

Light and Life

Considering Critically

These days we have such easy access to information we can learn more easily than ever before. Through social media, blog articles, podcasts and sermons we may encounter a perspective on scripture that is new to us. How will we react? Will we discount it because it is not our tradition? Will we accept it because it ‘sounds good’ or is just new and exciting? Or will we critically examine this teaching, “testing the spirits whether they be of God” (1 Jn 4:1)?

In Thessalonica, “the Jews who were not persuaded [of the gospel], becoming envious, took some of the evil men from the marketplace, and gathering a mob, set all the city in an uproar and attacked” the disciples (Ac 17:5). These Jews were so engulfed in their status quo that anything which had the potential to disrupt their tradition was threatening to them. Unwilling to critically assess their current beliefs when they were met with truth that contradicted their present lifestyles, rather than examining themselves they lashed out violently. They weren’t interested in ‘new’ perspectives.

In Athens, Paul went to preach among the deep thinkers at the Areopagus. “All the Athenians and the foreigners who were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing” (Ac 17:21). These Greeks were the opposite of the Thessalonian Jews – they were **only** interested in new perspectives! However, many would not consider a lesson that was taught and evidenced throughout their history from the beginning of time (Ac 17:24-32). They disregarded the evidence of the past.

In Berea, the Jews “received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so” (Ac 17:11). These Jews weren’t obsessed with new perspectives or old traditions – they only sought truth! **Let’s be like them!**

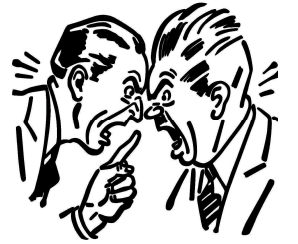
- Sam Bunyard



Just My Thoughts

Fruitless Disputation

“Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters. One person's faith allows them to eat anything, but another, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. The one who eats everything must not treat with contempt the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does, for God has accepted them” (Ro 14:1-3).



Humans like to be right. I do, you do, we all do. Sometimes this desire to be right, to have all the answers, can get in the way of our calling as Christians. There are matters of truth in Scripture that must be upheld and defended, but there are also many things that are what Paul would deem “disputable matters”. In this passage Paul gives the example of one who eats only vegetables, and one who eats whatever he wants. In our modern day this often isn’t an issue that is as hotly contested as it would’ve been in the first century. However, there are plenty of disputable matters Christian’s might find themselves arguing over.

Some may debate over what time Christian’s should meet on Sunday mornings. Some might dispute whether the congregation should meet once or twice on Sunday. Some might dispute what kind of media is acceptable or unacceptable to consume. Paul contended that matters such as these shouldn’t be quarreled and argued over, because these disputable matters don’t help or harm the Christian. What **can** harm the Christian, however, is demanding what the text does not demand, drawing a line where God draws none. The Gospel message is a simple one, and our desire to be right about disputable matters can sometimes complicate that. So, let’s endeavor to put quarreling over disputable things behind us, focusing only on the truth of God’s word!

- Hayden Cathey

ASSEMBLY TIMES

Sunday

Bible Class 9:30
Morning Assembly 10:30
Evening Assembly 5:00

Wednesday

Evening Bible Class 6:30

RADIO PROGRAM

The Bible Speaks



Sunday 9:00-9:30a.m.
KURM 790AM

Downtown Church of Christ

P.O. Box 447
201 W. Chestnut Street
Rogers, AR 72757
479-636-3575
www.downtowncoc.net

SPRING SINGING

this Friday, April 21
6:30-8:30pm

Song Leading by

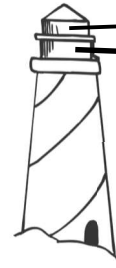
Tim Stevens
&
Dane Shepard

ELDERS:

Otis Hardin
Perry Johnson
Ken Parker
Alan Revier
GW Walsh

DEACONS:

TJ Burleson
Scott Hale
Joel Heiligenthal
Jason Hill
Chris Johnson
Brock McKeel
Randy Potter
Tim Roberts
Randy Shell



DOWNTOWN GOSPEL BEACON

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Extremism in Religion

Addressing religious extremism in a short, 200-word article is rather – extreme. But let’s give it a shot.

Extremism bad: when preachers focus on one aspect of the gospel to the neglect of others. When the topic is consistently on the ‘issues’ of the day while minimizing fundamental truths of justice, mercy, and faithfulness (Mt 23:23), that’s extremism. On the other hand, when the topic is consistently on love, grace, and forgiveness to the neglect of warnings about worldliness, apostasy, and hell, that’s extremism too (Ga 5:19-21, 2 Th 2:3, Mk 9:43-48). Faithful preachers will avoid both extremes.

But then again, **extremism good:** when Christians stand up against the tide of evil that sometimes engulfs a land. As Peter wrote, “they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery” (1 Pe 4:4, concerning things like sensuality, drinking parties, etc. - vs 3). Living a holy life seems extreme to the world (and even to some ‘Christians’, sadly).

Moses was extreme by the world’s standards when he chose suffering over the “fleeting pleasures of sin” (He 11:25). It always seems extreme to the world when God’s people make that choice. But it’s okay – be an extremist anyway. - *WKing*

FAMILY NEWS

PRAYER LIST –

Preachers we support: Japan, Philippines, Vietnam, Canada, Mexico, Peru, & U.S.

Sick: G&K Fletcher, Tony Tolbert, J&M Swim, Jean Marshall

Shut-ins: Betty Jo Young, Billie Pennington, Shirley Cole, Mary Lou Lewis

Military: Kyler Sullins, Sean Potter

SONG LEADER TRAINING – This Saturday, April 22 (morning after our spring singing), Tim & Dane will conduct a song leader training from 10-12.

SENTENCE SERMON – Be patient with the faults of others, for they must be patient with yours.