**Attitudes Towards Error And Sin**

Richie Thetford – Poudre Valley e-bulletin

 In **2 Timothy 4:3-4**, the apostle Paul warned young Timothy that, ***“the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”*** Paul told Timothy to “watch out” because men would leave the doctrine of Christ and would accumulate teachers that would teach a doctrine that they wanted to hear. Thousands today have done this very thing. They have turned their ears from the truth and fallen victim to fables and doctrines of men. We learn from God’s word that individuals who remain in sin will suffer an eternal death, and that only those who abide in righteousness will receive eternal life (**Romans 6:23**). What is our attitude toward error and sin? When faced with this question, one has four possible ways to deal with error and sin.

 **We Can Deny Them**

 The Pharisee in **Luke 18:11** would not admit that he was guilty of sin. He was quick to see sin in the lives of others, but not in his own life. This man trusted in his own self, while despising others. He appeared righteous outwardly, but his heart was not right. His attitude was wrong. John tells us that we lie if we deny that we “have & do sin (kds)” (**1 John 1:8, 10**). Every one of us have sinned (**Romans 3:23**) and are foolish to deny that error and sin is occurring around us. James admonishes everyone to confess their sins (**James 5:16**), not deny them.

**We Can Ignore Them**

 In Daniel chapter 5, we read about Belshazzar who ignored the fate which his father Nebuchadnezzar had suffered because of sin and was overcome by sin himself. His life was taken and his kingdom given to another. We can ignore sin now but we will face it in the judgment. Our sins will find us out (**Numbers 32:23**). Many of the Jews in Jesus’ day ignored their sins and closed their eyes and ears to the truth (**Matthew 13:15**). The apostle Paul instructed Timothy to take heed unto himself and unto the doctrine (**1 Timothy 4:16**). This is good advice for all children of God. We must continually examine our lives to ensure that we are not living in error and sin. We can't ignore our sins and pretend they are not there.

 **We Can Live With Them**

 Pilate knew he was guilty of sin when he refused to free the sinless Christ (**Matthew 27:15-25**). He knew that he was delivering an innocent man. This kind of attitude and practice reflects a greater desire to please men than God. To live with error and sin is to become a party with them. When one knows that sin is occurring and yet goes along with it, then that individual is partaking in the evil (**2 John 9-11**). Members of the church in Corinth were unconcerned about the sin among them. They were condoning it by living with it (**1 Corinthians 5:1**ff). There is error and sin in some congregations today, yet many live with it. We cannot live with sin and still be pleasing to God!

 **We Can Oppose Them**

 Paul was never afraid to stand for truth and oppose error and sin (**Galatians 2:4-5**). At the close of life, he knew that he kept the faith by opposing error (**2 Timothy 4:7-8**). We can and should have the attitude that we are going to fight against error and sin. This is the ONLY way God will approve of us. Let’s always strive to oppose sin in our lives, the lives of others and within the Lord’s church!

***“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is***

***shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. But all things that are***

***exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light.”*** **Ephesians 5:11-13**