

The Vincennes Voice

“...The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight...” (Matt. 3:3)

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HIS SPIRIT WAS STIRRED IN HIM

Larry R. Ping II

Paul and his traveling companions were accused of having “turned the world upside down” in the city of Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-6). They were chased out of town and ended up in Berea, where they met a noble people who “searched the scriptures daily” (Acts 17:11). Paul had to be privately sent away and was “conducted...unto Athens” (Acts 17:15). The Bible chronicles “Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry” (Acts 17:16).

By using the phrase “his spirit was stirred in him,” the Bible indicates a great, swelling sadness on the part of the apostle. He was not angry, nor was he annoyed. He simply felt a profound sorrow for a people so steeped in sin. In fact, he later said, “Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO

THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you” (Acts 17:22-23).

We all have a part of us which should feel the same profound sorrow when folks are so immersed in sin. Our spirits should be stirred when...

1) PEOPLE ARE GIVEN TO IDOLATRY.

Just like in Athens, there are still folks addicted to idolatry. The practice of idolatry is allowing anything or anyone to take God’s rightful and deserved place. John’s last words in his epistle of I John were, “Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.” Paul admonished the Corinthian brethren to “Neither be ye idolaters” (I Cor. 10:7) and to “flee from idolatry” (I Cor. 10:14). When brethren and friends start to put money, work, sports, sleep or self before God, our spirits need to be stirred. Is yours?

2) WHEN FORNICATION RUNS

RAMPANT. Not only does it seem to run unbridled, it often is celebrated and legalized. Such was the case among the brethren at Corinth of whom it is written, “It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father’s wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you” (I Cor. 5:1-2). Fornication is sort of an umbrella, under which are pre-marital sexual relationships (Heb. 13:4), extra-marital relationships (adultery), same-sex relationships (homosexuality) and human-animal relationships (bestiality). These each constitute fornication. It is something we should “flee” (I Cor. 6:18), that is to be avoided (I Cor. 7:2), that is to be mortified (Col. 3:5), and which will result in one not being able to “inherit the kingdom of God” (Gal. 5:19-21). When brethren and friends begin to

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participate in and celebrate fornication, our spirits need to be stirred. Is yours?

3) WHEN THE MURDER OF INFANTS IS PERMITTED AND APPLAUDED.

According to recent statistics, there are, world-wide, about 125,000 abortions performed every day. Many of those are performed in the United States of America. God sees value in the unborn. He sees them as they are, a created human being. In Moses' Law, it states, *"If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life"* (Exo. 21:22-23). We glean from the writings of the New Testament a babe *"leaped"* in his mother's womb (Lk. 1:41,44). The taking of life is expressly forbidden in God's Word. In fact, one of the seven things the Lord hates is *"hands that shed innocent blood"*

(Prov. 6:17). Life is precious. All lives matter. These statements absolutely apply to unborn children! When our fellow-citizens, and sadly, even some among the Lord's body condone such activity, our spirits need stirring. Is yours?

4) WHEN WE ARE NO LONGER ASHAMED OF SIN.

The weeping prophet reported, *"Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD. Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein"* (Jer. 6:15-16). These words help to show why Jeremiah is referred to as the weeping prophet.

The Lord's Church cannot afford to let worldliness in. If it is permitted to do so, it is improbable it can be rooted

out. James reminded his readers, *"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world"* (Jam. 1:27). Later he would caution, *"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God"* (Jam. 4:4).

Christians should always blush when God's or Jesus' name is taken in vain. Christians should always blush when foul and vulgar language is employed. Christians should always blush when off-color jokes are spoken. Very large problems await the Christian or the congregation who becomes desensitized to sin. You can mark that down! When brethren and friends can no longer blush at sin, it is time for spirits to be stirred. Is yours? Is mine?

God desires on-fire servants. May we be one!

FIRST CITY CHURCH OF CHRIST

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MEETING TIMES (EST)

SUNDAY

Bible Study – 10:00 am

Worship – 11:00 am & 3:00 pm

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study – 7:00 pm