

Are We Fighting Against Error or Fellowshiping Error?

J. W. McGarvey has been recognized as one of the outstanding, bible scholars of the restoration movement of the 1800's (1829-1912). When the controversy over the use of instrumental music in church worship divided brethren in this country. While McGarvey personally opposed instrumental music in church worship, history tells us that he tried to fight it by going along with its practice. Nearing the end of his life, he gave the following conclusion of this approach to dealing with error among brethren to a young preacher.

It is worth repeating:

"You are on the right road, and whatever you do, don't let anyone persuade you that you can successfully fight error by fellowshiping it and going along with it. I have tried. He said, I believed at the time that was the only way to do it. I've never held membership in a congregation that used instrumental music. I have, however, accepted invitations to preach without distinctions between churches that used it and churches that didn't. I've gone along with their papers and magazines and things of that sort. During all these years I have taught the truth as the New Testament teaches it to every young preacher who passed through the college of the bible. Yet, I do not know of more than six of them who are preaching the truth today. It won't work."

I agree with Mr. McGarvey, it will not work!!

As we read and study our bible's we see that the New Testament also teaches that it simply will not work! Going along, with error does not promote unity.

Ephesians 4:3-6 - Paul tells us,

"Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling."

It promotes compromise, corrupting those who attempt to fellowship error.

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 – Paul informs us saying,

"Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the Temple of the living god. As God has said: "I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their god, and they shall be my people." Therefore, "come out from among them and be separate, says the lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you. I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says, the lord almighty."

2 Corinthians 11:2-4 – Paul continues saying,

"For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that i may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not receive, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you may well put up with it!"

Paul is simply saying, when we go along with others in compromise it produces the loss of fellowship with God as it causes one to partake in error.

2 John 9-11 - John informs of this,

"Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the father and the son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him, for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds."

Yet, brethren still try to use this approach with error today - the social gospel, divorce and remarriage, evolution, denominationalism, accepting fellowship with those who have been baptized into denominational churches, and many more. It won't work today, either. Don't be an ostrich! Do not bury your head in the sand! Error will not go away! It must be opposed for the sake of truth and the salvation of our souls.

Jude 3-4 – Jude said,

“Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning your common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out of this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Galatians 2:4-5 – Paul here defending the gospel says,

“And because of false brethren secretly brought in who secretly came in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage, to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.”

If we want to truly, please God and make heaven our home. We must not ever compromise truth and always expose the error.