

# WORDS OF TRUTH

*A Weekly Bulletin for the Sunrise Acres church of Christ*

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## *Sunrise Acres* **CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**Meeting at:**  
**8625 Robert Drive**  
**El Paso, TX 79904**

915-525-5794

### **OUR MEETING TIMES:**

**Sunday Bible Class: 9:45 AM**  
**Sunday Worship: 10:55 AM**

### **Are You Visiting With Us?**

If you are visiting with us, we want to welcome you to the Lord's church (Matthew 16:18 and Colossians 1:18). Our goal is to simply get to Heaven and to help you do the same. We use the Bible as our standard to govern what we do in our work and worship for the Lord (Colossians 3:17, II Timothy 1:13, II Timothy 3:16-17, and I Peter 4:11).

We welcome your questions and would love the opportunity to study further with you. Luke recorded a fascinating statement we all need to consider: *"Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able"* (Luke 13:23-24). We invite you to join us in being one of the few that are saved!

### **"By Their Fruits Ye Shall Know Them"**

*By: Brian A. Yeager*

Jesus said: *"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them"* (Matthew 7:15-20).

As our Lord said in the quote above, we can expect false ones to try and creep in. We will not always see them clearly from the start. Sometimes, it will take a look into the fruit of what they do to really find out who some supposed "brethren" really are (Proverbs 10:16). For me, that has always been a time of heartache. You'd like to live in a world of make-believe wherein all who claim to be Christians really are.

The Scriptures are clear that there were, are, and will be false brethren. Paul warned the elders in Ephesus (Acts 20:17) saying: *"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears"* (Acts 20:28-31).

It is heartbreaking that many will follow those false brethren (II Peter 2:1-3). It is not always preachers, elders, or even men who cause the multitudes to err (Revelation 2:20-23). In fact, it is more likely to be those capable of creeping in than those who would be more obvious (Jude 3-4). We are sure though, they'll expose themselves (Luke 6:43-45). Will we see it though?

## **The Erring Will Expose Themselves, But Will We Want To See Them For What They Are?**

Here is one difficult lesson that most Christians have had to learn or must learn so as not to be led away with the errors of the wicked (II Peter 3:17). Sometimes, we don't want to see the wrong in people. Sometimes, we close our eyes to things we should be seeing. Sometimes it is our family members we cannot really see for who they are (cf. Matthew 12:46-50). Jacob certainly struggled with seeing what his children did with their brother Joseph though there had been jealousy for some time in the family (Genesis 37). Sometimes, we get caught in emotions and do not think clearly. For example, though Delilah had betrayed Samson, he did not heed to the clear warning signs before him (Judges 16:6-20). Sometimes, it is someone who convinces us that they are on God's side and because of this we cannot see the warning signs. The Old Prophet was able to deceive the younger prophet for this reason (I Kings 13:11ff.).

What of you? I know there have been several occasions wherein I have ignored clear warnings signs. In one case, I knew a fellow "Gospel preacher" who had left "Institutionalism" as I had. We became friends. From time to time he would preach meetings at congregations that were in error, but would not try to help those brethren as God expects preachers to do (Acts 20:26-27 and II Timothy 4:1-5). I would question him on why he did not teach what needed to be taught. He would give some flimsy excuse. I should have seen then his inconsistencies on fellowship (Ephesians 5:11 and II John 9-11). I also learned that some of those same congregations he was not preaching the truth at were also financially supporting him. Herein, I did begin to start seeing some things. False teachers are covetous (Jeremiah 6:13 and II Peter 2:3; 14). Since they are out "for hire", they will preach to the wants of a people rather than to the needs of a people (John 10:12-13). In this too though, they are crafty. They will teach the "truth" during these times. Wherein their craftiness lies is that they will steer clear of any subject they know will meet resistance. I finally saw this and other flaws in this "preacher", but I allowed my friendship to cloud my judgment too long. Have you done that? Are you doing it now? Don't err as I did and do nothing when the evidence is clearly before you (I Timothy 6:3-5).

We cannot allow the blinders of friendship to keep us from seeing those who are in error. Our friends must first clear the Lord's test of fellowship before we can join them as brethren (I John 1:3-7, Acts 2:42, I Corinthians 1:10, Philippians 2:2, and Philippians 3:16). The Lord's friends are those who obey Him (John 15:14). While it is easy to begin making a list of things we are willing to overlook, let's remember that the Lord is not of that mindset. The Lord does not have those "in the light" who are partially abiding in darkness (II Corinthians 6:14 and I John 1:5). We don't want to begin confusing light for darkness so that we can overlook the evil fruits of those whom we like (Isaiah 5:20). Sometimes we have to find out who is with the Lord and who is against Him (Exodus 32:25-29). We all need to remember that one is either with or against the Lord, as there is no in-between (Matthew 12:30). Sometimes, it is hard to realize the "against" part of some people.

### **Why Paul Said: "I Have Told You Often, And Now Tell You Even Weeping"**

Paul said: *"For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things"* (Philippians 3:18-19). Identifying someone as the enemy of the Lord marks their fate. That is no fun. It is hard to do. However brethren, we can never ignore the evidence of one's actions because it will cause us heartache. We cannot ignore the fruits of the wicked (I Corinthians 5:1-8, Galatians 5:7-9, II Timothy 2:14-18, and Revelation 2:14-16).

### **Conclusion**

We shall know them by their fruits. What we will do once we see those fruits may save or lose souls. Will we expose the erring (John 3:19-21 and Romans 16:17-18), or will we ignore rotten fruit?

**What must one do to be saved (Acts 2:37)?** Hear and believe the Gospel (Mark 16:15-16 & Romans 10:17), repent of their sins (Acts 3:19), confess Christ (Acts 8:37), and be baptized (immersed) for the remission of sins into the church of Christ (Acts 2:38-41; 47, I Corinthians 12:12-13, and Romans 6:1-6; 16:16). One must then remain faithful (Colossians 1:23).