

March 29, 2020

# **Viewpoint** from the **Valley Grove Church Of Christ**

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## **You Need The Right Tool**

By Charles Willis

**I**t was just a screw that needed tightening. It would just be a simple thing to snug it up, but I couldn't find a Phillips screwdriver. Have you ever tried to tighten a screw with Bic ball point pen cap? Or a pair of tweezers? Maybe you had success with a pocket knife. Nothing worked for me. I was unable to complete the job because I didn't have the right tool, and that was frustrating.

What makes a tool "right" is that it is made for the job you are trying to accomplish. A hammer has one job. A hand saw has one job, as do most other specific saws. Software is a computer tool that is designed for a specific job. Anyone who has used a computer knows the frustration of having a program that won't do what you need it to do. In every situation, the right tool makes all the difference.

Men want to be saved. But, like my handiwork efforts, some try everything but the right tool to accomplish the job. Some will create their own doctrine or adopt a tradition that they think will work. Rather than search for the right tool or going and getting the right tool, we tend to search for the shortcut and the convenience, even if it is not a right tool. The sad truth is many think they have entered a saved relationship with God, when in fact they have not, because they have used a wrong tool to supposedly enter that relationship.

Only one thing will accomplish salvation, and that is obedience to Jesus Christ. God has done His part in providing a means of salvation through Jesus Christ. His grace is a gift to anyone who will obey Him. Every man can enjoy the spiritual blessings, but only if they are in Christ Jesus (Eph. 1:3). Baptism is the way we are placed into Christ (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27), yet many today reject the fact that baptism is necessary for salvation. If you reject the only means of accomplishing the task, then you have failed. So Scripture tells us, "baptism now saves you" (1 Peter 3:21). Through baptism we come into contact with the blood of Jesus, and by God's grace are forgiven of our sins (Acts 2:38).

***Visitors — We pray that you benefit spiritually from  
our worship together and hope to see you again.***

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# Destroying The Church From The Inside Out

By Mickey Galloway

**T**he death of a local church does not come suddenly. Neither is a home destroyed overnight. A home's destruction usually results from certain fatal steps taken over a lengthy period of time. As we travel the road that leads to a home's breakup, let us examine how our careless conduct can ultimately destroy the strength of the local church. Years ago, someone said "not everything that is wrong with our country is in Washington. . ." Well, not everything wrong with the church is visible when the church comes together. Many of the problems that affect the church begin in our homes! In these days, when so many homes are crumbling, we would do well to examine our marital relationships to see how weaknesses that exist there are adversely affecting our service to the Lord and hindering the strength of the church.

**1. Selfishness.** This is probably the number-one enemy of a happy home life, and it is also a killer of the local church. Each person does his own thing. Neither is willing to give up what he wants to do and submit to the will of the other. Each seeks his own satisfaction in material realms and in secular activities, with little concern for the satisfaction of others. The apostle Paul prefaced his statements regarding the husband/wife relationship with the words "Giving thanks always for all things in the name of our lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; subjecting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ" (Eph. 5:20-21). Consider also these words: "Doing nothing through faction or through vainglory, but in lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself; not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others" (Phil. 2:3-4). Wouldn't that solve a lot of ills in the family and in the church? When Paul described Timothy, he said: "For I have no man likeminded, who will care truly for your state." Ladies, wouldn't you like to be married to someone like that? However, notice the contrast in the next verse. "For they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 2:20-21). Many times, the thing that causes problems in our marriages is the same thing that causes problems in the church. Jesus said, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matt. 16:24). Could it be that if I am not happily married, the problem is my relationship to the Lord? Maybe, if both marriage partners learned to submit to the Lord, it would go a long way toward helping them submit to each other!

**2. Disillusionment.** Often, before marriage, expectations are just not realistic. After we are married for a while, we begin to see in our companions faults that we did not notice during our courtships. These faults magnify to the point where they become nagging sources of irritation. When it becomes intolerable, each decides that he made a terrible mistake when he chose a marriage partner. Sometimes, before becoming a Christian, we have false

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concepts about what a Christian is. Jesus spoke of counting the cost of discipleship: “If any man cometh unto me, and hateth not his own father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. . . whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple” (Lk. 14:25-35). Many are glad to become Christians if it means “social activities” or club-like memberships, but then we learn there is work and responsibility involved. Many go in with “rose-colored” glasses, not realizing that being a Christian is real work.

Indeed, I make a commitment that requires me to give myself to the Lord before all others; then I look for faults with the church. “And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God” (2 Cor. 8:5). Perhaps it is the realization that “not everyone that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father who is in heaven” (Matt. 7:21). Upon reflection, I find this “too narrow” (Matt. 7:13,14) to include those I want to include. Then “faults” with the church seem to be magnified to the point of intolerability, and we decide we’ve made a terrible mistake.

**3. End of faithfulness.** No further efforts are made to build a happy home. Communication ceases; love fades and gives way to bitterness. We find ourselves merely housekeeping and no longer enjoying

and fulfilling the God-given purpose of marriage. This, too, extends into our feelings toward the church. Having developed a selfish attitude, we explain, “I just don’t get anything out of it anymore.” The faults I find have now become intolerable, and I make no effort to build up the church by my own personal faithfulness. I no longer support the Bible classes. I no longer attend gospel meetings or other special functions designed for edification. I do not want to talk with fellow Christians, and my love for them and the Lord gives way to bitterness. I find myself merely housekeeping for the Lord and no longer experiencing the joy of being a Christian. As adultery invades the home, destroying my relationship with my spouse, so spiritual adultery destroys our relationship with the Lord and robs the church of its most valuable assets . . . its members.

You see, the same thing — sin — destroys both the home and the church! But not just the sin of unfaithfulness. Selfishness, failure to count the cost, intolerance, lack of love, bitterness, etc., all lead to this unfortunate end. Sin destroys from the inside out. If we would preserve the happiness of our homes, and secure the success of the church, we must strive to exclude sin from our lives. If you want to help strengthen the church for the future (and for your children), begin in your home! “But seek ye first the kingdom and His righteousness . . . (Matt. 6:33).

## Study Your Bible

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If we believe we have been saved through any other means than through what Jesus taught, we have deceived ourselves (Acts 4:12). Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith (Heb. 12:2) and is the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father but by Him (John 14:6). Using the wrong tool in an attempt to be saved makes even less sense than trying to build something with a wrong tool. This is because salvation is eternal, and if we do not obey the truth we will be eternally condemned. Therefore we are instructed to “Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves!” (2 Cor. 13:5). The only way to please God so as to be saved eternally is through obedience to all that Jesus said: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you” (Matt. 28:19-20).

Are you using the right tool?



**F**inally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy — meditate on these things.

— *Philippians 4:8*

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### April Birthdays:

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#### Sunday

Bible Study . . . 9:30 A.M.

Worship . . . . . 10:30 A.M.

Worship . . . . . 5:00 P.M.

#### Wednesday

Bible Study . . . 7:00 P.M.

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