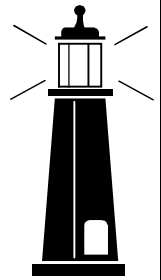


The Berryville Church of Christ

Bible Beacon

"Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." (Psalm 119:105)



Volume 2, Issue 4

January 26, 2003

The Sin of Bitterness

Wayne Robbins

In Hebrews 12:15 we read. "...looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled." Bitterness then is one of those sinful things that we must keep out of our lives if we expect to see heaven.

How does the seed of bitterness sprout in our hearts? Usually bitterness comes about because we have been hurt by someone. The fruit of our bitterness is manifested in anger, wrath, hate, and sometimes in slander and malice. Now it is not wrong to feel hurt when we feel that someone has done us wrong, but how we deal with it makes a difference as to whether our hurt turns into bitterness. When we become bitter in our hearts toward someone, we care little for the person that we are bitter against. WE become very touchy about what that person says to us. We tend to hold grudges.

Bitterness is sin. It is serious because it goes against God's command to love each other — even our enemies. (John 13:34-35; Matthew 5:44-45). Bitterness seeks to hurt and get revenge. Love seeks to serve and to help. Bitterness, instead of love, is proof positive that we have **not** passed from death to life. (1 John 3:14) Bitterness puts us spiritually in the morgue.

There is another problem with bitterness. It usually does not stay with the person that has it. Many times the holder plants the seed in the hearts of others. By holding bitterness in our hearts we can lose our soul and those close to us. Again, this goes against the Lord's command to influence others for good. (Matthew 5:16) Bitterness is like a poisonous viper that we most diligently want to avoid. Paul warns us to let all bitterness be put away from us with all malice. (Ephesians 4:31) May this ugly sin never find its way into our godly hearts.

Kevin's Korner

Available in the foyer is the "Biblical Questions and Answers 2002."



This book is comprised of all of the questions and answers that were answered last year in our 2nd Sunday evening question and answer sessions. In addition there are several questions and answers included that were generated from individuals looking at our web site. Everyone is welcome to a copy of this book free of charge. However, if you would like to offset the costs to the church of publishing this book you may donate \$2.00 per copy into the glass jar next to the books in the foyer. If you are planning on keeping the book, then please limit yourself to one copy per family. If you want to give a copy of the book to someone outside your family, please take what you need.

I would like to suggest a couple of uses for this question and answer book. First, it is a great tool for Bible study. These questions are bible questions. By studying the questions and answers, you also will be studying the Bible. Second, I would like to recommend that you use this question and answers book as an evangelistic tool. If you know of someone who is interested in the Bible and who wants to study more, give them a copy of this book. There are many questions answered in this book that people in the denominational world ask about the Lord's church. They will also find some other interesting questions to study. They will learn that we are interested in studying the Bible and hearing what the Bible has to say about a question and not just what men think about things. Third, perhaps you know someone who is not able to attend services. This would be a great and inspirational gift for them. Having good solid Bible materials for study is pre-

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

cious to those who are not able to get out. Personal improvement, evangelism, and exhortation are just three avenues in which this material can be used. You may even be able to think of another use for this book.

This past Friday night I and a den of Cub Scouts were privileged to attend a wonderful basketball game. I must congratulate our players. Lindsey Moore and Katie Williams are both on the girls basketball team. They handily defeated Gentry. I was really glad to see several members at the game. We may not realize it personally, but we are setting an example every time we go out into the community. It is good that we can be a light in a world of darkness.

When to Leave (Part 2)

Tracy Dugger

A pattern is a detailed outline of a plan. Just as God gave those of old a specified pattern, He has given us a pattern for building our life and the church (organization, name, doctrine, worship, plan of salvation, mission). Just as those of old were obligated to build according to the pattern, so are we.

Really, the only way we can accurately know about the church of the first century is by reading and applying the New Testament. In fact, there is no any way to really know Jesus except from the Bible. What can we really know about Christ and His church except what we read in the Bible?

Further, regarding the expectation of God for man to recognize that the New Testament lays down a pattern for us to follow, Paul left Timothy at Ephesus to charge certain men not to teach a different doctrine (1 Timothy 1:3; 6:3f). Later, he wrote to Timothy exhorting him to hold the "form (pattern—NKJV) of sound words" which he heard from him, in faith and love in Christ (2 Timothy 1:13). If Christianity is not ordered after a distinctive pattern or blueprint, how could Timothy be able to determine a different doctrine? How could he even know what was the pattern of sound words? How could the Roman Christian have obeyed a particular form or pattern of doctrine (Romans 6:17)? How could the Corinthians be expected to speak the same things and secure unity if there is no blueprint (1 Corinthians 1:10)? The very fact that Paul gave orders for the churches to carry out proves there was a pattern. To the Corinthians Christians he explained:

—"For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance

of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church" (1 Corinthians 4:17). Timothy taught a certain body of doctrine that Paul taught in every church. There must have been a specified pattern.

—"If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord" (1 Corinthians 14:37). If there are commandments of the Lord that New Testament writers recorded, there must be a pattern. Paul intended the Corinthians to follow the pattern he gave unto them.

—"Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (1 Corinthians 16:1-2). There were orders given to multiple churches. If there were orders, then there was a pattern.

If the Scriptures do not furnish a pattern for the church, then we have no trustworthy guide by which we can know that such a thing as Christ's church exists. The very word "Christian" presupposes a knowledge of what a Christian is. The very idea of a church where Christians are, likewise presupposes some sort of knowledge of some kind of church. Did the apostles organize any churches in the first century? If they did, there must have been some principles or a standard by which they were governed. When an apostle spoke of a church, what did he mean? He meant something. If we can determine what the apostles meant by "church" and the principles by which they organized churches, then we can produce that church today. If the New Testament does not furnish us with this information, then we are without any intelligent means of forming or identifying true church of Christ. But the New Testament does furnish us with that information.

(Continued on page 3)

Elders: Clay Bozarth, Leon Duncan, Bruce Foster, Bill Fort, Glenn Quigley

Deacons: Ken Smith, Brent Stevens, Rusty Windle.

Preacher: Kevin Cauley 870-423-6707

Times of Worship and Study

Sunday Morning Bible Class: 9:30 AM

Sunday Morning Worship: 10:30 AM

Sunday Evening Worship: 6:00 PM

Ladies Bible Class: 10:30 AM

Wed. Evening Bible Class: 7:00 PM

(Continued from page 2)

And since it does furnish us with that information, the so-called "churches" today which fail to bear the identifying marks of the church described in the New Testament can scarcely qualify as true churches of Christ. We seek to be the same church the apostles organized and built (Ephesians 2:19-22).

I write all of this to point out that if a church ceases to emulate the same characteristics of the New Testament church, then they obviously cannot claim to be a New Testament church.

Again, I could not be affiliated with a congregation which does not engage in the worship of the first century church—true worship (John 4:24). The use of instrumental worship, choirs, the Lord's Supper not offered on every first day or offered on other days, the use of woman preacher or elders are things which clearly show a departure from the New Testament church. A church that bears these marks is headed for apostasy. These kinds of unauthorized practices affect my own worship to God and I cannot participate even to "keep the peace." Always remember, peace with man is not necessarily peace with God (John 12:42-43).

What if there is only error from the pulpit? Once it has been determined that there is a neglect of the Gospel and that it is being suppressed, I did not see any other option but to leave. How can a person stay when it is clear that the congregation is unfriendly toward the pure Gospel and has no intention to repent and embrace the truth? When they are intent on apostasy, refusing warnings and exhortations, then what other choice is there? It is time to shake the dust off and move on. And what of your own soul? Remaining not only causes one to be wrongly influenced (1 Corinthians 15:33; 5:60, but there comes a point in which the unfruitful works of darkness are being fellowshipped (Ephesians 2:11; 2 John 9-11).

The church at Corinth is worthy of our taking

into consideration concerning this issue. If there ever was a church that had problems, the church at Corinth did (1 Corinthians). They were divided over preachers (chap. 1), carnal-minded (chap. 3), in fellowship with adulterers (chap. 5), divided over small matters which brought them in litigation before unbelievers (chap. 6), they had perverted the Lord's supper (chap. 11), they were divided over miraculous gifts (chaps. 12-14), and error about the resurrection was being propagated (chap. 15). Paul had written a rebuking letter calling for their repentance. They did repent (2 Corinthians). But suppose they had refused to repent? Had they not repented, Paul would have had no other choice but to separate from them. How could a faithful Christian maintain his faithfulness in the face of the blatant rebellion?

Therefore, when the following circumstances exist, it is time to leave:

1. The congregation has ceased to emulate the same characteristics as the New Testament church.
2. Every effort to admonish the church to correct sinful situations, cease engaging in unauthorized practices, and return to the old paths (Jeremiah 6:16) is met with strong opposition and a spirit of rebellion to God's Word. When my influence and voice have been silenced or my effectiveness for convincing people has disappeared, it is time to shake off the dust.
3. The preaching is no longer distinctive.
4. My continual affiliation involves me in fellowship with apostate brethren.
5. We are being influenced to accept sin or to compromise the Gospel.

May we pray and study this matter further. And in any decisions that must be made, let us always manifest a disposition of love for God, His Word and those who are involved.

Sunday's Sermons

For January 26th

Morning **Adam and Eve**
 Scripture Genesis 3:20-24
Evening **Restoration**
 Scripture 2 Chronicles 34:14, 15, 21

Our Record

Week of 1/19

Sunday Class	59
Sunday A.M.....	68
Sunday P.M.	59
Wednesday	53
Contribution.....	\$1564.00
Budget	\$1760.00

News, Notes and Prayer List



• We want to welcome all of our visitors today. Please fill out a visitors card and stay after services so we can get to know you.

- Please remember the following in your prayers: Connie Atchley, Rex Gentry, Opal Hull, Charlene Pinkley, Gail Rorex.
- Lucille Wright is in room 504 of the Berryville nursing home.
- Edith Mischler is in the nursing home in Eureka Springs.
- Art Roberts and Mary Patterson are confined to their homes.
- Kevin and Mary Lynn are hosting their open house today. Please drop by between 2 and 4 this afternoon to visit.
- If you have not picked up last years financial statement they are available in the foyer.
- There will be a Valentine's day party on Friday February the 14th. Please make your plans to attend.
- Youth devotional will be next Sunday night at the Cauley's house.
- There will be a brief VBS meeting to-night after services.
- House to House and Heart to Heart is in. Those who help put this together are asked to stay after services to-night to prepare for the mailing.
- Next week Kevin will be starting to gather pictures of all of the members of our congregation. Please plan to get your picture taken next month.
- Assignments for the month of February are as follows: Ken Smith will make announcements. John Gass and Rusty Windle will carry communion. Gladys Kimes and Pam Pinkley will prepare communion. Bill Fort will be the worship co-ordinator.
- The Pantry Item for this week is Kool Aid, Bob.



Men to Serve

	<u>Today</u>	<u>Next Week</u>
Sunday Morning:	January 26th, 2003	February 2nd, 2003
Song Leader:	Bill Fort	Ken Smith
Preacher:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Bob Moore	Leon Duncan
Scripture:	Matt Bassing	Perry Foster
Lord's Table:	Bill Fort	Clay Bozarth
	Bruce Foster	Brent Stevens
(assist)	Ray Duncan	Rusty Windle
	Perry Foster	Matt Bassing
Closing Prayer	John Gass	Glenn Quigley
Sunday Night:		
Songs:	Rusty Windle	Rusty Windle
Preacher:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Ken Smith	Bob Moore
Scripture:	Bruce Foster	Bruce Foster
Lord's Table:	Dale Pinkley	George Eddings
	Brent Moore	Ray Duncan
Closing Prayer	Brandon Foster	Dale Pinkley
Wednesday		
Songs:	Bruce Foster	Clay Bozarth
Opening Prayer:	Matt Bassing	Kevin Cauley
Invitation:	Kevin Cauley	Rusty Windle
Closing Prayer:	Brent Moore	Bill Fort
Monthly Assignments		
Announcements	Bob Moore	
Worship Coordinator	Leon Duncan	
Communion Prep	Joann Bragg	Debbie Duncan
Communion Carry	Bruce Foster	Kevin Cauley

The "Berryville Bible Beacon" is published by the Berryville church of Christ. Please contact Kevin Cauley at work at (870) 423-3068 or at home at (870) 423-6707 or e-mail bvccoc@alltel.net to contribute information.

For questions or comments, please call (870) 423-3068 or write us at:
Berryville Church of Christ
909 West Trimble Street, Berryville, AR 72616