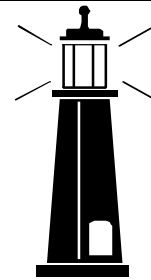


The Berryville church of Christ

Bible Beacon

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



Volume 2, Issue 45

November 16th, 2003

Biting and Devouring

Kevin Cauley

"**B**ut if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." (Galatians 5:15).

Somewhere between A.D. 48 and A.D. 58, the apostle Paul sat down to write a letter to the churches of Galatia. This letter was written to address one particular subject: the erroneous teaching that Gentile Christians must obey the Law of Moses in order to be saved. The apostles and elders of Jerusalem discussed this issue prior to Paul's composition of this epistle (Acts 15). The decision of the Holy Spirit in this regard was not to burden Gentile Christians with the commands of the Old Law, and in particular the practice of circumcision (Acts 15:28). Yet, there were "false brethren" who had secretly entered the church "to spy out" their liberty in Christ (Galatians 2:4). These continued to cause problems among the churches of Galatia.

Paul addresses this issue among the churches in a three-fold manner. First, he discusses his **authority** as an apostle, as inspired of the Holy Spirit, to speak to such matters (1 - 2:14). Second, he offers an **analysis** of the issue itself in light of the person of Christ and the scriptures (2:15-4:31). Finally, he discusses the **application** of the truths elucidated to the lives of the Gentiles (5:1-6:18). It is within this third section of scripture that we find our text, Galatians 5:15.

Galatians chapter five begins with a declaration of Christian liberty. The Christian has been freed from the Law of Moses, but if the Christian desires to go back to that Law, then he falls from grace (5:4). That which avails for the Christian is "faith working through love" (5:6). Paul had established the churches of Galatia upon his first missionary tour (Acts 13-14) and so they were "running well" (5:7). However, they had been hindered by another gospel (5:7; 1:8, 9). Paul

reiterates that they were called to freedom--freedom from the Law of Moses, but not freedom to practice licentiousness (5:13). Christians are not free from Christ's fulfillment of the law and that fulfillment is in loving one's neighbor (5:14). It is within this context that Paul writes, "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another."

The verbs employed in this verse are only used in this one place in the Greek New Testament. The Greek scholar Robertson in his "Word Pictures" says that the verbs were used commonly to describe the actions of wild animals tearing and devouring each other. The words biting and devouring are obviously used figuratively. "Biting" refers to the aggressive and incisive action of gnashing on one another through words and actions characteristic of men whose minds are closed to the possibility of performing deeds of charity toward each other. Devouring indicates that the goal of such biting was to consume to the point of digestion and elimination. Thus, the brethren, acting in such a way, would finally gain nothing.

The word for "consume" is only used in one other place in the Greek New Testament, Luke 9:54 where James and John seek to call down fire from heaven upon the inhospitable Samaritans. In that passage (verse 55), Jesus tells the Sons of Thunder "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." Consumption, says Paul, is the ultimate end of such biting and devouring. The result is an obvious vacancy for the cause of truth. The "one another" and "one of another" in the verse indicate that both parties were practicing such behavior. Those who had not been taken by false doctrine had devolved into conceit, provocation, envy, and wrestling with personalities instead of issues (5:26-6:2). They ought to have been prac-

ting meekness in relationship to restoring their brother. Those who had been taken by falsehoods had evidently withheld contributions and ceased supporting the work of the church (6:6-10). They ought to have been working together toward the mutual edification of one another and not their destruction through false teaching. When an atmosphere of mistrust, deceit, inflammation, unwillingness to communicate, and failure to bear one another's burdens prevails among Christians such can only result in biting, devouring, consumption and mutual destruction. The end consequence is the dissolution of the church, the beautiful bride for which Jesus died.

David Lipscomb in his commentary on 2 Corinthians and Galatians notes:

"The Galatians were of a warm temperament, quick to resent wrong and prone to imagine it. The dissension excited by the Judaizers had aroused their combative temper to a high degree, and excited a spirit of commotion and recrimination among them."

J.W. Shepherd adds in the same volume,

"Biting describes the wounding and exasperating effect in which their controversies were carried on; devour warns them of its destructiveness. Taunts were hurled at each other; vituperation supplied the lack of argument. It bore fruit in personal thrusts and quarrels, in an angry, vindictive spirit which spread through the churches and broke out in various forms of contention."

J.W. McGarvey paraphrases this verse in his commentary on Galatians. He says:

"But if, instead of having the spirit of love, which becomes men, ye be animated with the spirit of wild beasts, which, in their hasty rancor, bite each other, and, in their settled, inveterate malice, gnaw at and devour each other, take heed that your conduct does not result in your being consumed one of another."

Within the midst of Paul's rebuke, he supplies the spiritual solution that faithful brethren will allow to prevail in such circumstances. He says, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law" (5:22, 23). Application of this fruit in our life will lead toward peaceful and non-contentious resolutions to both private problems and brotherhood wide contentions. Our liberty in Christ ought to be used to enslave ourselves to one another in love (5:13). Let us pursue such every day and patiently bear one another's burdens for in so doing we shall fulfill the law of Christ (6:2).

Kevin's Korner

Well, this past Monday John and I went to Joplin again.

This time the rest of the preachers showed up as well. Funny how that works with the scheduling and all. We did enjoy a good visit with everyone there. We met our friends in Stark City and rode with them on the way and had a wonderful time. They took us back through Neosho, MO where we got to see the "Big Spring" and feed the trout. We did have a good time together on Monday.

This past Friday we met with the rest of the Cub Scout pack for our monthly pack meeting. We put together snow men candy boxes and candy stockings for the nursing home. It was a good project. The boys really had a good time making the crafts.

John Gass has been working very hard trying to get us ready for our trip to Costa Rica. He has been preparing Bible study materials for us to take with us when we go. I have had several people ask me if they could give things for us to take down there. We should have enough suitcase space to do this. Our priorities are Bibles, song books, and teaching material, but if you have some other things that you would like to send with us for the trip, please let us know.

I neglected to mention in last week's bulletin the computer class that I held at the community center on November 4th. The class went very well and was well received. Those who attended really thought the class was informative and they suggested that there be a follow up class sometime in the future. I am very thankful for the opportunity to serve at the community center and to use the skills with which God has blessed me to help our community. I really want to encourage everyone to take time to volunteer in our community.

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



New Wood

Bob Howton

When Longfellow was well along in years, his head as white as snow, but his cheeks as red as a rose, an ardent admirer asked him how it was that he was able to stay so vigorous and write so beautifully. Pointing to a blooming apple tree nearby, he replied: "That apple tree is very old, but I never saw prettier blooms upon it than those it now bears. The tree grows a little new wood every year, and I suppose it is out of that new wood that those blossoms come. Like the apple tree, I try to grow a little new wood every year." What he did, we also should do. **Speaker's Source book — Doan**

Nothing stands out more clearly from the Bible, than that a Christian's life must be filled with 'new wood'. (I.e. fruit bearing, or growth) At baptism, one begins a new life, which necessitates continual 'new wood', or growth in Christ. **Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.**

Rom.6:4. When Peter penned the words of his first epistle, he indicated that those addressed should **As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby: 1 Peter 2:2.** It is not surprising to find the Hebrews writer rebuking some for not showing proper growth in the Scriptures, and knowledge of God **For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of**

full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. Hebrews 5:12-14.

At this point, let us take note of the wisdom found in an old adage, which states, As the twig is bent, so is the tree inclined. Surely, we can understand that the very best time to start New Wood (Christian Growth) is when the mind is young and pliant. The Apostle Paul commended Timothy with the following words, **And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 2 Tim.3:15.**

When should 'New Wood' (Christian Growth) begin with our children? As soon as they are able to comprehend! When should 'New Wood' begin in those who are of mature age? As soon as they are willing to submit to the Master's Gospel! The Proverb writer spoke clearly on the subject of children. **Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old he will not depart from it Prov.22:6.** When the Apostle Paul wrote the Ephesian letter, he addressed the idea of grown folks who fail to grow in the stability which is required of those who have obeyed the Gospel: **That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ. Eph.4:14, 15.**

Who is there among us, who has not seen a young tree covered with beautiful blooms, in the spring time, and later, bowed to the ground with mature fruit? Just so, a life lived in Godliness, and service to others may be stooped underneath the weight of 'New Wood' with its blooms and fruit.

Sunday's Sermons

For November 15th

Morning..... The Family Bond
Scripture 1 Timothy 3:15
Evening..... The Message of Philemon
Scripture Philemon 1:4-6

Our Record

Week of 11/9/03

Sunday Class.....	62
Sunday A.M.	87
Sunday P.M.....	53
Wednesday	61
Contribution	\$1783.11
Budget	\$1760.00

News, Notes and Prayer List



- If you are visiting with us, welcome!
- Please remember the following in your prayers: Geneva Atchley, Michael

Collins, Brian Guess, Curtis and Opal Hull, Chris Pinkley.

- Edith Mischler is in the nursing home in Eureka Springs.
- Art Roberts and Mary Patterson are confined to their homes.
- Please remember the following travelers in your prayers: Bill and Lucille Fort, Donna Henderson.
- Our monthly potluck is today! We invite everyone, especially our visitors, to stay with us for our meal after morning services.
- Tonight is the regular elders and deacons meeting. If anyone has anything they would like addressed at that meeting, please see one of the participants.
- Let's remember that the truck for the children's home is coming December 1st. We have a pantry full of food, but let's bring more. They are also requesting good, used clothes for their second hand store.
- Let's also not forget our last Sunday singing at the nursing home in two weeks. This is our opportunity to do something for these older members of our community. Let's make sure that we make the most of it.
- Two weeks from tomorrow our team is off for Costa Rica. We would appreciate it if you kept this work near in your prayers.
- There will be no ladies Bible class the week of Thanksgiving. The week after Thanksgiving, due to the Costa Rica trip, ladies Bible class will also be cancelled.
- The Pantry Item for this week is Canned Peaches.



Those to Serve

	<u>Today</u>	<u>Next Week</u>
Sunday Morning:	November 16th, 2003	November 23rd, 2003
Song Leader:	Bill Fort	Brent Stevens
Preacher:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Clay Bozarth	Ray Duncan
Scripture:	Brent Moore	Sandy Nieves
Lord's Table:	Leon Duncan	Bill Fort
	Ken Smith	Rusty Windle
(assist)	Larry Elliott	John Gass
	Jack Gentry	Brent Moore
Closing Prayer	Glenn Quigley	Larry Elliott
Sunday Night:		
Songs:	Glenn Williams	Rusty Windle
Preacher:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Rusty Windle	Glenn Williams
Scripture:	Ray Duncan	Sandy Nieves
Lord's Table:	Matt Bassing	Leon Duncan
	Dale Pinkley	Dale Pinkley
Closing Prayer	Hugh Atchley	Bill Fort
Wednesday		
Songs:	Glenn Quigley	Bruce Foster
Opening Prayer:	George Eddings	John Gass
Invitation:	Larry Elliott	Matt Bassing
Closing Prayer:	Dale Pinkley	Larry Elliott
Monthly Assignments		
Announcements	Leon Duncan	
Worship Coordinator	Matt Bassing	
Communion Prep	Pat Quigley	Tiffany Windle
Communion Carry	Bob Moore	Glenn Williams

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 bvcc@alltel.net to contribute information.

For questions or comments, please call (870) 423-3068 or write us at:
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