

Heretic Manifesto

TEXT: Acts 20:29-30

INTRODUCTION:

A. SHAMEFUL MESSAGES ON A WEBLOG.

1. MESSAGE #1

We will see who wins this battle. There are more of us here now who have a progressive spirit.

Only a few more old traditionalist left to run off. Ha! Ha! The countdown is on.

2. RESPONSE

Your post explicitly exposes your purpose--to run off people who stand firm in the authority of God's Word. **What do you hope to accomplish** by doing this besides continuing to sew discord?

3. RESPONSE TO THE RESPONSE

Old Wine in New Skin

What we hope to accomplish?

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|------------------------------------|---|
| a. Make this church one | g. Unseat the stigma the world has about the cofc |
| b. Let the spirit pilot the way | h. Shepherd all to worship God more |
| c. Be open to new ideas | i. Love our brothers and sisters |
| d. Serve our community | j. Abolish negative teaching |
| e. Fellowship with other believers | k. Center on Jesus |
| f. Uproot old Traditions | l. Preach Jesus not brotherhood issues |

B. THE NEED TO JUSTIFY MY LESSON TITLE:

1. **Heretic** – “**hairesikos**, ...2. schismatic, factious, a **follower of false doctrine: Titus 3:10.**” (Thayer)
2. **Manifesto** - a public declaration of intentions, opinions, objectives, or motives. (**Infoplease Dictionary** – online).
3. In message #3 we have a declaration on intent by a heretic.

C. WHY IS THIS IS IMPORTANT?

1. The newest popular heresy (Church growth movement – CGM) follows this.
2. Reflects the attitude of many departures in the past, ie. Neo-Calvinism, Grace Fellowship, Crossroads-Boston-Discipling Movement.
3. We have been infected. Do you have this virus?

D. EXAMINING THE DOCUMENT.

1. On face value, some of these propositions are good.
2. We need to know the history and context and understand what they mean.
3. We will briefly discuss each on in this light – with the Scriptures as a guide.

1. “MAKE THIS CHURCH ONE.”

A. UNITY IS EXPECTED IN THE CHURCH (**John 17:20-21; Eph. 4:4**).

B. THE DEBATE IS: “UPON WHAT WILL WE BASE THIS UNITY?”

1. All agree on Love (**John 13:34-35**).
2. Some demand that compromise – ignoring differences – is the only way.
 - a. Old Testament wisdom (**Amos 3:3; Prov. 23:23**).
 - b. “Guard,” “Contend” are not compromise words (**2 Tim. 1:13-14; Jude 3**).

C. UNITY IS ALSO BASED ON DOCTRINAL PURITY (**Eph. 4:4-6; 1 Cor. 1:10**).

D. POSSIBLE ONLY IF WE STICK TO THE BIBLE (**1 Cor. 4:7, 6**).

2. “LET THE SPIRIT PILOT THE WAY.”

A. WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT? Direct operation and special revelations? **NO!**

B. HOW DOES THE SPIRIT GUIDE? WHENCE COMETH DIVINE INSTRUCTION?

1. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit (**John 16:12-13**).
2. To whom was THIS promise (**Eph. 3:5; 1 Cor. 2:12-13**).
3. The Inspired word has all we need (**2 Tim. 3:16-17**).
4. **Rom 8:14**. To be guided by the Spirit is to do what the Bible says.

3. “BE OPEN TO NEW IDEAS.”

A. THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH THE OLD – THEY ARE TRIED AND TRUE.

B. NOT OPPOSED TO NEW IDEAS – AS LONG AS THEY ARE SCRIPTURAL AND EXPEDIENT.

1. Scriptural – **2 John 9; 2 Tim. 1:13**.
2. Expedient - fit or suitable for the purpose; proper under the circumstances. (**Webster's 1828 Dictionary**) (**1 Cor. 6:12; 10:23**).

C. WHAT NEW IDEAS? EACH ONE MUST BE LOOKED AT INDIVIDUALLY.

4. “SERVE OUR COMMUNITY.”

A. WHAT WORK DID GOD GIVE THE CHURCH IN THE COMMUNITY (**1 Tim. 3:15**).

B. WHAT GREATER WORK IS THERE? (**James 5:19-20**).

- C. THIS IS THE CHURCH'S WORK IN THE COMMUNITY – ITS **ONLY** WORK.
- D. INDIVIDUALS? (**Gal. 6:10**).

5. **“FELLOWSHIP WITH OTHER BELIEVERS.”**

- A. OUR FELLOWSHIP BASED ON FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD (**1 John 1:3-4**).
 - 1. Fellowship with God depends on “walking in the light” (**vs. 6**).
 - 2. If one is not walking the light, there is no basis for fellowship (**Eph. 5:11; 2 Cor. 6:14** – see Paul’s application; **2 John 9-11**).
- B. WHAT IS GENERALLY MEANT BY THIS PLANK?
 - 1. Believers among the denominations?
 - 2. Among the digressive churches of Christ?

6. **“UPROOT OLD TRADITIONS.”**

- A. ARE WE TALKING 2 songs, a prayer, and another song before the sermon; Wed. night Instead of Thurs.; length of gospel meetings; standing or sitting while praying, etc.
- B. OR THINGS THAT HAVE LONG BEEN HELD AS TRUE – Women not taking the lead, Offering the invitation, preaching on needed issues, no choir or instruments, etc.
- C. **2 Thess. 2:15; 3:6, 14**. EACH TRADITION MUST BE EXAMINED INDIVIDUALLY.

7. **“UNSEAT THE STIGMA THE WORLD HAS ABOUT THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.”**

- A. THE CHURCH IS SUPPOSED TO BE DIFFERENT! (**Eph. 5:27**).
 - 1. Made up of people who are different (**Rom. 12:2**).
 - 2. A different perspective (**1 Cor. 2:14-16**).
 - 3. Looked upon with scorn (**1 Pet. 4:3-4; Luke 6:26; John 15:19**).
 - 4. Who are we trying to please (**Gal. 1:10**).
 - 5. Light condemns the dark (**John 3:19-21; 8:12; 1 Cor. 6:2**).
- B. TWO PROBLEMS ARE EVIDENT!
 - 1. There is a desire to “mainstream” – to be like those around us (**1 Sam. 8:5**).
 - 2. There are those who are ashamed of what the Bible teaches (**Rom. 1:16; Mk. 8:38**).
- C. IN SOME COMMUNITIES, NOBODY KNOWS ANYTHING ABOUT THE CHURCH!

8. **“SHEPHERD ALL TO WORSHIP GOD MORE.”**

- A. WORSHIP IS GOOD (**John 4:23**).
 - 1. Acts of worship are commanded (**1 Thess. 5:17; Col. 3:15**).
 - 2. Lots of worship is better (**Heb. 13:15**).
- B. **John 4:24**. WORSHIP MUST BE IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH.
 - 1. IN SPIRIT – The inner man must be involved (**Matt. 15:8**).
 - 2. IN TRUTH – According to the pattern (**Matt. 15:9; Heb. 8:5**).
- C. WORSHIP IS ONE ACT OF SUBMISSION.
 - 1. Servants DO what their Lord commands (**Luke 6:46; John 12:26**). Who is honored?
 - 2. Without submission, worship is vain (**Matt. 15:9**).

9. **“LOVE OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS.”**

- A. THERE IS NO ARGUMENT ABOUT THE NEED TO LOVE (**Rom. 13:8**).
- B. LOVE DEMANDS ACTION – BENEVOLENCE (**1 John 3:16-18**)
- C. LOVE ALSO DEMANDS WARNING (**Acts 20:26-27**).
- D. AND CORRECTION (**Rev. 3:19; 2 Tim 2:24-26; 4:2**).
- E. AND PROTECTION (**1 Cor. 5:6-7**).

10. **“ABOLISH NEGATIVE TEACHING.”**

- A. OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT PREACHING ADDRESSED SIN.
 - 1. **1 Kings 22:8**. Will we be like Ahab? (**Gal. 4:16**).
 - 2. **Acts 24:25**. Would today’s preaching terrify anyone?
- B. THE SPIRIT’S MISSION (**John 16:8**).
 - 1. Jesus exemplified “Negative teaching” (**Luke 11:45**)
 - 2. Who does this sound like (**Matt. 15:12**).
 - 3. A man who does not learn of his sin, feel bad about it can’t come (**Matt. 11:25-30**).
- C. WE DON’T DARE NEGLECT THE NEGATIVE – OR THE POSITIVE SIDE.

11. **“CENTER ON JESUS.”**

- A. CENTER ON HIS DIETY (**John 1:1-3, 14; Col. 2:9**)
- B. CENTER ON HIS PURPOSE (**Luke 19:10**).
- C. CENTER ON THE CROSS (**1 Cor. 15:1-4**)
- D. WHAT WAS ACCOMPLISHED ON THE CROSS (**1 Pet. 1:18-19; 2:24**).
- E. ON HIS AUTHORITY (**Acts 2:36; 8:5, 12**).
- F. ON HIS WORD (**John 6:68; Matt. 7:21, 24-29; John 12:48 → Matt. 19:9**).
- G. THE APOSTLES TEACHING (**Luke 10:16**)
- H. HE IS THE ONLY WAY (**John 14:6; 2 John 9**).

IS THIS OKAY?

12. **“PREACH JESUS NOT BROTHERHOOD ISSUES.”**

- A. JESUS WAS ISSUE-ORIENTED.
 - 1. The Sabbath (**Mark 2:23-28**).
 - 2. Traditions vs. the Law (**Matt. 15:1-5, 12, 13-14; Matt. 15:17-20**). Hand-washing!
 - 3. The resurrection (**Matt. 22:23-33**).
 - 4. MDR – THE 3RD RAIL (**Matt. 9:6, 19; 5:32-33**).
- B. THE APOSTLES WERE ISSUE ORIENTED.
 - 1. The Great Debate (**Acts 15**)
 - 2. 5 of Paul’s epistles were written problems that arose over issues. Also, John’s letters.
 - 3. Philippians, written by Paul addressed an issue before it became an issue (**Phil. 3**).
 - a. It is better to know and be prepared for problems that may arise.
 - b. Maybe not good public relations, but could there be another motive? If something is not preached on, it is easier to victimize the ignorant (**Acts 20:29-30**)
- C. APOSTLES ENCOURAGED THE DISCIPLES TO ISSUE-ORIENTED SERMONS (**Jude 3; 2 Tim. 4:1-4**, etc.).

CONCLUSION: WHAT IS ALL THIS ABOUT?

- A. THERE IS AN ONGOING EFFORT TO CHANGE THE FACE OF THE LORD’S CHURCH.
 - 1. The Church Growth Movement is not just about “Church Growth!”
 - 2. “Change-Agents” go about the brother-hood undermining preachers and elders.
 - 3. They institute what changes they can – for a purpose. No invitations, asking women questions during sermons, turning down lights during prayer, encouraging applause, etc.
 - 4. Promoting a “New Emphasis,” A “New Direction/Perspective/Philosophy.”
 - 5. Gradual change is acceptable to most – **Incrementalism**.
- B. THE IMPETUS FOR THESE CHANGES IS SUSPECT – NOT BASED ON SCRIPTURE.
 - 1. Sometimes opposed to what the Bible teaches. The ignorant often are drawn in (**2 Pet. 3:16**).
 - 2. Some see these changes as necessary for the church to grow.
 - a. Cautious, meatless sermons.
 - b. The eldership is forsaken for the survey.
 - c. The numbers on the board become the measure of success and growth.
 - 3. Some among us just don’t like the church of Christ (**Phil. 3:18-19**), or what the Bible teaches about it.
- C. WE ARE PERSUADED BETTER OF YOU THAN THAT.