

# 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**

915-755-8137 (Building)  
915-525-5794 (Preacher's Office)

### **OUR MEETING TIMES:**

**Sunday Bible Class: 9:45 AM**  
**Sunday Worship: 10:55 AM**  
**Tuesday Bible Study: 7:00 PM**  
**Thursday Bible Study: 7:00 PM**

### **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!

### **When Our "Brethren" Aren't Good for Us**

*By: Brian A. Yeager*

Last week's bulletin dealt with how blessed we are to have faithful brethren laboring with us. Well, with every good thing that is from above, it certainly seems that Satan finds a way to try and turn what is good into something bad. For example, we can see at least at one point, that Demas was working with Paul (Colossians 4:14). However, that had changed: *"Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me: For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia"* (II Timothy 4:9-10). There have been many like Demas since that day.

Sometimes there are even those who are capable of opposing faithful brethren and drawing others after themselves. This was the case with Alexander the coppersmith: *"Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works: Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words. At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge"* (II Timothy 4:14-16). The fact that false brethren can lead others astray is shown powerfully when Paul spoke of Hymenaeus and Philetus. Notice what Paul said through inspiration: *"But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some"* (II Timothy 2:16-18).

From Jesus' warning about wolves in sheep's clothing (Matthew 7:15-20) to Paul's warning to the elders in Ephesus (Acts 20:28-31); we can see there are dangers that can come from within the church. Many of those are by way of false doctrines being introduced (II Peter 2:1-3). However, error is not the only threat that can come from within. There are brethren who live the kind of lives within the body that while not blatantly teaching error, they aren't exactly living the life that a faithful Christian ought to lead.

## Vampire Brethren

(Wait, stop; you don't have to bring the bulletin to me and ask me if I believe in "vampires". This section of the bulletin is simply a point in the article where I will be using a fictional figure to illustrate that point). Okay, now that we have stopped any possible lynching of the preacher ☺, let's get on with the point. What I mean by Vampire brethren is that there seems too often to be those in a congregation who are never contributing, but they're always taking. That doesn't necessarily mean financially either. Consider those brothers or sisters who are always bringing up things that need done, but they never do them. "The yard needs mowed", says brother \_\_\_\_\_. "They building needs painted", says another. "We need to get the Gospel out to more people", says a concerned sister. The point is, if something needs done and you realize it and are authorized to do such a work, do it yourself. It is draining when all of the members present a list of things to do and only one, two, or three are going to keep those things up.

Vampire brethren are also those that drain a congregation financially. There are those who will always need help and mostly because they've made the wrong choices in life. The local church is not in the "business" of bailing people out of financial distress do to pure stupidity. We ought to do all that is possible to keep burdens off of the church (I Timothy 5:16). Needy saints are not those who spend too much money eating out, living "fat on the hog", and then find themselves broke (Acts 11:28-30). Even individuals in the congregation get suckered by the emotional stories of the financial mishandlings of blood sucking, pretentious Christians. If we have a NEED (not for a burger, TV, or movie ticket), that is one thing. However, in all other cases, let's have this mindset: "*I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive*" (Acts 20:35). Let's be careful not to turn into werewolf brethren.

## Werewolf Brethren

Yes, you've seen them. These are the brothers or sisters who when the wind blows (or the full moon comes ☺) they seem to have significant mood swings. One day these brethren love you, the next you'd think you were the cause of some fatal disease they've contracted. The Hebrew writer gave a very simple instruction: "*Let brotherly love continue*" (Hebrews 13:1). Therefore, we do not want to be the "brethren" who love each other one minute and hate each other the next. This attitude is often the cause of much harm in the local congregation. Notice the following passages: "*He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now... Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him... If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also*" (I John 2:9; 3:15; 4:20-21).

Folks, I'll end the references to the nightmare creatures in horror books and films, but only if we understand first how scary it is in the local congregation when brethren act like animals! Really, we need to understand that the devil destroys congregations from within and such occurs many times without a false teacher or false doctrine being verbally espoused. Many divisions occur over "personality conflicts". Such ought not to be named among the saints.

## Conclusion

As was said in last week's article, there is a lot of good that brethren can do for each other. The danger comes when those good things are turned bad. If we do not realize these present threats, Satan will get the advantage over us because we'll be ignorant of his devices. Let's not allow God's wonderful gift to each of us (our brethren), be a tool to be used against us (II Corinthians 2:11).

**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, I Corinthians 12:12-13, and Romans 6:1-6). One must then remain faithful (Rev. 2:10).