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ANTI, LIBERAL or SIMPLY A CHRISTIAN? (5)

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Article 1 discussed how labels can be used properly & improperly. Article 2 looked at attempts to justify musical instruments in worship, as well as organizational perversions (the missionary society & sponsoring church arrangement) which change local organization to a more centralized organization. Article 3 examined the role of the church and of individuals relating to widows & orphans, eating, socializing, entertaining, etc. The above issues are ones where brethren ADDED to God's word. In article 4 we looked at examples where brethren have SUBTRACTED from God's word by binding their opinions, such as the no-Bible-class position and those against women being teachers over women & children. Now let us examine the one container position.

The view of some brethren is that when Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper, he revealed 3 elements to the Lord's Supper: the bread, the fruit of the vine, and the cup. Some even assert that the cup represents the New Covenant as per Luke 22:20. The reference to "a cup" is therefore taken literally and these brethren see multiple containers as a departure from the Scriptures. Ironically, these brethren are in fact misunderstanding the Scriptures & binding their opinion. They are in reality adding to God's word and creating division.

Matthew 26:26-29 says, "26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it; and he gave to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. 27 And he took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; 28 for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins. 29 But I say unto you, I shall not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

When Jesus took "a cup" and gave it to His disciples, He said several things:

(1) "Drink ye all of it." This statement, if applied literally to "a cup" would be a physical impossibility. You cannot drink & swallow a container. Of necessity, then, this reference to "drinking" a cup - is a reference not to the container, but the contents. This is, in fact, a common metaphor or figure of speech called a "metonymy". A metonymy is "a figure by which one name

or noun is used instead of another, to which it stands in certain relation" (Figures of Speech used in the Bible, Bullenger p. 538).

A cup is related to drinking as a plate is related to eating. The first item is the container, while the later item is the contents. What is meant by saying "drink" a cup? The same thing that is meant by saying "That is my favorite dish". Such an expression is referring to the container when the contents are really the point of concern. Note this from the context of Matt. 26, in the following two points.

(2) "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins." When Jesus referenced the cup, he went on to say "This" is my blood... which is poured out. What is "this" - a solid or a liquid? Does the container represent His blood? Or do the contents of the container represent His blood? Is it the container itself that is poured out, or the contents of the container that are poured out? What was Jesus talking about & focusing on? A solid or a liquid? The cup or the contents?

(3) "I shall not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine..." Jesus went further talking about "this". Previously He told them to "drink the cup" and now he says "drink the fruit of the vine". These are parallel statements, the latter explaining the former. The "cup" was not the focus of Jesus' words. Rather, it was the contents that were to be drunk in memory of Christ's blood. The cup is incidental to the command here. The bread & the fruit of the vine are the essentials. For man to require "one cup" from this passage is to misunderstand the Truth & bind what God has not bound.

Add to this that Luke 22:17 says plainly, "And he received **a cup**, and when he had given thanks, he said, Take this, and **divide it among yourselves**". What did Jesus do BEFORE instituting the Lord's Supper in Luke 22:19-20? He told His disciples to take it and DIVIDE it.

IF this is referencing the "one container" - then Jesus told them to divide the container into pieces among themselves. Do you really think this is what Jesus meant? Surely we can see how simple the answer is. The cup is not the intended point here at all. The contents, the fruit of the vine is the focus. It is really sad that brethren will take a position that is so readily & plainly answered by the Scriptures. Perhaps some have never studied this. Perhaps some grew up having been taught this. But what it boils down to is that we all have an obligation to "prove all things", even things we have been taught by people we trust (1 Thess. 5:21; Acts 17:11).

Another opinion issue that has divided brethren is the "no-located-preacher" position. This particular view is expressed so as to keep preachers on the move. The reasons for this view is varied - ranging from simple ignorance of the scriptures to dislike of preachers who speak "too plainly." But the scriptural answer to this, like the others, is really quite simple. In Acts 19:8-10, Paul

spent 3 months preaching in the synagogue at Ephesus. When some were hardened, he moved to the school of Tyrannus for two years. In other words, Paul was "located" in Ephesus for over two years. And we have Biblical authority to imitate Paul's example (1 Cor. 11:1).

Additionally, Paul not only left Timothy at Ephesus - but "exhorted" him "to tarry at Ephesus" (1 Tim. 1:3). Paul told Timothy to stay there. How long specifically, we do not know; but that is the whole point! Why do men arbitrarily say no preacher can be "located" in a work, when Paul not only did so, but also directed Timothy to "stay" for an unspecified amount of time? If we are to speak where the Bible speaks & be silent where the Bible is silent (1 Pet. 4:11); then the false doctrine of "no-located-preachers" must be tossed into the trash can.

And besides, Paul said he had the same rights as other brethren to eat & drink, to be married, to be paid for his work (of preaching), etc. (1 Cor. 9:4-12). Would you stand for someone arbitrarily setting religious rules for your life? Would it be proper if preachers started telling you what kind of car to drive, where you could buy a house, how big it could be, etc.? It is one thing for us to willingly forgo a liberty in service to others; it is entirely another for others to bind their opinions upon us so that we "must" do it their way or "sin"! Why then are some intent upon "muzzling the ox while he treadeth out the corn" (1 Cor. 9:9-10)? Ought not the laborer to labor in hope of partaking? Is it sinful for a man who works to expect appropriate and just reward for his efforts?

What could drive brethren to treat preachers this way? Possibly it is that after a preacher has been in one location for 6 months or more, then he begins to get to know the brethren & their spiritual needs. His lessons begin to hit "a little too close to home". The "honeymoon" period ends and reality begins to set in. Then these kind and loving brethren start thinking, "We love you, brother, but its time for you to move on! Oh it isn't that you don't preach Truth. It is just time... You bought a house? Sorry about that. Kids in school? That is rough on them to move so much. Wife wants to stay? Friends here? That is sad. But see you around, brother. Don't let the door hit you on the way out!"

It just seems that brethren often have the idea that preachers are not truly "normal" brethren. They must live better than "regular" brethren. They must never have quirks or things that others personally disapprove of (even if it isn't sinful). Preachers must always dress right, walk right, talk right, comb his hair the way we want it... never mind that one person's estimation of such opinions will greatly differ from another's expectations. It is the preacher's job to know all this and more.

I've heard it said, long before I started preaching, that preachers live in a "glass jar" for all to observe. Yes, there is truth in the fact that preachers are to be examples & an influence. But, dear reader, aren't ALL Christians to be examples & an influence?

And whose standard are we to use in evaluating these things? Our own personal tastes and feelings? If so, then we are doomed forever to divide and crumble apart; biting and devouring each other (Gal. 5:13-15).

Instead, we must learn to walk in Truth & love, requiring nothing more than what is necessary (Acts 15:28). We have enough to confront and deal with that are true matters of sin. We do not need to fabricate more problems and create friction over opinions & unnecessary things.

The "Golden Rule" applies to how we treat preachers, just as surely as it applies to all men. "Do unto others what you would have them do unto you" (Luke 6:31). Just stop and think: "Would I want this done to me? Would I want to be treated this way?"

Lord willing, we will move on in our next article to address the view of those who forbid the Sunday evening Lord's Supper. Again, if you have in mind some additional examples I have not addressed, just drop me a note & I will try to address them.

Beloved, walk in Truth, love & peace - and the God of peace will be with you. Be complete in Christ. Let all that you do be done in love.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- **Men's & Ladies Classes** - Every 2nd Sun. @ 5pm.
- **Home Bible Study** – Sat., Dec. 9 & 23.
- **Business Meeting** – Sun. Nov. 26 @ 5pm.
- **GM** - Jeff Smith, April 15-20, 2007.
- **GM** - R. McPherson, Oct.14-19, 2007.
- **GM** - TBA April 2008.
- **GM** - Lanny Smith, Oct.12-17, 2008.

PRAY FOR

Mag Bumbalough, Thelma Cunningham, Mary Cox, Monie Petty, Dave Poteet, Joshua & Misty Poteet, Rose Taylor, Dorris Williams, Robert England, Johanna Fletcher, Ed Williams, Joe Smith (cancer), Lydia Poe, Mike Tenpenny (back), Thelma Klein, . Also, **Sierra Frasier (arm), Reba Jones (Dorris Williams' niece), Jackie Tindle (cancer, relative of the Sims), Holly Jernigan (Joyce Gardner's niece), John Ross Key (Mary Cox's son), Marci Miller (Alisa Fletcher's mother), Ocia Bell Jones (Doris William's mother), Ruth Williams (Betty England's niece), Pauline Hickey, Nanny Wtaker, Dylan Roberts (grandson of Marilyn's friend); Kitty Mahan (Kathy Tenpenny's mother), Dwayne Williams (Dorris William's son, back surgery).**

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Douglas W. Hill
Evangelist

*Speaking where
the Bible Speaks
&
Silent where
the Bible is Silent*

Service Times

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

Wednesday
Bible Study 7:00 p.m.

**All are welcome to all
of our services!**