

Trends

How far has our society and culture fallen? In a recent edition of *Teen Vogue* magazine an article appeared teaching kids how to engage in anal sex (i.e., sodomy). The article's author, Gigi Engle, said: "This is anal 101, for teens, beginners and all inquisitive folk." "Anal sex and anal stimulation can be awesome, and if you want to give it a go, you do that," wrote Engle, a self-described sex educator. Phillip Picardi, the magazine's digital editor, fired back to criticism with a flurry of tweets—culminating with a photo of him embracing another man while giving the "finger."

—via *The Todd Starnes Show*

2 Timothy 3:13: "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."

1 Corinthians 6:9-10: "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God."

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.

Pray for Al Cook's family. Recently Al's uncle Theodus passed away. Let's keep the Cook family in our prayers.

Please pray for Dawne. She is scheduled for eye surgery in mid-August. The doctors say it is a simple procedure. But parents are concerned when their child and the words "eye" and "surgery" appear in the same sentence!

Please pray for Alan Jones. He underwent deep brain stimulation to hopefully relieve severe facial pain. Alan held a gospel meeting for us in October 2014. He's been unable to preach for several months due to his affliction. Pray for him and his family.

Please keep sisters Virginia Brown and Wilma Cardwell in your prayers. Their faithfulness sets such a good example and gives encouragement to all! Ditto for Al (our Barnabas!).

Pray for Eric and Whitney Holk and congratulations on their recent marriage!

Pray for the all of our students: elementary, secondary and college. Our young people will be starting a new school year very shortly.

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Words of Life

Westside
church of Christ

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

John 6:68

Sabbath Forever

Larry Hafley



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Seventh Day Adventists and other Sabbatarians cite Exodus 31:13-17, to prove that the Sabbath is to be observed "forever." It is "a perpetual covenant." Hence, Christians must observe the Sabbath "throughout (their) generations." Is this true? If not, why not?

First, even if it could be proven that the Sabbath is to be observed, it would not apply to Gentiles, but only to fleshly Jews. The Sabbath was "a sign between (God) and the children of Israel" (Ex. 31:17). Gentiles were not included.

Second, the burning of incense was also a "perpetual" commandment which was to be observed "throughout (their) generations" (Ex. 30:8). Must Christians "burn incense"? To be consistent, Adventists should do so, but they do not.

Third, circumcision was "an everlasting covenant" (Gen. 17:13). However, today, the Spirit tells us that "in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision" (1 Cor. 7:19; Gal. 5:6). If one keeps the Old Testament law of circumcision, "Christ shall profit you nothing" (Gal. 5:2). Do Adventists bind

"You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace."

Galatians 5:4

circumcision because it was "an everlasting covenant"? No, they do not. So, why bind the Sabbath? To bind either the Sabbath or circumcision, means: (1) that Christ profits us "nothing;" and (2) that we "are fallen from grace" (Gal. 5:4).

Throughout their generations, perpetually, forever, as long as the nation of Israel existed under the law, they were to burn incense, practice circumcision, and keep the Sabbath. We are not under the covenant made to Abraham, nor to the law of Moses. We are "under law to Christ" (Rom. 7:4-7; 1 Cor. 9:21;

Gal. 2:16, 21; Col. 2:14-16). Thus, we do not practice circumcision, burn incense, or keep the Sabbath (Jn. 1:17; Rom. 2:28, 29; Gal. 5:1-4).

Some Things the Church is Not

Heath Rogers

The gospels inform us that people were sometimes confused about the identity and purpose of Jesus. While some believed He was one of the prophets, others tried to dismiss Him as being possessed by demons. Some saw Him as a good Man, others labeled Him as a troublemaker and a blasphemer. We should not be surprised to find that confusion continues to exist concerning both Christ and His church. The following are some misconceptions that people have about the church today.

1) The church is not an ATM machine. When some people fall on hard times, their cupboards get bare and their light bills are past due, they pick up the phone and start calling churches. We usually receive several calls every month from individuals requesting financial assistance. The Bible does not allow the church to be used and abused in this way. Local churches helped their own members who were in need (Acts 6:1, 1 Tim. 5:3-16), and they extended benevolence to needy members of the church in other places (Rom. 15:26), but they were never used as a charitable organization for the community at large. The purpose of the church is primarily spiritual in nature, not

financial.

"For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem."

Romans 15:26

Their feelings about worship are dependent upon what they have experienced with their eyes and ears, not what they have expressed with their own hearts. Preachers are sometimes looked upon as entertainers. They are judged by style rather than by substance. As long as they can deliver a polished, relevant, yet non-judgmental message in thirty minutes or less, churchgoers are pleased. Paul was not this kind of preacher (1 Cor. 2:1). The Lord warned the prophet Ezekiel that he was looked upon as an entertainer. *"Indeed you are to them as a very lovely song of one who has a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument; for they hear your words, but they do not do them"* (Ezek. 33:32).

3) The church is not a social club. To some people, a local church is nothing more than a social club or civic group. They use their membership as a status symbol, and they attend to see and be seen.

2) The church is not in the entertainment business. To some people, worship is looked upon as entertainment.

Their feelings

Some people who are in sales are encouraged to use church membership as a means of making contacts with possible clients. Politicians are notorious for misusing churches in this manner. Several years ago, a family member of mine heard a campaign speech given by then presidential candidate Bill Clinton during the morning worship services at the denominational church they attended. Most people can see through such hypocrisy. The church was bought with the shed blood of Jesus Christ (Acts 20:28). It is despicable for man to use the death of Jesus as a means of self-promotion and personal gain.

4) The church is not a vehicle for social reform. Politicians misuse churches, not only for elections, but also as a platform to achieve their favorite social programs. The church is not a political institution. The church should have a positive influence upon society, but not because it has been instrumental in signing petitions or applying pressure upon officials or authorities. The church is to support the truth (1 Tim.3:15) and sound forth the gospel (1 Thess. 1:8). As individual members exert their influence (as salt and light—Matt. 5:13-16), others are won to the gospel. As more people are truly converted to Christ, the world is made a better place.

5) The church is not a wedding chapel. There have been a few times that I have received calls from people in the community wanting to use the church building for their weddings. On one such occasion, the parties involved were

not members of any church, they just picked up the phone book and started calling churches. I am not opposed to having a wedding in a church building.

"...the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

1 Timothy 3:15

However, I believe there is a world of difference between a local church allowing its members to make such use of the building, and a church allowing itself to be "rented out" as a wedding chapel. If one is not religious enough to be a member of a church, why is it important to have a "church" wedding? Churches should not allow themselves to be used in this way.

The people had a misconception regarding the nature of the Messiah. Jesus did not measure up to that false expectation. He did not change to fit their preconceived idea of what He should have been. He remained faithful to the Father's plan, even though He was ultimately rejected by God's people and put to death. People today have misconceptions regarding the Lord's church. We sometimes feel the pressure to accommodate these false expectations, but we must remain faithful to the Lord's plan for His church.