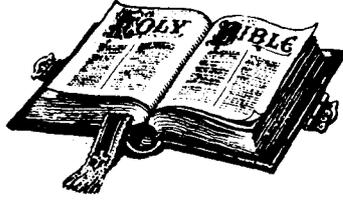


THE INSTRUCTOR



"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." 2 Timothy 3:16

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IS IT NECESSARY TO ASSEMBLE?

Sometimes weak or uninformed Christians will try to justify their negligence in assembling with the saints by saying, "It is not necessary for Christians to assemble. One can worship God at home." Is this idea of faith? Can it be advocated by faith? Let us consider the following facts.

1. CHRISTIANS ARE COMMAND-ED TO ASSEMBLE. Hebrews 10:25 says: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." NOTE: Assembling involves a gathering together.

2. ACTS 4:31 INDICATES THERE WAS AN ASSEMBLY IN WHICH PREACHING AND PRAYING WERE ENGAGED IN.

3. ACTS 11:26 TELLS US "THAT A WHOLE YEAR THEY (Barnabas and Saul) ASSEMBLED THEMSELVES WITH THE CHURCH, AND TAUGHT MUCH PEOPLE."

4. ACTS 14:27 TELLS US THAT PAUL AND BARNABAS "GATHERED THE CHURCH TOGETHER," and "THEY REHEARSED ALL THAT GOD HAD DONE WITH THEM..."

5. CHRISTIANS ARE TOLD NOT TO SHOW PARTIALITY TO THOSE WHO COME INTO THEIR ASSEMBLY DRESSED IN FINERY. (See

James 2:1-4). NOTE: This necessarily implies that Christians were assembling and that Christians should assemble.

6. WE LEARN FROM ACTS 20:7 THAT "UPON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK, WHEN THE DISCIPLES CAME TOGETHER TO BREAK BREAD, PAUL PREACHED UNTO THEM..." NOTE: We are commanded to partake of the Lord's Supper (see 1 Corinthians 11:23-29) and Acts 20:7 shows us what day we should break bread.

7. IT IS CERTAINLY GOOD TO ASSEMBLE WITH THE SAINTS IN ORDER TO WORSHIP GOD. I am sure that no Christian would deny this. If we are able to assemble, and we have the opportunity to do so, and we simply do not, we have sinned. (See James 4:17).

No, the idea that "it is not necessary for Christians to assemble" is not of faith and cannot be advocated by faith! Obviously Satan would be pleased if you accepted such an idea!

(CRS)

CRITICISM

Don't mind criticism. If it is not true, disregard it. If it is unfair, keep from irritations. If it is ignorant, smile. If it is justified, learn from it.

THE INSTRUCTOR

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Editorial

SHOULD PREACHERS CALL NAMES?

By the question, "Should Preachers Call Names", I mean, should preachers identify by name persons and/or parties and organizations they have in mind while preaching the gospel of Christ and the truth of Almighty God?

There are different opinions among "saints" as well as "sinners" relative to whether or not preachers should call names in their preaching.

Some of the most "popular" preachers among God's people do **not** call names. Is this good or is it bad? Is it only a matter of judgement and choice? Or is it a matter of right or wrong? Do those who would **not** ever do so under any circumstance do right? Do those who call names (not simply for the sake of calling names nor with improper motives) sin by so doing?

REASONS FOR NOT CALLING NAMES

"Reasons" for not calling names can be given. Here are some I have heard through the years. (1) It isn't popular. (2) People don't like it. (3) It makes people angry. (4) You can't reach people by preaching like that. (5) It does not show love. (6) It leaves a bad taste with people. (7) It is not dignified. (8) It will run people off. (9) It is ugly and mean. (10) You should preach the gospel and leave people alone. (11) It offends

people. (12) It will put the church in a bad light. (13) It will stir people up. (14) Jesus and the apostles did not preach like that. (15) I don't like it.

I have noticed that the people who give any of the above or similar "reasons" never give any **Scriptural proof** that calling names is sinful. Is it **wrong** for preachers to call names? Or do preachers have a **Scriptural right** (or perhaps an obligation) to call names? **What saith the Scriptures?**
OBLIGATIONS OF PREACHERS

Preachers (and others) have an obligation to contend for the faith. In Proverbs 28:4 Solomon declared that **"They that forsake the law praise the wicked: but such as keep the law contend with them."** In his letter to saints, Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, said: **"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."** (Jude 3) In contending for the faith, one must preach the word. Not only must he preach the word in a positive way, but he must also **reprove and rebuke.** (cf. 2 Tim. 4:2).

REPROVE. Please consider the obligation to **reprove** that is set forth in the following passages.

1. 2 Tim. 3:16-17 — **"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for REPROOF, FOR CORRECTION, FOR INSTRUCTION IN RIGHTEOUSNESS: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."**

2. 2 Tim. 4:2 — **"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; REPROVE, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine."**

3. Eph. 5:11 — **"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather REPROVE them."**

REBUKE. In the following passages we can see that preachers (and others)

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have an obligation to rebuke.

1. Luke 17:3 — “Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, **REBUKE** him; and if he repent, forgive him.”

2. 2 Tim. 4:2 — “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, **REBUKE**, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.”

3. 1 Tim. 5:20 — “Them that sin **REBUKE** before all, that others also may fear.”

4. Tit. 1:13 — “. . . Wherefore **REBUKE** them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith.”

5. Tit. 2:15 — “These things speak, and exhort, and **REBUKE** with all authority . . .”

In reproving and rebuking the Pharisees and Sadducees who came to his baptism in Matthew 3:7-8 John said: “O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.” To Herod John said: “It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother’s wife.” (Mk. 6:18).

JESUS CHRIST CALLED NAMES

It would be difficult for a person who reads the New Testament to not be impressed with the fact that our Saviour reproved and rebuked sinners by addressing them personally and warned his disciples about others by calling their names. The following passages show that Jesus reproved and rebuked and often in so doing he called names.

1. Matthew 12:34 — “O generation of vipers, how can ye being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.”

2. Matthew 15:7-9 — In addressing scribes and Pharisees Jesus said: “Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying . . .”

3. Matthew 16:6-12 — “Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees . . . Then understood they how that he bade

them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.”

4. Matthew 22:18 — In addressing the Pharisees when Jesus perceived their wickedness said, “Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites.”

5. In Matthew 23 Jesus mentioned “the Scribes and the Pharisees”. (V.2). In addressing them in verses 13, 15, 23, 25, 27 and 29 he said: “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites.” In verse 24 he said, “Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat and swallow a camel” and in verse 33 he said, “Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?”

6. John 8:44 — “Ye are of your father the devil . . .”

7. Jesus mentioned “the doctrine of Balaam” in Rev. 2:14, “the doctrine of the Nicolaitans” in Rev. 2:15, “Satan’s seat” in Rev. 2:13, “the synagogue of Satan” in Rev. 2:9 and “Jezebel” in Rev. 2:20-23.

NOTE: Jesus did not sin in calling names and he left us an example that we should follow in his steps. (cf. 1 Pet. 2:21-24; John 8:46).

PAUL CALLED NAMES

In the Scriptures that follow we can see from his preaching and writing that Paul called names.

1. In addressing Elymas the sorcerer, Paul said: “O full of all subtilly and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?” (Acts 13:10).

2. 1 Tim. 1:19-20 — “Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.”

3. 2 Tim. 1:15 — “This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.”

4. 2 Tim. 2:17-18 — “And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom

SHOULD PREACHERS CALL NAMES?

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is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some."

5. 2Tim. 4:14-15 — "Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works: Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words."

6. Galatians 2:11-14 — "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed . . . Barnabas was also carried away with their dissimulation . . . I said unto Peter before them all, . . ."

NOTE: We are to follow the apostle Paul as he followed Jesus Christ. (Cf. 1 Corinthians 4:16; 11:1; Phil. 3:17 and 4:9). Paul left us an **example** in preaching. We dare **not** think for a moment that we can improve upon it! We need to pray that we and others will have sufficient **courage** to preach the truth with boldness! (Please read Eph. 6:18-20).

OTHERS

1. JOHN. "I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them, receiveth us not . . ." (3 John 9-10).

2. PETER. "... following the way of Balaam, the son of Bosor . . ." (2 Peter 2:15). Also see the rebuke he

gave to Simon in Acts 8:17-24).

3. STEPHEN. "Yea, ye took up the tabernacles of Moloch, and the star of you god Remphan, figures which ye made to worship them: . . ." (Acts 7:43). In verse 51 he said: "Ye stiff-necked . . ."

4. JUDE. "... the way of Cain, . . . the error Balaam . . . the gainsaying of Core." (Jude 11).

5. LUKE.

(1) Acts 6:9-10 — "... the synagogue of the Libertines, and of all Asia, and them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with them . . ."

(2) Acts 19:14 — "And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests . . ."

(3) Acts 19:24 — "For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsman."

(4) Acts 23:8 — "For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both."

NOTE: The examples of these preclaimers of God's word were **not wrong in calling names**. They not only preached a "positive" gospel but also a "negative" one. Do you?

CONCLUSION: In light of all the evidence we have in God's Book, we must conclude that **it is certainly right** for preachers (and others) to **call names** and that there are times when **we should do just that!**

(CRS)

— SENTENCE SERMONS —

No person truly lives until he learns to love — as God's word teaches.

* * * * *

The world crowns "success", but God crowns faithfulness.

* * * * *

To attain true greatness one must be clothed with humility.

* * * * *

When your faith fails to obey God, it is dead and worthless.

CHURCH OF CHRIST

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