

Tuning to the Standard

For many years musicians would tune their instruments with a device called a tuning fork (the predecessor of the pith pipe and the new digital devices). The conductor of the orchestra or band would strike the tuning fork with his hand and let a clarinet player or violin player tune to the standard. Once the musician tuned his instrument to the tuning fork, the rest of the musicians would listen to that note and tune their instruments accordingly. Today, if you attend an orchestral performance (and you get there a little early), you may hear the piano player striking a note like "C" and all the musicians will listen, and then tune to that note (up or down). In this process, do you realize the tuning fork was the standard of authority and, therefore, unity?

Can you imagine the unmusical results if the conductor said to his musicians: "For tonight's performance, we will not be using a tuning fork. It will be our purpose to illustrate the beauty of individuality and diversity. You can find your own "C" according to your own desires, or tune to a neighbor if you like. We do not want anyone to be stifled or limited by authority of a single standard." What do you think the performance would sound like? What would the reviews say?

But why not take these ideas of 'no suppression from authority' and 'exaltation of individualism' a little further? Suppose the conductor says, "each one of you can play your favorite piece; ready, 1, 2, 3 . . ." Go ahead - fire the conductor; let the musicians show up whenever they want to; let everyone play whatever instrument they want, whatever piece they like, in tune or out of tune; and let them start and finish whenever they desire. If you let individualism prevail and authority die, do you know what results? You have nothing left of any musical value. No authority, just unattractive chaos that nobody would want to hear. It would sound awful!

Yet this is exactly what we observe in modern religion today. There is resistance to Bible authority, praise for human plurality, unity in diversity and the growing deception that this is what God wants!

But this isn't what God wants. Jesus prayed, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (John 17:20-21). Who can believe and teach that the division of denominationalism is sanctioned by our Lord?

by Warren Berkley

Edifier

Evant church of Christ

310 W Brooks Drive

Evant, TX 76525

254-471-5705

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Attending church services regularly is like making a path through the forest: the more often you use it, the less obstruction you find in the way."

Sunday Worship:

9:30 am Bible Study

10:20 am Worship

12:30 pm Afternoon

Wednesday Night

6:00 pm

Will Vann, Preacher

863-899-0987

Email: wvann@yahoo.com

www.evantchurchofchrist.org

Priscilla and Aquila and Apollos

There's a very interesting passage from the Book of Acts I want like to share with you: Now a certain Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by race, an eloquent man, came to Ephesus; and he was mighty in the Scriptures. This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, knowing only the baptism of John: and he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more accurately. (Acts 18:24-26)

This passage is a wonderful example of demonstrating proper behavior towards one another on the part of brothers and sisters in Christ. As part of our growing in the fruit of the Spirit, we are commanded to be patient with our fellow Christians, and especially those who are babes in Christ: "...beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith you were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Ephesians 4:1-3)

What if Priscilla and Aquila had behaved differently when they first encountered Apollos? What if they had immediately criticized him in front of everyone in the synagogue? How do you think Apollos would have felt and reacted if these two individuals, without confronting him first in private, had talked about him behind his back, and called him a "false teacher" and circulated letters among the brethren disparaging his character and motives? Wouldn't great harm have come to the church, the church which Jesus loved so much that He purchased it with His own blood (1 Peter 1:18-19)? I dare say it would have! Too many times people wish to brand their fellow brothers and sisters in Christ with appellations such as "false teacher" or "apostates" when an honest examination of the facts doesn't warrant these labels being attached. Many times, these individuals may only be mistaken, as was the case with Apollos, or maybe they simply hold a difference of opinion on a matter that falls within the parameters of Christian liberty, as Paul wrote in Romans 14. It's true that we must "contend earnestly for the faith" (Jude 3), but let's make certain we aren't being contentious for the faith instead. Let's follow after the example of Priscilla and Aquila, so that we can achieve the same result as they did with Apollos: And when he was minded to pass over into Achaia, the brethren encouraged him, and wrote to the disciples to receive him: and when he was come, he helped them much that had believed through grace; for he powerfully confuted the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ. (Acts 18:27-28) Thankfully, Priscilla and Aquila demonstrated true agape love for Apollos. The world has been greatly blessed by their love. May the Lord bless you!

By David R. Ferguson

Happy Birthday

***Eloisa Garza March 2nd
Anson Day March 28th***

The Wrath of God

To this day I can still remember the anxiety and the fear that would overcome me when my mother instructed me to go and "pick a switch." Being on the end of the wrath of an authority figure because of our wrongdoing is not a pleasant feeling. Yet, at the same time, when people break the law or cause us offense we desire retribution, justice, and vengeance. As Christians, we can be certain that our God will avenge the wrongs we are subjected to by Satan and his forces. The book of Revelation, in part, is a reminder that God will avenge His people.

However, we should remember what the wrath of God unleashed upon man looks like. One might think of the flood, or the Amalekite people, or perhaps even the people of Nineveh (Nah. 1:2) who were spared for a time by the preaching of Jonah. Paul describes the wrath of God as being terrible (2 Cor. 5:11) and points to it as a reason we persuade others to follow Jesus. Yes, God is an avenger and yes, He will avenge His people. But that does not mean we should hope for this. Instead, we should desire that everyone we meet in our lives avoids our avenging God.

By Andrew Beasley

Those to Serve

(B) Mike Lovell
(FV) Doug Pruett
(O) Jack Wall
(A) Judd Wall
1st prayer Mike Mallett
2nd prayer Keith Stifflemire
Announcements: Calvin Burks
Singing: Kevin Grant

***February 25th
Noon Fellowship
March 3rd
Mission Sunday
March 10th
Daylight Saving Begins
March 17th
St. Patrick's Day
March 19th
Spring Begins
March 31st
Noon Fellowship
Easter Sunday***

Prayer List:
Dora Martinez
Jorge Garza
Lynn Parker
Tammy Parker
Anita Adams
Virginia Lovell
Letha Sheldon
Pray for our Nation
Our Troops
Law Enforcement
Rescue Personnel