

THE EXAMINER



Published by the Winter Park church of Christ
Meeting at: 2122 Market Street; Wilmington NC 28403
www.winterparkcocnc.com

Vol. 7, No. 19

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August 18th, 2019

The Sin of Indifference - by Bill Mosely, Tucson, Arizona

There are many obstacles to the growth of the church in our day. One of the greatest of these is the indifferent church member. Webster ~ New Collegiate Dictionary defines indifference as follows: "apathy; lack of feeling for or against anything." He goes on to say "... not interested in or concerned about something; neutral; having no prepondering influence or value." How many people, claiming membership in the Lord's body fall into this category! They have no feeling for or against the church; they are not concerned about it, nor interested in it. As a result of such attitudes, they are of no value to the church. As far as they are concerned, the church can live or die.

In the light of these definitions, we can see why the indifferent member is a hindrance to the church. He does more harm to the church than one who professes no religion. Everybody knows what the atheist is, and he is not likely to bring any lasting harm to the church - only to himself. The

Laodiceans were condemned because they were neither cold nor hot; not for nor against. They were to be rejected because of their lukewarmness -indifference.

Note what Joseph Fletcher says about indifference. "The true opposite of love is not hate but indifference. Hate, bad as it is, at least treats the neighbor as a THOU, whereas indifference turns the neighbor into an IT, a thing. This is why we may say that there is actually one thing worse than evil itself, and that is indifference to evil. In human relations the nadir of morality, the lowest point as far as Christian ethics are concerned, is manifest in the phrase, 'I couldn't care less.'" - **(Reader ~ Digest, Nov. 1968)**

As I reflected on these words, I thought how true they are! I had to agree when Fletcher said "... the lowest point as far as Christian ethics are concerned, is manifest in the phrase, 'I couldn't care less. " This is the way some members feel - "I couldn't care less." They won't say it with words, but their actions

speak it far more eloquently than words ever could. Such have no active interest in the work and worship of the congregation of which they are a member. They are lax in their assembling for worship or study. They never take time to visit or call a sick brother. They do not engage in a private study of the Word; this fact is shouted out by their obvious lack of knowledge concerning that Word. They are indifferent, and have no value to the church. Yet, for the sake of numbers, the brethren seldom exercise any corrective or disciplinary measures against such indifferent members. We need to realize that the church is better off without such members. Lest some think this to be a harsh statement, remember what the Lord said he would do concerning such people. **(Rev. 3: 14-16)**

The ultimate in indifference was brought home to me upon one occasion. I had preached a sermon on lukewarmness and indifference. One brother came out the door, shook my hand and said, "that was a good sermon, preacher. But I guess I'm just one of those lukewarm members you talked about." So far as I know, he never did do anything about his condition and probably is still lukewarm. He was indifferent about his indifference!

There is a need in the church

today for members burning with zeal, overflowing with enthusiasm and abounding in labor and work. But such are hard to find. Enter in among the assembly of many congregations and witness a feeling of gloom, and feel the "deadness" of it. This is not so when a congregation is free of indifferent members. Hear the apostle as he says "... always abounding in the work of the Lord." Hear him as he commends the Thessalonians for their "labor of love." The scriptures teem with such phrases, but do they describe many today - individuals or congregations?

My brother or sister, if you have been indifferent toward your responsibility as a Christian, and toward the church, you had better wake up! The Lord is coming one day, and you will stand before him in judgment. Would he commend you as a tireless worker for his cause; as one who ceaselessly labored without regard for personal or physical things? Or will you be as the slothful servant? If so, you will be cast into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Many try to excuse their indifference by saying, can't do this or that." I'm sure if these indifferent church members were sure the Lord would return tomorrow, they would move as heretofore thought impossible of

them. They would get things done that even they thought they could never do! Do you know something? Tomorrow might be the day! **** ---- Via TRUTH MAGAZINE XIV; 32, pp. 8-9 ; June 18, 1970 ****

Repent And Pray - by By Luther G. Roberts

The apostle Peter commanded Simon, an erring child of God to "repent and pray." Peter's exact words are: "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness and pray the Lord, if perhaps the thought of thy heart shall be forgiven thee" (**Acts 8:22**). One who has obeyed the gospel of Christ is a child of God and a servant of righteousness (**Rom. 6:17,18**). When one sins after having become a child of God, he is still a child of God, but an erring child. It is a fact that children of God may sin. James writes, "My brethren, if any among you err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way shalt save a soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins" (**Jas. 5:19,20**). John writes, "If we say that have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (**I Jno. 1:8**). There are over 200 passages of Scripture in the New Testament that warn the child of God of the consequences of his sins. Why would God warn his children of the

consequences of their sins if it were not possible for them to sin?

An Erring Child of God

The child of God may "err from the truth" through indifference, lukewarmness, unfruitfulness, worldly-mindedness, or through outright stubbornness and rebellion. When he does his heart is not right before God and he is in a perishing state. Simon the Sorcerer had believed and had been baptized, and was saved from his past or alien sins, according to Jesus. He said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (**Mk.16:16**). Simon believed and was baptized (**Acts 8:12**), and, therefore, he was saved. Afterwards he sinned or erred. He became an erring child of God.

The story of the prodigal son illustrates what an erring child of God is. He does not represent the alien sinner. He was a son. His going away from his father's house and wasting his substance in riotous living represents the course of the child of God in turning from the way of righteousness to sin. He was a wayward, disobedient and rebellious son. There are many, who have obeyed the gospel, who have followed Christ for a time, who have once walked in the narrow way, who have grown careless, indifferent and have wandered away from God. The possibility of such a course is,

taught by Jesus in the parable of the sower. "And he that was sown upon the rocky places, that is he that heareth the word, and straightway with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for a while; and when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, straightway he stumbleth" (**Matt. 13:20, 21**)

Is there a way of salvation for one who has obeyed the gospel and then errs from the truth? Some teach that there is no pattern of salvation for the erring child of God ; no certain way that one may be forgiven when he sins after having become a child of God. Many seem to think that God saves in various ways and on different conditions. But there is a plan or pattern of salvation, a law of pardon for the child of God who sins, just as certainly as there is a plan or pattern of salvation for the alien sinner. There is only one thing that can keep any one from being delivered from his sins, and that is: a refusal to obey the Lord; a failure to comply with the conditions that are applicable to him. God, the Father, is willing to forgive his wandering child, he is waiting to receive him back home. ***** (Continued In Next Weeks Bulletin) ******

"ONE THING THOU LACKEST.."

PROPER ATTITUDE TOWARD MONEY? MK.10:17-22

RICH MAN LOVED MONEY - MK.10:22
LOVE OF MONEY - 1 TIM. 6:10
ISRAEL'S OFFERINGS - MAL. 1:7-8:3-8
WE ARE TO GIVE - 1 COR.16:1-2:2 COR. 9:6-8
COVETOUS WON'T INHERIT KINGDOM - EPH.5:5

GOOD WORKS ?

CREATED UNTO GOOD WORKS - EPH.2:10
GLORIFY GOD WITH GOOD WORKS - MT.5:16
ABOUND IN GOOD WORK - 1 COR.15:58:2 COR.9:8
FURNISHED UNTO GOOD WORKS - 2 TIM.3:16:17
ZEALOUS OF GOOD WORKS - TIT.2:14
MAINTAIN GOOD WORKS - TIT.3:8:14
FAITH WITHOUT WORKS - JS.2:17:22
THOSE WHO FAIL - MT. 25:41-46



GODLY LIVING?

TAUGHT TO LIVE GODLY - TIT.2:11:12:2 PET.1:3
GRACE TO BE ADDED - 2 PET. 1:6
EXERCISE SELF - 1 TIM.4:7:8
NOT TO LOVE WORLD - 1 JO. 2:15-17
NOT TO FOLLOW WORLD - ROM. 12:2
NOT TO WALK AFTER FLESH - ROM. 8:12:13
UNRIGHTEOUS WON'T INHERIT KINGDOM - 1 COR.6:9:10

OBEDIENCE?

MUST DO FATHER'S WILL - MT. 7:21
"IF YE LOVE ME..." - JO. 14:15:21
OBEY FROM HEART - ROM. 6:17:18
SALVATION TO OBEY - HEB. 5:8:9
ALL HAVE NOT OBEYED - ROM.10:16
THOSE WHO OBEY NOT - 1 PET.4:17:2 TH. 1:7-9

ARE WE TO MISS ETERNAL LIFE FOR LACKING ONE THING?
JS. 2:10