
Words of Truth

Beware Of Networking Preachers

By: Brian A. Yeager

On my computer I have a dictionary that I use often when I am writing articles. As I was thinking about a title for this article, I looked for a while to find the best term to identify the kind of false preachers I wanted to write about. The word “networking” is the perfect word. One of the definitions of this word is as follows: “a group of people who exchange information, contacts, and experience for professional or social purposes: a support network” (New Oxford American Dictionary).

I have known many so-called preachers that were networking preachers. One fellow though stands above anyone else that I have known of. His name is Wayne Goforth. This guy seems to have contacts in many congregations, with many preachers, etc. In fact, his network included people of all brands of false doctrines within “churches of Christ” (Florida College folks, unity in diversity folks, Truth Foundation, etc.). If you needed to know something about someone, Wayne could find out through his network of friends. This also helped Wayne when he wanted to get more money for standing in the pulpit on Sunday. Wayne can raise support faster than a democrat pushing abortion in an election year. Networking has helped Wayne attack his enemies. I know this first hand, for when I became his enemy I found I lost most of my outside support and had Gospel Meetings canceled (such as in Ranger, TX this year). Networking preachers, such as Wayne, have much influence through their many contacts.

Is it wrong to know brethren in other congregations? No, it is not wrong for us to know brethren in other congregations nor is it wrong for us to communicate with them (Romans 16:21-23 and Colossians 4:15-18). Is it wrong to give a FACTUAL report, without malicious intentions, about someone to other brethren? No, it is not wrong to give a FACTUAL report about someone to someone else (Acts 14:25-28, Romans 16:1-2, Romans 16:17-18, I Corinthians 1:11, I Corinthians 11:18, Philippians 3:16-17, I Timothy 1:19-20, and II Timothy 4:10-15).

So, what is the problem with “networking preachers”? The problem is not in that they communicate with other brethren. The problem is, we need to be aware of “networking preachers” who use carnal tactics in manipulating information and using their influence for evil. It is bad enough when you have someone who desires to slander the faithful (cf. Romans 3:8). What makes that worse is when they have a huge network to work through and hide behind to do it. These types use evil tactics such as the “party spirit” to play politics amongst supposed “brethren”.

Networking Preachers Using The Party Spirit

The idea of breaking up into parties is condemned as a work of the flesh [“heresies” KJV & NKJV; “parties” ASV 1901] (Galatians 5:20). In regard to these works of the flesh, Paul wrote: “...of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not

inherit the kingdom of God" (Galatians 5:21). Faithful brethren would never employ a tactic that is scripturally identified as carnal (II Corinthians 10:3-4).

The idea of networking and getting others on your side to further your own cause is not a new idea. Korah employed the "party spirit" when he sought to overthrow Moses (Numbers 16:1-33). Absalom worked to steal the hearts of the men of Israel and take the throne from his father (II Samuel 15:1-6). The Jews had their own council that moved politically to suppress the truth (Acts 4:1-5:40).

The party spirit amongst supposed "brethren" is the easiest breeding ground for this tactic of false brethren. Thus, we must be sure we never fall into a party amongst so-called "churches of Christ". Our allegiance is not to any preacher, group of preachers, certain doctrinal positions, etc. The only allegiance we are to have is to our Lord (Proverbs 23:23, Mark 12:30, John 17:20-23, Acts 5:29, and Colossians 3:1-4). The "party spirit" gains strength when mixed with errors such as traditionalism.

Human Traditions Make Networking Preachers Effective

Men, such as Wayne Goforth, will use human traditions amongst so-called "churches of Christ" to generate prejudices against those who teach truth above traditions. For example, many "churches of Christ" have a make-up serving of the Lord's Supper for those who missed the first serving of it. Any and all human traditions are wrong (Matthew 15:1-9, Colossians 2:8, and Colossians 2:18-22). There is no scriptural authority for a second serving of the Lord's Supper. Anything that occurs without the Lord's authority is sinful (Proverbs 30:5-6, Jeremiah 7:30-31, Matthew 28:18-20, Luke 6:46, Ephesians 5:10, Colossians 3:17, and II John 9).

I teach that Christians are to assemble together and partake of the Lord's Supper together on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). If someone cannot make it to a service time, the Lord COMMANDS us to wait for that brother or sister in Christ (I Corinthians 11:33). Remember, the Lord's Supper is "communion" (I Corinthians 10:16). You are not communing one with another if you just say, "they can partake later". Any other arrangement is unauthorized. Networking preachers realize that traditionalists will find these truths as "odd" since they've not seen it as the "common practice". This scares traditionalists because they don't want to be different than "their brethren" (cf. John 12:42-43).

Conclusion

When a preacher is on his phone gossiping, emailing, facebooking, working the "system", playing all sides of every "party", etc.; you have a networking preacher. This man will spend his time spreading his influence rather than teaching the Gospel. This man will have a filing cabinet full of older sermons he recycles rather than studying, growing, and teaching afresh. He has little time for the work of a preacher. He is busy working the "brethren". What does this tell us? This tells us that networking preachers are false brethren (II Peter 2:1-3). It is not that these networking preachers will outright teach error. No, they will be careful to maintain the traditional views amongst whatever group they are among. In fact, these networking preachers will talk about biblical authority, they will preach against many errors, etc. They sound like they are the "real deal". Others will speak well of them. Yet, behind the scenes, they are working their own agendas all of the time. These are "networking preachers" (John 11:46-53).