Doesn't it make sense to instruct the pulpit minister to teach the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in this matter?

Whether or not to allow instrumental music in the church building on non-worship occasions is a discretionary matter. It is good to allow liberties where they can be allowed. It is good to show restraint for the common good. If restraint is chosen, it should not be elevated to the rank of dogma.

IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION!

Flight. If you had never seen a bird, would you say to yourself, I think I will launch myself into the air I can't see and fly around? The possibility would probably never occur to you. We lock up anyone foolish enough to believe this unless they are "scientist".

It took men 6000 years to see birds and learn enough to fly. Evolutionist would have us to believe that some dumb (1.) accidentally grew wings with which to fly and (2.) decided to fly. This is an impossible task to assign to accidental evolution.

OPEN LETTER TO "REV." DOUGLAS HARPER "REV." TOM TEWELL

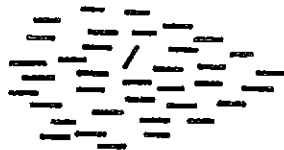
In the most recent issue, we had an "Open Letter" to the above gentlemen regarding the most recent departures of the Presbyterian Church from the scriptures.

As you might suspect, I received no reply. I will include any reply which might come in the future.

WHAT DO YOU TEACH?

Jehovah's Witnesses teach that the kingdom was not established in the first century. Colossians 1:13 says that the first century Christians were already in the kingdom. What do you teach?

THE FLOCK



A individual sheep alone has considerable variety in how to scripturally implement religion.

When a sheep joins a flock, he gives up many rights of individual discretion to the leadership.



The leadership of the flock assumes the rights and the responsibilities the individual gives up.

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ALL THINGS GOOD

".. God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, ..."
Romans 8:28 (NASV)

Most people take that to mean that each thing individually works for the good of each Christian. They don't know how, but the Bible says that.

The Bible doesn't say that, that is an interpretation of what the Bible says.

Cancer of a good Christian woman will easily show that this must not be a correct interpretation. How can the cancer of a good Christian woman be beneficial to her?

Assume that cancer is exemplary of all problems and difficulties. Now imagine that the world did not have any cancer (problems or difficulties). It would be a real tendency for you to feel infallible right up to your painless death. Everyone could then easily believe that they went to the "happy hunting ground", irrespective of lifestyle. Everyone could be their own personal deity.

Benefits of pain and suffering are:

1. You are reminded that you are not an infallible being.
2. You are reminded that you are not independent of need for God.
3. You cannot feel joy if you do not know pain.

Secondly, if there is to be pain and suffering in the world, is it good for Christians to not have it? Again, look at the reverse side of the question. What would happen if the good Christian women never had cancer, but others did. You would have everyone becoming "good Christian women" to avoid cancer.

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IT IS NOT THE CRITIC WHO COUNTS

"It is not the critic who counts: not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, and comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat."

Theodore Roosevelt, Paris, 1910.

"You got to stand for something, or you'll fall for anything." Aaron Tippen from the c&w song "You Got to Stand for Something"

AREA WIDE EVENTS:

SECOND ANNUAL CHRISTIAN COLLEGE DAY
Presentations of Christian education by
Christian colleges
11-24-91 @ 2:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Memorial, 900 Echo Lane, 464-0271

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