

# Plain Path

Weekly newsletter of the Fry Road church of Christ

Sunday, June 1, 2014

Volume 19, Number 22

“Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path... Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart” (Psalm 27:11-14)

*(Editor's Note: While this article is a little dated, being written back in 1012; I read it this past week and felt it had some very good points for us to consider. Enjoy...)*

## DISRESPECTING SOMEONE ELSE'S RELIGION

by Jerry King

The Muslim world has been in a dither recently, with angry mobs forming riotous protests, storming western embassies, and murdering westerners. The excuse for this round of violence is a cheap film produced in California that portrays Islam as an opportunistic and violent religion and Islam's prophet Mohammad as an immoral buffoon. How much of the movie is accurate and how much is fabrication aside, the movie makes its

points with heavy sarcasm and pretty lame attempts at humor. It is easy to see why Muslims would be offended by such a portrayal of their prophet, whom Islam forbids to be portrayed on film even in a good light.

Muslim leaders have objected to the movie on the grounds that it is greatly offensive to Islam. They protest that the religion of Islam has been disrespected, which is somewhat ironic coming from a religion that is infamous for its

disrespect of other religions. Also, western leaders have condemned the provocative nature of the film and questioned why someone would create something so inflammatory against a religion known for violent reaction to such disrespect.

There is widespread opinion in western societies that no religion ought to be disrespected, that every religion has devotees who honestly believe their religion is right, and therefore that every religion is deserving of some measure of honor and respect. And so, the question: What does the Bible have to say about how one ought to approach a religion with which one disagrees?

First, let's consider the example of the apostle Paul in Acts 17. Paul had come to Athens, a center of paganism, where he saw the many objects of worship on public display. He said to his audience, "I perceive that in all things you are very religious; for as I  
(Religion, continued on pg 2...)

Be Certain that our  
**2014 V.B.S.**  
is on your calendar

June 23 - 26 (10 - 11:30 AM)

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(Religion, continued from pg 1...)

was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: To The Unknown God. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you” (vv. 22-23).

Paul was not being sarcastic with the people of Athens. He did not ridicule them, he did not use language calculated to provoke them to anger. Instead, he found something commendable about their religious practice, that he could use as a springboard to teach them the truth about the one true God. But note that in teaching them the truth Paul exposed the errors of their paganism. He was addressing honest followers of error, and, while he did not shy

away from telling them truths that condemned their beliefs, he was careful to do so with kindness. If we approach those in error in such a way and they still get mad and react violently, so be it. Unbelievers reacted violently to the truth presented with kindness in New Testament times (note the reaction of pagans in Ephesus in Acts 19, for example), but that did not stop the truth from being presented.

But there are other instances in the Bible when stronger language against paganism was called for, when God’s prophets were addressing the purveyors of damnable error, and God’s prophets did not hesitate to expose the ignorance of that error with very provocative language – language which showed their utter disdain for both the error and the men who were holding onto it.

Elijah used sarcasm to ridicule the 450 prophets of Baal in their contest on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:27). They were doing something ignorant, and Elijah exposed their ignorance with satire. In much the same way, Isaiah exposed the ignorance of idolatry with sarcastic humor in Isa. 44:9-17, noting that the craftsman would cut down a tree, burn half of it in the fire to cook with and

warm himself, and carve the other half into a god that he would bow down to and worship.

And Jesus Christ used very scathing language against the religious leaders of his day in Mat. 23, showing his contempt for their error with what can only be described as “disrespectful” language. Jesus did not respect the hypocrisy of these men and He made His feelings known in language so provocative that His feelings could never be misinterpreted.

Ridicule, sarcasm, irony and humor are delicate things, though, and should only be used in religious discussions with great care. Our goal should never be to offend, but always to instruct. Wisdom should dictate what kind of language is appropriate to the occasion. We should never use untruths, half-truths, or crude and vulgar images or language.

And remember these two things: 1) While many *people* in false religions might be respected for their honesty in holding tenaciously to what they believe, no *false religion* is ever worthy of our respect; 2) We show respect for people in false religions not by being silent to their error but by teaching them the truth. 

## THIS WEEK'S DAILY BIBLE READINGS

### NEW TESTAMENT READING

LUKE 7 - 9

June 1 - 3

### OLD TESTAMENT READING

NUMBERS 8 - 15

June 4 - 7

I TIMOTHY 4:13

*Something to Think About...*

**Taking a stand for the truth should be evident to persons around you, but should never leave sole marks on their person.**

# FAMILY NEWS & NOTES

*News and Notes of Interest  
to Fry Road Members*

Because of the large number of visitors to our services, we would ask those wishing to identify with the congregation to do so by expressing this interest directly to the elders.

## *Upcoming Meetings & Events:*

**V.B.S. ("We Would See Jesus")**  
June 23 - 26, 2014

**Gospel Meeting (Rick Moore)**  
July 12 - 13, 2014

**Annual Singing**  
September 6, 2014

**Gospel Meeting (Joseph Casimier)**  
September 7 - 10, 2014

## *Sick and Shut-Ins*

*Sections have been removed to preserve members' privacy*

## **Sermons:**

### **Next Sunday:**

There's Death in the Pot

### **Tonight:**

Casting Out the Demons

## *Directory Info*



*"Give me understanding, that I  
may observe Thy law..."*

(Ps 119:34)

We live in a society that likes to get something for nothing. Or, at least, something for very little.

There was a time when the general sentiment was that hard work sweetened the rewards reaped by that work. Today, the general sentiment seems to be, easy is sweet, and free is even sweeter. Unfortunately, this has become the prevailing sentiment in religion. Bible study used to be an involved labor of love on the part of disciples.

The text above is a plea offered to God by David. Does David mean that God will literally give that understanding without David doing anything for it? Consider the next statement: "Make me walk in the path of Thy commandments..." (v35). Will God force David to obey? Sure didn't do so when he saw Bathsheba, did He? Surely we understand that the plea is being expressed of the heart's yearning. But if that is the case, then we must ask, "What is my heart's yearning?"

Study Psalm 119 with your family this week. Emphasize the first eight verses, and then discuss how the remainder of this Psalm reinforces the sentiments found in the first eight verses.

# FOR THE RECORD

## WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS

## MONTHLY ASSIGNMENTS

Sections have been removed to preserve members' privacy

IN KEEPING WITH OUR LONG STANDING AGREEMENT, THOSE SERVING PUBLICLY ARE REMINDED TO PLEASE DRESS IN A MANNER RESPECTFUL OF THE GOD WHOM WE SERVE.

### ELDERS:

Ruben Amador  
Matthew Heaton  
Donnie Mangrum  
Steve Voss



### DEACONS:

John Coleman	Ken Dunsmore
David Ellison	Ray Farrell
Aubrey Garner	Steve Geraci
Steve LaGrasta	John Light
Steven Martin	Mike McMurray
Jason Mock	David Stevenson
Glenn Tomblin	

### TIMES OF SERVICES

Sunday Bible Classes	9:30 AM
Sunday Morning Assembly	10:30 AM
Sunday Evening Assembly	6:00 PM
Wednesday Bible Classes	7:30 PM

### EVANGELIST & EDITOR:

Bob Pulliam                      bob@fryroad.org