



Hebron Herald

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I am not ashamed to work with this congregation, though some may wish me to be. It is a solid church, sound in the faith and spiritually minded (1 Thes. 1:6-10). The elders are serious, active, and faithful in their duties to shepherd the flock, including watching for wolves within and without (Acts 20:28-32). For this, they are maligned. Still, they carry out the charge given them by God. Her preachers, in times past and at present, are loyal to the Lord and His word (cf. Mk. 8:38). Yet, like Paul, they are the subject of much ridicule and a focal point of attack (2 Cor. 10:7-11; 11:23-29). Instead of being ashamed of this church, her elders, and preachers, I count it a privilege to labor with it.

Are you ashamed of the Lord or His word? Are you ashamed of those who faithfully serve the Savior? If yes, then repent of your sin. If not, then know that your love and loyalty are noted by God.

- Steven F. Deaton

Not Ashamed

[For many readers this will be the first article they read from me, but hopefully not the last. What follows is meant to be an introductory article about my view of this congregation and my approach to teaching the gospel.]

There are many things for which a man ought to be ashamed, especially sin. There are some who glory in their shame, but not those who love the Lord (Phil. 3:18-19). However, there are some things of which we should never be ashamed.

Paul said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ" (Rom. 1:16). He was not ashamed of it because it is God's power unto salvation. It enlightens men with spiritual truth, the riches of the knowledge of Christ (Col. 2:2-3). It sets them free from sin and Satan (Jn. 8:32). It comes from God almighty, through the Holy Spirit (Jn. 16:7-15). Why would anyone be ashamed of the gospel?

Though I cannot personally claim to have never been ashamed of the gospel, I do pray that I will never be again. Thus, my articles in these pages will reflect my efforts to boldly proclaim the truth (Acts 4:29). They will include rebuke and exhortation (2 Tim. 4:2). A variety of subjects will be addressed including denominationalism, problems among brethren, and general issues about sin and worldliness. The blessings found in Christ, including eternal salvation, will be examined (Eph. 1:3). I ask for your prayers that I will not be ashamed, but readily declare "the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:26-27).

Further, Paul told Timothy not to be "ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner" (2 Tim. 1:8). There is no need to be ashamed of those who carry the gospel to a lost and dying world. These are ones who are sanctified with the blood of Christ and call upon the same Father (Heb. 2:11). They share a common salvation and like precious faith (Jude 3; 2 Pet. 1:1). Why should anyone be ashamed of them?

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Wednesday 7:30 p.m.

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A Time For Prayer and Preaching

There is never a time when prayer and preaching are not needed. We are to “pray without ceasing” and “constantly affirm” the truth (1 Thes. 5:17; Titus 3:8). However, there are times of “crisis” when special attention must be given to an acute problem.

The Corinthians needed a great deal of admonition about unity. Hence, Paul dealt with it in one way or another in the first fourteen chapters of his first letter. The Galatians had problems with Paul’s apostleship and the circumcision. So, the bulk of his letter to them addressed these issues. Certain problems in our nation call for special attention right now.

It seems our nation is undergoing a moral test. It is not the first one. The “sexual revolution of the 1960s was one. The scandals of Bill Clinton, and people’s reaction, were another. The nation failed on both accounts. Sexual immorality has risen since the 1960s and polls revealed Bill Clinton was supported by the majority of America, that is, most citizens were not outraged enough to have him thrown out of office (either by vote or Senate trial).

The moral test we are now facing is on the issue of homosexuality. Are we, or are we not, going to tolerate legal sanction of homosexuality. Will we as a nation view it as just another “lifestyle”? Do John and Joe have as much right to marry and cohabit as Jim and Jane?

God declares homosexuality to be sinful. Those who practice such will lose their souls in hell (1 Cor. 6:9-10; Rom. 1:26-32; cf. 2 Pet. 2:6; Jude 7). All who believe in God, and believe His Word, will view homosexuality as a deviant behavior as well.

It is sad, but many people are willing to compromise on this issue. The idea is, let two consenting adults do as they please. In the past, this philosophy was applied to unmarried couples and prostitution. We wonder, to what will it be applied next? Will the age at which one becomes an adult be lowered from 18 to 16? There is a group called NAMBLA (North American Man-Boy Love Association) that wants to legalize sexual relations between men and boys. Will they get their wish in 20 or 30 years? If we look at the moral decline of the United States over the past 40

years, the answer is yes.

So, now is the time for prayer and preaching on these issues. Let us pray for our leaders, that they may take a stand for righteousness (1 Tim. 2:1-2). Let us also “preach the word,” though it may be out of season, to prick the hearts of those around us and persuade them of the truth (2 Tim. 4:2; cf. Acts 2:37).

“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people” (Prov. 14:34).

- Steven F. Deaton

God Is Victorious

It is easy to be negative about the world. As in the days of Noah, it is filled with wickedness (Gen. 6:5, 11). Abortion, rape, theft, and drunkenness are all too common. Sexual immorality is on the rise, including adultery and homosexuality. All these are an abomination to God and His people (Rom. 1:18-32). Thus, when a righteous man looks at the world, sadness and sorrow can overwhelm him. Still, the word of God encourages us.

The world does lie under the sway of the wicked one (1 Jn. 5:19). He is described as the “prince of the power of the air” and the “god of this world” (Eph. 2:2; 2 Cor. 4:4). Many more men follow Satan than the Savior (Matt. 7:13-14). Still, God remains in control (Rev. 4). He is in heaven, upholding all things by the word of His power (Heb. 1:3; Col. 1:17). His eye sees all that takes place among men, both the just and unjust (Heb. 4:13). He is aware of the trials of His children, their heart aches, temptations, and persecution. The Christian can take comfort in knowing that God cares and hears his prayer (cf. Lk. 18:1-8).

We also know that in the end God is victorious (Rev. 17:14). All enemies will be put under the feet of Christ, the last enemy being death (1 Cor. 15:24-26). Satan will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, along with all other wicked beings (Rev. 20:10; Matt. 25:41). We have this assurance from the Lord, guaranteed by the resurrection of Christ (1 Cor. 15). Therefore, do not lose heart.

- Steven F. Deaton