

Tuning to the Standard

For many years musicians would tune their instruments with a device called a tuning fork (the predecessor of the pith pipe and the new digital devices). The conductor of the orchestra or band would strike the tuning fork with his hand and let a clarinet player or violin player tune to the standard. Once the musician tuned his instrument to the tuning fork, the rest of the musicians would listen to that note and tune their instruments accordingly. Today, if you attend an orchestral performance (and you get there a little early), you may hear the piano player striking a note like "C" and all the musicians will listen, and then tune to that note (up or down). In this process, do you realize the tuning fork was the standard of authority and, therefore, unity?

Can you imagine the unmusical results if the conductor said to his musicians: "For tonight's performance, we will not be using a tuning fork. It will be our purpose to illustrate the beauty of individuality and diversity. You can find your own "C" according to your own desires, or tune to a neighbor if you like. We do not want anyone to be stifled or limited by authority of a single standard." What do you think the performance would sound like? What would the reviews say?

But why not take these ideas of 'no suppression from authority' and 'exaltation of individualism' a little further? Suppose the conductor says, "each one of you can play your favorite piece; ready, 1, 2, 3 . . ." Go ahead - fire the conductor; let the musicians show up whenever they want to; let everyone play whatever instrument they want, whatever piece they like, in tune or out of tune; and let them start and finish whenever they desire. If you let individualism prevail and authority die, do you know what results? You have nothing left of any musical value. No authority, just unattractive chaos that nobody would want to hear. It would sound awful!

Yet this is exactly what we observe in modern religion today. There is resistance to Bible authority, praise for human plurality, unity in diversity and the growing deception that this is what God wants!

But this isn't what God wants. Jesus prayed, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (John 17:20-21). Who can believe and teach that the division of denominationalism is sanctioned by our Lord?

- by Warren Berkley

Why Hymn Books but Not Pianos?

Some may wonder how one could object to a piano in worship to God and yet have hymn books. Neither is specifically mentioned in the New Testament.

Let's illustrate with Noah and the ark. When God told Noah to build an ark out of "gopher wood" (Gen. 6:14), that did NOT authorize Noah to use pine, fir, or cedar, for these are ANOTHER KIND of wood. To use another kind of wood WITHOUT AUTHORITY would have been presumption. However, that command DID authorize tools to build with, and red, white, or yellow gopher wood (if there be such), even though not specifically mentioned.

Likewise, when God said, "sing" (Eph. 5:19), that did NOT authorize pianos, guitars, and organs, for these are ANOTHER KIND of music. To offer God another kind of music WITHOUT AUTHORITY is presumption. But, the command to sing DID authorize hymn books, a leader, lights, and harmony, though not specifically mentioned.

- by Steve Fontenot

Why Do We Keep Hearing This "Campbellite" Stuff?

Nothing we believe or do is believed or done by the authority of Campbell or any other human. We follow the authority of Christ.

Most brethren have been called "Campbellites" by denominational people at one time or another. They are led to do this by a prejudiced clergy who just abhor the simple plea to return to New "Testament Christianity." They are so wrapped up in denominationalism and their churches

of human origin, they just can't conceive of anybody not belonging to a denomination. They just won't allow it. They would prohibit anybody from being just a Christian and a member of the church of which you read in the New Testament. Neither will they be honest with the historical facts regarding Alexander Campbell and the efforts made by many to restore the church as the Bible reveals it. It is just too much for them.

The fact is, efforts to return to the church of the Bible began before Alexander Campbell ever set foot on these shores. It began among Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and others without ever having heard of the man. Churches of Christ existed in England after Catholicism and the Protestant Reformation and a century or more before Alexander Campbell was born. How could such folks be called Campbellites with any degree of honesty? Dishonesty may be at the heart of the term "Campbellite."

There existed a church of Christ before Alexander Campbell was ever in America. Only a prejudiced clergyman who shows his ignorance of history and the Bible would ever say Campbell, or any man founded the church of Christ. Why don't some of these people show more honesty with truth and admit the church exists separate and apart from denominationalism? Nothing we believe or do is believed or done by the authority of Campbell or any other human. We follow the authority of Christ (Col. 3:17).

- by James Boyd

Evolution In Action?

A recent news article told of a new hybrid shark found in the waters off Australia. Scientists explained that the local Australian black-tip shark has mated with its global counterpart, the common black-tip shark. Jess Morgan, a researcher from the University of Queensland said that this is "very surprising because no one has ever seen shark hybrids before" and "this is not a common occurrence by any stretch of the imagination." The new discovery is said to be a potential sign that sharks are adapting to cope with 'climate change.' Morgan went on to declare that "this is evolution in action."

Those who deny God's work in the creation of the universe and everything in it (including all life forms) may think that this delivers a blow against the faith of Bible believers. Nothing could be further from the truth. No one denies that species adapt to their environment. Abundant evidence has been available to prove this long before the news of hybrid sharks was announced. This is called 'specific evolution', or evolution within a species. All agree that this happens. What Bible believers deny, and what science has never come close to proving, is the general theory of evolution. What this unproved theory claims is that all life sprang from non-living matter, and that all the myriad of life forms seen on earth today evolved from a single common source.

Notice in this recent shark discovery that the known law of biogenesis (life comes from life, and living things produce after their own kind) is still working. In this case living sharks mated to produce life. The new type of shark was NOT the result of 'spontaneous generation' of life from non-living matter – which the general theory of evolution requires. AND, the new life form was still a shark, not a cat, not even a catfish!

Nothing in this new discovery challenges anything we know about God and His marvelous creation.

- by Greg Gwin