

THE FOREST HILL NEWS

Published weekly by the Forest Hill church of Christ

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Forest Hill Church of Christ

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VISIT US SOON!

Sunday:

Bible Study..... 9:30 A..M.
Morning Worship.....10:30 A.M.
Evening Worship..... 6:00 P.M.

Wednesday:

Bible Study7:00 P.M.

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“DEVIL DISEASE”: Illustration of Galatians 5:15?

Neal Pollard

[Editor's Note: Neal Pollard is one of the finest preachers among us. Likewise, he is a prince of a person. His insightful article below identifies a very serious problem besetting the church today. This article ought to be read and heeded throughout our brotherhood.]

The Tasmanian Devil population is being decimated by a strange, deadly malady known as “Devil Facial Tumor Disease.” It is a cancer that horribly disfigures an ever-growing portion of the carnivorous marsupial's body until it suffocates or starves from lesions in the neck. Horrific as the disease is, its means of spreading through that animal population is even more so. The best guess of scientists is that the cancer cell is transmitted when the Devils bite each other during the course of fights. In attacking their fellow species, they are infecting themselves and likely precipitating their own demise. Their infamous ill temperament may be facilitating their own extermination.

False teachers troubled Galatia. This troubled Paul, who by inspiration denounced especially the Judaising trouble-makers in the latter part of the epistle. Paul used many graphic ways to describe their doctrine and approach. It was “bondage” (5:1). It nullified the effect of Christ's atonement in their spiritual lives (5:2). It indebted one in a way impossible to pay (5:3). It estranged one from Christ, causing that one to fall from grace (5:4). It hindered true obedience to God (5:7). It was destructive leaven (5:9). It was brought by troublemakers and persecutors (5:11,12). It was fleshly (5:13, 16ff). It led to spiritual destruction (5:17-21). It was harmful to “one another” relationships (5:26).

Yet, the most graphic description in the midst of several is found in Galatians 5:15. Paul warned, “But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another” (NKJ). Paul had just hyperbolically yearned that the troublers would figuratively mutilate themselves (5:12), but now he says those with such a divisive, ungodly methodology were destined to spiritually wound and even destroy those likeminded.

Liberalism is a dominating, troubling concern in spiritual Israel today. The church faces so many battles centering on proposed changes that threaten to undermine its authority and identity. Many want to change things clearly and principally set forth in scripture to suit their own desires and inclinations. In some places, there is an outright push to denominationalize the church of Christ and pollute our pulpits and classrooms with blatantly false ideas.

However, one is naïve who believes only one side (i.e., the “left”) is attacking biblical center. There are too many from another direction who are equally damaging and vicious in their attacks on the body of Christ. In one sense, they are more dangerous due to their contention that they are rooting out all false doctrine and exposing all error. When they are doing so with proper ethics, attitude, and balance, they are to be applauded. Yet, there is a mentality that seems wholly obsessed with fulltime heretic detection, slandering brethren, and scrupulously elevating mi

(Continued on page 2)

nutia as on par with Christ’s doctrine. They unnecessarily divide brethren and split congregations. They polarize and draw away disciples after themselves. They are fight-pickers, seemingly eager to engage in lengthy, unending diatribe and debate to the exclusion of other Christian obligations, of righteous, Christlike conduct, and of a charitable spirit that “is not rude...keeps no record of wrongs...does not delight in evil...” (1 Corinthians 13:5,6).

Yet, a pattern seems to be emerging among such contentious brethren. First, they are increasingly turning on one another. Further, they are succeeding in infecting themselves by their biting and devouring. Then, they are facilitating their own demise- that of their influence, reputation, trustworthiness, and respectability. However, they have also viciously wounded good men and women from among us in the process. It is an epidemic that deserves closer attention and needs eradication.

If there is biblical center, it can be abandoned in more than one direction. The antidote is Christ-like love that leads to love of truth and kind treatment of brethren. To do less leads to horrific disfiguring of the body of Christ.

(Brother Pollard preaches for the Cold Harbor Road church of Christ in Mechanicsville, Virginia, where he, also, directs the annual Cold Harbor Lectureship.)

IF I WERE THE DEVIL...

Paul Harvey

[Editor’s Note: Although we do not agree with Mr. Harvey’s religious beliefs; never the less, he has given us some insightful material in this article.]

If I were the devil...

If I were the Prince of darkness, I would want to engulf the whole world in darkness.

I’d have a third of its real estate and four-fifths of it’s population, but I would not be happy until I had seized the ripest apple on the tree—thee.

So, I would set about however necessary to take over the United States. I’d subvert the churches first, and I would whisper to you as I whispered to Eve: “Do as you please.”

To the young, I would teach to pray after me, “Our Father, which art in Washington...”

Then, I’d get organized. I’d educate authors

in how to make lurid literature exciting so that anything else would appear dull and uninteresting.

I’d peddle narcotics to whom I could. I’d sell alcohol to ladies and gentleman of distinction. I’d tranquilize the rest with pills.

If I were the devil, I’d soon have families at war with themselves and nations at war with themselves until each, in its turn, was consumed.

And with promises of higher ratings, I’d have mesmerizing media fanning the flames.

If I were the devil, I would encourage schools to refine young intellect but neglect to discipline emotions. I’d tell teachers to let those students run wild. And before you knew it, you’d have drug-sniffing dogs and metal detectors at every school-house door.

Within a decade, I’d have prisons overflowing and judges promoting pornography. Soon, I would evict God from the courthouse and the school-house and then from the houses of Congress.

In His own churches, I would substitute psychology for religion and deify science. I’d lure priests and pastors into misusing boys and girls and church money.

If I were the devil, I’d take from those who have and give to those who wanted until I had killed the incentive of the ambitious.

What’ll you bet I couldn’t get whole states to promote gambling as the way to get rich?

I would caution against “extremes” in hard work, in patriotism and in moral conduct.

I’d convince the young that marriage is old-fashioned, that swinging is more fun and that what you see on television is the way to be.

And thus, I could undress you in public and lure you into bed with diseases for which there are no cures.

In other words, if I were the devil, I’d just keep right on doing what he’s doing.

**WORK TEAM REORGANIZATION
DINNER**

There will be a covered dish dinner in the fellowship hall on Thursday, September 8, 6:30 p.m. New work teams will be announced at this dinner and new students will be introduced.

FOREST HILL CHURCH OF CHRIST
Adult Classes
Fall Quarter, 2005

Location Topic Teacher

SUNDAY MORNING

Auditorium Class (A) Dennis Woods
The Period of the Judges

Chapel Hall Class (E) Paul Connell
The Apostles

WEDNESDAY NIGHT

Auditorium Class (A) Keith Mosher
Aspects of Christian Living

Chapel Hall (E) Barry Grider
Marriage: The Bud of Which Heaven is the Blossom

Ladies Classroom (A) Melinda Thompson
Let This Cup Pass

TUESDAY MORNING

Ladies Classroom (A) Celicia Grider
How Shall I Be Remembered

A- Auditorium Building
E- Education Building

**BIBLE SCHOOL
PROMOTION DAY**

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 4

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