

He Who Complains Volunteers

Joe Slater

Pity the poor souls who see it as their God-given duty to nit-pick and find fault with anything and everything at church! You see my personal philosophy about such behavior in this article's title. Could we improve? Most assuredly! But rolling up your sleeves will bring positive change more effectively than pointing fingers.

Isaac Watts (1674-1749) complained to his father about the dull, lifeless songs in their Sunday assembly. His father challenged him: "Well, then, young man, why don't you give us something better to sing?" He did! For the next two years Watts wrote a new song each week for their Sunday service. We still use dozens of his songs such as "Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed" and "Joy To The World."

In Acts 6 the Hellenists (Jews from Greek-speaking areas) in the church complained that their widows were being neglected by the Hebrew brethren in the daily distribution. Was their grievance legitimate? Evidently so, for the apostles developed a plan to remedy it. "*Seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business*" (Acts 6:3). Observe the names of the chosen men in verse 5. Every one of them is a Greek name! Whether any or all of them had personally lodged the complaint we know not. But the church wisely selected them to make certain the need was met. And it worked! Everyone was happy, a potential split was averted, and the gospel continued to spread.

Finding something to be unhappy about is easy. Voicing your frustration takes little effort. But climbing out of your chair and working to effect needed change requires shifting from critic to volunteer. Which is more helpful? Which are you?

The Answer Is Christ

Have you become despondent? Are you discouraged? Has your faith grown weak? Does your spiritual battery need to be recharged? Likely what you really need is a good dose of spiritual medicine . . . the gospel of Christ. You need to be in Bible Study and Worship regularly.

In the long ago, Jeremiah declared: "*O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps*" (Jeremiah 10:23). We live in a time when the foundations of civilization are crumbling, the night of apostasy is deepening, lawlessness runs wild to its awful climax, the powers of atheism increase and abound, and wars and troubles circle the globe. The trail of tears through which humanity has passed since Adam is marked by the milestones of countless failures. Oh, how we need a guide in these troubled times! We need a guide who knows the way – a guide who knows where we need to go and how to get there.

We have such a guide if we would only listen to His voice. Our guide is Christ. He can solve all our problems. Without Him our nation will die, our homes will dissolve, and our souls will be forever lost in a devil's hell.

To survive this crazed generation, we must get back to God and His way. We must accept the Bible and follow its teaching. The only hope and cure for mankind's sin and misery rests in the precious name of our Savior, Jesus Christ the Lord.

One day all the redeemed and blood-washed shall be gathered home to God to live forever in the house not made with hands. Will you be among that number?

--Bobby Key (deceased) via *Old Paths*

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*If others can hate people they don't know,
I can love people I don't know!*

Come. Let Us Reason Together

Truth is a strong force. It has nothing to fear from a confrontation with error. In encounters with error, truth will always prevail, at least among fair-minded people.

Why is a simple affirmation of belief in Biblical marriage now labeled "hate speech" regardless of the tone in which it is stated? Not that long ago "everyone" believed in "one man, one woman, for life." Why is quoting a particular Scripture passage now called "hate speech"?

We used to speak of "agreeing to disagree." That doesn't mean we accept both contrary viewpoints as valid. It just means that we continue reasonable, brotherly, respectful discussion about the disagreement without rancor.

In a conversation with a Christian friend, we discovered we differed concerning a matter which, in the long run, is of little significance. As the difference became obvious to both of us, my friend said, "Well, I guess this means we won't be friends anymore!" An extreme case, no doubt, but indicative of the trend! Not only is it assumed that if I express any difference with you, I hate you, but it is also presumed that you should hate me.

Admittedly, I have strong convictions about a wide variety of matters, and I rarely talk to anyone very long without finding something about which we do not agree. I am not ready, however, to hate or be hated by everyone else but me.

Sexual relations of men with men and women with women are plainly declared by the Bible to be sin. I believe the Bible. However, I do not hate those involved in such activity. I am forbidden by that same Bible to engage in hateful activities toward them; and I do not want to be hated by them.

What ever happened to "Come let us reason together, says the Lord"?

--Cecil May, Jr. (via *Preacher Talk*)