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Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR THOSE WHO LOVE THE TRUTH AND HATE ERROR

“THOU SHALT NOT KILL”

(Exodus 20:13; Romans 13:9)

The commandment, “**Thou shalt not kill**” in the Hebrew reads, “**You shall do no murder.**” All killing is not murder. The apostle Paul wrote, “**For if I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die**” (Mat. 25:11a). The man who shot the West Freeway Church of Christ members was the murderer who violated God’s will. The church member who shot and killed the murderer (“**an offender**”) provided the consequence of the murderer’s evil choice and saved others from injury or death thereby.

When a law enforcement officer shoots and kills a murderer such as the one who committed his evil deeds in the West Freeway Church of Christ worship assembly, that lawman is not a murderer. In like manner, when a citizen does the same he/she is not a murderer, but a defender of the innocent. If a civilian may legally make a citizen’s arrest, then that same citizen may defend himself and others from evil doers. Some people simply do not know their Bibles and are moved more by ignorance and sick sentimentalism than truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth (John 12:48).



ON JUDGING

“**Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment**” (John 7:24). To engage in “**righteous judgment**” is to decide what is right and wrong solely on the basis of God’s rightly divided word (Psa. 119:172; 1 John 3:7; 2 Tim. 2:15; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; John 8:31, 32; 12:48; Col 3:17). To forbid ALL judging is to prohibit judging that Jesus commanded in John 7:24. Indeed, there is a sinful judgment (Mat. 7:1-5) and we are forbidden to engage in it. However, we must practice the judging that Jesus commanded in John 7:24. “**Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, ...**” (1 Cor. 6:3, 4).

—Editor

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*I can never hide myself from me;
I see what others may never see;
I know what others may never know;
I can never fool myself, and so,
Whatever happens, I want to be
Self-respecting and conscience free.*

—Edgar Guest

Contending FOR THE Faith™

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ADVERTISING POLICY & RATES

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH exists to defend the gospel (Philippians 1:7,17) and refute error (Jude 3). Therefore, we advertise only what is authorized by the Bible (Colossians 3:17). We will not knowingly advertise anything to the contrary and reserve the right to refuse any advertisement.

All setups and layouts of advertisements will be done by *CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH*. A one-time setup and layout fee for each advertisement will be charged if such setup or layout is needful. Setup and layout fees are in addition to the cost of the space purchased for advertisement. No major changes will be made without customer approval.

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MAIL ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS, ADVERTISEMENTS AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR, P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357. COST OF SPACE FOR ADS: Back page, \$300.00; full page, \$300.00; half page, \$175.00; quarter page, \$90.00; less than quarter page, \$18.00 per column-inch. CLASSIFIED ADS: \$2.00 per line per month. CHURCH DIRECTORY ADS: \$30.00 per line per year. SETUP AND LAYOUT FEES: Full page, \$50.00; half page, \$35.00; anything under a half page, \$20.00.

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Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Founder
August 3, 1917–October 10, 2001

Editorial...

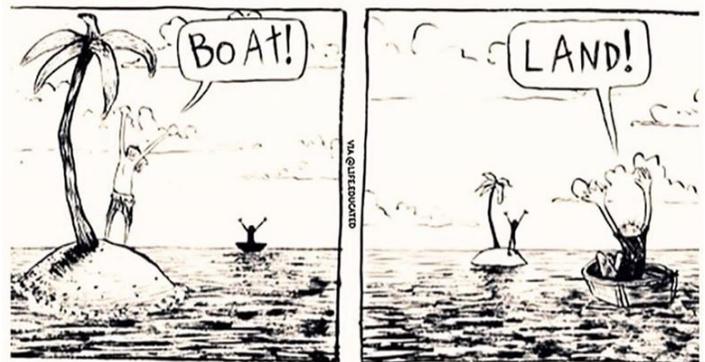
TRUTH SUBJECTIVE AND RELATIVE OR OBJECTIVE AND ABSOLUTE

The cartoon below depicts two characters seeking salvation from being stranded—the one in a boat looks for land, the one on an island looks for a boat. However, not just any land or any boat can provide salvation for either person. In both cases, the cartoonist did not permit his characters to have the sense to determine the kind of land or boat needed to save them. He forced his cartoon to teach that both characters were prisoners to their life “contexts” (cultures, etc.). Thus, different conclusions may be reached (in his cartoon both characters reached false conclusions) because of their respective life “contexts.” Again, notice, that the cartoonist created his characters so they did not have enough sense to realize anything outside their life “contexts.”

Without adequate objective evidence bearing on the cases depicted by each cartoon character’s needs and their ability to think properly, neither cartoon character could logically arrive at their desired conclusions. Indeed, **“There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death”** (Pro. 14:12; 16:25). Also, we are to **“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good”** (1 The. 5:21). Sadly, such personal subjective and relative views prevail with many as they, from within their own “contexts,” conclude what is right and wrong in moral and spiritual matters when they ought to seek God’s objective, infallible, and absolute truth to determine the same (See John 8:31, 32; 17:17; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Tim 2:15; John 12:48).

—David P. Brown, Editor

TWO DIFFERENT CONTEXTS, TWO DIFFERENT VIEWS



THIS IS LIFE.

PRETENDING AKA HYPOCRISY

Bill Jackson

The game of pretense. We know that children play the game, and in their time of life it is innocent and a great deal of fun. But then, there's the grown-up world, and for those in Christ, there is the reality set forth in the Word of God. Christianity is not the religion of pretense. In mythology, and in the systems men have created, one can do a great deal of pretending because all that does exist in those forms are made up by man, but not so in the system of Christ. God is, and that is reality! (Gen. 1:1). Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God (Mat. 16:16), and that is reality! Satan and sin exist, and have their influence upon men in causing men to be separated from God, and those are realities! (Eph. 2:1). In Christ, salvation is offered to man, and that is a splendid reality! (Eph. 1:13). The saved are in Christ, and thus are in the church that Jesus built (Acts 2:47), and that is reality! Christians deal in realities.

For a Christian to be a pretender is to say, then, that he is a hypocrite. Jesus saw so much of that among the Jewish leaders of his time, and repeatedly he condemned such in Matthew 23. That very word gives our word *actor*, and that is exactly what a hypocrite is, for he is merely "playing a part." Above all else, the child of God must know that he is dealing with eternal realities, and cannot just pretend. It is dangerous to pretend, and foolish. We suggest some types of that foolishness:

(1) What of that preacher who still "pretends" to be God's man, but he's so careful to avoid preaching on the subjects troubling to the saints, or on those things that prominent people in the congregation might be given to? Is he not just a "pretender?" Rather than preaching the truth, and standing squarely for God, he's in the business of men-pleasing. Forceful he is, in speaking forth those things wherein all around him are in agreement, but silent as a tomb when it comes to things wherein controversy lurks. He is simply a "pretender."

(2) What of those elders who have the title, and have their names on the bulletin and on the stationery, but precious little time and effort is expended in seeing to the spiritual needs of the flock? Are they not just "pretenders?" These are charged with feeding the flock of God (Acts 20:28), and watching for souls (Heb. 13:17). Attending to those very duties would have stopped some divisive movements dead in their tracks, and the church would not have been hurt so terribly. But too often, we have known of elders who simply "put heads in the sand" and played the game of pretense—pretending there was no problem, pretending certain ones were not false teachers, pretending the problem would just die on its own, and pretending a problem would right itself.

Satan has his devices (2 Cor. 2:11), and all are calculated toward the defeat of God's cause. Satan's efforts are called "war against the Lamb" (Rev. 17:14), but that conflict amounts to "war against those belonging to the Lamb" (Rev. 12:17). All of God's children are to be faithful soldiers in the Lord's army, and elders are to be such as will hold the Word in their hands and to use it in convicting the man of the contrary part (Tit. 1:9). Liberalism is all around us, and those known as elders just "pretend" that there is no problem. Indeed, they are just "pretenders."

(3) And what of entire congregations whose main thrust today is in the realm of the economic, or social, or entertain-

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SPRING CHURCH OF CHRIST CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH LECTURESHIP

Saturday, February 29, 2020

THE UNITY DEMANDED BY CHRIST
(Ephesians 4:3-6)

9:00: *Give Diligence to Keep the Unity of the Faith and the Importance of Love*—Weldon Blake

10:00: *That They All May Be One*—Jose Gamez

11:00: *One God/One Bible*—Lovell Henry

12:00: LUNCH SERVED BY THE CHURCH

1:30: *One Lord/One Faith*—Jack Stephens

2:30: *One Spirit/One Baptism*—Bruce Stulting

3:30: *One Body/One Hope*—John West

LECTURESHIP DIRECTOR: David P. Brown

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ment of its own members? The church, like a mighty army, has been placed on the field of battle, commanded by the captain of our salvation (Heb. 2:10), and is expected to expend all in casting down and pulling down anything daring to stand in the way of the knowledge of God! (2 Cor. 10:3-5). And the church builds a gymnasium? The volley ball replaces the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God? (Eph. 6:17). Given just a few years of church concern turned inward toward the members' pleasure, and those in the church will not only not desire the New Testament truth, but they will not even recognize it! But the congregation given to the social gospel and emphasis on pleasure, is that congregation not just "pretending" when it claims to be devoted to the Lord's will and claims to be working toward the salvation of souls? Indeed, just "pretending."

Again we stress the fact that the things of God are the

things of reality! Accountability is real, and the coming day of judgment is real. Hell is an awful reality, and pictured in terms of reality in the Bible. Hell is too real for any of us to spend our time in this life just "pretending." We must be up and about the Father's business!

—Deceased
CHRISTIAN WORKER, 1987

"Laugh and the world laughs with you," are immortal words from the pen of Ella Wheeler Wilcox. But Jesus wept over a world staggering under a load of sin, and stumbling head-long toward hell. The plight of a lost, dying world, laughing hysterically and seeking amusement, is not a picture that will move a true Christian to laughter, but to tears.

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