

Prayer Requests & Announcements

- Mitchells are in Canada visiting family.
- Jennifer Anderson, delivered Ross & Debbie's grandson Ethan Friday. He is 4 weeks early and a little fella but is doing fine.
- Debbie is in Arkansas.
- Bobbie Holms passed, keep his family in your prayers.
- April's aunt has a broken foot.
- Elvia Ruckman has pneumonia not doing well.
- The Christians in the Philippines.
- Kevin Anderson, Ross & Debbie's son-in-law who is serving in the Army and is deployed in Afghanistan
- Save the Date: Bobby Graham will be holding a Gospel Meeting for us September 17-22, 2017

For prayer requests, call or text Chad @ (208) 221-2587

Assignments

Today

Bible Study – Ross Ward
Song Leader – David Porter
Lord's Table – David Porter
Sermon – Ross Ward

Wednesday

Bible Study – Ross Ward
Song Leader – David Porter
Invitation – Ross Ward

Next Sunday

Bible Study – Ross Ward
Song Leader – David Porter
Lord's Table – David Porter
Sermon – Ross Ward

Next Wednesday

Bible Study – Ross Ward
Song Leader – David Porter
Invitation – Ross Ward

Blackfoot church of Christ
 370 North Shilling Ave.
 Blackfoot Idaho, 83221

Meeting Times:

Sunday Morning Classes 10:00AM
 Sunday Morning Worship 11:00AM
 Wednesday Evening 7:30PM



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Blackfoot Church of Christ

Published by Blackfoot church of Christ / Blackfoot, ID

Volume 5 Number 31

July 23, 2017

“Like All The Nations...”

By Tommy Thronhill Jr.

As you study the history of a nation (or anything for that matter) you will notice key decisions and actions that have a profound impact on shaping what it would become. America is certainly that way. There are key events and decisions that have made us what we are as a nation, including wars that we have been involved in, the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the ratification of various amendments to the Constitution (such as the 13th amendment which abolished slavery and the 15th and 19th amendments which made voting available to all adults, and key judicial decision (such as Roe vs, Wade in 1973 which legalized abortion and the removal of any mentioning of God in various places). We are who we are, both good and bad, because of history making decisions.

In the Bible, Israel is no different. As you study their history in the Old Testament you find there were landmark decisions they made which shaped what they would become. One such occasion is found in **1.Sam.8** where Israel turns to Samuel and demands, *“God give us a king to judge us.”* Samuel, as God's servant, tries to discourage them by warning what would happen if they had a king. They reject his warnings and demand, *“No, but we will have a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles”* **1.Sam.8:6, 10-18, 19-20**. What a tragedy. In demanding a king they rejected God's theocracy and began on a path that led them further and further away from God.

Why did they demand a king? As **v.20** says, they wanted to be *“like all the nations”* around them. In other words, they wanted to be like everybody else and act like everybody else. They did not want to be different. Their desires were granted and sadly, Israel became like all the other nations, with a king

and all the ungodly corruption that their idolatrous neighbors participated in. As I study their history and decline I find this to be one of their crucial decisions, which led to their eventual rejection by God and the fall of both Israel and Judah. Truly we ought to heed the warning, BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU ASK FOR! Christians are to be different. If we are to be pleasing to God, we need to avoid the desire to be like everyone else. In **Tit.2:14** Christians are God's "own special people." The KJV uses the word "peculiar" which in Greek means, "that which is one's own, belongs to one's possession" (Thayer). The point being we belong to God and act to please Him instead of men. Peter warned that our conduct will cause others to "think it strange" that we do not run with them **1.Pet.4:4**, especially those who knew us before we became Christians. In **v.12** of this same chapter Peter warned that as a result of your conduct you will experience fiery trials because of the way you stand out. Paul described our lives as a light that shines "in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation" **Phil.2:15**. Moses was commended because he, "by faith...when he became of age refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin for a season" **Heb.11:24-26**.

Yes, there are many Christians who desire to be popular that will compromise their peculiarity. They want to be like everyone else so they put their light under a bushel. Sadly, their desire for acceptance among the worldly usually leads them to eventually reject God. They will sell their soul for a brief moment of gratification. A particularly disturbing example of this that I have observed is among the young within some (not all) congregations. I have seen those who are popular in the world belittle, tease and alienate their Christian peers because they act differently. They don't wear the latest styles and they don't do the ungodly, worldly things, so they are mocked by supposed brethren. The parents of these ridiculed children struggle to encourage them to keep doing what is right and to not worry about the way the world treats them. Sadly, when the parents speak of the world, they are including some who are SUPPOSED to be brethren. It is one thing for a young Christian to put up with teasing and rejection at school, but it should NEVER happen when they are among fellow Christians. And parents who allow their children to act that way ought to be ASHAMED of themselves because they are encouraging their children to be "like the nations around us" and causing great damage to the future of the local church.

Like Christians, there are many churches that have adopted a desire to be "like the nations around us." Over the past century we have seen both the denominational world and some churches of Christ become more worldly. Denominations are now involved in things that a few decades ago would have been shunned with almost complete unity by the religious world. Now, in an attempt to be accepted, more and more churches (not all) are lowering standards, choosing to ignore subjects like homosexuality, sinful divorce and remarriage and numerous recreational and political activities that are without any authority in God's word, thus changing the focus of the church. Their desire is more to be accepted by the world than by the Lord. So, rather than trying to change the world by being peculiar, they adopt the standards of the world. The sad thing is that history is destined to repeat itself and things will get worse and worse.

A good example of this is to consider music in worship. In the late 1800's the Lord's church divided over the use of instrumental music and missionary societies. It started with a simple melodeon (a type of organ) introduced into the worship service. But look at where music in worship is today. Some Christian churches now incorporate complete bands and choirs into their "worship services." Particularly disturbing is the use of various forms of "Christian" music including Christian rock, heavy metal, rap, punk, country alternative, and you name it. Just like Israel of old, there is a desire to be "like the nations around us." And like Israel of old, they have left God out of the picture and become more like the world. And some "churches of Christ" are not far behind as they are attempting to "upgrade" their worship services with everything but instrumental music (and some have added that). But mark my word, with time this will change.

This article is written so we may see the problem with desiring to be "like the nations around us." If we do not restrain ourselves we WILL get our wish. "Adulterers and adulteress! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend with the world makes himself an enemy of God" **Jas.4:4**. Heed the warning of Jesus. "No one can serve two masters; For either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other, You cannot serve God and mammon" **Matt.6:24**. Are you striving to be more like the world or like Jesus? The choice you make will make an impact on your eternity.