**“Going to Church”**

**Part II**

 ***“But What About…”***

Ah yes, the good ole days… when instead of ‘losing readers,’ my ‘studies’ or ‘commentary’ would bring comments and questions.

Following the uploading of my “*Going to Church*” commentary, I received a few questions and comments that I can now happily respond to. Yay!

In those ‘olden days,’ I used to write sermons, etc. that were very complete – not a verse or a thought was omitted – at least I tried, anyway. I do remember that I think I averaged approximately 75 verses to a single sermon in those days.

Anyway, let’s continue this thought that was started in “*Going to Church*” – part I and talk more about ‘*going to church’* today – yes, no or whatever? It ought to be our personal goal to please God in such a manner to give Him glory regarding the truth according to the risen Saviour and acting on what His words state as given to us through Paul – with our end concern being our own judgment seat of Christ. I don’t think any of us want to waste any of our efforts down here on doing things that will mean nothing to God ‘up there’. We know most of what we do and where we go and what we see these days will simply burn at our judgment seat, but we ought not go out of our way to do things that simply waste time, by our own choosing, and won’t ‘do us any good’ in the eternal long run!

* Does going to church today please God or please man (or wo-man)?
* Does the church that folks continue to attend ‘fit the bill’ on what the local church should be today, of course meaning ‘according to Paul ONLY’?
* Should we still attend a common church service even if it is not a Scriptural local church?
* Is going to a local church that isn’t a Paul teaching church any different than the common bible believing Baptist going to another denominational church – Lutheran, etc. – I mean, isn’t the gospel’s Great Commission taught in most denominations one way or another?
* Can a church even exist today if it is designed solely on Paul’s teachings?

First of all, understand I am not against ‘going to church.’ Whether it be Sunday morning, Sunday evening, Wednesday evening, Thursday evening or Tuesday morning or whatever… even having a get together on Saturday or any other day is fine *(as long as you aren’t calling whatever day you choose to attend ‘The Sabbath’ and believing you shouldn’t do anything on the Sabbath because you want to keep it holy.)*.

Bunny Trail: There isn’t a person alive that can follow the Jewish Sabbath law today – if a man was stoned because he gathered sticks on the Sabbath in Numbers, then someone today must be brain-stoned to think they can actually obey the Sabbath Day enough to keep it holy. **Numbers 15:32-36** ***And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day. And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation. And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him. And the LORD said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp. And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the LORD commanded Moses.***

Also, don’t try to force **Exodus 20:8** into your family today - ***Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy***, because in **Colossians 2:16**, Paul takes the ten commandments and makes them into the “big nine” when he says, “***Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:***

(Note: Do you realize that there is no need to be fighting over the ‘*Ten Commandments*” when it is only the ‘*Nine Commandments”* that Paul reiterates to mean anything to us today!)

No doubt, a local church is still the ‘local’ way for us to gather together, etc. We have to see, realize and accept that today’s churches are based on **Acts 2** not **Ephesians 4**. So, if we realize that and still can’t find a church based on **Ephesians 4**, then what about the rest of what Paul says?

Ok, let’s look at what else Paul says.

We turn to **I Timothy 3** where we read about the office of a bishop and the qualifications of such. We look at the qualifications about a deacon *(although have you noticed that we don’t find anywhere about what specific duties a deacon has…).* We also see comments about behaving in the ‘house of God’ and how it is to be the ‘pillar and ground of the truth.’

OK, we can look at those verses a little closer… but first, also note that in the following chapter **I Timothy 4**, we see comments made about departing from the faith. Do folks think those of us who don’t attend church anymore have departed from the faith?

What we see in **Chapter 4** are details in the Christian’s daily life – Paul calls it his manner of life and does expect us to know it. It isn’t even close to the Levitical Law so don’t ‘go there’ with that objection; however, it does present to us sound doctrine – and I guarantee to you that I believe that it is these chapters in Timothy why men and especially women hate Paul as much as they do.

Bunny Trail – ‘a long one.’

If I was doing a live sermon, I would most certainly bunny trail following that comment and point out **I Timothy 5:11-15; 6:1,2; 6:3-6; 6:9,10; 6:11.12; 6:14; 6:17,18;** and finish the bunny trail with **chapter 6:20,21**. I promise I would make them read those verses with me – in the meantime, I would have to duck down behind the pulpit to dodge those fiery darts that I know would be coming my way! Been there – done that many many times!

By the time I would be done with that preachy bunny trail, we would all realize that going to today’s ‘average’ church today isn’t going to help any of those things take place in our life – and those verses are certainly NOT preached in any local church that I am aware of… at least one that ALSO preaches Paul’s calling to the dispensation of the grace of God! (and without mixing the gospels, James, Peter, I II III John, etc. along with a bunch of guilt producing Old Testament verses about being righteous and the benefits thereof…

I’m telling you – or reminding some of you – that when I preached those verses along with **Titus chapter 2**, I could tell that my days in the pulpit were fading away quickly. I knew that just by looking at the faces of the congregation as I preached and ‘teached’ this stuff. The joy of learning about the dispensation of the grace of God in doctrinal detail went by the wayside when Paul’s ‘manner of life’ entered into the picture. Nobody, and I mean nobody, preaches this stuff like it ought to be preached… in love and encouraging folks to respond so that they may grow up into him in all things… and that it would help us grow up and henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and so we would no longer be carried about with every wind of doctrine, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive.

It seems to me that most ‘Christians’ today would rather walk as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleannesss with greediness.

(See **Ephesians 4:15-19**)

Christians, modern or otherwise, really don’t want to hear ‘sound doctrine’ nor do they really want to take heed to what Paul teaches because he tells that all those things that we learned, and received, and heard, and seen in Paul, we are to DO – and yet he reminds us that the God of peace shall be with us through all that ‘manner of life.”

End of bunny trail…

Whew – now that was some bunny trail!!!!

*“We will have to come back tonight to get back onto the trail! Once again, I went ‘long’ – but you ought to be used to that by now, folks. 😊*

*Gentlemen, come forward and let’s ‘take’ their offering, we need some extra giving so we can add more coffee flavors to our coffee and snack bar in the lobby – and while we do that, aunt Maybelle, would you sing a special offertory deep from your heart as we try not to cringe too much as you screech those sky-high notes of warbling sopranoness!”*

*Henry, take your position at the door and as you shake their hands and thank the folks for coming, be sure to yank them out so we can all get to the restaurant so we can continue our ‘fellowship’ of breaking bread together!” Somebody wake up Caroline, and tell her we are done for the morning. See you all back tonight for Part III.*

*See Part III for the continuation…*