

# THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

September 16

2018

## On "Church" Loyalty

We have given considerable space of late to articles emphasizing the individual's obligation to Christ and warning about "party" or "church" loyalty that makes Christ second fiddle. This continues to be a current problem and warrants further attention.

But there is no solace here for those who would set the church aside as being of no importance. "Partyism" increases the need for more accurate definition of "church" and a better understanding of the obligations imposed by our association with other saints in the local church. One can not be a faithful follower of Christ, and ignore what the New Testament says about Christ's church.

Christ is *"head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all"* (Ephesians.1:22-23). God is glorified *"in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages world without end. Amen!"* (Ephesians.3:21) *"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;"* (Ephesians.5:25) *"the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood"* (Acts.20:28). These verses treat of the church in its universal sense — all saints, world-wide — that great "brotherhood" which we are to love and respect (1 Peter 2:17).

I preached a sermon in Louisville, on Congregational Independ-

ence, and a Christian Church visitor commented, "Don't go too far with that, so that churches will have nothing to do with one another". I acknowledged the appropriateness of "love" and "fellowship" — and the possibility of a "separateness" that could endanger such — but told him true "brotherhood" does not mean nor necessitate organic ties among churches. There is even a form of "cooperation" among brethren that does not involve local church action (see Galatians 6:6; Hebrews 13:1-3; Romans 12:15).

Loyalty, first and always, to the Lord, does not negate the obligations of membership in a local church. When brethren function collectively (and even those who ridicule local church "membership" seem to agree they are authorized to so function) or "member of the team" the need to do his part (1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 1 Corinthians 5:4-5, 14:27-33). Here, loyalty to one-another, and to the common goal achieved in collective action, is within the framework of loyalty to Christ, and not a supplanting of it.

The Corinthians purposed (willed) a year in advance, to supply a gift for the needy saints in Jerusalem (2 Corinthians 8:10-11, 9:2-4). Each saint was thereby obligated "as God hath prospered him" (1 Corinthians 16:1-2). In the same way, when a church today plans and approves a program of work for the furtherance of the gospel etc., each member of that church accepts an obligation in "team-work" that is wholly in keeping with loyalty to the Lord each saint serves (We must here assume, of course, that the "work" is in keeping with the Lord's will and direction.). One can not be a faithful Christian and, having opportunity, ignore fellow-Christians — another way of saying, "the church" (Hebrews 10:24-25).

✍ Robert F. Turner



## The Dangers of Pride

Pride is defined as "a high or inordinate opinion of one's own dignity, importance, merit, or superiority whether as cherished in

one's mind or as displayed in one's conduct." To be simply put, pride is an exaggerated, high opinion of one's self, it is a feeling of being better than others, and it is often described as conceit, egotism, or vainglory. You see, the fact of the matter is, pride is dangerous, and it is very important that we do not think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think (Romans 12:3). So, with that thought pressed upon our minds, let's examine some dangers of pride, beginning with...

### 1) **The Pride of Life Is of The World.**

Sadly, the world we live in today seems to operate from a sense of pride. However, we all need to remember that the pride of life is not of God the Father, but rather the pride of life is of the world (1 John 2:16), and Paul instructs Christians not to be conformed to this world (Romans 12:2). So, may we all avoid friendship with the world (James 4:4), and let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall (1 Corinthians 10:12).

### 2) **Pride Removes God From One's Thoughts.**

Another danger of pride is, it can make one forget about their dependence upon God. You see, pride can and sometimes does remove God from one's thoughts and in Psalm 10:4, we read, *"The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God; God is in none of his thoughts."* Folks, beware of pride, and never exclude God from your thoughts.

### 3) **Pride Promotes One To Be Self-Willed.**

Pride will and can also promote one to be self-willed. You see, pride causes one to think that their way is the best way or the only way, and this is dangerous because that mentality will often lead to contention. So again, beware of the danger of pride, and remember these words of wisdom, "by pride comes nothing but strife" (Proverbs 13:10).

### 4) **God Resists The Proud.**

My friends, pride is also dangerous because of the fact that God is opposed to the proud. Therefore, we all need to understand and beware of the fact that God does resist the proud ( Proverbs 3:34; James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5). Therefore, avoid pride, and do not be one who is at war with God.

### 5) **God Hates Pride.**

You see, the fact of the matter is, pride is dangerous and God hates pride (Proverbs 6:16-17). In Proverbs 16:5, the wise man revealed, *"Everyone proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord; Though they join forces, none will go unpunished."* Folks, that is serious, so think about that, and humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord (James 4:10). For, the Lord will destroy the house of the proud (Proverbs 15:25), and always remember my friends, He is able to, and will put down those who walk in pride (Daniel 4:37; Matthew 23:12).

Once more, beware of the dangers of pride and strive to avoid it, and may we all hold onto these inspired words of wisdom, *"The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way"* (Proverbs 8:13).  
*✍️ Brad Phillips*

## **Belleville church of Christ**

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[www.bellevillechurch.net](http://www.bellevillechurch.net)

### **Schedule of Services**

Sunday Bible Study . . . . . 9:30 a.m.  
Sunday Morning Worship . . . . . 10:30 a.m.  
Sunday Evening Worship . . . . . 5:00 p.m.  
Wednesday Bible Study . . . . . 7:00 p.m.

### **Evangelist**

James Hahn . . . . . (317) 443-1938