

BRYAN STATION BAPTIST CHURCH

THE PIONEER BAPTIST

INDEPENDENT • MISSIONARY • ESTABLISHED 1786

"Preaching the same truth since before Kentucky was a state"

VOLUME 34, NO. 12

SEPTEMBER, 2003

FOR JESUS' SAKE

or

CARRYING A CAN OF OIL

By: C. D. COLE

Ephesians 4:32, *"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."*

Colossians 1:24, *"Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church."*

II Corinthians 4:5, *"For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."*

Introduction: If you think of this world of humanity as a huge machine with the multitude of individuals as wheels and cogs and pulleys and other gadgets that belong to a great factory, you may safely say that there is a lot of friction that will cause serious trouble unless there is more of the oil of human sympathy, consideration, and a desire to do right. And we have no basis of hope that such will be forthcoming. Wars and rumors of wars to the end.

Ecclesiastes 7:29, *"Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."* I John 5:19, *"And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness."*

If you think of a smaller segment of the world's population, that part of it that claims to be Christian, the same situation

exists.

And if you focus your attention upon most any assembly of believers; large or small, there can be heard the grating noise of a machine that needs oil. In this machine age, an oil can is a very important thing.

Let me suggest to myself and to you that we carry a can of oil. Some of you may have been doing this all the time, but you may not have kept the can polished, or it may be nearly empty.

I want to label this can "For Jesus' sake." And we will try to discover the kind of oil we are to use. "For Jesus' sake" is a good motto, if we may change our figure for a moment.

Whatever we do for Jesus' sake is very apt to be the right thing, and it is certainly the highest of all motives. Doing the right thing may not be so very good if not done for Jesus' sake. For example: the Pharisees.

Matthew 23:1-33, *"Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but*

they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man

your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he

that shall humble himself shall be exalted. But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater

"Whatever God does for us is for Jesus' sake. It is because of what Jesus did for us when he gave Himself on the cross of Calvary. Forgiveness is the divine prerogative and God forgives us for Jesus' sake."

damnation. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? And Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty. Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift? Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon. And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein. And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous. And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how

"If the church has to be perfect for you to love it, then it can never be loved as long as you are in it. The church is not to be loved for its own sake but for the sake of Him whose it is."

can ye escape the damnation of hell? Let us first of all remember that whatever God does for us is for Jesus' sake. It is because of what Jesus did for us when he gave Himself on the cross of Calvary. Forgiveness is the divine prerogative and God forgives us for Jesus' sake. Forgiveness is based upon redemption and Christ redeemed us by His own blood. Nothing enters into the cost of our salvation but His blood, that is His life given up for us. Ephesians 1:7, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."

As believers we cannot pay him for what he has done, but we can show our gratitude. He does not want any pay, but he does want our love, and he tells us how to shew our love for him. He has interests here on this earth. He has a church for his people to belong to and work in. He has other believers and he wants believers to be good to one another. He knows all the irritations and disappointments we are to one another. He knows we will have need of a forgiving spirit. Ephesians 4:32, "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." We are to be kind one to another and tenderhearted, and if we were consistently so, there would be no occasion for forgiveness. But he adds, forgiving one another, because he knew there would not always be kindness shown.

Paul tells of the sufferings he endured for His body's sake, the church. II Corinthians 11:23-28, "...in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things

that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches."

God wants our love...that is an amazing statement. How can my love be of any benefit to God who is self-existent and self-sufficient? He is the happy God. I would not say He wants it because He needs it, but because it is His due.

The wish to be loved is Divine as well as human. The whole law of human obligation to God and men is summed up in the word love. And God does not want any half-hearted love. Mark 12:30, "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength..." Our duty to love is in proportion to the worth of the object loved.

And since the sinner is not loveable, he is to be loved for Jesus' sake. And since we believers are not lovable to one another, we are to love one another for Jesus' sake.

A certain pastor was trying to interest one of his men in the work of the church. The man was frank enough to tell the pastor he did not like him. And the pastor made this reply: "Well, I do not like you either. You refuse to do anything yourself, and you put everything in the way of others you can. Your influence is against the church to which you belong. You have an ugly attitude toward what others are trying to do. But, in spite of all this, I would be glad to cooperate with you for Jesus' sake. Neither of us is very much, but our Saviour is great and good and glorious, suppose we join hands as a pledge that we will do what we can for the church, which is his body."

If the church has to be perfect for you to love it, then it can never be loved as long as you are in it. The church is not to be loved for its own sake but for the sake of Him whose it is. Christ said it is "my church." Matthew 16:18, "...I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Ephesians 5:25, "...Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." He did not love it for what it was but for what he will make it. It is full of spots and blemishes and wrinkles now, but it will not always be so.

If you feel bad about the church today, look back into the first century and see what they were then. Corinth was split into factions over preachers; they had at least one immoral man; a man living with his father's wife; law-suits

among the members; some who denied the resurrection. I Corinthians 5:1-6:3, *"It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good, Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person. Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do you not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?"* Luke 20:27, *"Then came to him certain of the Sadducees, which deny that there is any resurrection..."* Acts 23:8, *"For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit..."*

At Thessalonica they had a bunch of lazy members and Paul preached: II

Thessalonians 3:10-12, *"For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread."*

The churches of Galatia were rotten in doctrine. The seven churches of Asia were all censured except Philadelphia and Smyrna. But to none of these churches was anybody to come out of them. There was a call to clean up but no call to come out.

A converted cowboy gave this as his conception of how to live the Christian life. He said a lot of people think they are serving the Lord when they shout themselves hoarse praising his name. But this is how I look at that, he said. While I am working for Jim, if I did nothing but sit around the house and tell what a wonderful fellow Jim is and sing songs to him, that WOULD NOT PLEASE Jim. But if I buckle on my straps and mount my horse and go into the hills and see that Jim's herd is faring all right; if I see his cattle do not suffer for water and food, and that they are not driven off the range and branded by cattle thieves; than I am serving Jim as he wants to be served.

There is a place for public worship and a need for it, but public worship is not service. It is to get strength for service. In the church we come to be fed and corrected and to learn his will for our lives, but the field of service is out yonder in the world seven days a week.

Illustration: Canned Sunshine: Coal has been called canned sunshine. It has lain for ages in the bowels of the earth. When we warm up the coal out comes the sunshine to light and warm our homes. Thousands of years ago, God canned this sunshine for us.

Years ago, a certain man lived in a rough cabin near Philadelphia. While hunting one day, his foot struck a black stone, i.e., he thought it was stone. He built a fire out of wood and threw some pieces of the black stuff on it to hold the embers while he roasted a fowl. He was surprised to see the stones burn and glow and hold their heat for a long time. He took some of these stones home with him and burned it to warm himself and his family. Nobody until that time knew

what the black stones were. Someone suggested a monument for the man who discovered canned sunshine.

Love is also called canned sunshine and has been likened to a lump of coal. A little boy declared he loved his mother with all his strength. When asked what he meant, he said, "Well you see, we live way up on the fourth floor of this apartment and there is no elevator, and the coal is kept way down in the basement. Mother is too weak to bring the coal up and so I see to it that the coal bucket is never empty. I bring all the coal up four flights of steps, and it takes all my strength to get it up here. Now isn't that loving Mother with all my strength?"