

His Workmanship: Westside

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works."

—Ephesians 2:10

Vol. XXIV

July 5, 2015

No. 27

Neutrality—Jesus and Pilate's Wife, by Fanning

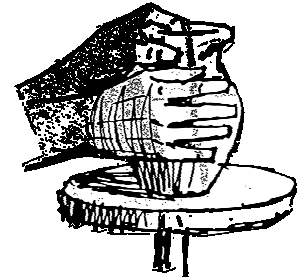
Pilate was in a dilemma. An innocent man stood before him for judgment; Pilate knew that Jesus had been delivered up because of the Jews' envy, and there was no evidence of wrongdoing which would justify a sentence against Him. Yet the mob was howling for blood. It was a ticklish situation, a nasty mess. Pilate wanted with all his heart to be relieved of the necessity of handling this case. Either way he went, he was certain to have regrets. His sense of Roman justice was outraged at the thought of condemning an innocent man; yet his political sagacity told him that he dare not antagonize the mob.

At this crucial juncture his wife sent him an urgent message: *"Have nothing to do with that righteous man; for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of Him,"* Mt 27:19. How pleasant that would be, to have nothing to do with Him! What a relief just to wash his hands of the whole affair, bow gracefully out of the picture, and refuse to render a verdict. In a sense that was what Pilate tried to do. He even called for water and symbolically *"washed his hands"* of the matter, avowing his innocence. Yet Pilate found that it was impossible to side-step his moral responsibility. The verdict of history, repeated endlessly in that earliest of all creedal statements, is

that Christ was *"crucified under Pontius Pilate."*

As it was with Pilate, so is it with everyone who has knowledge of Jesus. Neutrality is not possible. The advice of Pilate's wife is an impossibility. Pilate's very failure to declare himself for either side was a declaration. Had he been familiar with the teachings of this holy prisoner, he would have recalled His words, *"He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad,"* Mt 12:30. The long story of the years has demonstrated the inexorable truth which Jesus put into words, *"I came not to send peace, but a sword,"* Mt 10:34. His advent into the world has brought to mankind the necessity of making a choice regarding Him. In theory they may postpone the choice, or try to evade it or avoid it; in practice the choice is made every day, and in every act or word or thought. Pilate's theory was that he could avert the choice; his practice was that he delivered Christ to be crucified.

A hundred years ago the church of Christ stood at the crossroads. For multiplied thousands of Christians an inescapable choice loomed up. They did not ask for this problem; they did not want it; they did not like it. But it was there. In theory multitudes of them tried



Isaiah 64:8

to shut their eyes to the problem and ignore it; in practice every last one of them made a choice. In any such circumstances some think there might be three choices possible: a positive choice for, a positive choice against, and a neutral choice. But as the years unfold, it has been demonstrated over and over again that the "neutral" choice disappears in the cold, hard logic of practice. Men can be neutral in theory only; in practice they are compelled to declare themselves.

In national affairs, when a nation is engaged in a struggle to the death for her very existence, neutrality is regarded as treason. In spiritual affairs, it is true that the Lord's church is perpetually engaged in a warfare that knows no respite. When a matter of truth or error is up for decision, any attempt at neutrality is treason—a betrayal of the truth!

"Have nothing to do with that righteous man," said Pilate's wife. Attempting to follow that advice, Pilate turned Christ over to his tormenters. *"Have nothing to do with that righteous man"* is the unexpressed but nonetheless real determination of thousands upon thousands of our contemporaries and acquaintances. Yet every such effort at "neutrality" is disastrous to the one attempting it. For Christ cannot be ignored. He makes positive claims and demands on the life

continued on p. 2

Neutrality, from p. 1

of every individual. A failure to acknowledge those claims—refusal to yield to those demands—places one squarely in opposition and rebellion against God.

In theory a man can decide to be "neutral" on the subject of baptism; he is neither for it, nor against it. But in practice he either will be baptized, or he will not be. There is no neutrality in practice. In theory a man may be "neutral" on the subject of instrumental music in assembled worship; he is neither for it, nor is he against it. But in practice he cannot be neutral. He will either worship with it or refuse to worship with it.



The choice may not be forced upon him all at once; but sooner or later it will come.

Perhaps he thinks himself against instrumental music; but he never speaks against it; never points out to any man the error of it; refuses to discuss it either publicly or privately. He is neutral in theory only; he is not neutral in practice. His influence is on the side of those who advocate playing instruments. In theory, a man can decide to be "neutral" as to the regularity of observance of the Lord's Supper; in practice he cannot be neutral. A failure to be for a weekly observance of it inevitably puts him in the class of those who are not for a weekly observance of it. "Have nothing to do with that righteous man." Yes, that is what Pilate devoutly wanted to be so. But it was impossible for him. And it is impossible for anybody. It is impossible for you! When right and wrong are involved, when truth and error are in combat, neutrality is not only treason, it is impossible. Even an attempt at neutrality marks one as disloyal to Christ. There is no middle ground between Christ and Satan.

Unequally Yoked, by L. A. Stauffer

Jehovah, in His covenant with Israel, strictly ordered them to avoid joining, blending, and mixing things that are different; see Lev 19:19; Deut 22:9-11. God forbade yoking an ox with a donkey, weaving flax and wool into the same cloth, and sowing two kinds of seed in the same field. We may not know fully why God issued these laws, but agree that, in part, it illustrated the need to keep the nation holy—separate from pagans and their unholy practices.

The apostle Paul alludes to this when he wrote to brethren who had made unholy alliances with idolatry and immoral practices. "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers," 2 Cor 6:14. He clarified his thought with a series of questions:

"For what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? Or what communion has light and darkness? And what concord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has a temple of God with idols?" 2 Cor 6:14-16. Christians, Paul is saying,

are to separate themselves from the world of sin and touch no unclean thing, 2 Cor 6:17. The expression "unequally yoked" is a single word in Greek (*heterozugero*) and combines the words *heteros*—"different; other; altered; strange" and *zugos*—"yoked, coupled, balanced." Its precise meaning denotes the tying or binding together of dissimilar things. This occurs when righteousness participates with iniquity, light shares things in common with darkness, and believers engage in the lifestyle of unbelievers. An unequal yoke results when Christians compromise with sin and partake in evil deeds.

Business. When Christians become partners with non-Christians in business and operate with them on dishonest principles, it's unequal. It's not unequal and the partnership not wrong unless the bond ties the believer to an unclean practice of the unbeliever.

Marriage. Unequal yokes develop in marriages when believers bound to unbelievers join their mates in unright-

eous behavior. The Christian may sign a deceitful income tax return, drink a few beers at a New Year's Eve party, engage in a night of dancing with friends, or don immodest apparel for a beach picnic. The "yoke" of marriage is not of itself unequal—for marriage is sacred, joined by God, and each is sanctified in the other; see 1 Cor 7:14. It becomes unequal (strange, altered) when the Christian is pulled over to the side of unrighteous behavior.

Denominationalism. A disciple may for a legitimate reason choose to visit services of a religious group that teaches and practices false doctrine. Even Paul attended the synagogues. And when invited, a Christian might speak the truth just as Paul did. But to contribute money to support false teachers and unauthorized practices is to yoke ourselves unequally by endorsing and having fellowship with sin. To greet them, to bid them Godspeed is to share in their evil deeds, 2 Jn 10-11.

Friends. "Friends of the world" is not the same as "friendship of the world," Jas 4:4. Paul associated or "complicated with" fornicators, covetous people, idolaters, etc.—people of the world, 1 Cor 5:9-10. But to engage with them in their sins is friendship with the world itself, and that creates "enmity with God," Jas 4:4. "Evil companionships corrupt good morals," 1 Cor 15:33, and when they do, our association with them has become an altered yoke and must cease. Both old and young need to be reminded not to "walk in the counsel of the ungodly, stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers," Ps 1:1. Christians are in the midst of the world in order to let their lights shine before the world of ungodly and wicked men, Mt 5:16; Eph 5:9; Phil 2:15-16. They are to "abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul," 1 Pet 2:11. We cannot do this when we yoke ourselves unequally to the world in perverse practices. And we cannot do this when we approve of the world's practices, either openly or tacitly.



God makes my heart clean in 2015 "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." —Ps 51:10

Teach Your Child to Love To Worship, by Forest D. Moyer

Sometimes children who have been brought up attending worship are anxious to leave home so they won't "have to go to church" anymore. Why would a child want to get away from worshipping God? What kind of children from what kind of families do so?

One real source of this attitude is that children are not taught to love the Lord and to love to worship Him. From the time they are infants the parents may yell at them on Sundays to "hurry up because we have to go to church." The parents don't communicate the joy of worship. No one says anything about the wonderful privilege to commune with God and be in His very Presence. We teach children that "going to church" is a drudge. No wonder they want to get away from it.

When children are in the assembly, often they are allowed to play with various toys and games. This causes them to think that the assembly is a time to play games—and when they become too big to play games, they are bored with what is really worship. They have never practiced being still for a minute or two without any distraction. These children continue to whisper during all aspects of worship—perhaps because they see many adults doing the same thing.

Many parents are not teaching their children to sing. If kids are not taught to sing as tiny tots, then they will not sing as they grow older. Parents, do you teach your children the words to

Discipleship Here At Home

songs at home so they will know them and be able to join in the singing? It is sad to see teenagers sitting instead of singing. No wonder they have no interest. [Parents, you can ask the song leader to email you a list of the songs the church will be singing at worship.]

Parents are not teaching their children to pray at home. They are not teaching reverence during prayer. The children keep on playing instead of bowing their heads in reverence. If you took your child to a funeral, would you give him games to play? Would you allow him to whisper, or would you teach him reverence and respect for the dead? During our worship we remember the death of Jesus; it is holy, and children need to be taught how to honor holiness.

Parents must teach their children to study the Word. Do you study the Bible lessons with your children every day? Are you teaching them to enjoy that part of the day and look forward to it? If this is a child's environment, he will rarely wander away from the Lord. Kids who are taught to study the Bible will listen to sermons and lessons. They will understand much more of the sermons. They will grow up to love the Lord.

Friend, what are you teaching your children—to love God and His worship, His Word, and His people? What you teach your child, who may be tiny now, will determine where he will be when he is old. Solomon said something like that. **African Leader Mocks US,** from p. 4

The US decision to legalize gay marriage came just before LGBT Pride marches took place around the world, with American landmarks such as Niagara Falls, the Empire State Building, and the White House being lit in rainbow colors to mark the ruling. However, in Turkey those celebrating a gay pride march were stopped in their tracks by Turkish police who used water cannon, tear gas, and rubber pellets to disperse crowds.

PRAY FOR healing, protection, help

- **Ed Fink**—prostate cancer worse, spread to liver
- **Logan Corray**—chicken pox
- **Marie Sangellino**—thyroid cancer; surgery 7/9
- **Rod Green**—staph infection; still weak
- **Danny Dodd**, formerly of Westside—full brain radiation at St. Anthony's Hospital as outpatient
- **Kaylee Chavez**—age 10, cancer; improving, MRI clear; treatment continues
- **Bill Dennis**—home following rehab on infected knee drainage; pseudo-gout; getting stronger
- **Aubrie and Aaron Andrews**, friends of **Boyd's**—**Aaron** lost foot in motorcycle accident; pray they will be receptive to the gospel
- **Sandra Perry**—possible kidney failure, may need dialysis or transplant; heart valve issues recently diagnosed; neuropathy from diabetes
- **Sylvia Chapman**, **Brett's** grandmother—third stage pancreatic cancer; **Brett's** grandmother **Sue**, and Aunt **Bonnie Doss**—cancer returned
- **Brittany Tope's** mother—breast cancer; improving; grandmother—on dialysis
- **Gregg Geis's** friend **Taylor Olson**—overdosed recently; pray for his family
- **Sheryle McNeill's** daughter **Tiffany** and **Ed's** son **Rodney Schulz**—pray they will receive gospel

CHRONIC CONDITIONS

- **Logan Corray**; **Addison Tope**; **Christian Harrod**; **Rocco Jr.**; **Pat Wilkes**—asthma
- **Autumn Hadders**—epilepsy; celiac disease
- **Jonathan Hadders**—RA
- **Kirk Johnson**—MS; pelvic bone atrophying
- **Menards**—aging; **Lloyd**, diabetes, Alzheimers;
- **Virginia**, macular degeneration; high bp
- **Cheryl Reames**—diverticulitis; fibromyalgia
- **Judy Sartin**—rotator cuff injury; spinal stenosis;
- **Lynda Szymanski**—COPD, lung weakness

Travel **Mina Gonzalez** is in San Jose, CA, caring for her sister after her leg surgery; **Payton Miller** will be out of town Mon-Wed. **Gintchins** are in Bulgaria visiting family until Aug.

Rejoice **Janell Hall** put on her Lord in baptism last Tuesday and has determined to work and worship with the Westside church: 10240 W. Dartmouth Ave, Lakewood 80227 303-349-4839 itue4166@yahoo.com Please welcome her and ask how you can help her in her walk with the Lord.

Gospel meeting The Poudre Valley church in Loveland will host Mark Mayberry of Alvin, TX, preaching the gospel Fri-Sun, 7/10-12: Fri 7 pm; Sat 10:30 am, 1:30 and 2:30 pm.

Third quarter Wednesday Bible study: "Traditions of Men vs. the Word of God," Jim Reingrover



Exposing current thoughts & trends *homosexuality*

Zimbabwe Leader Says He'll Propose to Obama, *from Daily Mail*

Zimbabwean president Robert Mugabe has taken a swipe at US President Barack Obama following the recent Supreme Court's decision to legalize gay marriage across America, sarcastically promising to travel to Washington and ask for his hand in marriage.

The 91-year-old leader, known for his fiercely anti-homosexuality stance, condemned homosexual "marriage" during his weekly radio interview with the country's national radio station, ZBC, and said he would propose to Obama. *"I've just concluded since President Obama endorses the same-sex marriage, advocates homosexual people, and enjoys an attractive countenance...thus if it becomes necessary, I shall travel to Washington DC, get down on my knee, and ask his hand."*

"I can't understand how this people dare to defy Christ's explicit orders as our Lord prohibited mankind from sodomy," he added. He also claimed that Washington was being controlled by *"perverted Satan-worshippers who insult the great American nation,"* according to Nigerian news website Naij.com. The Zimbabwean leader went on to say that although the U.S. was founded on *"lofty Christian principles,"* the *"corrupt political elite"* now acts only towards its own end.

At a 2013 campaign rally, Mugabe had condemned Obama for forcing homosexuality on the African continent. *"We have this American president, Obama, born of an African father, who is saying we will not give you aid if you don't embrace homosexuality. We ask, was he born out of homosexuality?"* Homosexuality is illegal in Zimbabwe, and in previous speeches Mugabe has told gay people to go to hell and stated that those of homosexual orientation are lower than *"pigs, goats and birds."*

"Let Europe keep their homosexual nonsense there and live with it. We will never have it here. The act [of homosexuality] is not humane," he said in a July 2013 speech to his Zanu PF party supporters. *"Any diplomat who talks about homosexuality will be kicked out. There is no excuse, and we won't listen to them."*

Elsewhere on the African continent, Zimbabwe's neighbor, Mozambique, yesterday scrapped a colonial law dating back to 1886 which criminalized homosexuality, bringing in a new penal law which also decriminalized abortion. The original law had targeted anyone *"who habitually engages in vices against nature"* and was punishable by up to three years of hard labor but had not been prosecuted since 1975. Gay rights activists called the decision a *"symbolic victory"* for gay rights in Africa. The majority of African countries outlaw homosexuality, but Mozambique has seen little anti-gay violence or social friction over the issue.

continued on p. 3

Westside CHURCH OF CHRIST

meets at
13789 W. 8th Avenue
Golden, Colorado 80401
720-295-4530

Pastors

Larry Campbell (303) 246-8810
DeWayne Howell (303) 973-7283

Preacher

Jim Reingrover (303) 973-5102

info@thechurchingolden.com

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Westside-Church-of-Christ/276475819148309>

Assembly Schedule

Sunday

Bible classes	9:00 am
Morning assembly	10:00 am
Afternoon assembly	1:30 pm

Wednesday

Bible classes	7:30 pm
---------------	---------

Sunday morning

- **adult Bible class**, *"A Life-Changing Encounter with God's Word from the Gospel According to John,"* Jonathan Hadders

- **Sermon**, "Celebrating Freedom," Jim Reingrover

Sunday afternoon, "Expository Study of 2 & 3 John," Payton Miller

Feeding on His Word Reading

Everyone is invited to an open Bible reading of 2 Corinthians and 1-3 John Friday evening, July 10, at 7:30 pm, at the Topes', light supper before. See **Joel Walker** for schedule.