



The *Pulpit Exchange*

It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe (1 Corinthians 1:21). So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading (Nehemiah 8:8). Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend (Proverbs 27:17).

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Scriptural Positions on Association, Fellowship and Counsel

Somehow, as I face this subject, I tremble. I feel it is a subject that is very critical in our situation today. The Bible talks of those whose habitation of God causes them to “tremble at his word” (Isaiah 66:5). As we think of the association, fellowship, and counsel, we think of social relationships and the impact and the influence of social relationships to our churches. We could

think of this somewhat in relation to our own church settings. We are thinking more in relationship to our association with others and fellowship, and as to how counsel has a part in our relationships one to another.

When we think of Scriptural positions, we think of boundaries that God has set. Also, we think of our relationship with those we associate with and that we fel-

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lowship and those from whom we are receiving counsel. In this thought we would like to clarify the thought that we are “in the world” (John 17:11; Philippians 2:15; 1 Peter 5:9) but “not of the world” (John 15:19; John 17:14; John 17:16). Thinking of that, we all know of the need to associate. Jesus associated with publicans and sinners.

We all know the Scriptural requirements to evangelize. There is the need to be near to the

“down and out” and the need to be able to help those around us for being in the world but not of the world.

The Bible also talks about not keeping “company with fornicators” (1 Corinthians 5:9), “or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters” (verse 10). This has the thought, in my own words, “if we would not associate with them, we would need to go out of the world.” However, it says, “not to keep company.” As

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I would understand this subject, it has to do with our affinities, our agreements, our covenants with those whom we associate with. As we think of this and the impact of influence on each other, we need to be able to draw lines in our association and our fellowship where God draws them to the spiritual safety and welfare of our congregations where holiness is maintained and our churches are building His Church and the dwelling place of God.

We all know what brings confusion to building the church. It is when there are brethren and sisters who are attracted to the world. As they are attracted to the world, the world has more impact on the church. Besides this there is the fact that they are not building the church and they are bringing division to the body. That is why this subject is so vital and important. We think of the Church as the light of the world where truth is revealed, where the truth of God is brought forth and men's lives are exposed to their awful condition before God.

Then, we think of the salt of the earth where the spiritual life, the life of a spiritual people brings conviction on people's life. We have the picture in Psalm 48 which shows the

impact of the Church on an ungodly world. Psalm 48:3-7, talking of the Church here says, "God is known in her palaces for a refuge. (4) For, lo, the kings were assembled, they passed by together. (5) They saw it, and so they marvelled; they were troubled, and hasted away. (6) Fear took hold upon them there, and pain, as of a woman in travail. (7) Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind."

As I think of these verses, I think of the Church being illuminated in the minds of people. Where they see Her greatness, they see Her God and they marvel. However, as they continue looking, they begin to tremble. Notice here that it says that "they were troubled." "Fear took hold upon them," and it says, "Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind." I am not sure what you get out of this but I see people who are travelling in ships. They feel secure and fairly safe but as they see the Church, the vessel becomes weak or it becomes leaky. Their vessel breaks up. They see their judgment and they begin to tremble. Therefore, thinking of this and thinking of the Church and her great calling today in helping people to see their leaky vessels and to be able to see where the beauty of God is seen, calls for

Scriptural lines and fellowship boundaries to help us to see the truth that there is no affinity or nothing that would mar the glorious holiness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, in our association we are thinking more of not making covenants or having an affinity in our associations and social relationships that mar the beautiful picture.

When we think of the opposite ends, I think of the North and South pole and the magnetic poles as we think of them drawing to each end. We think of the powerful pull each way. There is no place for them to meet. Likewise it is with the church and our relationship with the world. The world is at one end and the Church is at the other and there is no meeting ground. There needs to be a separation. Therefore, this doctrine in relationship to our fellowship has to do with the doctrine of separation.

When we are spotted with the world we immediately hinder our effectiveness to draw people to our God or to draw people out of the world. How do we help people out of the world when there is an affinity that does not condemn the world? In thinking of this in relation to Scriptural positions, I realize I may not be able, or have time to make this as practical as

we should in a subject like this because I feel I need to spend my time on some of the Scriptural positions. Then, we will need to make some of our own applications.

1) *Some examples of wrong associations.* 1) Thinking of this I thought of Solomon. He was at the zenith of what we think of Israel's relationship with God. As a young king, a humble king who looked to the Lord for direction, we see his kingdom growing. We see the terrible impact it had on the world. The queen of Sheba came and she said, "the half was not told me" (1 Kings 10:7). We see this continuing and he began to make an affinity with "outlandish women" (Nehemiah 13:26) from other countries. He became so influenced by them that before his death the Lord said that He would divide that kingdom. He would take it from him. We see the terrible impact of influence for good or for evil.

2) Another example would be king Jehoshaphat. We many times marvel at what he did for revival. He did so much in sending men out house to house and simply teaching the Word telling them to teach justice and all this. In the beginning of his reign it says, he "strengthened himself against Israel" (2 Chronicles

17:1). The influences of Israel were something he did not want.

However, in another chapter, we notice “Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab” (2 Chronicles 18:1). We see here that in his association he had become strengthened. He had riches. He had been blessed by God. He had done a work of revival of magnitude. However, here he made an affinity. Notice verse 3. Ahab asked him to come and help with his problem he had with another king. Notice Jehoshaphat’s answer in verse 3. “Wilt thou go with me to Ramothgilead? And he answered him, I am as thou art, and my people as thy people; and we will be with thee in the war.”

We all know Ahab’s wicked reign. We know about the fact that he married Jezebel the daughter of the king of the Zidonians, and the terrible wicked life that Ahab lived. However, there was this affinity, “my people as thy people.” As the account goes on, as we go on through this, we know that in Jehoshaphat’s death his son Jehoram began to reign, and he had married the daughter of queen Jezebel. He was a wicked young man. Jehoshaphat had tried to follow the order that the first born would be the king of

Judah, and so he was made king. The first thing he did was destroy his brethren. Therefore, all of the rest of Jehoshaphat’s sons were destroyed. Anyone who could have an influence or could have an effect that might be a test to his kingship.

Within eight years he died with his bowels falling out [see 2 Chronicles 21:15]. Then, his son Ahaziah reigned one year. The Scripture says how his kingdom was wicked because Athaliah . . . “his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly” (2 Chronicles 22:3). Within a year he lost his reign. Queen Athaliah had access to the throne in Judah. It was an affinity in which when she saw her son was killed it says “she arose and destroyed all the seed royal” (2 Chronicles 22:10). What I see in this is that there was a wrong affinity, even though Jehoshaphat had done a very good work. The Scripture mentions the prophet coming to him and saying, “Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD” (2 Chronicles 19:2). However, within ten years after Jehoshaphat’s death his family was gone, all but one little son, because of the influence of a wicked woman and wrong associations and ties.

3) I think we all know the story of the children of Israel as they came out of Egypt and as they came into the land of Canaan and how effective the influence around them was. The Scripture says how, “they went a whoring after other gods” (Judges 2:17). They began to make covenants and had intermarriage with them. There also was the terrible impact of influence as people. The influence of the nations was greater than the influence of their God. How quickly they came under bondage and cried to the Lord and they had deliverers. This happened time and again.

4) As we think about this in relation to the church today can we somehow see the seriousness of wrong affinities in relationships, in our relationships to our God? How quickly the world makes ineffective our witness and destroys our homes and families and we reap the terrible harvest.

In relation to this let us turn to 2 Corinthians 11:2, 3. Paul is talking here, “For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. (3) But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity

that is in Christ.” We each as brethren need to have a commitment like Paul had here — a godly jealousy — a jealousy for our people that we might present them as a chaste virgin to Christ, pure and undefiled ready for His coming.

II) *Definitions.* In thinking of the word, in defining the word associations as we are using it, we are thinking of “existing or occurring together,” or the thought of we may have groups in the same communities in our association with them. It says, “to keep or be in company.” Somewhat, we are close together and there is a certain amount of relationships in the community, and so on. Therefore, in thinking of association we are thinking of a limited social relationship.

In fellowship we are thinking of a body of individuals joined together under similar beliefs and so forth — a brotherhood. Or, we could think of companionships, our groups that we fellowship with each other. “The condition or fact of having common interests, ideals, and experiences.” We have the same God. We want to go into that a little later. Then, of counsel, “Mutual exchange of advice and opinions, deliberate.” What part does counsel have with having good fellowship? I think this is where

we want to look into.

III) *Biblical principles to consider.* 1) *First of all, we would like to think of the doctrine of separation.* In Psalm 1:1 it says “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.” Then it goes into his relationship with God and his delight with God instead of in the counsel of the ungodly. That psalm finished with the ungodly not standing “in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous” (Psalm 1:5). The relationship with God makes sinners uncomfortable. They cannot stay in the congregation of the righteous. This is the purity that we are talking about that we would like to see.

Let us turn to 2 Corinthians 6, when we think of spiritual positions — positions that God can bless. I marvel at the way the apostle here associates it with social relationships or with social terms. 2 Corinthians 6:14–18 says, “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? (15) And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? (16) And what

agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (17) Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, (18) And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”

We notice in this Scripture it talks about an unequal yoke. There again it reminds us of an agreement, an affinity, or a relationship. It is unequal. Notice the words it uses to describe unequal yoke — “fellowship,” “communion,” “concord,” “agreement.” These are words that designate relationship. They have to do with our relationships one to another. Now, we add to this righteousness and unrighteousness. What fellowship does right doing have with wrong doing? We see the clear line here. The position we take is between right doing and wrong doing and it involves our fellowship.

The next point here has to do with communion of light with darkness, truth and error. What agreement is there between truth and error? When light comes,

darkness leaves. There is no middle ground. There is no relationship. It is one or the other. Therefore, it involves our concepts, our doctrine. As righteousness talks about our practice so truth includes our doctrine.

Then, in the next point we have here, “what concord hath Christ with Belial?” What part does Christ have with the sons of the devil? What does part does a Christian have with those that are walking in darkness? Or, what agreement? There is none there and we are on two different roads. “What part hath he that believeth with an infidel?” One who believes or one who does not believe. These are two different roads. We are going to two different places. We are traveling a different way. If we notice the dividing line here, the separation, there is a line that is straight. It is either on one side or on the other. There is no middle ground.

Therefore, as we think of association and fellowship there needs to be a dividing line where God places that dividing line. A boundary needs to be where He puts that boundary. If it is not that way, He says, “come out from among them, and be ye separate.” It involves getting out of that situation and getting away from it. This is in contrast to

when we think of some of the associations we could relate to today which would bring us right back instead of coming out of a relationship like that. Therefore, we must draw our fellowship lines. We must have boundaries. We must set lines, guidelines that will direct the path.

Let us think of God receiving us and being sons and daughters. It is such a clear picture that it is either/or. There is no middle ground when we think of yoking with something that is less than what God would have, making an agreement that does not bring conviction on someone’s life against worldliness for instance. Suppose we yoke up with a situation where we need to somehow make a compromise with worldliness? We are in essence saying “That is not that bad.” In that case, that man’s, that young person’s convictions are not being tested in relation to their relationship with God.

Then, as we think of establishing fellowship lines, we must decide who will enter our pulpits. We must decide who our Sunday school teachers will be and what they will teach. We must direct activities and intercongregational relationships. The great call of the church is to set the line where God sets it such that people would see. We must accept

counsel from our brethren as to where we are going. Sometimes we simply do not see the dangers as we ought to see them.

2) *We would now like to point out the dangers that the Scriptures point out in relation to this.* Most of you are acquainted with what these Scriptures say. In Matthew 7:15 Jesus said “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing.” Notice the word “beware.” Notice also they “come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”

How quickly do we see the person in sheep’s clothing as a ravaging wolf? How much damage will be done until we see what is happening? “Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them” (Matthew 7:20). Their practice does not agree with what they are saying or expressing.

We could also think of Matthew 24:11 where it talks about “false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.” It says, “And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold” (Matthew 24:12). Often these situations are dressed up with religious garb. They are dressed up with smooth words, dressed up maybe as our own family and kin, our own relatives which are saying some of these things. Nevertheless, they have a

wrong effect on our life.

In Matthew 24:24 it says they, “shall shew great signs and wonders.” As we think of our churches today and the signs and wonders that people talk about, the Charismatic movement, the Ecumenical movement, the great revivals here and there, yet we do not see a change of life. It says, “if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect” — those who are true children. They would even deceive them. Or, we could think of the words in Acts 20:29 where Paul told the Ephesian elders “that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.” . . . Why? Someone did not see them as wolves. Someone did not see what was happening. It says they shall, “enter in.” Somehow we left the door open. Then it says, “Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things” (Acts 20:30) — of our own brethren. They may have heard some things. They may have read a book. They may have heard someone speak. They may be promoting some error. The Scripture says, “to draw away disciples after them.” Heresy and all of this are involved in this type of thing.

In Galatians 2:4 Paul talks about “false brethren unawares

brought in.” Somehow the thing that I tremble at is the fact that many of these situations are unaware. People do not see. They come in. They come into our very midst. They carry out their work and people did not see what was happening. What do they do in Galatians 2:4? It was to “bring us into bondage.”

In 2 Corinthians 11:13–15 after that Paul was encouraging them to present their congregations as chaste virgins of Christ, it talks about “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.” Later, in verse 15 it says, “transformed as the ministers of righteousness.” Can we identify Satan’s vessels, or those who Satan is using transformed as angels, or as ministers of righteousness? Who will see this? Are we today alert to these situations? Are we ready to set boundaries and fellowship lines because we see the enemy when he gets close to the door?

They are people who are slippery. They know the language. Yet, their goal is not for the truth of the Gospel. In Philippians we have another account that is maybe a little closer to home yet. Paul said, in Philippians 3:18, “[I] now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ.” What does he

say about them? He says that they “mind earthly things” (verse 19). Do we allow people to speak in our settings who mind earthly things, “whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame?” That is self life. We need to be able to identify when things come from the self life rather than from God.

Jude 4 talks about “For there are certain men crept in unawares . . . ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness.” I understand this word *lasciviousness* means “license.” It is turning the grace of God into license. We hear that quite often today. “What is wrong with this? It is only a little thing. Why are you so narrow?” And on and on.

We could also think a little bit about the churches in Revelation. There were six churches where the Spirit pointed things out. In one there was a spirit of “Balaam” (Revelation 2:14) or with being double-hearted. It is speaking one thing in public and another thing in private. It makes people prime targets for wrong teaching. The Spirit said, “thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not” (Revelation 2:2). Then, He said, “thou hast left thy first love” (Revelation 2:4). Unless they gain that first love they will turn aside. “them which say they are

Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan” (Revelation 2:9). They pose as being Christians, for being true men, but are the synagogue of Satan.

These were those who had the teaching “of the Nicolaitans” (Revelation 2:15). There were some teachings they were accepting, and He said, “which thing I hate.” Influences were brought in. Another place had “Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants” (Revelation 2:20). It is someone who claims to follow Christ and yet living as they please. Then we have the “Laodiceans” (Revelation 3:14) thinking things about themselves that God was not thinking. It is pride. It is a congregation not seeing themselves as they truly are.

IV) *Where do we draw fellowship lines?* Let us look to 1 John 1:3, “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.” Notice verses 5–8, “This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. (6) If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the

truth: (7) But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. (8) If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”

Notice here it says, “If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.” Also, notice it mentions in verse 3 our fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. That fellowship with our God brings us to fellowship with those who walk in the light. It is that simple. We must, in our associations, in our fellowships, recognize whether people are walking in the light or not, and whether their practice agrees with their doctrine. I know of situations where people say, “We fellowship with people who have the same confession of faith.” Is that Scriptural? We need to compare it with their life.

I think we have all heard the saying (I think Moses Baer used to say sometimes years back) “Our doctrine can be as straight as a gun barrel and just as empty.” I think that is true. We need to walk in the light. Our life, social being, and our activity need to be the Gospel in shoe leather. It is a Gospel in practice. It is carried out in daily life. That

is how we decide where our fellowship lines are.

In Galatians 2, we have an example that will help us to see some of these points. The apostle Paul was having some trouble as I would understand it. There were things being said about his work that he was concerned about. We want to notice in these verses association, fellowship and counsel. I will go through this quickly. In this instance he was going up to Jerusalem and he was taking Barnabas and Titus in verse 1. He said, "I went up by revelation" (verse 2). I would understand that he felt led by God to go there. Then, he said, "and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain." He valued the relationship with the Jerusalem church.

He was hearing things (as I would gather the setting) that caused him to go up with Barnabas and Titus to see where he stood. It said, "lest by any means I . . . had run, in vain." He went to those of reputation, to those who had reputation for being faithful. He was going to tell them the Gospel as he taught it to find out what they thought, as I would gather here. We

notice here their counsel to him.

1) We are thinking here of counsel affecting association. 2) The second point is communicating privately. In our association with those where we are not sure where they are, it is good to, as church leaders, go privately to them and find out where we are. Have communication with those who lead out, and then we communicate privately.

Then, the point that impresses me here is Paul's openness to the possibility of personal failure. He did not go with his guns focussed "This is my charge. You are treating me wrongly." He was open to whether there was any wrong in his life. We should, even though we know what we believe, be open that we can hear the Lord speaking through our associations and be able to catch whether it is the voice of God or not.

We notice in verse 3 that the differences came into focus. 3) The next point here is communication in our differences. Verse 3 would point out that as I would understand this Scripture, the decision was that Titus did not need to be circumcised. Somehow false brethren came in unawares here to someone. I am not sure who that was but it must have been somewhat to Jewish leaders, even though the decision

was made at the Jerusalem conference. It was clear. It was plain. We could ask the question, “Paul, why did you bring Titus along? He is a Greek and there are some people in the church there who will bring problems if you bring Titus along.”

Paul was honest with himself. He was going to reveal to them the Gospel as he saw it. He was bringing Titus along. We see something there — the openness, the frankness, the willingness to stand for what he believed. We also notice these false brethren came in unawares. They were saying some things in that Jerusalem church which they were not seeing (some of them). Paul said they were doing it “to spy out our liberty” (Galatians 2:4). We know Paul saw it. Paul was aware of what was happening.

That is the challenge that I see as brethren as sisters, as ministers of the Gospel. We need to see what is happening. Paul also said that he would not subject himself to them for one hour [verse 5] regardless if he was before the Jewish church — the church of reputation. I mean the people that had a reputation. He would not subject himself for one hour. Why? The answer is there in verse 5 “that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.”

It was not his own “hide” he was afraid of. It was not his own system he was thinking about. It was “that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.”

The challenge, as we think of it, in our differences as they come in associations (there are differences) is that we need to be “frank” and we need to speak our differences. However, when we know that something is not according to the truth of the Gospel we need to stand. That is where we stand. There is no compromise regardless how good men are, regardless how strong the system we need to stand for the truth of the Gospel.

One thing we notice about this is that where they stood officially and where they were actually practicing were at two different places. These false brethren were bringing in something that the Jewish church was allowing but this was not their official position. Their position was that those of the gentiles who became Christians did not need to become circumcised. Then, we also notice here that these people, like I said, were out to catch Paul rather than out to bring the truth of the Gospel, and Paul caught that immediately.

3) *Next, we notice the sad part of this; many did not discern what was happening.* The

strength was that Paul saw through it and would not subject himself to that kind of thinking for an hour. Paul knew where he was going. We as a church need to know where we are going. One thing was clear, if Paul would have fellowship with them he would not subject himself to that kind of influence.

4) *Next, we notice the blessing of fellowship with counsel.* Verse 9 says, “And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.” Notice here they gave him the right hand of fellowship. “We can accept your work.” Notice in verse 8 the reason was that they saw his work was effectual to the gentiles as theirs’ was to the Jews.

That is another basis for fellowship. Our sphere of service may be different but when our work is effective in helping the blind to see, the lame to walk, and when it is according the Gospel then we recognize each other’s work. From that standpoint Paul now had the blessing of having the blessing of the Jerusalem church now on his work with the gentiles. They

also had the blessing of knowing that Paul saw a benefit in their work or that their work was effective.

Now, what I believe happened here is they “straightened this thing out” even though these brethren had crept in unawares. When Paul stood his ground some people saw the truth of the situation. What happened here? Paul helped the Jerusalem church by his relationship to them. This is what true fellowship does. It enhances truth in our relationships. When our relationships destroy truth then there is something wrong, and something is happening that we must get a hold of.

Notice then here also in verse 10 they also encouraged him to “remember the poor.” Their counsel was mutual. It was back and forth, Paul said, “I want to do that too,” but it did encourage him. Here is counsel that I can accept and take. It was something that they were agreeing on. Then, we notice in verse 11, this must have been at a later date. He was writing this in Galatians. It would seem to me this happened later. He faced Peter with something that was not right in verses 11–14. “But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. (12) For before

that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. (13) And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. (14) But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said. . .”

Here I see a beautiful picture of what fellowship does. People outside our situations sometimes can see a lot more than we can. Paul cared. He treasured his relationship. Notice also that things were happening quickly. When Peter turned aside the Jews dissembled and Barnabas. The one that Paul took with him to get this thing cleared was now also sidetracked with the influence that he got at Jerusalem. What did Paul do? He went back to the Scriptures, and he laid it out so clear. You do not hear that Peter made one rebuttal. The answer was clear. When the Scriptures are our basis, there is not a lot of arguing that needs to be done. It is clear. Therefore, as we think of this, it should help us to see some of the Scriptural positions. Our counsels to each other are vital and important to help us to stay “on track.”

I should maybe bring one thing up. There are a lot of things that could arise as we think of fellowship lines and our weaknesses. For instance, if we do not guard our pulpits, we can see what can happen. Or, if we do not guide our young people’s activities, or if we do not in our associations, we see how things can happen so quickly. I thought of Bible school. We have associations there where people come that we would not normally fellowship, young people and these young people are away from their parents. They are away from their ministers and there are others that come in. We say “That could be critical.” However, what I see in this, I appreciate so much what I see happening. The Bible school board members are sending out letters to ministers, How are your young people? Are they ready for Bible school? We see a relationship, a counselling.

When we have a spiritual atmosphere in our Bible school where other people are attracted to truth why not. However, if in our home setting things are not in order, and we are allowing things that would attract those who are not right with the Lord then we are headed for trouble. Therefore, we need to keep our lines clear as an example. I simply giving this as an example.

Our associations should be salty. They should be effective. We should be able to reach out to others. However, it needs to be on that eternal Word, on that Truth that will govern and direct our churches, people of stability and mature who develop convictions and build the church. Oh,

the terrible thing that happens when we develop affinities in our church that make us helpless. Our witness is lost. It becomes ineffective. There is no salt there and how it can leaven and destroy. May God help us to keep our associations clear.

Scripture References

	Judges	24:11	193	2:9	198
2:17	190	24:12	193	2:10	198
	1 Kings	24:24	193	2:11–14	198
10:7	188		John		Philippians
	2 Chronicles	15:19	186	2:15	186
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7:15	193	2:5	197	3:14	195
7:20	193	2:8	198		

Tradition

- It is Corban
- Subtle Expressions of the Anti-tradition Emphasis

*“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.”
— 1 Corinthians 15:33*

From the Previous Issue:

The Three-Fold Being of Man

From a message by Harold Good

Sunday, November 14, 1993

Valley View Mennonite Church

The “Bishop District” Concept in the Mennonite Church

From a message by Jesse Neuenschwander

Sunday, May 28, 1995

Centerville Mennonite Church

Book Reprint *(continued)*

The Seven Laws of Teaching

CHAPTER VI *(continued)*

THE LAW OF THE TEACHING PROCESS

Rules for Teachers

Like our other laws, this one also suggests some practical rules for teaching.

(1) Adapt lessons and assignments to the ages and attainments of the pupils. Very young children will be interested more in whatever appeals to the senses, and especially in activities; the more mature will be attracted to reasoning and to reflective problems.

(2) Select lessons which relate to the environment and needs of the pupils.

(3) Consider carefully the subject and the lesson to be taught, and find its point of contact with the lives of your pupils.

(4) Excite the pupil's interest in the lesson when it is assigned,

by some question or by some statement which will awaken inquiry. Hint that something worth knowing is to be found out if the lesson is thoroughly studied, and then be sure later to ask for the truth to be discovered.

(5) Place yourself frequently in the position of a pupil among your pupils, and join in the search for some fact or principle.

(6) Repress your impatience which cannot wait for the pupil to explain himself, and which tends to take his words out of his mouth. He will resent it, and will feel that he could have answered had you given him time.

(7) In all class exercises aim to excite constantly fresh interest and activity. Start questions for the pupils to investigate out of class. The lesson that does not

culminate in fresh questions ends wrong.

(8) Observe each pupil to see that his mind is not wandering so as to forbid its activities being bent to the lesson in hand.

(9) Count it your chief duty to awaken the minds of your pupils, and do not rest until each child shows his mental activity by asking questions.

(10) Repress the desire to tell all you know or think upon the lesson or subject; if you tell something by way of illustration or explanation, let it start a fresh question.

(11) Give the pupil time to think, after you are sure that his mind is actively at work, and encourage him to ask questions when puzzled.

(12) Do not answer too promptly the questions asked, but restate them, to give them greater force and breadth, and often answer with new questions to secure deeper thought.

(13) Teach pupils to ask *What? Why? and How?* — the nature, cause, and method of every fact or principle taught them; also *Where? When? By whom?* and *What of it?* — the place, time, people, and consequences of events.

(14) Recitations should not exhaust a subject, but leave additional work to stimulate the

thought and the efforts of the pupils.

Violations and Mistakes

Many a teacher neglecting these rules kills all interest in his class, and wonders how he did it.

(1) The chief and almost constant violation of this law of teaching is the attempt to force lessons by simply telling. "I have told you ten times, and yet you don't know!" exclaims a teacher of this sort, who is unable to remember that knowing comes by thinking, not by being told.

(2) It is another mistake to complain of memory for not keeping what it never held. If facts or principles are to be remembered, the attention must be concentrated upon them at the time, and there must be a conscious effort to remember.

(3) A third violation of the law comes from the haste with which teachers require prompt and rapid recitations in the very words of the book; and, if a question is asked in class, to refuse the pupils time to think. If the pupil hesitates and stops for lack of thought, or in apparent lack of memory, the fault lies in yesterday's teaching which shows its fruit today; but if it comes from the slowness of the pupil's thinking, or from the real difficulty of the subject, then time should be

given for additional thought; and, if the recitation period will not permit it, let the answer hold over until the next time.

It is to this hurried and unthinking lesson-saying that we owe the superficial and impractical character of so much of our teaching. Instead of learning thoroughly the material of our lessons, we endeavor to learn them only so as to recite them promptly. If faults of this character are prevalent in our day schools, how much more serious are they in the Sunday schools? If the lessons of the Sunday schools are to carry over into the lives of the pupils by purifying and exalting their thoughts and making them wise in the religious beliefs taught them, the instruction must not be mere

telling, but must be accompanied by the better methods used in the regular schools. How different are the results when this great law of teaching is properly followed! The stimulated self-activities operate in the correct manner, and the classroom is transformed under their power into a busy laboratory. The pupils become thinkers- discoverers. They master great truths, and apply them to the great questions of life. They invade new fields of knowledge. The teacher merely leads the march. Their reconnaissance becomes a conquest. Skill and power grow with their exercise. Through this process, the students find out what their minds are for, and become students of life.

Youth Book Reprint *(continued)*

Judith

I

HAPPY DAYS OF CHILDHOOD

In the Country

The beautiful two story-house, located in the midst of the forest, seemed to be transformed today. Its owner was the timber merchant, Mr. Weinberg, an honorable rabbi. Though advanced in years, he was still very active and able to take care of his business. For several years he had been liv-

ing alone with his wife in the quietness of the woods. His two sons were both married and had their own families. They also had been successful in business and had made their homes in a distant city.

Usually an undisturbed quiet reigned in the home. At times

Mr. Weinberg worked for whole days behind shut doors in his office, or in his study with the Bible and the Talmud before him. But today lively footsteps were heard throughout the house, and the silvery laughter of delighted children filled the rooms. The three granddaughters had arrived with their mother from the city. Eagerly they unpacked the gifts they had been preparing with joyful anticipation for their beloved Grandpa and Grandma. In presenting them, each was eager to make the value of her gifts known to her grandparents, and in praising her own gifts created much laughter. They recounted all the latest news from the city and especially items of their life and success in school.

A happy time commenced for the children with no lessons to prepare. Whole days were spent in rambling through meadows and woods gathering quantities of beautiful flowers that carpeted the ground with many colors. Together with the older folk, they revelled in the beauty of the wood-life.

Shortly after the arrival of the jolly little guests, there came two rabbis, old friends of Mr. Weinberg from a neighboring city, to see him. The whole day they were engaged in a religious discourse. The women and chil-

dren were meanwhile occupied with their own interests. Only Judith was not interested in the usual things today. She had slipped away from her sisters and returned to the house. She tried hard to be near the rabbis, and she listened attentively to every word she could catch. Mr. Weinberg noticed his inquisitive grandchild and suggested she would better go and play with her sisters, as the conversation of old rabbis could be of no interest to a child.

Discourse of the Rabbis

Judith was far from being pleased. She would much rather have listened to the discussions of the rabbis than to the singing of the birds just now, but she did not have the courage to say anything in the presence of the visitors, so she left the room quietly. But from what she had been able to hear, she gathered that they were arguing about God, the law, and a certain "Yeshua." She determined to ask her grandfather about these things as soon as the visitors departed. Recalling her conversation with her father at the last Passover, she was glad he had granted permission to ask her grandfather as many questions as she pleased. Now the opportunity had come!

Following a short walk after supper, Judith retired with her sisters to their common bedroom. It was a warm night. The sweet fragrance of flowers came through the open windows and filled the room. The two younger sisters soon fell asleep, exhausted from tramping in the woods. But Judith could not sleep. Her mind was very active. Thoughts about God, and the conversation of her grandfather with the rabbis kept her awake for many hours. Even now the sound of voices came to her through the open window. She could distinguish her grandfather's voice, raised at times to an angry shout. The others, too, sounded excited and angry.

Lying in bed, it was impossible to distinguish what they were speaking about. Her interest was aroused more and more. What were they arguing about? Judith knew she had no business to listen and that it was not quite right for her to do so, but curiosity finally won the victory. Rising from her bed, she went to the open window. Just below her were the open windows of the study and Judith could now understand every word.

From the first moment she listened she knew that they were talking about "Yeshua," whose name was mentioned quite frequently by her grandfather. Now,

she heard one of the other rabbis say that "Yeshua" WAS INDEED THE MESSIAH of Israel Whom the Jews had not recognized and Whom they had rejected. Her grandfather and the other rabbi were eager to prove that he had been just a clever impostor and deceiver. The one side as well as the other referred to the prophecies of Moses and the other Jewish prophets. At times their arguments became very heated. Judith soon found out that her grandfather and the rabbi who agreed with him, not knowing what to answer, commenced to argue and to shout, while their opponent called them to calmness and sound reasoning. He urged them to search the Scriptures most seriously and without prejudice.

"Perhaps one day we shall have to realize and confess the fatal mistake of our fathers, and then repenting we shall have to accept 'Yeshua' as the promised Messiah Who has come but Who through ignorance has been rejected and despised," he said.

Nearly the whole night Judith sat on the window-sill absorbed in listening to the discussion. Following the debate, she concluded that a terrible mistake had been made sometime somewhere by the Jews, the result of which was felt even today. But only the

rabbis knew, and they talked of it only among themselves, for some reason unwilling that the secret should be made known to others. From what she heard, she understood that the Jewish people had rejected their Messiah.

At the same time, Judith received an unexpected answer to a question that had interested her greatly and that she had asked her father — why the Jews in that memorable night of their flight from Egypt had to kill the innocent lamb. She heard the rabbi who argued against her grandfather prove to him and the other opponent that the lamb that was killed that night in Egypt (as well as all the other lambs offered subsequently at the Jewish sacrifices) were only types, prophetic symbols of “Yeshua,” of Whom the prophet Isaiah spoke in the fifty-third chapter of his Book. The lamb being the substitute for the Jews died at the time when the angel of death smote all the firstborn of the Egyptians. In a similar way to the lamb, “Yeshua” had to die for the Jewish people that they might not perish together with all others for their transgressions.

Judith heard her grandfather question: “If that be so, what then is our duty? What should we do now?”

“The future will teach that,”

was the reply. “But first of all we must be honest, and it is our duty to study and search the Scriptures more thoroughly and without prejudice. I am sure it will teach us all what to do in this matter. This is a most serious and important question for our nation and needs deep and earnest consideration.”

As the eastern sky became tinted with red and gold, the sweet trill of the nightingale came from the bushes near the house. The air became cooler. Judith was still sitting at the open window listening to the discussion with rapt attention. Her youngest sister awoke and asked, “Why don’t you sleep, Judith?”

Taken unaware, confused, and fearing to tell the truth, she said, “Listen, Ruth, how sweetly the nightingale is singing.”

“Sleep is sweeter to me now than the songs of nightingales,” was Ruth’s laughing reply as she pulled the blanket closer.

“You are right, my sleepy little sister,” returned Judith, walking over to her bed.

Being tired after the sleepless night and benumbed with the cold, she soon fell into a restless slumber. In her sleep she continued to hear the men argue about “Yeshua.” Her heart ached with pain at the thought that the Jews had been so cruel and had killed

Him, the meek and innocent Lamb; that they had slain Him Who had come to bring happiness to Israel. She commenced to defend “Yeshua” in her dream, and she entreated her grandfather, father, and mother, the sisters and other Jews, to acknowledge and accept “Yeshua” as their Messiah. It seemed to her that she must be able to persuade them all. But suddenly her grandfather, with angry eyes, harshly rebuked her. Shouting at the top of his voice, he said, “Apostate! Heretic! You have deserted the faith of your fathers. Such as you should be stoned!”

Poor Judith was so frightened by these awful words that she turned quickly and tried to flee from her enraged grandfather. Making a quick movement, she awoke. Opening her eyes, she saw her mother near the bed, anxiously bent over her.

“What’s the matter with you? Did you have a bad dream? With whom did you fight? You talked so much and were so excited! It was very hard to look at you.”

“O Mamma, dear, I saw many, many people around me, and I was so anxious to tell them that they should love God more and that they should obey the prophets through whom He speaks.”

“What queer dreams to disturb

my child. Leave that to Grandpa and to our other wise rabbis. Let them think about God, and you and I had better think of something else.”

“But why, Mother, should this question be considered by the rabbis only? Why should others not be interested in it, too?” asked Judith, looking up inquiringly.

“Oh, yes, my precious girl. Of course anyone may think and speak about God. But in order to know anything about Him, one must study thoroughly the Torah and the Prophets. Without this it is impossible to reason or judge rightly about Him. Your grandfather and the other rabbis know the Torah and the Prophets well.”

“Mother, do you think it is possible to study the Torah and at the same time fail to know God and disobey Him?”

“Well, Judith. What a strange girl you are. Who ever put such thoughts into your mind? Let’s leave this for another time and now get up quickly. It is nearly dinner time. Breakfast was over long ago, and it’s a lovely day. I sent Ruth to call you for breakfast, but she said you had not slept at night as you were sitting and listening to the nightingales. She suggested letting you sleep a little longer.”

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