

## UNBIBLICAL LANGUAGE

Neh.13:23-27

Ed Dye

### I. INTRODUCTION

1. Nehemiah, a descendant of the Jews who were held captive in Babylon, was serving as cupbearer to the Persian king Artaxerxes (1:1-2:20) when he received distressing news about his native land of Palestine.
2. Jerusalem's walls were still in ruins although the project to rebuild the city and its beautiful Temple had been under way for many years.
3. Upon learning this, he obtained permission and went to Jerusalem himself on special assignment from the king to oversee the building of the walls of the city.
4. In spite of harassment by their enemies, he rallied the people to the challenge and completed the rebuilding of the walls in short order.
5. After proper order was restored, the Law of Moses was re-read, the wall was dedicated.
6. Other reforms included stopping marriages to pagan women; that is, that of the Jews who "had married wives of Ashdod," 13:23-27.
7. One of the unacceptable things resulting from such condemned marriages was that the children, the off spring, of these marriages, spoke a mongrel dialect, a compound of Hebrew and the speech of Ashdod (Vv.23,24).
  - a. "Their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod"
  - b. Their children "could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people."
  - c. In other words, their children could not speak the language of the people of God! And that because of an unscriptural alliance with those who were not of God!
8. We are faced with a similar problem today and for the very same reason. Professed believers as well as people wholly of the world due to unholy and unbiblical relationships do not and cannot speak the language of God's people, but a mongrel language of the world, an unbiblical language.
9. Yes, the people of God today do have their own language which they are required to speak; it is "**the oracles of God.**"

- a. 1Pet.4:11 commands, “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” That is, “according to divine utterance.”
  - b. We are not to speak a mongrel dialect, half in an unbiblical language, or the language of the world, and half in the language of the people of God.
  - c. We are commanded to “speak the same thing,” 1Cor.1:10-13. We are not to be divided in either speech, faith or religious practice, for Christ is not divided.
  - d. We must strive to make sure that our speech is authorized both as to content and manner, Col.4:6.
  - e. We are commanded not to add to, subtract from, nor substitute for -- and that applies to our speech!
10. This warning about unbiblical language is in order for no other reason than that:
- a. We live in the world by which we are often so influenced that we sometimes pick up the language of the world.
  - b. People are, like the Israelites of old, so often influenced by unholy religious alliances that they speak unbiblical language – the language of Ashdod as it were.
11. The following examples so attest this fact:

## **II. DISCUSSION**

- A. The language of “living together” in a loving relationship instead of “living in adultery,” or “in fornication,” or “living in sin”!**
- B. Being “gay” or living in an “acceptable alternate lifestyle”, instead of being a “fornicating homosexual,” or a “Sodomite.”**
- C. Designating men by religious titles, even calling a gospel preacher “Pastor” when he is not one of the elders of pastors of a local church.**
- D. “Join the church of your choice”; “your church”; “our church”; “my church”; instead of, “the church of Christ,” or “added to the church by the Lord.”**
- E. “Your faith”; “my faith”; instead of “the faith”.**
- F. Christ as our “Personal Savior”**

1. Billy Graham popularized the phrase “accept Christ as your personal Savior.”
  - a. It sounds nice and comfortable. But what does it mean? Or what do those who use it mean by its use?
  - b. Accept Christ on your terms. Then find the church of your choice as your church home and join it.
2. This is unbiblical and, in fact, un-biblical language. The Bible never speaks of Jesus in such terms.
  - a. It does however speak of him as our Lord and Savior; as the Redeemer, the one in whom we have redemption; as the One God set forth to be a propitiation, or the atoning sacrifice, for our sins.
  - b. See Heb.5:8,9 for what he is , to whom, and how!

**G. The language of a “born again Christian” is another example of unbiblical language.**

1. When Carter was president such language was very popular with people often asking others if they were “born again Christians.”
  - a. By this they didn’t mean “are you a Christian”? But are you more than that? Are you a “born again Christian”? with the idea being they are two different things.
  - b. People were then and are now known to talk about having being saved or being a Christian for years then finally experiencing what they called the “new birth” and becoming a “born again Christian.”
  - c. In other words, the very idea behind the expression is that being a common Christian is one thing and being a “born again Christian” is another!
  - d. I suppose it is something like being just a common every-day Christian, then having some kind of a religious experience where one experiences what they claim is being “born again” and then becoming a “super-charged Christian.”
  - e. The truth of the matter is in Bible language there is no such thing as a Christian in any sense of the word who is not and has not been “born again.”
    - (1) You can’t be one without the other!

- (2) For to become a Christian one must be “born again,” and all who are Christians have been born again. See Jno.3:3-5; Ac.2:36-41,47; Ac.11:19-26; Ac.26:22-28; 1Pet.4:16; Jas.2:7.

**H. “Witnessing for Christ” as some today claim they are doing is not only unbiblical language, but is something that is impossible to do.**

1. To justify what they claim they are doing they will seek to use Ac.26:19-23 and the Apostle Paul as their example, where he as an Apostle of Christ, said he was “witnessing both to small and great...that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.” Cf. 3:18,24.
2. The Bible uses the word “witness” as that of an “eyewitness.”
  - a. That is still the correct use of it today.
  - b. How can you testify to the fact of something you did not see or hear for yourself?
  - c. You can believe something you did not see or hear because of sufficient evidence presented to produce that faith. But you can not testify to the fact of something you did not see – such as the resurrection of Jesus Christ!
  - d. Paul could so testify because he was a witness of the risen Lord, which was required in order to be an apostle. See Ac.1:20-22; Ac.9:1-9; 22:12-16; 23:11.

**I. The way the expression “I believe” is so often used is still another example of unbiblical language.**

1. True, because when people use the expression “I believe” pertaining to religious matters they actually mean it is “my opinion.”
  - a. This is often exemplified when different Bible subjects are discussed where one will say, “I believe this about it,” another will say, “But I believe this on that subject” which may be just the opposite of the first one’s stated belief.
2. “Faith”, that is, true bible faith can come from only one source which is never contradictory, Rom.10:17.

3. It is evident there is a vast difference between faith and opinion which can be illustrated by Jno.3:1,2.
  - a. Did Nicodemus come to Jesus by night? By faith we can say, “Yes!”
  - b. **Why** did Nicodemus come to Jesus by night? The answer
    - (1) Any answer you or I or any one can give would be an opinion.
    - (2) We can not know why he came. The Bible doesn’t say!

**J. Using the language of “Church of Christ Preacher” is another example.**

1. A gospel preacher is no more a “Church of Christ preacher” than being a member of the church of Christ makes him “a church of Christ.”
2. Being a “Church of Christ preacher” suggests that one preaches the “Church of Christ,” something like it being a Denomination among other Denominations. But the Lord’s church, identified as the Church of Christ, is not a Denomination, nor a part of one.
3. A gospel preacher doesn’t preach the “Church of Christ”; he preaches “the doctrine of Christ,” “the gospel of Christ,” “the faith of Christ,” that and nothing else!
4. It’s true that Baptist preachers preach Baptist doctrine; Methodist preachers preach Methodist doctrine; Lutheran preachers preach Lutheran doctrine; Catholic priests, Catholic doctrine, etc.; etc.
5. But gospel preachers do not preach Church of Christ doctrine because there is no such thing; they use Bible language and preach the faith of Christ, the gospel of Christ.

**K. The term “fellowship,” though a biblical term, is often used unbiblically.**

1. Brethren speak of “fellowship dinners” of the church.
2. Churches build “fellowship halls” for food, fun, entertainment of different kinds which they call “fellowship.”
3. Bible “fellowship” in its perverted form has come to be identified with coffee and donuts, or more broadly with all such

activities of a non-spiritual nature carried on in their fellowship halls.

4. The word “fellowship” is a biblical term found some 14 times in the N.T. but always used in a spiritual sense, never with reference to food, fun and or secular activities. The following two examples are typical:
  - a. Ac.2:42.
  - b. 1Jno.1:3.
5. Yes, we have a “fellowship hall” – it is where we assemble for work and worship of a spiritual nature.
6. The modern “fellowship hall” is contrary to scripture, and where the church assembly is turned into some form of secular fellowship hall it is anti-biblical.

### **III. CONCLUSION**

1. Ever keep in mind, the people of God today do have their own language which they are required to speak. That language is “the oracles of God,” (accordance to divine utterance), 1Pet.4:11.
2. We must take heed that we do not corrupt it and begin to speak a mongrel dialect.
3. If what we believe and practice can not be identified and clearly described with Bible language, with book, chapter and verse, then what we believe and practice is not Bible –is not the doctrine of Christ.
4. Heed the warning of Mt.12:36,37: “But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will condemned.”