

## Trends

Over 6 hours a day are spent by the average American family either watching movies, television or videos. Dick Rolfe, movie and television specialist and head of the Dove Foundation remarks "...when you spend that much time watching something, you have just developed new role models and a new window on life. And I think that's the destructive value of some television and movies... [viewers] get the wrong impression and a distorted view of what life is really like."

- via [ChristianAnswers.net](http://ChristianAnswers.net)

**2 Corinthians 10:5:** "casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ..."

## Sentence Sermons

"A lie can travel half way around the world while truth is putting on its shoes."

—Mark Twain

**John 17:17:** "Sanctify them by Your truth, Your word is truth."

## News & Notes

Please pray for those mentioned in the announcements after services and others listed on the bulletin board in the foyer of the church building.

Please be sure to pray for all the needy saints. *Be sure to pray for all the members at Westside! Please pray for the Ferrell family in Michigan. In previous Words of Life I informed the brethren about Susan Ferrell and her illness with a brain tumor. Shawn, Susan's husband, informed me Susan recently had very "clean" scan and resumed chemo on 3/11. She is having difficulties with the chemo, therefore, they are using a special regimen. Please continue to pray for Susan, Shawn and their three boys: Samuel, Micah, and Eli.*

*Christian Shadburne, the young Christian brother in Bowling Green (KY), has returned home after a 21 day stay in the hospital. He is scheduled to undergo more radiation treatments. Please keep him and his family in your prayers.*

*"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (James 5:16)*

Please keep sister Wilma in your prayers! She gives all of us so much encouragement! God bless her and Virginia! Remember both of them in your prayers.

**There are many needy saints! Can you help?! Let me know.**

If you know of any in need of our prayers please let us know so we can include them in the announcements and/or put their name on the bulletin board.

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Please direct questions and comments to the editor.

# Words of Life

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**"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."**

John 6:68



**"Tolerate, Then Embrace"**

Larry Ray Hafley

Concerning our moral and spiritual culture, a commentator said, "What this generation tolerates, the next generation will embrace." Both sacred and secular history have proven the truth of this assessment time and time again.

Everything from dancing to drinking, from abortion to mercy killing, has gone from toleration to acceptance. In the home and in the church, everything from immodesty to immorality has been first allowed and then endorsed. Adulterous marriages, gambling, and other similar sins, have gone from being permitted to being sponsored. Remember when wearing shorts and attending dances was condemned? Now, shorts are worn to services and dances are held in church buildings! Truly, what "this generation tolerates, the next generation will embrace."

One generation tolerated sprinkling for baptism if a person were seriously ill. The next generation accepted sprinkling for baptism. One generation approved a "chief" elder. The next generation appointed them. One generation introduced instruments of music as an "aid" to singing. The next generation demanded them. One generation accepted the "fellowship hall" (which, at first, were just a few tables in the basement for social meals). The next generation built gymnasiums ("Family Life Centers"). One generation apologized for "hard liners" who opposed denominational religion. The next generation saw their sons and daughters joining those denominations. One generation spoke of the need to reach out in a "non-judgmental" way to our Catholic and Protestant friends. The next generation welcomed Presbyterians into "our fellowship" with a handshake. One generation spoke of congregational singing as "one of our traditions." The next generation defended choruses and choirs. One generation applauded preachers who closed their sermons without an appeal for sinners to be baptized for the remission of sins. The next generation denied the gospel plan of salvation in general and baptism in particular.

What does this say to us? What is our responsibility? *"You shall observe to do therefore as the Lord...hath commanded you: ye shall not turn aside to the right*

hand or to the left" (Deut. 5:32). "Hold fast the form of sound words" (2 Tim. 1:13). "Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them" (2 Tim. 3:14). "Mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Rom. 16:17).

The next time we are tempted to deviate from the word of God, let us remember that "what we tolerate, our children will embrace!" (Cf. Judges 2:10).

### **Could It Become So Intolerable You Must Leave?**

Mark White

Many of our brethren across the country are sore distressed by the state of affairs in churches of Christ today. To say that many churches are undergoing change is a gross understatement of the situation. Radical changes in thought toward the authority of the Scriptures are allowing many churches of Christ to take even more liberal views toward the work and worship of the church. With the "New Hermeneutic" as their license (which denies that the New Testament reveals a pattern for our organization, work and worship) the movers and shakers of the institutional churches of Christ are leading their people toward the wholesale acceptance of a myriad of innovations and compromises with denominationalism. Our brethren are rethinking such issues as instrumental music and the role of women in the leadership and worship of the church. Additionally, many brethren are abandoning "book, chapter and verse" preaching and teaching for a modernistic higher criticism that seized the pulpits of denominational churches many years ago. Moral issues such as social drinking, mixed swimming, divorce and remarriage, immodest dress, etc. are no longer dealt with in sermons lest we appear too strict and legalistic. Even the plan of salvation is under serious attack, for many leading, influential elders, preachers, and professors are not too sure that there is a "plan" as we have always preached it. Baptism is being rethought and re-hashed in many circles, and it appears that before long the necessity of immersion for the remission of sins may become a bone of contention in some churches of Christ.

Within many of the churches troubled by these issues are some brethren who sense strongly that the church is "leaving" them. They see these changes for what they are: apostasy. But it is so hard to break long-standing ties with friends and family and leave such rank infidelity to the Lord Jesus Christ and his will. They know the church is not what it should be, nor is it even moving in that direction. The preaching is no longer distinctive, and could be served up in any denominational pulpit in town. They have tried to warn the elders, the preacher, their friends and anyone who will listen. But they are considered "old-fashioned," "non-progressive," and even "anti." Eventually, the elders no longer listen to them. The preacher berates them for trying to hold on to a "1950 mentality." Each passing week brings more compromise, more innovation, and more liberalism. What must they do if the tide cannot be stemmed?

### **A Case in Point**

King Jeroboam of Israel introduced the apostate worship of idolatrous golden calves in an effort to keep the northern tribes from going to Jerusalem for worship (1 Kgs. 12:26-33). He even appointed non-Levites to his new "priesthood." Not being able to squelch the apostasy, many Levites had no other recourse but to leave Israel and flee to Judah (2 Chron. 11:13-17). Remaining faithful to God meant separating from their homes and friends with whom they had previously worshipped. Doubtless it was painful to do this, but it resulted in the strengthening of Judah (v. 17). Men and women who stand for the truth always strengthen the people of God who are like-minded.

When John heard the announcement of the imminent destruction of "Babylon," he heard another angel warn, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive her plagues. For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities" (Rev. 18:4, 5). While opinions vary regarding what "Babylon" is in this symbolic passage, the warning is clear that God's people must flee from Babylon or perish with her. Even Lot was warned to leave Sodom or be destroyed with the wicked city (Gen. 19:13-14). It is no different today. God's faithful people must no longer tolerate apostasy.

### **Needs**

There remain many brethren in need of your help. There are faithful gospel preachers in the U.S. and foreign lands in dire need of financial support. Brethren in Zimbabwe are still suffering through another year of drought. There is also a severe drought in the Philippines. Brethren are suffering! They and their families faithfully labor in the gospel and suffer from material deprivations due to their stand for the truth, concern for the soul's of men and love for the Lord and His Christ. Other brethren are in acute need of the basics of life (food, clothing, shelter, medical attention). If you would like to help please send me an e-mail ([craigthomas82000@gmail.com](mailto:craigthomas82000@gmail.com)) and I'll put you in direct contact with a needy brother. Remember I John 3:17: "But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?"

