

Northeast Church of Christ

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From the Pen of Paul: “Who Did Hinder You?”

IN GALATIANS 5:7, PAUL WROTE TO THE Galatians, “Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?” These Galatians had started out right. They had been “called into the grace of Christ” (Gal. 1:6). They had been “baptized into Christ” (Gal. 3:26-27), thus receiving “the adoption of sons” (Gal. 4:5). And, according to Paul in this verse, they had “run well” for a time.

The Christian life is spoken of as a race to be run in Hebrews 12:1-2: “Wherefore seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience *the race* that is set before us, ever looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.” He also uses the figure of a race in I Corinthians 9:26. It is extremely important that we start out right in this Christian race. Unless we start the race properly following the rule book of God's word, we will be disqualified and fail to reach our goal (I Cor. 9:27). Jesus warned in Matthew 7:21, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.” He even tells us that we will be judged by “the word that I have spoken” (John 12:48).

However, *just* starting correctly is not all that there is to it. These Galatians had been hindered by something or someone and had quit obeying the truth. This is the second time in this epistle that Paul had asked this question. Back in chapter three he asked, “O Foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you,

that ye should not obey the truth”? These questions demonstrate the fact that “truth” must continue to be obeyed after we become Christians, after we begin to “run with patience the race set before us.” We are to “walk in the light, as He is in the light” (I John 1:7); to be “stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord” (I Cor. 15:58); add (supply) to our faith “virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity” (II Pet. 1:5-8); and “not be weary in well-doing” (Gal. 6:9).

The original meaning of the word translated “hinder” in this passage is “to break up a road, as an army before the advance of hostile forces.” A good paraphrase of Paul's question is, “Who tore up the race track in front of you?” That is a good question. It still needs to be asked of those who have ceased to “run well.” If this happens, there must be a reason for it. Here are some possible answers:

(1) Friends or bad company: “Evil companionships corrupt good morals” (I Cor. 15:33).

(2) Our family: Jesus warned us about loving father or mother, son or daughter more than loving Him (Matt. 10:37).

(3) Our job: sometimes we allow “five yoke of oxen” to “hinder us” (Luke 14:19). We must make a living, but should not allow our jobs to take so much of our time and/or efforts that we desert the Lord.

(4) Our possessions: “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of

Beer at Burger King

Our nation is rapidly becoming a nation of alcoholics. As further evidence of this fact, Burger King has announced that it is going to start serving beer at some of its fast food locations. The first "Whopper Bar" is opening in Miami Beach and others are slated to open in Times Square, Las Vegas, and Los Angeles. For two dollars more, you can get a cold one in your combo, instead of a Coke.¹

If these trial locations show a profit, you can be sure that the experiment will be expanded. Sadly, beer may be at a BK near you by this time next year. If Burger King is financially successful, then other burger chains will likely follow its lead. The time to stop it is now.

I am deeply concerned about the future of America, aren't you? The word of God is clear: "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34; cf. Psalm 9:17).

Beer doesn't build nations. It buries them. "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" (Prov. 20:1). Alcohol is deceiving America and taking her down the road to destruction. The great prophet Isaiah declared, "But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way...they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment" (Isa. 28:7). Did you notice how many times wine (beer) is said to cause one to go out of the way, to err, or to stumble? Clearly, alcohol is not the answer for Burger King or for America.

—Wade Webster, Southaven, MS

¹Karoliszyn, Henrick and Corky Siemaszko. "Introducing the Whopper Bar: Burger King to sell beer at fast food joints." *New York Daily News*. <http://www.nydailynews.com/money/2010/01/22/2010>

Who Is An Anti?

The word *anti* means against. If one has read any church history, he is acquainted with this word. The history of the church of Christ in America is filled with anti-ism.

There have been those who were against located preachers; thus, anti located preachers. There are those who are against Sunday school; thus, anti Sunday school. Starting about 1950, there came a tidal wave of people in the church of Christ that opposed orphan homes; thus, the anti orphan home brethren. The list goes on and on.

Why has this anti-ism arisen in the church? It has been in the church because some brethren do not know their Bible. Some within the body of Christ need to learn Christians go by the Bible and not by what they like or dislike. The antis in the church of Christ need to learn this lesson. The antis did not like located preachers so they fought congregations that had them. The antis did not like Sunday school so they fought them. The antis did not like orphan homes so they fought them.

I have been training gospel preachers for many years in Christian schools and some

brethren have fought the work we were doing. Some have refused to support Christian schools because they did not like them or maybe they did not like a teacher or the president of such schools. This kind of activity is anti-ism gone to seed. It is just as bad as anti Sunday school or anti located preacher. We have no right to fight any scriptural work. When we talk about support we are not just talking supporting with money. We are talking about supporting with prayer, cooperation, good will, and a firm stand for all Bible works. Some Bible doctrine must be involved before a Christian raises his hand in opposition to a work and this would involve a Christian school or orphan home.

Tennessee Bible College is a Christian school and is sound in the faith of Christ Jesus. All Christians should support it unless it is involved in a sinful practice. We stand ready to defend the school any time with reference to its soundness.

—Malcolm L. Hill

Abortion is murder!

heaven” (Matt. 10:24-25). Paul vigorously warned of this also in I Timothy 6:6-10.

(5) False teachers: the Galatians had been “so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel” by Judaizing teachers (Gal. 1:6). Paul told them in Galatians 5:8 that “This persuasion cometh not of Him that called you.” I am sure that there are other reasons, but these are some of the major reasons that Christians are sometimes hindered and thus quit obeying the truth.

Note again, that just starting out right and running well for a while is not enough! Revelation 2:10 says, “Be faithful unto death”. Paul, near the end of his life,

demonstrated this very point when he said, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith” (II Tim. 4:6-8). Only as a result of this completion of His course (race) was he able to have hope of “a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day.”

If there are those reading this who have been “hindered” into not obeying the truth, “Who did hinder you?” Read II Corinthians 4:16-18, and determine to “lay aside every weight” and “press (on) toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2:14). Heaven will surely be worth it all!!!

–Paul M. Wilmoth