

Mr Richard Lacey, Woodgreen Evangelical Church
Hastings Road, Warndon Villages
Worcester WR4 0ST

21 april 2013

To: Mr Lacey,

I could not determine from the Woodgreen website what doctrine was taught and therefore I enquired about three matters of doctrine which are historical issues.

1. You write that the *“official documents of the church” “do not go into this level of detail”*.

I disagree, sir. The official documents of the church - all twenty seven of them - go into great depth of detail on the very questions I asked. These were written by fishermen, a tax gatherer, a beloved physician and a converted pharisee. They were, mostly, unlearned and ignorant men. But, sir, they had been with Jesus, Acts 4:13. I was hoping you would have referred to these priceless documents. Sadly, not.

You only make one reference, sir. And that appears to be with a particular purpose in mind. But you do not appear to have access to the genuine documents of the church which have been scrupulously and jealously guarded by faithful, diligent God-fearing men like William Tyndale and Dean Burgon. You appear to have a corrupted copy, sir, the one which represents *dikaiosune Theou*, erroneously, as “a righteousness from God”. Rather than “the righteousness of God”, which is what it should be; an attribute of Divine nature. I suggest you burn it and get an authorised copy from a local bookshop. Or you could be led into heresy, sir.

2. On the matter of the law being, what you quote as, *“binding on the believer”*, you say, *“we have different shades of opinion of this.”*

So some of you are in bondage to the law, I take it. And some are not, I presume. And you are unable to agree on whether to be in bondage or not. Paul, the apostle declares, I, through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God, Galatians 2:19. And to those who wished to bring believers into bondage to the law, he says, I would they would cut themselves off, *apokophontai*, that trouble you, Galatians 5:12. Does he mince words on such a grave subject? He does not. Nor do I, Mr Lacey. I know what it was like to be under severe, legal bondage.

3. On the matter of justification you write that you hold to the *“classic reformation position”*.

I am aware of many “classic positions”, reformed and otherwise. The position of anyone in bondage to the law - if he is sincere about it - will be bent over double, crying out, O wretched man that I am - who shall deliver me ! Romans 7:24. If he is insincere, of course, he will pretend to be keeping that which curses all who are under it.

I was more interested in what you actually *believe*, not what you hold a position on. I’m looking for real, vibrant, faith. For the just shall *live by faith*. Not by taking up an intellectual position, sir. Habakkuk 2:4. Romans 1:17. Hebrews 10:38.

4. You then tell me, “if you are looking for a church that crosses every “t” and dots every “I” in a way that satisfies you, Woodgreen is probably not for you.

I, personally, am meticulous in my own study of the scriptures because they are what Paul describes as, God-breathed, *Theopneustos*, II Timothy 3:16 and holy writings, *hieros grammata*, II Timothy 3:15. These are they which are able to make me wise unto salvation. Some, of course, wrest them to their own destruction, II Peter 3:16.

Not one jot or one tittle shall pass from the law - which some among you are bound by, in several different shades, apparently - till heaven and earth shall pass, Matthew 5:18.

I cannot tell if Woodgreen is for me or not. I have, as yet, not been invited to attend.

5. You then say you are “not interested in heresy-hunting”.

The word *haireisis*, heretic, comes from *haireomai*, to choose. Someone who has an opinion that is contrary to the apostles’ doctrine. What shade of opinion is irrelevant. It is an opinion, rather than a matter of meekly receiving the engrafted word which is able to save the soul, James 1:21. Such are to be reprimanded once; then admonished. If they still maintain their personal opinion, contrary to sound doctrine, they are to be rejected. Titus 3:10.

6. You then quote Titus 3:8-9 and inform me that Paul “goes on to warn those who would seek to argue and quarrel” over matters which, you say, are not “central gospel truths”.

Paul tells the Corinthians that they are all to speak the same thing and to be of the same mind, I Corinthians 1:10 - about being in bondage to the law, for example. Jude, 3, exhorts me to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. Delivered, that is, by the apostles.

Those who earnestly contend for the faith will receive vast amounts of criticism. The purpose of nearly all of this criticism is to encourage them to cease from earnestly contending for the faith. But Jude begins his brief epistle by exhorting them to continue doing it, nonetheless.

7. You say that you are the “Lead Pastor” of Woodgreen Church.

Your letter gives no indication of what you, personally, believe. Or teach. But you say that you are in the Lead. So I assume the rest are following you. Apart from those with different shades of opinion from you, of course.

I was actually interested in following the example of those of whom Luke writes in Acts 2:42. “They continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine”.

All of the apostles. All of the doctrine. Every letter of it.

For, man shall not live by bread alone, saith Jesus, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God - words like, In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.

Nigel Johnstone, Malvern

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To: Mr Lacey

Thank you for your response to my letter.

It was interesting to see how you responded to an enquiry about doctrine.

My reply to your letter has been posted on my website and is available to yourself - and to the entire planet - under the section, "The Knowledge of God and the Gatherings of Men".

It can be viewed and downloaded free of charge by anyone with internet facilities.

Faithfully

Nigel Johnstone
Director
Belmont Publications

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