

## ***Convenient Preaching***

Christians are being tried and tested for their love of truth. Many are courageously standing for that which they know to be right, while others, not studying the Bible for themselves, are swept away by the pleasant and fair speeches of teachers and preachers who seek only to scratch itching ears with "great swelling words, showing respect of persons for the sake of advantage." (Jude 16) Myriad of Christians are confusing the difference between convictions and conveniences. They conveniently stand for doctrine which is most popular, receiving the "praise of men," rather than standing for doctrine of Christ by conviction, being rewarded with the "praise of God." (John 12:43) Such an attitude is manifested by the failure to teach against worldliness, looseness and laxity in moral living, and by putting emphasis on number and size rather than spiritual stature. Many seem afraid to condemn anything, but stand ready to praise everything. We have watered down our convictions, sweetened our dispositions, and become so sophisticated with worldly wisdom and intoxicated with our "place under the sun" of prominence in the religious world that we stand powerless in the face of error and evil.

- by **Robert Harkrider**

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## ***Hiding Behind a Hypocrite***

The finger of indignation, with a touch of smugness, has been pointed many times at a brother or sister who fell short of what they should be. "If that's what a Christian is, then I want no part of it," says the accompanying voice.

But the fact there are hypocrites in the church provides no justification or hope for the sinner outside the church. It is an exceedingly foolish argument. Think about it. The hypocrite is wrong and will be condemned for it. He is lost, and without repentance will be forever lost. So the sinner who feigns to be repelled by such hypocrisy turns around and does what guarantees that he will share a lost eternity with the hypocrite. He does not break rank with him; he has in fact joined him.

Their difference is not one of substance, but of taste. It is the silly and vain idea that he may be wrong and a sinner, but at least his sin is not as bad as that of the hypocrite. And in so rationalizing he becomes one with the hypocrite in serving that which is evil and vile.

The bottom line: the professed Christian's sin, no matter how ugly and repulsive it may be, is no justification for you to deliberately refuse to obey the Lord.

- by **Jere E. Frost**

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## ***Willing Submission***

In times of discord it is not unusual to hear the plaintive cry, "Why can't we all just get along?" Confrontations often arise and are exacerbated by those who are unwilling to submit to others. From family problems to labor disputes, from church divisions to war, unsubmitive attitudes are at the core.

For many people submission is a negative word that conjures up visions of victimization at worst and weakness at best. However, submission is consistently presented positively in Scripture. The English word 'submit' means: "to yield to governance or authority; to commit to the discretion or judgment of another; to defer to the opinion or authority of another." The dictionary lists "yield" as a synonym. The Greek word translated "submit" literally means to "yield under."

Where do conflicts come from? They come from our selfish desires and pride (Jas. 4:1-10). When we approach our relationships in this life (with God or anyone else) on a "me first" basis, then we are unsubmitive. This causes friction. We are called upon to humble ourselves before almighty God and let Him do the exalting. Of course, He has the ability to force us to conform, but it is His desire that we willingly choose to submit ourselves to Him (1 Tim. 2:4).

- by **Andy Diestelkamp**

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## ***Have Convictions -- Will Stand!***

Again I say that I thank God for those Christians who are able to make proper discernment on weakness and strength, quantity and quality; who refuse to be swayed from Bible convictions by discouragements that weed out the weaklings. These know the WHY of 'a falling away.' (1 Cor. 11:9) They know that part of our warfare must be fought with 'spiritual wickedness in high places;' that sin and error crouch in camouflaged corners of even the kingdom of God. It takes a Gideon's army with broken pitchers of light to flush them from their dark hidings. This army has heard the short, sharp blast of the bugle call -- 'Stand, Therefore Stand.' We are entrenched behind the impregnable citadel of Bible convictions. Too soberly convicted to be flushed out by the tear-gas bombs of sentimentalism; too confident by the majority-that-God-makes to be routed by the bombardment of 'multitudes on the other side;' too near the 'Captain of our salvation' to be intimidated by the screaming mischief-missiles of innuendoes, slander, and prejudicial epithets. Yes, we "Have Convictions - Will Stand."

- by *J.W. Evans*

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### ***Help, Don't Hinder***

What do you do when you see a fellow Christian make a mistake? It may be a simple error of judgment, or it could be a more serious blunder – a sin that can potentially send his soul into eternal hell. What will you do?

Actually there are several options open to you. You could ignore the situation totally. Or you might, in your own mind, ridicule his foolishness. If you're a little bolder, you could gossip with others about his error -- belittling him as you do so. You see, there are a number of things you could do.

But, of course, there is only one thing you should do -- there is only one God-ordained course of action. "He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins" (James 5:20). "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Galatians 6:1).

The fact is that we all need the help, encouragement and strengthening that comes from our brethren. Sadly, too often we do things that hinder rather than help our brother when he is down.

The next time you are confronted with such a situation, remember that -- if you want to please God -- your choice is already made. If your brother has made a mistake, there can be no ignoring of the problem, no backbiting gossip, no thoughts of ridicule or humiliation. Go to your brother with the help he needs. Don't forget that you are certain to need this kind of help in the future, too!

- by *Greg Gwin*