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It is a group of Christians that claim no human denominational affiliation — just Christians working and worshipping together at the Lord’s word teaches.

If you need Christ as your Lord and Savior, we believe you will find him among the Christians at Valley Station.

Come and see.

The **VALLEY TIDINGS** is published monthly by the church of Christ, meeting at 1803 Dixie Garden Drive, Valley Station, Kentucky 40272

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Sunday Evening Worship 6:00 P.M.
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Valley Tidings

Set For The Defense of the Glad Tidings

Volume XI, July, 2010, Number 7

Abraham Lincoln’s Religion

Abraham Lincoln has the honor of being called, “the most spiritually minded president in our history.” He was never a member of any church, yet he developed a love for the Bible and a respect for genuine religion. There is a story that may have some interest to those familiar with the principles of restoring the church today as it was in the New Testament. Some refer to it as “the Restoration Movement.”

From James DeForrest Murch’s book, *Christians only*, is this excerpt lifted.

Lincoln’s father and stepmother were members of the Christian church*. While living in Kentucky, the Lincolns were surrounded by Scotch Baptist churches which later became Christian churches. In Indiana, they found their religious fellowship among such Baptists. When they finally settled in Illinois, they joined the Christian church. Lincoln, in his youthful years was an agnostic, but as he grew older he developed a love for a Biblical faith. He had little use for the denominations and never formally affiliated with a church. There is a tradition among Illinois Disciples that John O’Kane, when state evangelist, discussed the state of Lincoln’s soul with him on several occasions; finally he was convicted and wished to be immersed. He reportedly knew that his wife, who had strong Episcopal and Presbyterian social obligations in Springfield, would be greatly embarrassed if it were known that a “Campbellite” evangelist had baptized him. But one night, Lincoln slipped away from the house with proper garments for baptism, met O’Kane and was immersed in the waters of the Sangamon River. Whether this story is true or not, there are many evidences of Lincoln’s strong Christian Biblical convictions. (Another version tells of his baptism in Virginia while he was President.) The Bible and prayer were his strength while he led the nation in its most crucial years. He believed that he was called of God to preserve the Union and to free the slaves. Today the whole free world recognizes him as one of the greatest statesmen who ever lived.

*In the time of which Murch writes, the distinction between the Christian church and Church of Christ was not always clear. Some “Christian” churches continued to refrain from adding mechanical instruments of music to their worship. drs.



Doldrums or Tantrums

Doldrums are those low down feelings of listlessness. Tantrums are just the opposite. Doldrums comes from a word that describes a certain area in oceans near the equator. This region is known for dead calms that often last for days. Back when ships depended on the wind for propulsion, the doldrums represented delays and boredom. Waiting for a favorable wind could be very dull.

It is not difficult to imagine how doldrums grated on sailor's nerves. With a precious cargo either to deliver or pick up and no wind, about all ancient sailors could do was loaf, do minor meaningless chores, and wait. That was probably very depressing.

A tantrum, on the other hand is "a willful outburst of annoyance." I doubt that many parents ever stopped to look up the definition to that word when their children threw one, but that's what it means.

Some local churches hit the doldrums and get that listless feeling. They don't appear to have much get up and go. They occupy themselves with minor and often meaningless duties. What causes it? Well, they hit calm waters. Everything is calm and undisturbed and they are simply listing in the water. Precious cargo is tightly held in the hold and all forward motion stops.

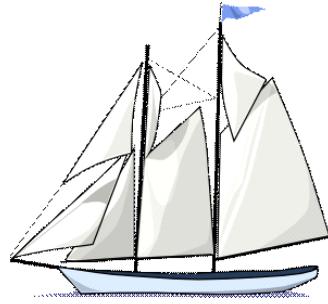
A listless church in spiritual doldrums is exactly what the Devil is looking for. The Jews asked Jesus for a sign (Matt. 12:38). Read his response. To Jesus they were an adulterous and evil generation. He promised them a sign, the sign of Jonah, but concluded by saying, "*When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none,*" he will return. Finding the place empty and available, the evil spirit brings seven very wicked spirits with him. Jesus concluded, "*and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation*" (vss. 44-45).

When a congregation becomes idle and indifferent about the work God gives it the Devil sees it as a fertile field -- a place for him to play. Idleness and indifference is like hanging out a vacancy sign. It is an open invitation to the evil spirits of idleness and laziness.

We have seen tremendous activity and growth in churches of Christ that have become liberal in their approach to scriptural authority. "Don't they ever have problems?" I've been asked that several times. The (to back page □)

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obvious answer to that question is that liberal churches have more problems than they can count. Liberal churches have a pretty good formula for fixing their problems, though. They quell internal problems with a generous portion of getting people involved in something — anything — but involved nonetheless.



But a church in the doldrums is at peace. They don't need to worry about personal involvement of every member. They don't support Sponsoring churches, Institutional Orphanages, or anything that smacks of the "Social Gospel." But they are at peace, and some wisecracker once quipped, "That's also true of a cemetery."

So, is it worse to be involved in institutionalism or remain dead in the water? I remember it well, a liberal preacher in Oklahoma City once said, "*I would rather go to Hell for doing something wrong, than for not doing anything!*" To each his own, I guess. I would rather just not go there. Both failure to do God's bidding and doing it wrong reach the same destination. Taking different routes to Hell is not much of a choice.

Those who allow the church to drift into unauthorized activity and those who allow it to drift into idleness are heading in the same direction. Those who allow the church to become a strife-ridden sect, who fracture it with factionalism are following right along. None of these alternatives are acceptable.

The remedy? A good old fashion tantrum. "a willful outburst of annoyance." I urge faithful churches to become annoyed with indolence and indifference. It is high time to express that annoyance with a willful outburst of standing up and being counted for what is right and acceptable to God. If we have the spiritual "blues" there is only one cure for it. Get busy serving the Lord. Show your interest in the activities of the local church where your worship by faithful attendance, liberal giving, and zealous volunteer work. Teach a class, have a home Bible study in your house. Visit the shut-ins, send cards to the sick, invite your neighbors, co-workers to study with you and worship with you.

Which will it be — doldrums or tantrums? Each individual member of the church has to make a personal survey of his or her situation and make whatever changes are required. When there are no favorable winds for propulsion, it's time to paddle. So grab one, put it in the water and heave ho. The cause of Christ needs you. -- DRS

Whether zeal or moderation be the point we aim at, let us keep fire out of the one and frost out of the other. -Addison



For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope-- the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. Titus 2:11-14

