

What About Halloween?

Space won't allow a detailed proof of the following argument, but for our purpose here, we will simply present it as true. (1) All cultural practices that are not inherently sinful are cultural practices that Christians may participate in; (2) Some cultural practices associated with Halloween are not inherently sinful; (3) Therefore, some cultural practices associated with Halloween are cultural practices that Christians may participate in. Now, having said that, consider Galatians 5:13, "For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another" (Gal. 5:13, NKJ). Just because we have a right to participate in some cultural practices associated with "Halloween," does not mean we are totally free to do what ever! Halloween used to be known as a night of vandalism, but thankfully, at least in my observation, vandalism has



not been as prevalent in recent years. Needless to say, though, people, especially Christians, should not destroy other people's property just because it's Halloween. Likewise, people, especially Christians, should not dress in ways that reflect un-Biblical values. Why would, for example, a woman want to dress like a prostitute, or a man like a pimp, just because it's Halloween? Even at a time of make-believe, we are still to be the "salt of the earth" and the "light of the world" (Mt. 5:13-16). Instead of serving "the flesh" at times like these, let us "through love serve one another"! ❤️ Brian

South Florida Avenue
CHURCH OF CHRIST
 1807 South Florida Avenue
 Lakeland, FL 33803-2653

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The End of Your Search for a Friendly Church . . .



Sunday, November 10 --- L2L will meet following morning services. We will adjust the schedule from last time, but one thing will remain the same: if you would like to eat lunch at the building, bring a dish to share. We should be finished eating at 12:00 noon-ish. We will have a schedule for adult mentors ahead of time.

Friday, November 15 --- Our monthly youth group devotional and activity will be hosted by Stacey and Michelle Paulin. We thank all who help. Our young people are greatly benefitting from these activities!

Join the "Berean Bunch" Sundays at 5:45 pm!
 Young or old or in between, we want you to join us each Sunday before evening services to learn more about the Bible, especially the Book of Acts, and to sing a devotional song or two. We are never too young or old to learn!

HELP
WANTED

We Are Still in Need of a 3rd-5th grade teacher till December. If you can help, see Brian or Jason.

Setting the Example . . . We commend our youth group for sacrificing their time to make Thanksgiving bags to stuff with food and personal items to give to those in special need. We thank Rene' for organizing and encouraging our youth



in this good work!

"But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth" (1 Jn. 3:17-18)

The South Florida Avenue MESSENGER

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SUNDAY SERVICES

Bible Study.....9:30a.m.
Worship.....10:30a.m.
Evening Worship.....6:00p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Ladies Class.....10:00a.m.
Bible Study.....7:00p.m.

HOME OF

Florida School of Preaching

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A Sleeping Sickness

Raymond Elliott

Several years ago, there was an article in the newspaper about a schoolteacher in a city in Alaska who lost his job because of his lengthy record of being tardy for his classes. It was revealed that the teacher had a real problem about being hard to wake up in the mornings. His wife related that it was nearly impossible to awaken her husband. Instead of one alarm clock, several were used, but to no avail. Various methods were also used to arouse him from a deep sleep, but such were generally unsuccessful. This individual stated that his problem was inherited and was actually a sickness. One could not help but have some sadness in learning about his plight. But on the other hand, the story could be considered humorous except for the seriousness of the matter. I am reminded of the passage in Proverbs 20:13 that reads, *“Do not love sleep, lest you come to poverty; Open your eyes, and you will be satisfied with bread.”*

The ‘sleeping teacher’ is not alone. The church is blessed with many ‘sleeping brethren’ who are very difficult to arouse out of slumber. I speak not simply of physical encephalitis. Spiritual sleepiness is quite often manifested by the outward actions. Take for example members who drag in late for the periods of Bible study on Sunday morning and Wednesday evening (that is if they come at all). If they treated their employers in the same manner that they treat the Lord, they like the teacher would be fired from their jobs. And there is the slothful singing of many Christians that is indicative of a drowsy heart. There were members of the church in Corinth who lived in such a manner and who manifested a very low interest in the worship, especially in the failure to rightly discern the body of Jesus while partaking of the Lord’s Supper, that Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 11:30, *“For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.”* That is to say they were dead spiritually speaking. The spirit of Eutychus is still with us also (Acts 20:9). Jokingly we often say that after the preacher’s sermon there is a ‘great awakening.’ How often have you endeavored to get brethren to work, and they habitually drag their feet. The root of the problem is not so much a physical malady as it is a diseased heart. It is rank apathy and lethargy, that is, a state of drowsiness and listlessness brought on by a lack of concern for spiritual matters. The exhortation given by the apostle Paul in Romans 12:11 is *“not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.”*

Brethren we need to know “that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.” Otherwise, it is most likely that many members will be found lacking on the Day of Judgment.

Truth and Error

by T. Pierce Brown

Jesus said in John 8:32, “*Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*” There seems to be an increasing number of influential and scholarly brethren who are teaching, “You do not have to know the truth to be made free.” Their reasoning goes like this, if I understand it properly: “No one knows all the truth. So if one had to know all the truth to be made free from sin, no one could be free from sin. For example, when we were baptized, none of us knew all the blessings that God promised His children. He could, therefore, believe all sorts of error, such as that he was saved by faith only, and still he would be made free from sin as long as he was baptized with the notion, attitude or opinion that his baptism under those circumstances was obedience to God and would please Him.” I suggest it would be more fitting for those philosophers to give an exegesis of John 8:32 and tell exactly what truth a person has to know to be free from what thing or things rather than simply to deny the truth Jesus spoke.

Of course, a person does not have to know all the truth about oak trees in order to be free from wrong ideas about how to raise peanuts. Nor does one have to know all the truth about everything God revealed in order to be saved. It has often been pointed out that those on Pentecost, the eunuch, the jailer and others knew very little, yet they were saved. We gladly admit it.

Now the question can be stated more sharply: “What truths must one know in order to be saved from sin?” Suppose that one learns that Jesus was a wonderful, loving person, a son of God, willing to die for his principles and for all humanity. That is truth. But he has not learned that Jesus was the only begotten Son of God, born of a virgin, proved himself to be divine by the miracles He performed and by His resurrection. He may not even know the difference in the idea that Jesus is a son of God and Jesus is the Son of God. In fact, if you ask him if he believes in the resurrection, he will answer, “Yes,” but he does not believe that Jesus bodily came forth from the tomb. To hear some brethren talk, you would conclude that you have no right to ask him any questions except, “Do you believe Jesus is the Son of God?” Then you baptize him because he has come to think that God wants him to be baptized, but for what or on what basis, he has no idea. Is anyone willing to affirm that since he knew truth about Jesus he was therefore saved?

We are forced to conclude that when Jesus made the statement in John 8:32, He was stating a principle of great importance, and it involved this idea: When you

know the truth about any aspect or area of life, salvation, health, business or anything else, that truth will make you free from the dangers and consequences of your former ignorance in those areas. But that truth will make you free in those aspects only if/as/when you properly apply those truths. Take the matter of health, for example. If you know the truth about the causes and cures for cancer, you can be free from cancer, only when that truth is understood and applied. If you know the truth about how to make money or succeed in business, only to the extent that you apply those truths will you be free from debt or failure. If you know the truth about who Jesus is, what His purpose was on earth, and how that purpose is to be realized, then you can be free from error when you apply that truth as Jesus directed. If you know the truth about what sin is, what the consequence of sin is, how to get rid of it and apply that truth properly, you will be made free from sin.

Now let us suppose you learn what sin is, and that the wages of sin is death. You assume (believe) that you can get rid of it by confessing, “I believe that God for Christ’s sake has forgiven me of sins.” Is that the truth? If not, can it make you free from sin? If so, why do we not just teach that and cease pretending to be the Lord’s church? If not, is one made free from sin by a proper application of the truth that relates to freedom from sin? Note that he is not made free from sin by an understanding and application of the truth about how and when to take the Lord’s Supper. But who will be so bold as to affirm that he is made free from sin by believing a lie and obeying a lie, though his motive was to obey the Lord? We know there are many who are that bold, but we have yet to see the logic or scriptural basis of their assumptions.

Keep in mind that Saul, who was chief of sinners, had the best motive in the world when he was persecuting Christians. He meant to obey God, and was trying to do it with all his power. One may say, “The difference in that and being baptized is that being baptized is a command of God, and killing Christians was not.” If one can prove that just being baptized, even in obedience to a false doctrine, is a command of God, then one might have a valid point. Our point is that merely having the right motive—to obey the Lord—does not necessarily mean that one has obeyed the Lord. It is very difficult for us to see how one could be accused for teaching a false doctrine about how to be saved (Galatians 1:1-9) and yet a person could be saved by obeying that false doctrine. However, if someone will be kind enough to write in response to this showing how and why we should believe that, we shall be happy to learn better.

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Harper Kinley & Sawyer Wesson Anderson were able to attend services Sunday evening with their parents, Tyler and Jessica Anderson. Joyce Burbage, Sam Bolding, Faith West, Ann Howard, Louise Starks, Jacquelin Dopwell, Margaret Coone, & Sharon Washington.

Relatives: Dorothy Trice, is in LRMC, room #M318. Carl Thompson, Lewis Tillis, Jane Kirkland, Jo Chancey, & Annie Beth Coone.

Shut In Members: Artis Bassett, Mary Shoemake.

Others: Graham McDonald, Michael Ray, Christina Fuessner, Steve Roberts, Jane Kirkland, Gene & Irma Dampier, Bonnie Hendrick, Kathy Peel, Marie Platzer & Danny Edmonds.

Upcoming Events

Nov. 2nd - Ladies Day at Kissimmee Church of Christ, with guest speaker, Jagie Kenyon. The topic will be "Draw Nigh to God" Time is 9:00 am till noon. Lunch will be provided.

Nov. 2nd - Ladies Monthly Brunch will be at Central Church of Christ in Haines City at 9:00 am.

Nov. 3rd - "Fellowship in Service" after our evening worship service" We will write cards to the sick, and those who need our encouragement. **Please bring finger foods.**

Nov 3rd - Nov. 7th - Gospel meeting at Sixth Street Church of Christ. Speaker will be Edward Keaton. Times Monday through Thursday at 7:30 pm. **See Bulletin board for more information on the above events.**

Nov. 15th - Youth Devotion and Fellowship at the home of Stacey and Michelle Paulin.

Visitors

Ronald Cox, Larry Exum, Steve Winchester.

Hither, Thither & Yon

Pam Share traveled to So Africa last week to spend time with her family there. She plans to be gone until after the holidays. We wish her a safe and enjoyable time.

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

November

David Anderson **Table** David Williams
Paul Romine **Assist** Josh Estridge

November 3, 2013

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Brian Kenyon
Prayer David Anderson

10:30 A.M.

Announcements Bobby Sheumaker
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Jimmy Sweeney
Closing Prayer Kyle Bingle

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Kyle Williams
Opening Prayer Paul Romine
Closing Prayer Jeff Bingle
Greeters The Sweeney Family
Att. Cards Quadarius Askew & Sebastian Rapley
Open & Close Building Charles Paulin

Wed. November 6, 2013

Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Dave Williams
Closing Prayer John McShane

Please meet in the library. If you cannot serve, please call Jason Hendrix, so he can get a replacement - 537-0857

Sunday, November 10, 2013

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Stacey Paulin
Prayer Josh Estridge

10:30 A.M.

Announcements Bobby Sheumaker
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Brian Kenyon
Closing Prayer Tucker Sweeney

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Kyle Williams
Opening Prayer Bobby Sheumaker
Closing Prayer C. J. Grimes
Greeters Phil & Dottie Fife
Att. Cards Quadarius Askew & Paul Sweeney
Open & Close Building Charles Paulin

Wed. November 13, 2013

Song Leader Stephen Hunley
Opening Prayer Ken Walker
Closing Prayer Jeremy Padilla

~ HOW WE ARE GIVING ~

Oct. 06 \$5,555.50
Oct. 13 \$3,508.50
Oct. 20 \$3,236.13
Oct. 27 \$3,932.10
Contribution Average \$4,133.50
Weekly Budget \$4,255.13
2013 Contribution Deficit \$5,200.41

HEAR OUR RADIO SPOTS

This Week's Message

"America of Yesterday"

1230 or 1430 on radio dial or web page

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