

Prayer List

Sierra
Gene
Veda
Judy
The Williams' Family
Ophelia
Arley

Services:

Sunday

Bible Class 9:00 a.m.
Assembly 9:50 a.m.
Assembly 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Class 7:00 p.m.

Pinole Tidings

www.pinolechurchofchrist.com

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This Week's Question:

Who had a vision of a lion with eagle's wings?

Answer To Last Week's Question:

Elijah - 1 Kings 17:1-4

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"If You Are Sincere, No One Should Judge You"

Harold Hancock

MANY TODAY THINK SINCERITY IS ALL that matters in the realm of religion. Sincerity is their plan of salvation, their condition for forgiveness of sins, their one commandment that must be kept. They are wrong! And those who go so far as to say, "If you are sincere, no one should judge you" do not understand the true meaning of sincerity or judging. Some of these demonstrate their insincerity.

Sincerity is freedom from pretense and deceit. It is honesty, truthfulness and truth-loving. It is an integrity of the heart that allows us to have a good conscience when we do those things we think are right. Obviously, it is a good trait to have and should be desired and admired by all. We need to be sincere in our approach and service to God (Hebrews 10:22; Joshua 24:14), in our love for one another (Romans 12:9), and even with ourselves (Titus 2:7). But one can be sincere and yet still be wrong. Sincerity means we want to do right, and that we think that what we are doing is right. It does not mean that we are right.

Abimilech was sincere when he thought Sarah was Abraham's sister and desired to take Sarah as his own wife. Though sincere, he was wrong and would have been punished by God had he not listened to God's warning. His sincerity would not have exonerated him from the guilt of the sin of adultery (Genesis 20:1–7).

Paul was sincere when he persecuted Christians. He thought he was doing what God wanted him to do. He said he had done this in all good conscience and that his conscience was void of offense (Acts 23:1; 24:16). Sincerity did not make Paul right in hurting and destroying Christians.

God demands not only sincerity, but also truth. Joshua said, "Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve Him in sincerity and in truth" (Joshua 24:14). Jesus taught we should worship in spirit and in truth. Paul prayed that the Philippians might be sincere and without offense (Philippians 1:10). Sincerity must be coupled with truth in our service and worship to God and in our daily living.

We grow more perfectly in the word of God and in Christ by instructions and even by rebukes. For people to point out our errors and to try to teach us in no way violates Jesus' statement in Matthew 7:1, "Judge not that ye be not judged." We are commanded to show people their faults (Matthew 18:15), and to convert them from their error (James 5:19). We are to rebuke those in sin (1 Timothy 5:20) and to restore those overtaken in a fault (Galatians 6:1). In Matthew 7:1 Jesus was teaching against hypocritical judging. He was telling us that before trying to correct another's mistakes, make sure we have our own lives in order. This is evident from the context when He says, "first cast out the beam out of thine own

eye; and then thou shalt see clearly to cast the mote out of thy brother's eye" (Matthew 7:5).

Often when one says, "I'm sincere, no one should judge me," he is really being insincere. He doesn't want one to point out his error, because he does not want to change. To that person "sincerity" is only a word to hide behind.

What person who is really sincere, that is, truth-loving, does not want someone to point out the error of his way so that he can better serve God or live more righteously? Some need to admit to themselves that they are more loyal to tradition and self than to God and Christ. One cannot fool God today with his insincerity any more than the Pharisees could deceive Jesus with their insincerity when they honored God with their lips, but taught for doctrines the commandments of men (Matthew 15:9).

Apollos was sincere when he taught the baptism of John. This is all that he knew at the time and he was doing his best to live and preach it. He was willing, however, to be taught by Aquila and Priscilla, and conform to the new-found truth (Acts 18:24–28).

Sincerity must be accompanied by truth. This truth also proves and tries our sincerity. If we desire truth, accept it, and live it, we are sincere. If we shun truth or reject it, our sincerity has failed. Christianity Magazine, April 1986, Volume 3 Number 4