

Bedford Bulletin

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BUILDING BLOCKS OF THE
F A I T H
1 Corinthians 3:9-11

Things That Divide (Part 9) The Church of Christ

Division between husband and wife always brings strife. Division within an organization always brings disorganization. Division by definition means: “the act or process of dividing: the state of being divided”, Merriam Webster. Division in the church opens the floodgate for worldliness and thus sin to penetrate, infiltrate or otherwise breach what should be purely focused on the spiritual, and blends that with the physical. Again, as long as there is a lack of respect for Bible authority, there will continue to be division in the body of Christ. Brethren must love the word of God and respect it enough to abide by the teachings of Christ. Remember what John wrote, “Whoever [a]transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; 11 for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds” (2 John 9-12). Make no mistake, going beyond in any way from what is written (1 Cor. 4:6), that is what is authorized is sin, and that is what separates man from God.

We have considered many things up to now, that bring division from within our ranks. It would seem that many feel as though the Lord’s church is like a tack board, where you just tack on anything that pleases you, and remove anything that offends. The thing is, the Lord’s people must be opposed to anything some try to tack onto the church of Christ without Bible authority.

The real problem with division within the ranks of the body of Christ, with opening the gate for things to take place without Bible authority is this: Where do you draw the line? Fact is once this begins there is just no stopping place. Many of us have watched, even in our generation, practices added to the church where there is no Bible authority whatsoever. But yet throughout all the “different / perverted” gospels, there still exist churches of Christ who continue their plea to speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent. Brethren, we must carry the banner of Christ our Lord, Master and Savior of the Body, standing for what is written.



“For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.”

Now, in this issue we’ll address one form of division that has many spellbound. That would be the recreational craze

that is taking hold within the ranks of some churches of Christ. Why is this so powerful? Why is an otherwise faithful brother or sister enamored, smitten with adding to spiritual the physical? The recreational craze within the churches of Christ changes the directive from the spiritual needs of our members to their physical and emotional needs. Brethren, the church is spiritual and ought to remain spiritual and recreation is physical and ought to remain outside of the practices of the church. Not all understand this and as a result many claim to be "progressive" and are providing and overseeing some form of recreation for their members.

Knowing & Doing God's Will

Proverbs 11:14

What kinds of recreational things are we talking about? We can easily find churches who have built gymnasiums, churches who have their fellowship halls, churches who have “church” baseball teams, Zumba, Boy Scouts, martial arts classes, and that is just a few. They have added just about everything in the world that you can think of. What’s wrong is they can’t give you any Bible authority, not one scripture to support these forms of recreation if their lives depended on it, and their souls do. In John 18:36, Jesus said, “*My kingdom is not of this world*”. Whenever you add anything such as the afore mentioned, my friend, you’ve made His kingdom different and merely a social institution. Country clubs have gymnasiums, they have fellowship halls, kitchens, game rooms, pools, and everything of this nature that you can think of. But the churches of Christ do not.

Jackson Park Church of Christ in Nashville posted this: “It’s time for Trunk or Treat! Saturday, October 26 Dinner at 5:00 Trunk or Treat at 6:00”. they also have posted “The East Nashville League: Dan Mills Club-23”, a church of Christ baseball team calling it the Jackson Park Church of Christ team.

In this case it was noted, “Money is not used from the church.” Fine, but why does it have the right to use the name “Church of Christ”? It violates Bible authority. Maybe you’re not sure if this is a strong point? I pray that the image here will make you feel sick and angry. This was taken on my phone in our local town’s grocery store. A box of beer named, “Sweet Baby Jesus”, I ask where’s the reverence, respect or fear? When you apply the Lord’s name to baseball teams and basketball teams, it’s not different, you are acting without divine authority. **When you put the name of "Jesus Christ" on anything other than that which He authorized—it is taking His Holy name in vain.**



God commanded, “*You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain*” (Exo. 20:7). This means using His Holy name for anything common, not just cursing, but applying His name to things He didn’t purpose for its use. When brethren do this—it will cause division and sin.

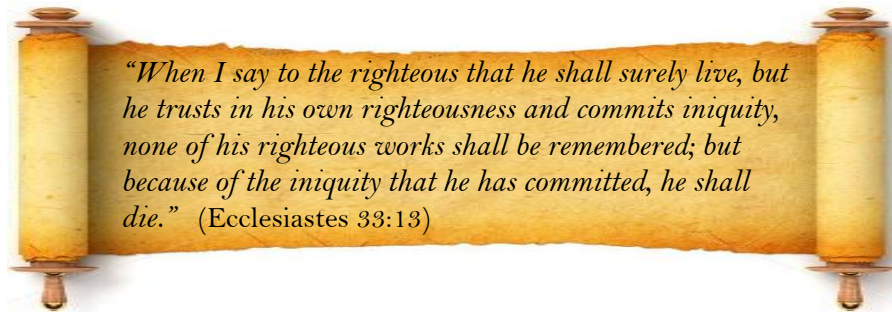
Somebody may say, “Preacher, you are just anti-recreation, anti-fun.” Listen, I enjoy golf and I can’t find a good reason not to workout at the local gym. My children, along with many in the church enjoy playing and watching baseball, basketball and football. I help my grandchildren in their cooking classes, horseback riding lessons and music lessons. All these and more are good for us, but, unless you can read somewhere in the scripture where these can be added to the practices of the church, then to do so violates Bible authority. The church must not be engaged in such activities as to make them part and practice of the church.

Moses told the people “*You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you*” (Deut. 4:2). John wrote a warning to the churches in the book of Revelation, “*18 [a] For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, [b] God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God [c] shall take away his part from the [d] Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book*” (22:18-19).

What is going to be added or removed next? Instrumental music in the worship! Serving the Lord’s Supper only on the first Sunday of every month? And there are some today who no longer oppose instrumental music in worship. Some “churches” have voted to observe the Lord’s table less often or on special holidays. What if we only talk about “*smooth things*”, instead of “*right things*” (Isa. 30:10-11)? Will we not also drive God out from among us?

If you can have a gymnasium tacked on to the church without Bible authority, then brethren, what is wrong with bringing a piano into worshiping God without Bible authority? What is wrong with calling the church some other man’s name? It was the Lord who purchased the church with His blood (Acts 20:28). I want you to tell me, where is the stopping place?

As always, in Love



“When I say to the righteous that he shall surely live, but he trusts in his own righteousness and commits iniquity, none of his righteous works shall be remembered; but because of the iniquity that he has committed, he shall die.” (Ecclesiastes 33:13)

Times of Our Services

Sunday Morning Bible Study	9:00 AM
Sunday Morning Worship	9:50 AM
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00 PM
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	7:30 PM

What Must I Do to Be Saved?

1. Hear the gospel -----John 6:45; Romans 10:17
2. Believe the gospel-----John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6
3. Repent of sins -----Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30
4. Confess Christ-----Matthew 10:32; Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized -----Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38
6. Remain faithful unto and until death-----Revelation 2:10; Matthew 10:22