

# On Bidding Godspeed – No. 1

Dub McClish

John wrote words of stern warning in 2 John 9: “For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.” John was warning about our attitude toward those who advocate error. To offer support, in word or deed, to those who have compromised the Truth is to become their partner. This principle also includes churches, schools, and publications that have abandoned the faith.

In light of this passage many are bidding God speed to those who propagate error. They are, in fact, practicing a form of “unity in diversity.” I do not have in mind those who are themselves liberals (no less could be expected from them). Tragically, some otherwise good, solid, conservative men and congregations are doing it also! Evidence of this is seen repeatedly in their church bulletins. It amounts to a strange contradiction in which they are tearing down the very thing they are otherwise trying to build up.

We see this phenomenon in the **republishing of articles**. I am amazed at the carelessness with which bulletin articles of liberal brethren are borrowed and reprinted, and I plead with my sound brethren to use more care. I fully realize that a given article by a false teacher may teach the Truth and no error and may do it in an effective and forceful way. However, it is nonetheless dangerous and harmful to Truth to use such.

At least three damaging results obtain when faithful brethren publish articles written by a liberal:

1. An inescapable endorsement of him occurs beyond his article.
2. He is given a platform, notoriety, and credibility that he does not deserve.
3. Unsuspecting and ignorant readers will be conditioned to listen to him when he does not teach the Truth.

Occasionally a good brother will innocently run such an article, not knowing the real doctrinal bent of its author. (This fact underscores the need for all of us [especially preachers and elders] to keep up with “who” is saying and doing “what” in the church at large.) When this practice happens repeatedly, it can hardly be mere oversight. It infers that the editor intentionally provides a forum for false teachers.

If this practice is not bidding Godspeed to a false teacher, I know not what to call it. Again, I call upon sound brethren everywhere to refuse to contribute to the doctrinal confusion so rampant among the saints by publishing articles by unsound, compromising brethren. May

we all remember that we are known as much by whom/what we **commend** as by whom/what we **condemn**.

The same sort of endorsement occurs when faithful churches **publicize activities of liberals** (e.g., in church bulletins, on bulletin boards, in pulpit announcements, and on church Websites, et al.). Occasionally, even careful editors do this due to ignorance of the source, sponsors, or implications of an event. Sometimes an uninformed (or perhaps a liberal) brother in a sound congregation will be able to have such an event announced when the preacher is out of town. However, when such things frequently or consistently come from a congregation, it is evident that the editor considers them harmless. It seems almost as if some otherwise rational and conservative brethren somehow feel obligated to publicize every announcement they receive, regardless of its source, content, or participants.

When a sound church announces (by bulletin or otherwise) activities of congregations or schools that are known for their liberalism (or programs that feature liberals), it **promotes liberalism**. It gives implied endorsement and approval to said activities and brethren. It encourages sheep to visit the dens of wolves. Do not these brethren see that at the very best this practice sends terribly confusing signals to the members of the congregation and to all others (including the liberals) receiving said announcements? I have seen the same church bulletin oppose one error while promoting another. Preacher “A” in a given congregation may take a strong stand on page 1 that emphasizes the undenominational nature of the church, while page 4 urges readers (young and old) to attend the Abilene Christian University lectureship that features liberals who view the church as a denomination.

Liberal brethren expect their cohorts to help them publicize their activities. They must do a lot of laughing behind our backs when they see media of sound churches helping them advance their cause by publicizing (and thereby endorsing) their activities.

We are to “have no fellowship with the unfaithful works of darkness” (whether moral or doctrinal). Encouraging people to attend the activities of apostates unavoidably constitutes fellowship, whether or not intentionally done. Rather than encouraging people to attend the programs of those who have abandoned the Truth (and thus engage in fellowship with them), we are commanded to “even reprove them” (Eph. 5:11).

[**Note:** I wrote this article in two parts for and it was published as such in *The Edifier*, weekly bulletin of Pearl Street Church of Christ, Denton, TX, October 5 and 12, 1989, of which I was editor. I subsequently combined the articles into one.]

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