

Oak Grove Church of Christ

(502) 749-9209

Sunday

Bible Class: 9:30 AM
Morning Worship: 10:30 AM
Evening Worship: 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Class: 7:30 PM

Evangelist: Bruce J. Dehut

*Home Bible Studies Available
Upon Request*

Oak Grove church of Christ
9203 Thixton Lane
Louisville, KY 40291



OAK GROVE ENCOURAGER

“And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works” Hebrews 10:24

JANUARY 22, 2006

A Peculiar People

NOT JUST AN ODDBALL

Most people think that the word peculiar refers only to something or someone that is *odd or eccentric*. But prior to these defining terms in Webster's dictionary comes the meaning, *distinctive and different from the usual*. God applies this designation to the subjects of His kingdom. **Titus 2:14** *Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. (KJV)* Strong's definition of the word peculiar is very similar to that of Webster's, as *being*

beyond usual, i.e. special (one's own):

Gold and other precious stones are rare and “beyond usual” thus making them of greater value than an ordinary rock found in a riverbed or on a mountainside. The Father views a child of God in the same way. **Exodus 19:5** *'Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special (peculiar, KJV) treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine.*

THE REFINER'S FURNACE

If we go back to what is written in **Titus 2:14** we see that God has *purified unto Himself a peculiar people*. The purification process that a Christian endures is their time spent in this physical existence. We are to pass through this time on earth, not contaminated by worldliness, but purged of uncleanness as if by fire. Jesus prayed for His apostles knowing that His time with them was coming to an end but the trials ahead of them were just beginning. **John 17:15-17** *"I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. 16 "They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17 "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.* Jesus knew that the genuineness of the apostles' faith could only be tested under fire (**1 Peter 1:7**) similar to God's servant Job (**Job 23:10**). Our faith is put under the same intense heat of trials and

tribulations and James tells us in **1:2-4** *...to count it all joy knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. 4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.*

ARE WE REALLY ANY DIFFERENT?

Sadly, the people of the Lord are not as peculiar as they should be. The effects of the world upon the church are prevalent today. Members of the Lord's body talk like the world, dress like the world, flock to the wrong kinds of movies like the world and no distinction can be made outside the walls of the meeting house between Christians and atheists.

The message of the gospel doesn't seem as attractive anymore because of the worldly living of many Christians. How can the world see a difference, and be drawn to it, if we just blend in with them?

STAND OUT IN THE CROWD

I'm not suggesting that we all become “Jesus freaks” and start being obnoxious in our religion but given the opportunity we should always give praise and honor to the Lord and never be afraid to confess the fact that we

are Christians and we are peculiar. **Matthew 5:16** "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. **Matthew 10:32** "Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven.

Teenagers especially will experience ridicule for dressing, talking and acting differently than their peers. But ask yourselves this question, which am I to please, God or man?

Being royalty causes a person to be distinctive from their peers and that is exactly the category we find ourselves in when we submit to the will of God. **1 Peter 2:9** ***But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special (peculiar, KJV) people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;***

Never be ashamed to be called odd or unusual for your allegiance to God or in spreading the gospel call (**Romans 1:16**). God always has and will continue to use peculiar people in His service and reward them for their faithfulness in the end.

- Bruce J. Dehut

WHY "LIBERAL" AND "CONSERVATIVE" CHURCHES OF CHRIST?

Robert Harkrider

During the past two decades many have asked this question. Some sincere brethren who have been caught up in one stream or the other never fully understood, and many who were too young before have now grown into adulthood wondering why. It is therefore a good question worthy of repeated investigation. Labels of "liberal" and "conservative" have been used by some as a prejudicial tool to halt further investigation. Labels used as prejudicial clubs are to be condemned; yet the terms "liberal" and "conservative" are proper when used as adjectives to describe a difference in attitude toward authority, and consequently, a difference in practices.

As the years go by the attitude underlying the division become more apparent. We are not separated because of jealousy and envy. We have divided over a basic attitude toward the Bible: (1) A "liberal" attitude justifies any activity that seems to be a "good work" under the concept, "We do a lot of things for which we have no authority." (2) A "conservative" attitude makes a plea to have Bible authority (either generic or specific) for all we do -- therefore we refrain from involving the church in activities alien to that of the church in the New Testament.

Briefly, the walls of innovations, which have divided us, are built in three areas:

WHO?

Who is to do the work of the church? The church or a human institution? The church has a God-given work to do, and the Lord made the church sufficient to do its own work. Within the framework of elders and deacons, a local church is

the only organization necessary to fulfill its mission of evangelism, edification and benevolence (Eph. 3:10-11; 4:11-16; 1 Tim. 3:15). However, a wedge was driven when some brethren began to reason that the church may build and maintain a separate institution -- a different WHO -- to do the work of the church. This separate institution is human in origin and control. It is not a church nor governed by the church; yet it receives financial maintenance from the church. Human institutions so arranged (such as benevolent homes, hospitals, colleges or missionary societies) may be doing a good work; but when they become leeches on the church, they deny its independence and all-sufficiency and make a "fund raising house" of this God planned institution.

HOW?

How is the work of the church to be overseen? On a local basis with separate, autonomous congregations? Or may several local churches work as a unit through a "sponsoring eldership?" The organization of the New Testament church is local in nature, with elders limited to oversight of the work of the flock among them (Acts 14:23; 1 Peter 5:2). We are divided by those who promote "brotherhood" works through a plan of intercongregational effort with centralized oversight, which is an unscriptural HOW.

WHAT?

What is the mission of the church? Spiritual or also social? It is in this area that the loose attitude toward the scripture is becoming more apparent. Though wholesome activities are needed for all, the Lord died for a higher and holier mission than fun, food and frolic. Let the church be kept free to spend its energy and resources (Rom. 14:17; 1 Peter 2:5), and let the home be busy in providing social needs (1 Cor. 11:22, 34).

-(THE CAPROCK MESSENGER)

THE LORD'S DAY PRIVILEGE LIST

Sunday Morning Sevice

Announcements: **Mike Shepherd**

Song Leader: **Brandon Yates**

Opening Prayer: **Steve Smith**

Lord's Table: **Wayne Runner**
Chuck Sharp
Robert Hood
Andy Milliner

Scripture Reading: **Chris Runner**

Sermon: **Bruce Dehut**

Closing Prayer: **David Shepherd**

Sunday Evening Service

Announcements: **Mike Shepherd**

Song Leader: **Brandon Yates**

Opening Prayer: **Mark Smith**

Sermon: **Bruce Dehut**

Lord's Table: **Wayne Runner**

Closing Prayer: **Kenny Cass**