



ISSUE

23.7

February 14, 2021

Faithful Sayings

BULLETIN OF
THE OL-
SEN PARK
CHURCH OF
CHRIST

Services

Sunday: 9:00 AM

10:00 AM

11:00 AM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Pat Ledbetter

Brady McAlister

Jeff Nunn

Deacons:

Ben Hight

Blake McAlister

Walker McAnear

Sam Nunn

Lance Purcell

Justin Smiley

Kevin Wise

Trevor Yontz

Evangelist:

Kyle Pope

We Are a Different People

By Eugene W. Clevenger

One of the greatest factors within the church today that is hindering the cause of Christ is a morbid fear on the part of some of being different. God's people in every dispensation have been a different people, and members of the New Testament church must be fully aware of this fact from the very moment they obey the gospel until their work on earth is over. The church will never be what God has designed it to be until there is this consciousness of being different among its members.

Difficult to be Different

Looking at it from a human standpoint, it is not an easy matter to be different. To be different is to be in the minority, and it is contrary to man's nature to want to be in the minority. To be different is to be unpopular with our friends and neighbors, and the social pain of being different, rebels at the thought of being regarded as outcasts. It is much more pleasant to be able to agree with people and retain their good will than to disagree and lose it.

Again, most of the time, those religiously different from the masses are greatly misunderstood and misrepresented, and certainly it is not pleasant to be misunderstood and misrepresented. To be different means to be constantly on the defensive, but everybody who knows by actual experience the meaning of the word “compete” knows it is not a bad feeling to be on be offensive occasionally. When we differ with another and call into question some unscriptural practice, often we are regarded as peculiar and eccentric, and no rational person wants to

be so regarded. Yes, it has always been true—it is difficult to be different! To vary from the accepted norm, whether socially, morally, or doctrinally, invariably brings upon one that which is unpleasant and invidious.

Reasons for the Difference

In view of these inevitable results of being different, the question comes, *Why be different?* Are there reasons to justify the difference? Unhesitatingly the answer is, Yes. I do not want to be different from others just for the sake of being different. The reasons involve the matters of truth and error, righteousness and sin, faith and opinion!

Truth has always stood unalterably opposed to error, and therefore, when one stands with the truth and another clings to error, there is the difference! Righteousness is as diametrically contrary to sin as light is to darkness, and when the Christian practices righteousness and his neighbor revels in sin, there is the difference! Matters of faith and matters of human opinion are likewise incompatible, and when I walk by faith and my friend who disparages faith is content to be governed in religious matters by the opinions and philosophies of men, again, there is the difference!



Olsen Park Church of Christ

Everything that pertains to New Testament Christianity is radically different from the world and denominationalism. Our's is a different obedience, a different worship, a different doctrine, a different service, a different hope. We have a different allegiance, to Christ and not man; a different attitude, one faith and not many; a different authority, God's word and not the creeds of men. There is the difference, and there can be only one of two choices: it is either conviction or compromise. I thank God there are many who have the conviction to draw the line between truth and error, and draw it sharply and distinctly; the conviction to stand up in the face of the bitterest opposition and be willing to be counted on the Lord's side; the conviction to be wholly unafraid of being different.

But there are others who are taking the course of least resistance. There are too many preachers who are afraid to be different. Their love of money, prestige, and popularity has caused them to conform and compromise with sectarianism. The sermons they preach are not distinctive; most of them could be preached in any denominational church. Not only that, but many elders want just that kind of preaching, and with so many elders and preachers manifesting such an attitude, who can be surprised at the members! We are afraid! Afraid to be different in our daily lives from the people of the world, and afraid to be different in our preaching and teaching from denominational practices. **“Do I seek to please men? For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ”** (Gal. 1: 10).

The Joy of Being Different

In spite of the fact that being as different as God would have us be is often times very difficult, there is a joy in being different. This joy comes from the assurance of several facts. It comes from knowing that even though we are in the minority as far as the world is concerned, we are really in the majority. God is on our side because we are on His side. **“If God be for us, who can be against us?”** (Rom. 8:31b). Happiness comes in the assurance that we differ not with God, but only with those who oppose God. This difference of which we speak causes us to be unpopular with those in sin and error, but why worry? We are popular with God. He loves us because of the stand we take, and His friendship means more than all earthly friendships combined.



will rise again” (William Cullen Bryan, *The Battle-Field*). God’s promise is true that if we love the truth, learn the truth, and live the truth, we have nothing to fear. May the Lord help us to have the consciousness of this difference and the conviction to practice it.

Preceptor 1.6 (April, 1952): 5-7

The joy in being different comes also from the fact that one day there will be vindication. History records the names of many who were opposed in their lifetime for advancing that which was different, but eventually they were vindicated. Why? They had the truth. “Truth crushed to earth

Editor’s Note. This article was taken from an issue of the *Preceptor* that ran in 1952 which had been scanned from the print version and preserved and distributed in digital form. While this is a wonderful way of preserving good material, it is subject to typographical errors. In preparing this good article for use in *Faithful Sayings*, it became evident that a number of such errors were present in the text. To overcome this, I edited the text using my best judgment when it seemed a word was missing, scanned incorrectly, a citation omitted, or the meaning was unclear.



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Welcome Visitors

We are so glad that you joined us today.
Please come again.