

radio sermons sound like a “pip squeak” when it comes to preaching against fornication, adultery, homosexuality, abortion and such like. The fad today is “positive” preaching that offends no one and never mentions repentance and the need for bringing forth fruits worthy of repentance. (See Acts 26:20; Luke 3:7-8).

MODESTY

Don A. Iverson

For the majority of my life my profession has dealt mainly in advertising. One of the first rules in promoting a client’s product is a proper analysis to find out exactly what is being advertised. After the analysis, it is always important to give special emphasis on posters, radio, and TV ads to identify the product that is being advertised rather than secondary items. Every Christian is a walking form of advertising. Our words, deeds, and actions determine what we advertise, and where emphasis is placed when others think of us. Any faithful Christian would not want to be talked about because of immodest attire, but rather because of Christ-like behavior. Any good advertising man looks at his campaign to see that it projects the proper type of image he wishes to convey. A Christian should do the same by looking into the perfect law (James 1:25) for a self-analysis. After all, we are what we advertise.

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WE MUST EVANGELIZE AND DEFEND THE TRUTH, TOO!

Roger Campbell

Is it possible that we could become so involved in teaching the lost that we neglect defending the truth when attacks are made against it? On the other hand, is it possible that we could become so involved in defending the truth that we neglect our duty to teach those outside of Christ? Not only are we convinced that it is possible to stumble into one of these pitfalls, but fear that such is happening in the Lord’s body today in some instances.

Often when we speak about “maintaining balance” in preaching, we refer to the need to preach both the positives and negatives of the gospel. In 2 Timothy 4:2 we read this charge, “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.” Again, in the book of Acts we see the apostles forcefully propagating God’s plan to save men through Jesus, while at the same time clearly rebuking man’s sinful actions and false teachings.

We want to emphasize our obligation to be balanced in our efforts to (1) preach to the lost and (2) contend for the faith. It is **NOT** the case that the Lord calls on us to choose to be involved in one of these while at the same time forgetting or neglecting the other. Brothers and sisters, both are mandatory! Yet, the church must actively preach the gospel **and** defend the truth. That is our charge from the One who has all authority (Matthew 28:18).

Continued p. 2

As one travels about or reads published materials, it can be seen that many brethren are indeed zealous to reach

those who are lost yet, it is sad to observe some fail to point out religious error (especially error that is in the church) and do not take a strong stand for the truth. For whatever reasons, they do not preach the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). It is sometimes said that the truth does not need to be defended by men. This idea may sound good, but it is false, for the apostle Paul by the Holy Spirit declared, "I am set for the defense of the gospel?" (Philippians 1:17).

It is equally tragic that some are sound in what they teach and are filled with zeal in opposing false teaching which threatens to harm the church but they lack that same zeal when it comes to reaching the lost with the gospel. The same Lord who instructs us to "earnestly contend for the faith" (Jude 3) also charges us to "preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:14). So, which will we choose, to give our efforts to defending the faith, or to teaching the gospel to those who are not yet in Christ? Brethren, we must do **BOTH!**

Evangelism and defending the truth are both clear commands of the Christ, and one without the other is empty, even as faith without works is of no avail (James 2:14-26). Let us be careful not to neglect or shun anything that our King has called upon us to do! 4865 Bates Pike SE, Cleveland, TN 37323

BEFORE ALEXANDER CAMPBELL'S TIME

In the cemetery beside the Cane Ridge church house near Paris, KY is a stone which marks the grave of William Rogers. The marker reads: "Born in Campbell Co., VA, July 7, 1784. Move to Cane Ridge, Bourbon Co, April, 1798. United with the church of Christ at Cane Ridge in 1807."

1807 was two years before Alexander Campbell came to America, and was three years before he preached his first sermon. Were the members of this congregation followers of Campbell? No. They were simply members of the Lord's church which had been founded on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ (28 May 30). Isn't that enough today? When people do today what people did on Pentecost, will they not be today what they became then? If not, why not?

LET US GO BACK TO THE BIBLE

Don Ruhl

Do not let the world convince us to disarm our selves! Am I speaking of the current controversy over guns? No! The world is renaming behavior, which in turn convinces Christians that the Scriptures do not have the answers for people's problems. Charles Sykes has well-written:

Armed with ever-more ingenious diagnoses of the therapeutic culture, we have multiplied the number of diseases exponentially. In place of evil, therapeutic society has substituted "illness"; in the place of consequence, it urges therapy and understanding; in place of responsibility, it argues for a personality driven by impulses.

Have you thought about what influences you in how you label or describe behavior? For example, if someone drinks alcohol all the time, how do you refer to them: as a drunkard or alcoholic? Then think about what you think should be done to overcome this problem? On both of these questions are your thoughts coming from the Scriptures or from man's ideas?

Let us speak as the Bible speaks and be silent as the Bible is silent. Let us call Bible things by Bible names.

To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them (Isaiah 8:20). If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen (I Peter 4:11)

If we do not speak as these Scriptures direct, then we will not act as the Scriptures command. If we speak as men speak, and call things as men call them, then we will believe that men have the solutions for the problems of living. We may have good intentions in so doing, really believing that the therapeutic culture has the answers but the truth is we will do harm.

The harm happens because people will not be encouraged to seek the Lord. Do you see a problem with encouraging people to seek man rather than the Lord? Listen to the Holy Spirit:

Give us help from trouble, for the help of man is useless. Through God we will do valiantly, for it is He who shall tread down our enemies (Psalm 60:11, 12)

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GORE ON HOMOSEXUALITY IN THE MILITARY

Chattanooga Times/Free Press Editorial (1/8/2000)

It shocked a great many Americans when President Bill Clinton made the first order of business for his administration the championing of a "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy for the acceptance of homosexuality in our military forces.

Why would such an issue get first attention? Since then, there have been countless manifestations of the rapid

growth of homosexual pressure-group political agitation, prompting a surprising array of candidates to make moral surrenders to pander to homosexual groups.

In one recent joint appearance of Vice President Al Gore, Jr. and former Sen. Bill Bradley in a Democratic presidential "debate," too little noticed was a statement by Mr. Gore. He made it clear that his selection of the top military leaders of our nation would depend upon a "litmus test" involving homosexuality. Mr. Gore pledged specifically that, if he becomes president, he will appoint no Army, Navy, Air Force or Marine general or admiral to be chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff unless the officer embraces Mr. Gore's support of open homosexuality in the military.

How shocking it is that promotion of the homosexual agenda, rather than military excellence, is Mr. Gore's chief issue as he seeks to become commander-in-chief of United States armed forces.

WALDRON'S COMMENT:

Satan uses the same tactics generation after generation to destroy lives and nations. Sodom, Gomorrah and the cities around them were destroyed because they had "given themselves over to fornication and gone after strange flesh" (Jude 7). The men of Sodom demonstrated their unbridled passion for sexual perversion when they rejected Lot's foolish offer of his daughters. They wanted to fornicate with men not women. Later God warned Israel, "You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is abomination (Lev. 18:20; cf. Deut. 23:17). The inspired writer said of Judah, "And there were also sodomites in the land and they did according to all the abominations of the nations which the Lord cast out before the children of Israel" (I Kings 14:24). Because of such abominations God destroyed the city of Jerusalem and Judah by the hand of the pagan king Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 36:14-17). Bill Clinton, a year ago (June '99), had the audacity to declare June as "gay rights" month. Beloved, we must be aware of those pushing so-called "gay rights" in order to put homosexuals in very strategic places in our country. As John rebuked Herod for his adultery, Matthew 14:1-4, Godfearing elders and gospel preachers must rebuke the politicians that push abominations as part of their quest for political power. As the prophet said, "Cry aloud; spare not; Lift up your voice like a trumpet..." (Isa. 58:1) Instead of this kind of preaching often pulpits and even