



Personalities

Have you ever heard some observer commenting upon certain difficulties that churches and individuals experience as the problem being a matter of personalities? Those who are aware of certain situations must admit that the expression or its counterpart is often the summation that some have. Just what does a person mean by the expression “a matter of personalities”? Unless I fail to understand their meaning, they are saying that the problem or problems are due to the feelings that persons have toward one another. Factors such as envy, revenge, or resentment are responsible for their actions. In accrediting the problem to personalities, they are eliminating doctrinal issues or making it quite evident that doctrine is not involved.

For a good while, certain thoughts have been in my mind regarding this subject which I believe all who desire to be right before God should seriously meditate upon. Consider the following:

Personalities Involved Do Not Eliminate the Possibility of Doctrine Also Being Involved. For an example, in Galatians 2:11-13, one reads of Paul standing before Peter to his face and telling him that he was to be blamed. Peter had eaten with the Gentiles when the Jews were not present; but when the Jews were present, Peter declined to do so. Here were persons definitely involved, as in most all matters of religion, but the matter also involved doctrine. At a very crucial time in the church regarding some matters, Peter was evidencing respect of persons and committing dissimulation, and as a follower of the doctrine of Christ, Paul was obligated to rebuke him. How easy it might have been for an observer, or particularly one hearing the matter second or third handed, to say that Paul was acting upon the basis of personalities or personal feeling toward Peter rather than his being motivated by doctrine. It is a serious

and unjust thing to accredit any rebuke or problem that arises to it being a matter of personalities with no consideration for higher motives being involved—namely, following the doctrine of Christ. Friends of Peter might have suggested to Peter that Paul was a little jealous of him and was just endeavoring to find fault. It happens in our time! Some make it a matter of personalities!

One Should Not Attempt to Evade Responsibilities By Conveniently Crying Personalities. It is understood by those who respect the word of God that a man of faith is definitely to declare himself in matters of faith, but such is not so regarding personalities. This is the out for some! They render the problem as a matter of personalities and ignore what they call doctrinal matters to keep from having to be either/or. Elders have been known to find this convenient to save face without having to take a stand. Why should they be involved when it is only a matter of personalities? So they go on their merry way still as great stalwarts of the faith. Preachers have relied upon “personalities” to relieve them of dealing with some congregational problems. A matter of personalities doesn’t keep them from holding meetings anywhere or endorsing any congregation. See how convenient this thing works! It’s a great help in evading responsibilities and saving face!

Fairness Should Be Manifested When Advocating Personalities. I know of a situation existing in a congregation where the elders said that the problem was a matter of personalities between the preacher and certain members. The preacher denied such and contended that, at least on his part, it was over the teaching of Christ that some members would not accept. To evade really dealing with the contentious members and upholding the preacher, they persisted in saying that it was a question of personalities, let them smooth it out themselves. A short time later, the elders had a run in with some of the same members. You guessed it—the matter then was no longer over personalities, but doctrine. What had changed? Not the issues, but simply the shoes. They were on the elders’ feet this time rather than on the preachers’.

Matters of personalities do at times exist and even these must



be properly dealt with. It is certainly sinful for envy, jealousy, and resentment to exist among members and congregations. However, we need to be careful and use caution in advocating that something is solely a matter of personalities. It could be that we are simply making a cowardly approach rather than a scriptural evaluation of the situation. When you are on the battle line of truth and doing all in your power to contend for the faith, would you appreciate someone saying that your actions were matters of personal dislike toward some individuals with whom you were dealing? Think brethren and be careful!

Bobby Thompson

Not Good If Detached!

Did you ever notice on various tickets or on many coupons, “Not good if detached”? The coupon or ticket was made of the same material as the rest of the ticket, printed with the same ink on the same press, and kept in the same



office. But it was not good if detached. Its usefulness was dependent upon its relation to the rest of the ticket.

Of how much worth is a church member detached from the rest of the church? How much fruit can a branch have detached from the vine? How good is a hand detached from a body? A Christian is one who stays with the rest of the congregation. He cannot serve God acceptably apart from it. Did you ever notice how quickly a banana gets skinned after it leaves the bunch? All who profess to follow Christ are to stay near to the Lord and others who are striving to faithfully follow Christ. Peter followed afar off and denied his Master. We need closeness rather than detachment. Remember the admonition from the Hebrew writer: “Forsaking not the assembling of yourselves together...” (Heb. 10:25).

Bobby Thompson



GLAD TIDINGS

Sermon Notes: Speaker: _____

Topic: _____

Order of Worship December 19, 2021

Song Leader—AM	Michael Young
Song Leader—PM	Steve Frazier
Lord's Table	Gary Barber
Sermon—AM—Devin Barber	Sermon—PM—Devin Barber

Continue prayers for those on our list, and for the free course of the gospel.

1 John 5:14

Editor: Steve Frazier

Marietta church of Christ

8150 Driggers St.

Jacksonville, FL 32220

Meeting times of the church

Sunday 09:00 am Bible Classes 10:00 am Worship 05:00 pm Evening Worship

Wednesday 7:00 pm Bible classes

Evangelist: Devin Barber

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Hebrews 10:24-25