

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sick & Recovering

Jo Byrnes • Betty Cannon • Joyce Coones
Tom & Linda Cannon • Sleatha Gore • Essielene Henderson
Faye Kilpatrick • Bonnie Lord's father (bro. Derrick)
Sally Smith • Cameron Rutter

New Directories

The new directories are finished and have been printed. We had them ready Wednesday night and some of you picked up a copy then. If you have not gotten one yet, they are in the foyer. If we run out, please tell Jamey Hinds and he will prepare more.

Our Gospel Meeting

Our gospel meeting with brother John Zellner begins five weeks from today (September 27–October 2). What you can do to help:

- Pray for these efforts
- When fliers are ready for distribution, mail them out to friends and family, post them up in your car, hand them out, etc.
- Pray for these efforts

Upcoming Area Gospel Meetings

- Trenton with *Don Truex*, September 13–16, 7:30 PM nightly (S–W).
- Spring Warrior with *Rick Liggin*, September 20–25, 7:30 PM nightly (M–F).
- Chiefland with *John Zellner*, September 27–October 2, 7:30 PM nightly (M–F).

Chiefland Church of Christ

Meeting at 211 NE 2nd Street in beautiful Chiefland, Florida
PO Box 2539 • Chiefland FL 32644 • (352) 493–1242

THINGS ABOVE

“Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth”

—[Colossians 3:1–2]—

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www.ChieflandChurchofChrist.com

Blessed Are the Flexible

By Bobby Graham

A few days ago in Canada the following saying appeared on a church sign: “Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not be bent out of shape.” It is difficult to know always how far people intend for such sayings to be taken. If the saying was meant to convey the idea of flexibility in personal relationships, the saying is well taken. On the other hand, if it included the current idea of being open to new truth, then the religious humanism demonstrated in the saying must be rejected. According to Bible teaching, there is a time when tolerance is no virtue. Fairness demands that we admit that we do not know which of these ideas was intended; however, the two possibilities open the door for profitable study of the Scriptures.



Some Flexibility Is Commendable

It is a poor attitude that inflexibly refuses to look not only upon one's own things, but also on the things of others. Such is the mind of Christ described in Philippians 2:3–11. Prejudice is that enemy of the soul which decides before hearing the situation or the facts and apart from a weighing of the matter on the scales of God's Word. The Bereans were commended by the Lord for their willingness to hear what was taught them and to search the Scriptures to ascertain its acceptability (Acts 17:11). James said that the wisdom coming down from the Lord is marked by a willingness to yield (James 3:17), but the Gentiles were said to be guilty of being implacable (unmerciful, unwilling to be agreeable) in Romans 1:31. The reason for such unconcern for others and the associated refusal to consider them is self-centeredness. Jesus said we are to love neighbor as self (Matthew 22:33). Surely we can see that we must remain flexible in relation to others and in relation to God's will for us, so that we might practice what He desires.

Some Flexibility Is Not Good

The attitude that recognizes no certainties, no absolute truth, and no finality in what the Lord has revealed is one of unbelief, for the Lord has assured us of these matters. One who wishes to remain aloof from the idea of absolute truth, maintaining a tentative approach to all things, does so because of the shaky ground that he occupies. On the other hand, the firmness desired by God is the result of the firm foundation erected by God in His sure Word. For one to be flexible in relation to the Bible is to manifest uncertainty about God's credibility. Three reasons explain why this kind of flexibility is not desirable.

1. God's Word is not subject to change. Because God has indicated the finality of Scriptures in passages like 2 Tim-

othy 3:16–17; Jude 3: Matthew 28:19–20, we have no basis for expecting any additional word from the Lord. No latter-day revelations, dreams, vision, or gentle nudges are in store for anyone.

2. Truth is narrow and unyielding. Its nature demands this be said. Truth in any field — mathematical, geographical, or religious — does not change because of whim, official decree, or changing conditions. What Peter declared regarding the exalted position of Jesus the Son of God is yet true. Paul's affirmation of the one body (church) is still true. Nor has it stopped being true that obedience is the path to God's favor (Matthew 7:21–23). Regardless of man's changed view of these matters, God-given truth does not change.
3. The pure gospel of Christ suffers no other gospel (Galatians 1:6–8). Efforts to please men are responsible for all changes imposed by men. Not only is God not pleased by such attempts, but He declares His *anathema* (consignment to destruction) upon those doing so.
4. The Divine pattern is irreplaceable. Under whatever arrangement God has instituted in His dealing with human beings, He has always made it clear that His way is the only way. It is the role of God to show man the way, and it is the role of man to walk in that way. Passages earlier noted suffice for this point.

Flexibility is good in yielding to put others ahead of self and to practice God's will, but it is evil when it leads us to abandon the certainty of Biblical teaching and to look for something else. Are we flexible in those ways that we should be? Do we remain steadfast in belief and practice of the truth of the Lord? May we remember that the highly honored "god" of tolerance must also bow before the great God of the universe.

