

Common Ground - cont.

The “common ground” approach elevates man’s standard over God’s standard. Why offer the plan of salvation, then bargain and deal for converts? The truth is, the gospel is to be offered to the world and then not changed to suit them (Matthew 10:14-15; 15:13-14; 19:22-23).

We should not try to poll people to find out what they want in the church and then start doing it. This approach elevates man’s response over God’s demands.

Why find “common ground” and be influenced by the world, when we are to do the influencing? We, the faithful Christians, are to influence the world, not the other way around (Matthew 5:13-16; Philippians 2:15-16; 1 Peter 2:11-12). We are not to be conformed to the world (Romans 12:1-2; 1 John 2:15-17). The “common ground” approach elevates the world’s influence above our own.

To my brethren I kindly say this: Plant the seed of God’s word (Luke 8:11) and preach the word of God (2 Timothy 4:2). Then, pray for the increase (Colossians 4:3). But, never, never, compromise truth in order to find “common ground”. - *Chris Reeves*

Sentence Sermons

- When you gamble with your money, you also gamble with your soul.
- If you take time to do what is right, there is less time to do what is wrong.
- When you are with people who tell half-truths, you are likely to get the wrong half.
- It is better to be despised for doing what is right, than to be praised for doing what is wrong.

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THE WARFIELD BULLETIN

September 18, 2022



For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.
- 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 -

“Common Ground” with the World

Some people in and out of the Lord’s church have said that we must “find common ground with the world” in order to make converts of them. This means that we must accept what they are doing in the name of religion.

The idea is that if you accept what people are doing in the world, then you will more likely be able to convert them to Christ. Their idea of Paul’s “become all things to all men”, is to be like the world in many ways in order to bring them to Christ.

So, some so-called “Christians”, even in the Lord’s church, have begun to accept things like instrumental music in worship, women preachers, and the social gospel in order to be like the world and convert them. The question before us then is this: “Is this biblical”? Does Jesus want us to “find common ground with the world” in order to save them? What does the Bible say?

Did Paul teach this in I Corinthians 9:20-23? What do these verses say?

And to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, not being myself under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are

without law, as without law, not being without law to God, but under law to Christ, that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak I became weak, that I might gain the weak: I am become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some. And I do all things for the gospel’s sake, that I may be a joint partaker thereof”
(I Corinthians 9:20-23)

The context of this passages deals with forgoing personal liberties of the Apostle Paul. He was talking about forgoing what he had a right by God to do in order to save others (things like eating meat or not). He was talking about forgoing authorized things. Paul did not engage in unauthorized practices in order to win souls to Christ.

Did Paul accept circumcision as a condition of salvation among the Jews in order to find “common ground” with them and save them? No he did not! Did Paul accept idolatry, or emperor worship, as a proper religion among the Gentiles in order to find “common ground” with them and save them? No he did not!

Instead of trying to find “common ground” with worldly ways, we need to be teaching them God’s word. Why turn to the world to find “common ground”? Why not turn to God’s word?

In fact, we already have “common ground” with the world. Our “common ground” is the word of God. God’s word can unite us (John 17:20; Ephesians 4:4-6). Yes, worldly people will need to give up some things, but we can all have “common ground” on the word of God. Additionally, Jesus makes all people one through the cross (Ephesians 2:14-16).

The approach to conversion that says we must find “common ground” elevates the desires of the world over what God desires. We listen to what the world wants and accept it, but then we neglect what God says in the scriptures. This is not right.

Those who seek “common ground” when trying to convert others need to ask this question: What will be the standard to determine the “common ground”? How far can one go to find “common ground”?

Does “common ground” today include sexual immorality (I Corinthians 6:9-10,18)? Does “common ground” today include the acceptance of other world religions like Islam (John 14:6; Acts 4:12)? Does “common ground” today include idolatry (Acts 17)?

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