

A Preacher You Would Not Tolerate

Dub McClish

He consistently arrives a few minutes late for worship, disturbing others as he enters. He and his wife sit on the back seat. They sit stoically through the songs of praise, never opening their mouths. He lets his young children sit wherever they please and behave however they wish.

He doesn't always arrive in time for the Bible class period. Sometimes he stays out so late Saturday night "doing the town" that he just doesn't feel like getting up in time to attend his class times. He attends on Wednesday night only occasionally. Sometimes he "has a headache" or is "just too tired." On other occasions there is a movie in town that he wants to see so he goes to see it. He has missed a few times on Sunday evening when friends or relatives "dropped in" a short while before the worship hour.

He drives a very expensive car, owns a summer home in the mountains, provides a fashionable wardrobe for his family, eats fine food, and spends a minimum of \$500 on the family vacation each year. However, he gives only \$10 a week to the Lord, and he does that only when it is convenient. He sometimes purposely withholds his contribution.

He sometimes finds himself in the presence of those who drink, and he drinks with them to "keep from offending them." His wife can be seen in the supermarket in her halter and short shorts during the warmer months.

When asked to assist with the visitation program he refuses because that's his bowling night. Besides, the last time he helped they wouldn't do everything just like he thought it should be done.

Such a preacher should not be tolerated. He could only have a depressing influence on the church. Any spiritual growth would **be in spite of** his influence instead of because of it, regardless of how powerful he might be in the pulpit

While we could not begin to tolerate a preacher of this sort, churches find it rather easy to tolerate other members of this sort. When the preacher becomes discouraged at such materialism in the brethren as described above and tries to root it out, the brethren sometimes think he should be more tolerant. Preachers have a tolerance limit too! The Bible I study doesn't teach a double standard. The "convenience controlled" Christian should not be tolerated indefinitely, be he preacher or any other saint.

[**Note:** I wrote this article for and it was published in *The Edifier*, weekly bulletin of Pearl Street Church of Christ, Denton, TX, January 29, 1981, of which I was editor.]

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