



**General Topics :: Where do we draw the line ...**

**Where do we draw the line ... - posted by tjservant (), on: 2007/2/11 23:33**

Do we ever draw a line?

If someone walks into church with a beer should they be able to finish it?

How about a shirt with foul language printed on the front?

Do we say anything?

In another post it was said:

Â...and if a cute young twenty something who likes to wear T-shirts with no bra starts showing up, sooner or later Jesus will tell her that's not appropriate for a place the community deems a holy placeÂ...

(I have no issue with the person that posted this, or that thread. I am just wanting to go another direction with it.)

How long do we wait for Jesus to say something?

Is this being seeker sensitive or just tolerant of the world?

Is tactfully explaining a modesty issue to a person to be likened to criticizing?

Where do we draw the line as to what is accepted/tolerated in God's house?

Any thoughts?

God Bless

TJ

**Re: Where do we draw the line ... - posted by Compton (), on: 2007/2/12 0:16**

For years I have wrestled with that question in many ways.

My own conclusion is that we need to decide what each meeting or gathering is about. Not all church gatherings need to be an outreach to the so-called seekers of God. (A misnomer biblically speaking...but that's another thread...) The communion of the body needs to be preserved as something separate from the world. The New Man is distinguishable from the old. This separation is vital not only for the health of the body, but for the soberness of the lost. If unsaved visitors are present, they should have an idea that the church is a place for purity and integrity as well as love.

I know these are stodgy words, but it's true none the less. Church is a people who practice compassion certainly, but also righteousness. They do not deny the power of Godliness just to make people feel good about themselves.

Yet, there may be some meetings that are community or street outreaches. Once when we were canvassing a street to find people to attend a tent meeting we were setting up in a nearby parking lot, we came across a woman who was drinking a beer on her front porch. She declined our offer to attend, saying she had to finish her beer. I told, "Why don't you bring your beer along? Better that you drink it hearing the message than to sit here drinking it without hearing." She looked at me surprised of course...and I had to remind her that I wasn't encouraging her to drink but that I was encouraging her to come and listen.

Well, I'm sure there are other ways to handle that situation. My point is that I wasn't inviting her into communion drinking a beer...I was inviting her to hear the Gospel.

Now my opinion is that once we figure out how to untangle our church communion from our community outreaches we can

an address the question more appropriately. Still, we can tolerate all the beer drinking, foul mouthed talk, and sensual dress people throw at us in hopes of making them feel accepted in our church buildings...the bottom line is if our church is just about "acceptance" and not the Gospel, then we are hindering them...not helping them.

I have not found any of this type of accommodation in the tantalizingly brief New Testament record of the early church. I have also not seen it in any of the writings of the earliest Church fathers who are perhaps the closest record we have to the practical day to day outworkings of the apostolic church.

And as soon as we truly understand the Gospel, we won't feel good about our open rebellion. Our bony pointing accusatory finger is not the issue...simply speaking the Word under the unction of the Holy Spirit will convict.

That is why a worldly church does nobody any good. If acceptance was the Lord's main mission, he wouldn't have needed to die for sins. He could have just accepted our sins. I mean, sinners can accept sinning sinners just fine...why not put them in charge?!

No, a church must be loving, but without the unapologetic purity that is evidence of the New Life, our shows of love are self-flattering and a distortion of God's love. If people feel comfortable in their sins in your church...it's not a sign of spiritual life but death.

Just my thoughts on this question,

MC

**Re: Where do we draw the line ... - posted by Yeshuasboy (), on: 2007/2/12 1:35**

C'mon now brother,

I think we should be seeker-sensitive. We don't want to upset anybody do we? Let's just have a free-for-all in the House Of God :-?

Please forgive my foolishness.... for the weakness of today's church baffles me and it's lukewarmness stirs my stomach. The Word Of God gives the answers....

Prv 29:25 "The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe."

...and what did Paul say about seeking to please men?

Gal 1:10 "For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I **should not** be the servant of Christ."

Is it not a great snare to a man's soul to be a people-pleaser, whatever the man's excuse maybe if it contradicts the Word Of God and the work of the Holy Ghost?

James 4:4 "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship with the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

Paul also wrote about some of the issues I think you maybe referring to in Romans 14:13-23.

to God be the Glory,  
richie

**Re: beer and church, on: 2007/2/12 2:50**

This is how I see it...

For the past two Sundays in a row my fiancée has been upset after seeing two early twenty year old girls in our church wearing revealing skirts and shirts. In the past I have noticed these girls because of what they were wearing, but not on these two occasions. I felt guilty for noticing them, because I felt I was lusting, but when my fiancée mentioned it before I saw them, then I knew it was not only my fault for catching these girls with my eyes.

My fiancée said each time that 'someone' should say something to these two girls. I suggested that she should, but first, to pray that she uses appropriate loving words, so not to offend or insult. I also reminded her that when I first met her, she too, dressed 'differently', because she was trying to attract attention. She is now praying about the matter and dressing much better than ever before.

This reminds me of another situation I was in a few years back at my 'black' baptist church in Canada. My mom works in a motel, as a second job, and I usually visit her while she works. There is/was a girl who is about 23 who is a black prostitute that stays there while she is 'working'. I came to know her and talked to her anytime that we were at the motel at the same time. She is a 'nice' girl who I believe that made many wrong choices in life that led her to be where she is today, however, I would always ask if she wanted to go to my church.

After weeks of asking and suggesting, she finally said yes. One Sunday morning, I went to the motel to pick her up and when she walked out she was dressed 'nicely' in her 'street' clothing (not as bad as Julia Roberts in pretty women, but just as obvious). I did not say anything because I was glad that she was finally coming.

We walked into the church about 30 minutes early, like I usually do, before most of the others arrived. I like to sit two pews back from the front on the right hand side, so there we sat. So, there we are, a black prostitute and me, a new white guy, in an all black church. Within a few minutes, one of the women elders started to mumble something about her attire and she defensively replied back and then we had a little heated debate.

The elder was right, but her approach was totally wrong. A few minutes later, a couple, who helped me a lot when I first got saved, sat down beside me and started talking to me and the girl. In the meantime, someone got the girl a jacket for her shoulders. The couple soon realized that this young lady was their niece, whom they have not seen for many years. This meant she was related to many others in the church. The point is that she never came back. One reason is because she was not accepted for what she was.

Trying not to divert too far from the original question, that brings me back to a few months ago when my fiancée and I were jogging. We came across a man who was sitting alone along a river drinking some soju (very popular Korean drink, tastes like gas and puts you on your ...). Since this was not even 9am, I felt in my heart that we should talk to him.

This was new to my fiancée and I, because we were just beginning to witness together (she translates) and handing out papers. I got her to ask if we could have a chat. He agreed. We sat down and began discussing Jesus. He asked us if we wanted a drink and although we said no, he continued drinking. The conversation was relatively good, but I could tell he was getting more nervous as he drank and smoked more cigarettes. He then repeated things he already discussed and then became argumentative. We eventually got up and continued our jog. The point is that some will listen, but there is a limit to what they are willing to receive.

A few weeks later, my fiancée and I were walking to morning church at 4:45am, like we do each morning, when a guy who was sitting, drinking in front of a convenience store asked us to sit with him. A little confused and doubtful, we sat to see what he could want. He noticed we had our Bibles and wanted to know where we were going and why we believe in God. After a few minutes, I realized that maybe we would be late for morning church and then focused on trying to help him.

A long exchange took place and it turned out he was fighting with his wife and his life was not going so well. He was a business owner who had lots of money, but was empty inside. He offered me a job teaching his son, because he said that I look honest and that he could trust me. After a while, he went into the convenience store and told us to wait, while he bought some more beer and a warm drink for us. We talked a little more, but then we soon felt that this conversation was not really productive and he was starting to change his tone.

We said thank you and that if he ever wanted to attend a good church, he might want to think about the one beside the store. We hurried up to the church on the sixth floor of that building and a few of the people looked at us as if we had no manners because we were late, although we knew we were doing something for the Lord.

About ten minutes later, from behind, I heard the door open and I prayed..."Oh, God...please do not be him!", but sure enough it was and he walked right up beside me and stood there talking loudly in Korean. I pointed to a chair in front of me for him to sit in and he did eventually. The whole room was distracted by this guy at first, but then he settled down and sat and listened. I could see him changing right before my eyes.

At first, he sat without facing the pastor (almost as a disobedient child with a terrible attitude) and then his body eased and got more and more comfortable. His head started to sink and looked as though in despair. He really looked to be changing and I was thanking God for what I was witnessing. It actually moved me to tears and he turned around to look at me just then. He saw my tears and it started to change him more.

I fixed my eyes on the pastor, while his eyes were fixed on me. Tears ran down my face, because I was thinking of the grace of God that I too experienced a few years prior. During the end of the message, like we always do, the pastor turns off the lights and we cry out "Jesus" 3 times and begin in group prayer. Before "Jesus" was cried out the second time, he was up and out the door in a flash. To this day, I believe the devil ran out of that room, not the man. The point is that any man should be given the chance to hear the Word.

One last story this thread reminds me of is a young guy who walked into a church that had cigarettes in his pocket, alcohol on his breath, and cocaine up his nose. We walked in the church and although he was not like everyone else, he was determined to find truth. He was welcomed by some, but cursed by others. At the age of 25, he sat down and 'heard' the Word, like it was the first time.

He did not know what to do at first, but because people were welcoming enough to show concern, he felt that he was safe and no one would hurt him in any way and although it was hard to attend each week and commit to anything concrete, he did eat more of the Word each week, to the point he started to need the truth and only the truth. That young man was me and I am here today, only because I was allowed in the church the way I was.

So, should you allow someone in the church with a beer in their hands? It all depends. The first thing I thought of was that we should not really be allowed to eat or drink anything in the church besides the blood and body of Jesus. I would feel uncomfortable with someone with a coke and bag of chips, let alone a beer and pizza.

You may ask to hold it for them and give it to them later, but if they demand to come in with beer in hand, so be it. Jesus removes the stain of sin, we can remove a beer stain!

...that's how I see it.

God Bless those that are accepted the way they are,  
BrianMira  
:roll:

**Re: Where do we draw the line ..., on: 2007/2/12 3:22**

Quote:

-----If someone walks into church with a beer should they be able to finish it?  
-----

no, its not appropriate, take it down to the bar, they'll even sell ya another one, when you finish that one. The Body is gathered here, this is holy ground, show some respect, no intoxicants.

Quote:

-----How about a shirt with foul language printed on the front?  
-----

same thing, the Body is gathered here, holy ground, and knowing what you know, even in the early stages, what kind of spirit would guide you to put on a shirt, you know good and well is offensive.

the "girl with the t-shirt", dont know what to tell you.

Here's the rules: the gathering place of the Body is not a bar, no intoxicants, in fact I believe that if a group of followers of Jesus form an Ekklesia, and the Holy Ghost over time reveals the leadership of this Body, they this group should make the equivalent of a voluntary "Nazirite" sort of vow and abstain from all liquor or any intoxicant, because you will be required to minister to others who have this problem.

just jotting down thoughts

**Brian Mira, on: 2007/2/12 3:27**

that is a beautiful post. Thank you brother.

much love to you in Christ, neil

**Re: - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2007/2/12 3:37**

i agree whit Neil(bartle), the church is a holy place, if someone comes whit a beer, tell them in love we don't want beer in here you are welcome but not that beer. Tell them why...

and whit clothes... if it is a first time there i don't know ....if they come back continually whit same sort of inappropriate clo thing, we should tell them... first i think women who dress whit clothes that attract attention to their bodies instead of their faces...is allowing themselves to be a devils tool to get "weaker" brothers to stumble and grieve the holy spirit in them . P .Washer said something good, if your clothes is a frame for your face its good and God approves of it, if your clothes is a "frame" for your body it is sensual and God hates it. And that goes for brothers whit tight shirts too.

but i wouldn't throw that out at someone who comes the first time and greet them whit that in the door, but there should b e elders or Christians whit the maturity to handle a conversation like that about clothing,

**Re: - posted by Lor\_E (), on: 2007/2/12 9:13**

"I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. Yet I certainly did not mean with the sex ually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner- not even to eat with such a person. For what hav e I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside?" 1 Cor 5:9-12

"Do you not know that the unrighteous will ot inherit the kingdom of God? do not be deceived. Neither fornicatos, nor idol aters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor solomits, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortion ers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of teh Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God." 1 Cor 6:9-11

"But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is convinced gy all, he is convicted by all. And thus the secrets of his heart are revealed; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God and report that God is truly among you." 1 Cor 14:24,25

"Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?" 1 Cor 6:19

"Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the hous ehold of god, having been built on the foundation of gthe spostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cor nerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are b eing built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit." Eph 2:19-22

How did Jesus deal with sinners?  
How did Paul deal with sinners?

Live your lives in such a way that men can not help but see the glory of God in your life and speak in such a way that hu mans can not but desire to know the God that you know, to have the same kind of peace that you have, to live in such a way that is pleasing to God.

The building on the corner is not Holy..... God is Holy, the Holy Spirit is Holy..... when the Holy Spirit lives and rules and r eigns inside of you, you are holy- the representative of holy on the earth..... "Be ye holy as I am holy"

(also a message spoken by Kieth Daniel which is very good!)

Too bad what I have seen within "churches" is that it is not the sinners coming in from outside that are the problem as m uch as it is the sinners from within the "churches"... such as... daughters that are not taught modesty at home.... husban ds that do not help teach their wives modesty at home..... older more mature women in the church that do not take their r

responsibility of teaching the younger women how to be modest.....

Believe me, when a sinner comes into a congregation of Holy Ghost filled people endeavoring to be HOLY, they will know that they are dressed inappropriately, they will also be convicted of that which is on the inside which causes them to be inappropriately dressed, which is the greater issue!

Jesus spoke to Pharisees and Scribes and called them whitewashed sepulchers (sp?) because they looked clean on the outside but inside were full of rotting, impure, unclean sin.....

The Church of Jesus Christ, His body, are to be those that clean the inside of the cup, and then the outside of the cup and fill the cup up with HIM; and sinners are both drawn to HIM and cleansed by HIM!!!!

**Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2007/2/12 9:25**

MC said:

Quote:

----- That is why a worldly church does nobody any good.

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Exactly! And this is really the point regarding these life-style issues. I once overheard a conversation in which a mom complained profusely about her daughter's gambling habits. In fact, it caused a lot of tension between the two. Then later in the conversation I heard this same mom mention something about her lottery ticket. Daaahh!

Here's another story: I once knew a girl who typically had wild parties at her house. Sometimes the police would raid the house because the parties would get out of hand. Now, I'll bet you know something now about her parents. That's right! They were high profile social people and often held parties. True they were "high society" parties, very proper, never out of control etc. But still, the SAME VALUE motivated both generations: socialization.

Take that truth into the church. When outer appearance is important, when conforming to trends is important among those who are in the higher places in the church, then how can they NOT expect the younger ones to follow the same pattern. It just so happens that when the youth apply their elders'/parents SAME values into their lives, it just LOOKS different - less acceptable. And THAT'S what we don't like.

We live in a world that values self-expression. So, do our churches. We value the freedom to worship as we choose, to sing the songs WE want, to run our institutions the way WE want.... So, can we fault our youth for wanting to be masters of their own lives and express themselves as they choose?

If the concerned members of a church live by the same values then they will never offer much more than rules, artificial lines in the sand - just other ways of making a the "right" impression. And that is the way we make hypocrites.

Quote:

----- whitewashed sepulchres

-----

Who are the ones who should make the first move towards change? Is it fair to expect more of the younger, less mature generation than we ourselves are prepared to uphold?

I praise God for these outward symptoms of a worldly church. Just like the symptoms of a fatal disease, they move us towards seeking the real solution: God's remedy. ... Or so it ought to be.

Diane

Re:, on: 2007/2/12 12:07

There is a basic misunderstanding of why the church meets together that is at the root of this issue.

The church does not meet together as an outreach. The church meets together for the edification and equipping of the **saints**. Any evangelism that happens is secondary. People do get saved in a church gathering, and you will get unsaved people who show up at your gathering. But the primary focus in the church gatherings is to build up the body of Christ.

That's where the so-called "seeker sensitive" churches have missed it, and why they are producing so many false conversions, and causing many a Christian to become compromised with the world.

If a person comes into a church gathering dressed in an appropriate manner (meaning in a provocative way), then that church has to exercise discernment concerning how to handle it. If there are young boys present, the church's first responsibility is to the young boys. I'm not sure turning that person away is a good idea, but that would be up to that church's leadership.

If a person shows up with profanity on their t-shirt... you bet they wouldn't have it on for long. Someone did show up at one of our gatherings once with profanity on their shirt. I didn't turn him away. I took him aside and explained that there were ladies and children present, and he was welcome to stay, but he would have to change into one of my t-shirts. He did, and he stayed... and got saved about a month later. But I did not allow profanity to come into a holy (meaning separated) gathering.

As far as someone showing up on a Sunday morning with a half finished beer... yea, like that ever happens. If anyone has ever seen that, let me know. I haven't. But it would be inappropriate if it ever did, and there is nothing wrong with having some standards. In the OT that would have never happened in the temple. Not without God consuming them with fire.

If we're talking about street preaching, that is completely different. You're out in the world. Expect the world to act like the world.

Somehow people have gotten the idea that the church gathering is for evangelism, and that is not the main purpose. It has never been, until recently. And then man, in his feeble brain, decides to make church "seeker sensitive", and it becomes a compromised failure, like we have seen over and over again. Why? Because they're trying to make the church gathering something it was never intended to be. The Bible says forsake not the gathering together of the **saints**. Not forsake the gathering of seekers and saints.

Krispy

Re: - posted by tjservant (), on: 2007/2/13 12:24

Quote:  
-----As far as someone showing up on a Sunday morning with a half finished beer... yea, like that ever happens. If anyone has ever seen that, let me know.  
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I read that it's not uncommon in some inner city churches. I think they are talking about homeless or street people bringing in their "brown bag bottles"

God Bless

TJ

Re: - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2007/2/13 12:59

Quote:

Somehow people have gotten the idea that the church gathering is for evangelism, and that is not the main purpose.

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this is the problem in many churches... we should worship God because he is God and thats why we have meetings.... or the main thing, then there are "bi-products" that to are important and good things...but as for reaching the lost, we should go out "into" the world and preach the Gospel...making people into disciples of Jesus... then you can come worship together with us, but many churches stopped doing that and just built up four walls and sit there and expect people come walking in and get saved, praise God when that happens,...but its not why we meet on the sabbath

Re: - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2007/2/13 13:04

Quote:

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As far as someone showing up on a Sunday morning with a half finished beer... yea, like that ever happens. If anyone has ever seen that, let me know. I haven't. But it would be inappropriate if it ever did, and there is nothing wrong with having some standards. In the OT that would have never happened in the temple. Not without God consuming them with fire.

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a brother told me he had been in a meeting and they invited a pastor to speak, and he came and he got into the pulpit and he putted a six-pack of beer on the pulpit! first they thought he was going to demonstrate something but after some preaching he opened and started to drink!

i asked what happened, but he said the people listening was so utterly in shock no one said anything! i don't know what is most sad...?