

An Interview With A False Teacher

He just keeps on coming back, wanting to teach in the congregation here. He assures me that he is accepted by brethren throughout the world — people like the way he talks ... they say he is easy to understand, that he is “up to date” with the language of today. The younger people especially appreciate him he says. He is in high demand for youth classes and the like. He kept pressuring me so much that I finally decided to sit down with him and ask him a few questions. The following is the result of the interview we had.

Question One:

At this congregation we strongly believe in the inspiration of the Word of God. We thus teach that we should “speak as the oracles of God” (1 Peter 4:11) and that we simply do not have the right to either “add unto” nor “take away from” the words of God (Revelation 22:18-19). Would you agree with this belief and teaching?

His Response:

I feel I have the ability to get a little further than that. I believe I can get to the actual “thought” of the original writers. As such I readily admit that in my teaching I go beyond the words which God gave the inspired writers.

Question Two:

We believe and teach that the church of Christ is the singular body for which our Lord and Savior died (Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:4; 5:25). It is the only church which was purchased with His blood (Acts 20:28) and it is the body into which all the saved are added by God (Acts 2:47). Thus we deny

that the church is a denomination among other denominations. Would you try to work against that teaching if you are allowed to teach?

His Response:

In all honesty I have to admit that I at the very outset state my belief that there are many denominations — Anglican, Assemblies of God, Baptist, Methodist — and I will place the Church of Christ in the midst of them and call her a denomination.

Question Three:

We believe and teach that when children are born into this world that they are pure and free from sin. They are exemplary of the purity and humility that God demands of us if we are to be saved (Matthew 18:3-4). We deplore the teaching that these precious babies are born with inherited sin, in fact we know the Bible states that it is impossible to inherit sin (Ezekiel 18:20) and tells us further that sin is not inherited but an act each person is guilty of when they transgress God’s law (1 John 3:4). Do you agree with this teaching?

His Response:

Again I find myself at odds with you on a teaching. I clearly teach that a person is sinful at birth, sinful from the very time they are conceived.

Question Four:

Most who teach the doctrine of inherited sin, also teach that we are possessed of a nature that is evil and against God. Since we disagree with your unBiblical teaching of inherited sin we obviously would not teach the latter either. Do you teach this also?

His Response:

Yes, I do. When given the opportunity to speak I teach repeatedly that we each possess a sinful nature.

Question Five:

We in the church of Christ, in accordance with God’s teaching, teach that one is saved from sin when he in loving obedience is baptized (immersed) in water for the remission of his sins (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16) based upon his faith, repentance and confession of Christ. Would you ever teach contrary to this?

His Response:

I am sorry but I think you are wrong in your teaching. I teach that our righteousness before God is by faith from first to last. When you hear the word of truth you are included in Christ, for with your heart you believe and are justified.

Question Six:

I am sure you are aware that the church of Christ is distinctive in many ways, and maybe one of the most widely known is our refusal to use the mechanical instrument of music in worship to God. We take seriously the Bible command that we “must worship Him in spirit and truth” (John 4:24). As such we believe and obey what He has said in regard to singing. We know that He has specified the kind of music He wants as singing (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; etc.). If you were allowed to teach here, would you teach the same thing?

His Response:

No, I would not. I teach that God said to sing and make music. I do not seek to specify the kind of music God commands. I know that is contrary to what you teach, but I am just being honest as to what I teach.

Well, what do you think? Were the elders at the congregation here right for not allowing this one to teach? Would YOU allow or be pleased if this one was allowed to teach at the congregation where you attend? I think not.

But you better look around. Chances are he is with somebody near you. He may be invited into the pulpit where you worship. He may be encouraged to especially work with your young people since he is so “up to date” and easy to understand for them. How do you know if he is there? Let me tell you his name, I am sure you have heard of him . . . Mr. N.I.V.—the *New International Version of the Bible*.

Brethren, I don't believe that many, even of our most liberal congregations, would allow a man who responded to an interview as above to enter their pulpit or classes. Isn't it amazing then that these same ones **encourage** the use of the very book that teaches all this and more! If you doubt what was written above is so, notice the quotes below from the New International Version. The quotes are placed with the question numbers to which they correspond. Any emphasis is added by me.

Question One:

“The first concern of the translators has been the accuracy of the translation and its *fidelity to the thoughts of the biblical writers*. They have weighed the significance of the lexical and grammatical details of the Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek texts. At the same time, *they have striven for more than a word-for-word translation.*”

Preface to the NIV, paragraph seven

Question Two:

In speaking of the translators we are told “they were from *many denominations—including Anglican, Assemblies of God, Baptist, Brethren, Christian Reformed, Church of Christ, Evangelical Free, Lutheran, Mennonite, Methodist, Nazarene, Presbyterian, Wesleyan and other churches.* ...”

Preface to the NIV, paragraph two

Question Three:

“Surely I was *sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.*” Psalm 51:5, NIV

Question Four:

“I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my *sinful nature.*” Romans 7:18, NIV

See also Romans 8:4,5,8,9,12,13; Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 2:3; Colossians 2:11, 13 - NIV.

Question Five:

“For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, *a righteousness that is by faith from first to last . . .*” Romans 1:17, NIV

“*And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit*”

Ephesians 1:13, NIV

“*For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified . . .*” Romans 10:10, NIV

Question Six:

“Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. *Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord...*”

Ephesians 5:19, NIV

Brethren, let's not let a false teacher into our classes and pulpits, whether in person or in writing. Let's determine to love and respect the true Word of God, not some book that states at the very first it will go beyond what God has said and try to determine the “thoughts” of the inspired writers. Such a false teacher ought to be “marked and avoided.” ☒

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