

LET SPURGEON SPEAK

The hypocrite sounds a trumpet before his alms and chooses the corner of the streets for his prayers. To him virtue in the dark is almost a vice. The true Christian, like the nightingale, sings in the night; but the hypocrite has all his songs in the day, when he can be seen and heard of men. To be well spoken of is the very elixir of his life; if he be praised, it is like sweet wine to him. The censure of man upon a virtue would make him change his opinion concerning it in a moment; for his standard is the opinion of his fellow-creatures, his law is the law of self-seeking, and of self-honoring: he is virtuous, because to be virtuous is to be praised; but if tomorrow vice were at a premium he would be as vicious as the rest. Applause is what too many are seeking after.

What shall we do to cure ourselves of any hypocrisy that may exist among us? Let us recollect that we cannot do anything in secret even if we try. The all-seeing God, apprehended in the conscience, must be the death of hypocrisy. I cannot try to deceive when I know that God is looking at me. It is impossible for me to play double and false when I believe that I am in the presence of the Most High, and that he is reading my thoughts and the secret purposes of my heart. The only way in which the hypocrite can play the hypocrite at all is by forgetting the existence of God.

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Integrity

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He who walks in integrity walks securely. Prov. 10:9.

THOSE CONTEMPORARY CORINTHIANS!

The articles in this issue are based on Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. The similarity of the trouble at Corinth with the problems of the church today is very striking. Although the unspiritual attitudes prevailing there were expressed in ways different from those of our generation, the real causes of difficulty in that ancient church are still bemusing God's people. One does not have to be a pessimist to feel that pride, factiousness, sensuality, and other Corinthian sins are a serious threat to the modern church of God. And there is today the same grave misunderstanding of the nature of the kingdom and the basis of salvation that existed at Corinth.

In a very real sense Christianity at Corinth was not unlike Christianity at Detroit or Dallas or Davenport. Although we no longer have Peter or Paul or Apollos to build parties around, we still have parties built around someone. In our society the eating of food offered to idols is not a hot issue, but we are still divided into "antis" and "liberals." And we still have much extremism with regard to excommunication. While the way we eat the Lord's supper today does not afford much of an occasion for one to be hungry and another drunk, there is still the same lack of concern for the fellowship aspect of the church that plagued our spiritual forefathers in Achaia. And our sexual immorality today is not altogether different from that which Paul encountered among the saints of that ancient city.

These are some very good reasons why Paul's Corinthian correspondence is so contemporary. He tells us how to handle so many of our perplexing problems. It is our hope that our brief attention to this priceless spiritual legacy will inspire the reader to pursue his own private search of the truth contained in the Corinthian letters.

OUR SUBSCRIPTION POLICY

We are continuing our policy of sending INTEGRITY free of charge to anyone who requests it, relying upon our friends to sustain us with their contributions. We do not want anyone who requests INTEGRITY, or who sends us the names of his friends to be added to the mailing list, to feel any obligation to send a contribution. However, since we are receiving a steady stream of requests, our publication costs are rising very rapidly. Therefore, if anyone wishes to share in this, he is welcome to do so. We expect that at any time the IRS will rule that contributions to us are deductible.

EXPEL THE EVILDOER!

Dean A. Thoroman

No congregation of God's people ever received plainer instructions from an apostle than did the Corinthians regarding definite action to be taken against immoral conduct by one of their members. (1 Cor. 5.) We do not have all of Paul's message to this congregation (v.9), but it is clear that he was consistent in his insistence that evildoers were not to be counted as professing Christians.

It is equally clear from verse 9 that this church did not pay any attention to an earlier apostolic decree "not to company with fornicators." Yet, in this epistle he addresses them as "the church of God which is at Corinth." (1 Cor. 1:2.) Even as he emphasizes his order to "put away from among yourselves that wicked person," he does not threaten the Corinthians with loss of HIS fellowship! True, he speaks as though he expects their compliance, but did he not also expect the same in his earlier communication? We might do well to consider this entire situation. What happened to a congregation that chose to ignore a directive of an apostle?

Of course it can be successfully argued that Paul did not ignore the congregation which ignored him. In fact, he seems to have become more explicit in his command and more direct in its application because the church had failed to listen to his previous letter. In so doing, Paul helps us to understand some of the kinds of believers which followers of Jesus cannot tolerate among themselves.

Even so, Christians must recognize that tolerance toward those outside the community of believers is essential. Those that are "within" must not judge those that are "without." (Vv. 12-13.) Further, the only way to completely avoid evildoers is to leave this world (v. 10). It should follow that abhorrence of evil does not demand disassociation from all evildoers - only those who are brothers guilty of immorality.

What brother is to be expelled from all Christian company? Fornicator, covetous, idolater, railer, drunkard, extortioner - all terms used in the King James translation (v. 11). The Phillips version reads, "But in this letter I tell you not to associate with any professing Christian who is known to be an impure man or a swindler, an idolater, a man with a foul tongue, a drunkard or a thief. My instruction is: 'Don't even eat with such a man.'" How many "foul-tongued" brothers and sisters in Christ continue to be recognized as professing Christians with little or no fear of being expelled as evildoers? When have any of us heard of congregational action against such a person? If this passage were strictly followed, how many members of your congregation would be eating ALONE?

Did the Corinthians obey this second stern command? Apparently, and even beyond Paul's intention! (2 Cor. 2:1-11.) However, we should be grateful that this church made so many glaring mistakes because we might not otherwise have such explicit apostolic instructions about specific application of Christian principles. The believers in Corinth seemingly had many of the difficulties we experience and their acceptance as God's children in spite of their blunders ought to encourage all who strive to walk uprightly.

Should we not be as careful as possible not to duplicate the obvious mistakes of early Christians? We need to identify so strongly with our Father that we cannot tolerate within His family anything which is completely contrary to His way. When we are certain that anyone in our number is really an evildoer, we must identify the evil and expel the doer from our midst.

On the other hand, when the evildoer repents, we must not add to his burden by refusing to forgive and to accept him in love. All who profess to be disciples of Jesus must follow His example of love and forgiveness. It is nothing less than "lawmaking" to demand more of a penitent evildoer than God does!

Isn't it significant that the expelling of this immoral Corinthian Christian did not lessen his desire to be counted among the "faithful"? And, assuming that Paul referred to this same case in his next letter, is it not strange that those who tried so hard to follow his instructions had to be reminded of the meaning of love and forgiveness? Why must it seemingly always be this way - that those whose company we cherish become so harsh in dealing with our error that we despair of ever being allowed to work and worship in the kingdom of Christ?

Let us be concerned about the morality of our membership, and equally concerned about our attitude toward a brother who repents. May our loving fellowship be so meaningful that any expulsion from it for immoral conduct will produce the same spirit and action that it did in Corinth.

SECTARIANISM: CORINTHIAN AND CONTEMPORARY David Elkins

In the opening chapters of First Corinthians one encounters sectarianism in an embryonic stage. As a result of their Grecian culture and philosophical bent, the Corinthians were turning Christianity into a system of philosophy with various schools of thought. Each sect had chosen its own

figurehead: some were students of Paul; some, of Apollos; others, of Peter; and still others, of Christ. Had this embryonic sectarianism not been aborted by the Apostle Paul, it would likely have resulted in the birth of four mature sects of Christianity at Corinth. Had each group decided to separate geographically from the others and construct its own meeting place, there would have been four distinct churches at Corinth: the "Church of Paul," the "Church of Apollos," the "Church of Peter," and (believe it or not!) the "Church of Christ."

One can imagine that an eloquent leader of one faction would have vigorously debated leaders of the other factions as he attempted to hammer out and set forth his distinctive theology and philosophy. It is even conceivable that one group might have excelled the other groups and eventually have come to a more precise and correct interpretation of various components of the Christian religion. As a result, this group might have lauded itself as being the only church in Corinth which really had "the truth." It might have disparaged the other groups and called people to membership in itself on the basis that it was the only "Scriptural church" in the city. But regardless of how correct its interpretations, how "Scriptural" its views, or how valid its claim to superior insight - it would still have been a sect! It would still have been guilty of the factious spirit that results in the rejection of other brothers in Christ!

Whether or not a Christian or a group of Christians is guilty of sectarianism cannot be decided on the basis of the correctness of his doctrinal stance. In fact, "a particular doctrinal stance" may be the means by which one displays his sectarian spirit. This is often true when one rejects a brother on the grounds that his "doctrinal" belief and teaching on a particular Christian topic is erroneous.

In the light of the foregoing considerations I would suggest that those of us in the "Church of Christ" branch of the Campbell-Stone Restoration Movement are long past due for a critical re-evaluation of our attitude toward those we admittedly acknowledge as our brothers in Christ. From the time our forefathers began rejecting our "instrumental music brethren" we have seen the increasingly bitter fruits of anti-ism as it was carried farther and farther toward its logical end. When one begins with the philosophical base that he must reject all brothers who practice anything which is in his opinion erroneous, such a person is headed straight down the path of anti-ism. Carried to its logical conclusion, such a course will lead one to the rejection of all, or almost all, his brethren in Christ. The "anti" Churches of Christ, which have rejected all brothers in Christ except those of their own little communions, stand as evidence to this fact and clearly suggest that our philosophy of fellowship in Christ needs drastically to be re-evaluated.

Frankly, I do not pretend to have all the answers. But it just seems to me that our disassociation from brothers in the Lord is often based on precedent. One hundred years ago someone decided that we had to dis-fellowship every brother that praised God to the accompaniment of a musical instrument. So today we just naturally reject our brothers who use the organ. Several years ago someone decided that all "pre-mills" had to be rejected. So today we just fall into line and avoid them. And so the story goes. What we have done is this: we have allowed some men, whose names we may not even recall, to build a wall between us and other brothers. The wall was there when we were born, and we just let it stand without ever questioning the right of men to have built it in the first place!

Is it just remotely possible that we should accept and fellowship those Christ-loving brothers on the other side of the wall? Is it possible that we can accept a brother in full fellowship even though we disagree with him - yes, even believe he is wrong - in some of his views and practices? Is it possible that we can allow such a brother to "stand or fall to his own Master," without taking upon ourselves the roles of judge, jury, and executioner? Is it possible that the walls in our Restoration Movement stand not as guardians of the truth but as monuments of a carefully disguised sectarian spirit?

In some matters we in the Church of Christ have not followed our "anti" course. Take carnal warfare, for example: a number of our "soundest" preachers believe and teach that it is a sin to kill in time of war. They believe in fact that to kill in time of war is no different than killing at any other time; thus they believe such an act is synonymous with murder, even though the soldier may be prompted by the finest of motives. Yet, these first preachers maintain full fellowship with a second group of preachers who believe and teach just the opposite - i.e. that it is right and proper for a Christian to kill in defense of his country. What it really boils down to is this: the first group of preachers is maintaining fellowship with the second group, believing all the while that the second group holds and teaches a view that encourages young men to commit murder in time of war! And at the same time this first group vehemently refuses to fellowship a brother who uses an organ in his worship! A church that finds itself in such inconsistencies would do well to sit down and re-think some of its conclusions.

The answers to the problem of fellowship are not simple because the questions are difficult and complex. It is doubtful that any man among us has all the answers or even all the questions. My only plea would be that we all be honest enough to admit that there is a problem and then join hands and hearts, as brothers should, in a mutual effort to find the solution to what may be a sectarian course being travelled by the very church which often cries the loudest against sectarianism!

THE CORINTHIAN COMMUNION

Frank Rester

Couched behind the familiar reproofs of Paul to the Corinthians are the not so familiar conditions which called them forth. It is difficult to perceive the real situation which prevailed as long as we superimpose the practices of a certain segment of 20th century factionalism upon Paul's instructions and then assume that he was correcting some sort of aberration that could arise from our own procedures. The fact is that some of our practices are so completely foreign to those of the Corinthians that it would be next to impossible to so corrupt them as to make the reproofs of Paul even remotely apply.

Let's consider the Lord's Supper. In every significant passage discussing the Lord's Supper there was directly connected with it either a love feast or common meal at which food was eaten for nourishment as well as providing an effectual and vibrant exemplification of Christian love. 1. Our Lord's institution of the Supper came "after supper" and as they were eating the Passover meal of the Mosaic Economy (Mt. 26). 2. Those joyous days immediately following the first Pentecost after our Lord's ascension were replete with breaking bread and eating their meals from house to house (Acts 2). 3. And, of course, that belabored bit of history recorded by Luke in Acts 20 contains the account of the fellowship meal (Acts 20:11). 4. In fact, the criticisms of Paul to the Corinthians were occasioned, not primarily by their perversion of the Lord's Supper in and of itself, but rather by their selfish and drunken conduct during the communal meal or love feast, which was actually eaten at the same assembly in which the Lord's Supper was partaken of.

When the Corinthians assembled to partake of the supper of Christ they also brought with them their food, a sort of "potluck" arrangement to be jointly shared with one another in the assembly (apologies to my "five acts of public worship" brethren!). In this fashion their love for each other was demonstrated in a very real and practical sense. Intense brotherly fellowship can seldom be expressed in a more intimate manner than in eating together. (The Corinthians, when expelling the incestuous brother from their fellowship, were commanded, "With such an one no not to eat," 1 Cor. 5.) At the conclusion of this communal meal the Corinthians would then partake of the bread and cup of the Lord's Supper.

However, when we read 1 Cor. 11, we discover that the fellowship meal had degenerated into a selfish and drunken display of characteristic Corinthian factionalism. It seems that the more opulent disciples had brought succulent food and drink to the love feast, but rather than waiting for their less fortunate brethren to arrive (whose time was likely controlled by others and who could afford to contribute little or no food to the meal),

these disciples would proceed at once to eat and drink without regard for either the absence or hunger of their brethren and thus "humiliate those who have nothing" (1 Cor. 11:22).

By the time the Lord's Supper was to be taken some of the disciples were glutted and inebriated, while others in the congregation were hungry. "Of all imaginable schisms the most shocking: hunger and intoxication side by side, at what is supposed to be the Table of the Lord! This is indeed 'meeting for the worse'." (G.G. Findlay.) Paul reproves this abhorrent condition by stating that under such conditions "it is not possible to eat the Lord's Supper." Why? Simply because the Lord's Supper is an expression of brotherly love. The Corinthians' reprehensible behavior during the love feast had already proven their complete disregard for their brethren. Their visible separation at the love feast had actually destroyed the reality of the Lord's Supper. Therefore, any attempt to truly participate in it became a farce and in fact "not possible." Paul's corrective strictures consisted of: (1) "When ye come together to eat, wait one for another"; and (2) "If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home." "Some might object that hunger is pressing, and they cannot wait; to these Paul says, 'If any one is hungry, let him eat at home' - staying his appetite before he comes to the meeting; cf. vv. 21, 22a. The Church Supper is for good-fellowship, not for bodily need; to eat there like a famished man, absorbed in one's food - if nothing worse happen - is to exclude Christian and religious thoughts." (Ibid.)

Look at verse 29. This has often been understood that one must have his thoughts riveted upon the physical body of Christ as he suffered for us in order to benefit from the Lord's Supper. I do not take issue with this, but I do think that in view of the contextual situation at Corinth, the meaning of the passage is rather: anyone who eats and drinks unworthily, not discerning the body (that is, the spiritual body, his relationship therein, and his love and concern for the others), eats and drinks judgment unto himself. This view is sustained by verse 34, "If you are hungry, eat at home, so that in meeting together you may not fall under judgment."

Of the things which I am saying this is the chief point: Whenever selfishness, disregard for others' feelings, factionalism, and bigotry exist among brethren, any attempt at observing the Lord's Supper becomes a disgusting and incongruous facade. The Lord's Supper is to be a projection of our love, not a masquerade for our apathy and schismatic behavior. In view of our prevalent propensity to stand apart from our brother solely because of his divergency from our own recently devised and crystallized creed, we might ponder whether Paul would say to us, as he did to that other fractured, fragmented society at Corinth 19 centuries ago, "When you come together it is not possible to eat the Lord's Supper." What do you think?

THE COOL FOOL
Hoy Ledbetter

Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much;
Wisdom is humble that he knows no more.

- William Cowper.

"We have the truth!" is not an uncommon boast within religious parties today. In fact, it has always been a symptom of the disease of dissension. As we lean across the centuries to diagnose the troubles of the Corinthian church, we find them making this very assertion. The spirit is the same; only the words are different. While we say, "We have the truth," they said, "We all possess knowledge." Even if such claims are true, their utterance is likely to indicate the presence of a sin far worse than ignorance.

The Corinthians had written to Paul about eating food offered to idols, and 1 Cor. 8-10 contains his reply. Although a detailed study of these would be rewarding, we must limit ourselves here to the basic attitudes involved in the Corinthian problem as indicated in chapter 8. Unfortunately these attitudes have not disappeared today, and their analysis is especially pertinent to our time.

By putting together three apparent quotations in 1 Cor. 8:1, 4, 8, we get a full account of the position of the "strong" brothers at Corinth: "All of us possess knowledge. An idol has no real existence; there is no God but one. Therefore, eating meat offered to idols is a matter of indifference, since food will not commend us to God." This seems to be very clear and correct reasoning (especially since Jesus declared all foods clean - Mk. 7:19), but let us look at Paul's reply to it.

First Paul deflates their self-conceit by pointing out that "we ALL possess knowledge." The knowledge with which they plumed themselves was not as unusual as they thought, since others also had it.

In the second place, Paul points out a fundamental error in their thinking. They had approached the problem from an entirely wrong starting point. Knowledge is worthless - and worse than worthless - without love. "Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up" (v.1). The love of the Corinthian elite, instead of being Christian, was essentially erotic (i.e., self-regarding and acquisitive). Their knowledge, not surprisingly, was accompanied by pride, the very antithesis of the Christian spirit. So Paul makes it clear that the Christian life does not consist in knowing and teaching propositions about God, even true ones, and that boasting about the possession of sound doctrine is something completely different from the real knowledge of God which is the heart of Christianity.

Whenever any group begins with the intellect and determines its conduct merely by its knowledge, it will fall into the Corinthian sin of pride. "Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up." Knowledge without love is just another form of ignorance. The real trouble at Corinth was not that some were eating meat offered to idols, or that they were encouraging others to violate their consciences. The basic fault was a kind of thinking that boasted in having the truth and that despised those who were less fortunately endowed.

In the third place, Paul insists that all knowledge here on earth is at best incomplete. "If anyone imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know" (v. 2). This statement is a lethal thrust to the intellectually proud man, and he will resort to ingenious remedies to save his wounded conceit. Only the very worst cases will make no confession of ignorance at all, but those who do usually couch their admissions in broad generalities. They are never ignorant on "the essential points!" The proud man may even often say that he is wrong, but never on anything specific or fundamental. One who has claimed to "have the truth" can ill-afford to admit his errors. Rather than acknowledging that "he does not know as he ought to know," he will arbitrarily manufacture lists of self-protective "essentials" and "non-essentials," and his ignorance will always be limited to the latter!

One fact which is essential, not only to the fellowship of the church, but also to one's own intellectual honesty, is that our knowledge is partial and incomplete. We are all ignorant. When we differ, we are just ignorant about different matters. Paul makes a liar out of the man who boasts that the search for truth ends with him (which is exactly what "We have the truth!" implies).

Matters upon which brethren differ can never be settled by knowledge. They must be resolved by love. It is not the man who knows (since all knowledge is incomplete) who is recognized by God, but the man who loves. Verse 4 says: "But if one loves God, one is known by him." As Leon Morris says, "The really important thing is not that we know God, but that He knows us." Those who try to reverse this and make their own mental acquirements the basis of the Christian fellowship erect a barrier of self-conceit between themselves and the possession of real knowledge.

But what was the knowledge of which the Corinthians boasted? It consisted of these facts: "an idol has no real existence" and "there is no God but one." This was a fundamental concept among Jews and Christians alike, and today it is generally regarded as one of the "essentials" of Christianity. But notice carefully what Paul said about some of the Christians at Corinth: "However, not all possess this knowledge." These weak brothers, because of past habits, had never quite abandoned the thought

that an idol did have real existence. Their scrupulosity about eating food offered to idols rested on PURE ERROR! They were wrong, and the strong were right. And if the problem could have been settled by knowledge, they would have been right in applying pressure to correct this ignorance. But knowledge only puffs up, while love builds up, and what Paul urged in behalf of these weak brethren was not denunciation and pressure or even a special Sunday school class, but tender loving care. Their scruples were to be respected, even if they were based on pure error, and furthermore Paul set no time limit on the required deference to them. Instead of prescribing excommunication for the weak and ignorant, he issued a warning to the strong: "And so by your knowledge this weak man is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died" (v. 11).

"Brother...brethren...brother...brother" - four times in three verses Paul reminds the strong of their relationship with the weak who do not possess their knowledge. Even if they are wrong, they are still their brethren. They belong to the church. And the church does not exist because people "know," but rather because they are "known" by God. Human acquisition is nothing. Christianity is a gift, not an achievement. Knowledge may be important, but it is insufficient to settle problems of fellowship. And we are in the fellowship, not because of what we have done, but because God took the initiative. He is the one "by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son" (1 Cor. 1:9).

The church will never have peace as long as those who "possess knowledge" allow their intellect to outrun their heart. The Corinthian elite tried to "encourage" (literally "edify") the weak by setting them a "good example" in eating in an idol's temple. When judged by knowledge, their behavior was right; but when judged by the real standard, love, it was sin against their brethren and against Christ. Their love was so cool that they became fools. Let us be careful that we do not do the same.

THE CHRISTIAN AND HIS BODY

Douglas Marsh

"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body." 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.

In its view of the human body, Christianity occupies a position between two extremes. On the one hand are those purely mechanistic philosophers who argue that a man is altogether physical, that so-called spiritual val-

ues are the result of wishful thinking, which is in turn only a matter of purely physical processes in the brain. On the same side of the question are hedonists, who think of physical pleasure as the chief end of existence. There are other people who, while they do not deny the existence of the soul or the spirit, seem to be preoccupied with the body, as if it were the most important aspect of life: physical culturists, health fanatics, hypochondriacs and the like. At the other extreme are some Eastern religions which teach that the body is an illusion from which the spiritual man tries to escape. This kind of attitude is represented in our own country by Christian Science, which teaches that divine mind is the only reality. The tendency to denigrate the body, to view it as something essentially hostile to man's spiritual development, is as old as Greek philosophy. According to this view, the body must be kept under rigid discipline, and everything from which it derives pleasure is a snare and an evil. Such an ascetic attitude has always seemed "spiritual" to a good many people, and a tragic misunderstanding of what Paul means in his writings when he contends that the FLESH and the SPIRIT are opposed to each other has helped to fasten this heresy on to Christianity. Even today, many Christians feel that whatever gives us physical pleasure is suspect, and that, in particular, sex is a dark and dirty part of our fallen nature, about which we as spiritual people should feel ashamed or at least embarrassed.

The Bible, however, does not divide persons into two antithetical parts, body versus soul. It teaches, on the contrary, that our body is as much the gift of God as anything else about us. The body is no more inherently evil than the mind. The body participates in redemption, and will be transformed into a spiritual body and raised at the last day (1 Cor. 15:44 and 1 Thess. 5:23). Far from being a dead weight encumbering the spirit, the body of a Christian is the very temple of God's indwelling Holy Spirit, the instrument by which the Christian glorifies God in this world.

It is for this reason (not because it is pleasurable!) that sexual immorality is from the Christian point of view, so hideous. "Do you not know that our bodies are members of Christ? Shall I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never!" (1 Cor. 6:15.)

One of the reasons why a false dualism between body and spirit is so serious is that it can lead to the notion that since the body is contemptible and unimportant to the "spiritual" man, what such a man does with his body is likewise unimportant. Thus, sexual conduct belongs to the same realm as eating and drinking and is as trivial a matter as dietary scruples. Some of the Corinthians seem to have adopted this way of thinking, and excused fornication with glib rationalizations: "All things are lawful for me" (since I am so spiritual), "food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food" (and consequently sex is natural to the body and outside

the realm of spiritual significance). Paul's answer to this ingenious argument is the affirmation that the body is meant "for the Lord and the Lord for the body." The body of a truly spiritual Christian participates in redemption along with the mind and the soul, and is therefore subject to the rule of Christ.

It follows that our sexuality presents us with an opportunity of glorifying God in our bodies. Just as joining ourselves to a prostitute is a misuse of that sexuality out of harmony with our relationship to Christ, the union of husband and wife is the symbol of the relationship of Christ with his people. (Eph. 5:21-33.) Our sexuality, our delight in physical beauty, the pleasure we feel in enjoying the legitimate gratification of the body - including sexual union with our marriage partners, are not sinful. They were given to us by God himself, who created male and female. The Christian is neither an ascetic or a hedonist. He neither despises the body nor idolizes it. He offers it up as a living sacrifice to him who created it, who sends his Spirit to dwell in it, and who will raise it up at the last day.

WE COMMEND

The trustees of MISSION have begun a drive to increase circulation of that monthly journal. MISSION is undoubtedly one of the finest periodicals being published today, and we are certain the readers of INTEGRITY will find it a thrilling addition to their reading material. The subscription price is: \$4 per year; 2 years \$7; 2 subs \$7; gift \$3.50; student \$3. The address: P.O. Box 2822, Abilene, Texas 79604.

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We invite comments from our readers (whether critical or commendatory), and we welcome original articles for publication.

All correspondence, including manuscripts, should be sent to P.O. Box 1205, Flint, Michigan 48501.

COMMENTS FROM EDITORS AND READERS

EDITOR'S NOTE: Almost all of our mail is commendatory, and a sampling of the letters is given on this page. Our thanks to MISSION and MISSION MESSENGER for some fine comments about us in their September issues. We have received a large number of subscriptions as a result of these, and they are still coming in every day. These have usually assumed that we are charging for subscriptions and have asked us to bill them. Please note the statement of our policy on the second page of this issue.

A LIBRARIAN WRITES

"Have just seen my first issue of INTEGRITY and am astonished that it is already volume 1, number 3 without having been received by the library.

"Please send subscription information. And can our subscription begin with volume 1, number 1?

"P.S. I'd also like to receive this publication at my home."

TWO IN ONE

"Enclosed you will find a check for \$10 and a letter to you that I wrote earlier after receiving the first issue of INTEGRITY. It had been set aside and not mailed as I thought.

"My opinion of INTEGRITY has not changed. It's great. I look forward to receiving it each month.

"The articles were well-written, thought-provoking, and reasonable.

"I would hope that many Christians realize that it is not necessary to agree with every thought presented in every article to appreciate your stated purpose in publishing INTEGRITY."

A REAL BLESSING

"Please correct my mailing address so that the future copies of INTEGRITY will not be delayed even by one day. I will be anxiously awaiting the arrival of each issue as I feel it is something long overdue in our area (probably nationwide) and is very effective in presenting the topics.

"I can truly say that it has encouraged me to think for myself, has deepened my faith and given me the courage to go on at a time I was feeling most discouraged - to the point of dropping completely out of church.

"My prayers are for a long, rich life for INTEGRITY and those involved in its publication. It has been a real blessing to me."

WATCH THE WINEPRESS

"I appreciate very much the effort made to date toward the unification of all men in Christ. Certainly many attempts will be made to pull you over backward into the winepress. Be of good cheer."

PRO AND CON

"Have heard some good comments (which came in muffled whispers) and some negative, pious remarks against your new publication, INTEGRITY (and these came with full-loaded lungs).

"With no need of further stimulus other than this, the keenest of publicity, please send me your monthly issues of INTEGRITY and bill me accordingly."

A COMMON PURPOSE

"I read your stated purpose in MISSION and am in complete agreement. May your efforts be blessed."

VOICE FROM THE PAST

And yet how the mistake of the Corinthians is perpetuated from age to age. The Church is smitten with a genuine admiration of talent, of the faculties which make the body of Christ bulk larger in the eye of the world, while too often love is neglected. After all that the Church has learned of the dangers which accompany theological controversy, and of the hollowness of much that passes for growth, intellectual gifts are frequently prized more highly than love.

Do we not ourselves often become aware that the absence of this one thing needful is writing vanity and failure on all we do and on all we are?

If we are not yet in the real fellowship of the body of Christ, possessed by a love that prompts us to serve the whole, with what complacency can we look on other acquirements? Do parents sufficiently impress on their children that all successes at school and in early life are as nothing compared to the more obscure but much more substantial acquisition of a thoroughly unselfish, generous, catholic spirit of service?

- Marcus Dods.