

Macedonia Primitive Baptist Church

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Young Adults in an Unholy Culture

By: Elder Dolph Painter

The intended audience of this article is not young adults, but rather the parents and grandparents of young adults. Young adults (high school and college age students) ought to recognize the unholy culture in which we live, but so should all age groups.

Legalism or *extremism* are too often the knee jerk responses to messages on holy living, but I ask the reader to step outside of their culture for a moment and into God's word. I ask the reader to objectively judge whether the things listed below are God's will for our lives or "Christian liberty."

In 1947, Strom Thurmond began his political career as a progressive Democrat. In 2003, he ended his career as a conservative Republican. Did Senator Thurmond steer from one side of the political road to the other, or did the road shift? Biographers report that culture shifted more than he did. Our nation and culture have undergone an enormous shift. Consider the following:

- Two sitcoms, one 50+ years ago and one from today: Barney Fife got red faced when Andy teased him about lipstick marks. Today, television characters do not so much as blush while committing adultery.
- Two songs, one 50+ years ago and one from today: "She looks good, she looks fine, wedding bells are going to chime." Versus, nearly any rap song on the top of the charts.
- Two professional athletes, one 50 years ago and one from today: How about two senior prom gowns, two Humanities 101 syllabuses, two Oscar winning movies, or two little league schedules?
- And compare addiction rates, alcoholism rates, suicide rates, teenage pregnancy rates, abortion rates, cohabitations rates, divorce rates, delinquency rates, incarceration rates, debt rates, obesity rates, and mental illness rates from 50 years ago and from today.

Each Primitive Baptist preacher took an oath to preach the word, the whole word, and nothing but the word. They ought not duck it, excuse it, or explain it away to social relativism. Preachers are to preach the word in season and out of season. My friends, we are in an unholy season. The road has shifted, God's word has not. *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works* - 2Ti 3:16-17. I see no expiration date on God's word.

A minister committed to preaching the whole counsel of God will address all seasons of a saint's life. Relatively speaking, preaching to young adults 50 years ago was a piece of cake. Addressing young adults in 2009 is not for wimps. I've come to believe **the biggest problem for young adults living holy lives does not rest with young adults, but with their parents.**

Consider an experience as I had while visiting a church: It was a few hours before a preaching appointment and 1Peter 1:16 (*It is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy*) would not leave my thoughts, and the Lord also burdened me with young adults. So I follow the Lord's leading and preach holy living with particular application to 16 through 25 year olds. What was covered? Media (1Co 15:33), apparel (1Ti 2:9), sobriety (Tit 2:2-6), sexual purity (1Co 6:18), honoring parents (Eph 6:2), and relationships (Eph 5:31). How is the message received? It was a mixed bag.

- The young adults, for the most part, received the message. Sure, there was one or two high school students who thought a *legalist* wanted to take away all their fun, or that an *extremist* wanted to transform every young adult into the nerd of all nerds. But for the most part, they recognized truth.
- The parents of the young adults received the message but not as well as one might think. Intellectually, the message was just right; but practically - well, that was another matter. The message got talked about but very little was implemented. Why? Because of Satan's lies. He whispers, *Ye shall not surely die* (Gen 3:4). More on Satan's lies in the next paragraph.

- And a percentage of grandparents resisted the message. Their pursed lips communicated disapproval of the subject matter. “That’s not preaching, it’s teaching.” Or, “Good for Dr. Dobson, but ...”

American parents, Christian parents, and yes, Primitive Baptist parents have been beguiled by Satan’s lies. We’ve swallowed them hook, line, and sinker. Here are a few:

1. That’s too high of a standard. If I hold the bar that high, I’ll drive them away. What saith the Lord? ... *that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service* - Rom 12:1.
2. They’re eighteen years old. Legally, they’re adults and need to find their way. What saith the Lord? ... *I will judge his (Eli’s) house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his (grown) sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not* - 1Sa 3:13.
3. I agree that _____ is wrong (you fill in the blank), but that’s a battle I’m not ready to fight. What saith the Lord? ... *and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee* - Tit 2:14-15.
4. How dare he tell us cleavage is inappropriate or stilettos were invented to enhance cancan girls. What saith the Lord? *And, behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot* - Pr 7:10.
5. Everyone’s got to sow a wild oat or two. Hadn’t we all? What saith the Lord? *My earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body ...* - Php 1:20
6. But I want to get a tattoo and show off my permanent ink at the Lord’s house.... What saith the Lord? *Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am the LORD.* - Lev 19:28

I agree, parenting young adults is no easy task. Relatively speaking, parenting during the terrible two’s was a piece of cake, but parenting is at least a 20 year commitment.

The Lord has entrusted parents with the training and nurturing of each son and daughter. In effect, parents are stewards. Think of Jesus’ steward parables: preparedness, expected increase, diligence ... Jesus was teaching primarily about the church, but children are a sub-set of the church. Does a farmer break up fallow ground, sow, water, and weed, only to leave the harvest in the field? Does a servant seek superior returns, diligently trade and reinvest, only to leave the bag of money lying on the front porch? My friends, this is exactly what many of us have done with our young adults.

This message could be unpopular with many folks, but I believe this message is crucial to Primitive Baptists if they are to survive. Yes, raising the bar half way through the process will be difficult. Yes, raising the bar with a spouse “not on board” will be very difficult. And yes, keeping the bar raised as peers pressure our children forty hours a week will also be difficult. But, God never justified disobedience with any of these excuses? Jesus said, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, but I never heard Him say, I will have submission to cultural pressure and not sacrifice.

May we speak as Joshua spoke: *but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord* (Josh 24:15). May God speak of us as He spoke of Abraham: *For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD* (Gen 18:19). Let God’s word be the standard in our homes, and not society or culture.

Christ Centered Ministry

By: Elder Ronnie B. Loudermilk

1 Corinthians 15:1-4 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

Several months ago I was talking on the telephone with another preacher. I asked him if he had a good subject to preach on come Sunday morning? His answer was Jesus Christ! Since that day he and I have enjoyed that little conversation and that statement just reiterated the fact that every sermon preached should be centered around Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:1-2 seems to agree with that conclusion without any reservation. He felt that the most important subject that he could preach to the congregation at Corinth was Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

There was a preacher in times past asked how he, in his study, derived at a subject to preach on Sunday morning? His answer was that he chose a text somewhere between Genesis chapter one and Revelation chapter twenty two and headed straight to the Cross of Calvary.

The fact is Christ should be in the center of every sermon. If we search the scriptures we find many times that He is the one in the midst. He is the center of the three in one Godhead (1 John 5:7). He was crucified on the center cross of Calvary with a thief on the right and on the left (Luke 23:33). He is found in the midst of two or three gathered together in His name (Matthew 18:20). He is found in the midst of the doctors in Luke 2:46. He is found in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks (seven Churches of Asia) (Revelation 1:13) and He should be in the very heart of every sermon every pastor preaches from the pulpit.

But is it possible to teach Jesus Christ without teaching the doctrine He taught? Is it possible for a preacher to have a Christ centered ministry without preaching the entire Word of God declaring all the counsel of God (Acts 20:27)? The answer is absolutely not! If a preacher's ministry is going to be a Christ centered ministry that preacher can not fail to preach that Jesus is a Covenant keeping God and if he preaches that, he will have to preach on the glorious subjects of Election and Predestination. If a preacher is going to have a Christ centered ministry he will have to preach on the subject of the New Birth that Christ taught perfectly in John chapter three. If a preacher is to have a Christ centered ministry he will have to preach on the subject of the preservation of the saints that Christ taught perfectly in John 10:27-30. If a preacher is going to have a Christ centered ministry he will have to teach on the hope of the resurrection, and that is exactly what the Apostle Paul did in 1 Corinthians 15.

Examples

- (1) In Acts 2 we find 120 disciples gathered together waiting for the promise of the Holy Ghost. Beginning with Acts 2:1 we find the congregation in one accord in one place and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind and it filled the house where they were sitting. Upon receiving the Holy Ghost they began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. In verse 14 we read that Peter stood up with the eleven and began to preach. This sermon, which is a wonderful example of a Christ centered sermon, was preached with power that convicted the congregation that heard and was one that was filled with the doctrinal teaching of Jesus Christ. Peter on this day taught the doctrine of the resurrection (Acts 2:29-33), he taught the doctrine of baptism (Acts 2:38), he taught the doctrine of repentance (Acts 2:38), and he taught the doctrine of conditional time salvation (Acts 2:40).
- (2) In Acts 13:16 the Apostle Paul delivered a sermon to the children of God in Antioch. This sermon preached by the Apostle is a great history lesson that begins with events recorded by the inspiration of God in the book of Genesis, then gives information found in Numbers, Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, Kings and Chronicles and ends teaching about the resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord. In this Christ centered sermon Paul teaches the doctrine of the Eternal Sonship of Jesus Christ (13:35

Holy One), the doctrine of the perfect humanity of Jesus Christ (13:28), and the doctrine of justification by faith (13:39). After the Gentiles heard this sermon they wanted to hear this good old doctrinal sermon again the next Sabbath.

New Testament Charge to the Ministry

In 2 Timothy 4:1-5 the Apostle Paul delivers a charge to the young preacher Timothy. His charge was not to preach portions of the truth about Jesus Christ but to preach the word of God that has been given by the inspiration of God (2 Timothy 3:16). I have no doubt that the Apostle believed Timothy should have a Christ centered ministry and according to this charge it will require one to preach the entire Word of God to have a Christ centered ministry. Why is it so important for us today to adhere to this charge? The reason is simple. We are living in a time when individuals are losing the desire to hear the gospel truth that Jesus taught. We are living in a time when people will not endure sound doctrine but will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears (2 Timothy 4:3-4). We are living in a time when men have departed from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils (1 Timothy 4:1).

Therefore no preacher should neglect to teach the doctrine that was first taught by the Lord, which the Church has been commanded to uphold (1 Timothy 3:15). If a man ever departs from this truth, he has departed from a Christ centered ministry. So if your pastor is one that preaches sound doctrine and exhorts the congregation to follow Jesus in a walk of discipleship, be sure to say Amen. And as for me, this is the only message that has ever brought comfort to my sin sick heart, the message of grace that gives all the glory to Jesus Christ. And to that I will always say, Amen.

These two articles cover subjects that have been upon my mind lately. May the Lord add his blessings to them for the benefit of Zion.

In His Love,



Elder Will Martin

Macedonia Church Announcements:

1. Sunday, August 2nd, we will not be eating lunch following morning service due to the fact that several of us from the church will be attending the Rome Braves game.
2. Sunday, August 16th, Elder Philip Conley from Ackerman, MS will be with us for our morning service. Brother Philip will be in town for the Little River Association Meeting (see announcement below) and agreed to stay through Sunday and be with us.
3. Sunday, September 6th, we will have communion following morning service and lunch.

Announcements from Sister Churches:

1. Thursday, August 13th-Saturday, August 15th, Shoal Creek Primitive Baptist Church will host the Little River Association Meeting. Services begin on Thursday night with supper at 6:00 and will continue all day Friday. The meeting will conclude on Saturday afternoon.