

## **"WHICH CAUSE"?**

### **Gary McDade**

When the apostle Paul is referring to the gospel of Christ there are times when he refers to it as the “cause” of Christ. After discussing his efforts to evangelize where others have not yet gone and as an explanation to the Romans regarding his not having visited them thus far in his work as an apostle, he remarked, “For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you” (Rom. 15:22). In his review of the dedication he had exhibited toward the Corinthian Christians and how those efforts had glorified God Paul wrote, “For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day” (II Cor. 4:15-16). The “cause” for which he fainted not was none other than the cause of Christ. Paul reminded Timothy of the threefold work committed to his trust as a preacher, teacher, and apostle. He rehearsed how suffering had been associated with that work, but the suffering he had experienced had not been a source of shame, “For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day” (II Tim. 1:12). Again, the “cause” for which he had suffered was the cause of Christ. The writer of Hebrews provided an insight into the relationship of Christ with those whom he had redeemed with his blood and had set apart as holy unto God: “For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren” (Heb. 2:11). Brethren united with Christ are sanctified and involved in the cause of Christ.

“Which cause” is four times in the New Testament used by Paul to refer to the cause of Christ. Other causes militate against the cause of Christ. “Which cause” captures your time, talents, and treasures?

### **Personal Gratification?**

Personal gratification through possessions; past time activities like sports, travel, cuisine, music, gardening, reading, and more; pursuit of career goals or even frolicking family time; and people interests in general like shopping or just relaxing with friends are all causes which captivate the time, talents, and treasures of life. Is personal gratification the cause that drives your life? Are we suggesting a dedicated, devoted Christian cannot do anything that brings personal gratification? Of course not. Prayerfully ponder what Paul penned on this point: “All things are

lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any” (I Cor. 6:12).

### **Profane Religion?**

Performances those with guilty consciences call “edu-tainment” present the norm in religion today. Such activities are profane, not sacred. Participation by attending these performances puts a person in with the cause of profane religion. Long, long ago the book of Ecclesiastes spoke of the proper disposition to have toward the worship of God: “Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few” (Eccles. 5:1-2). Is profane religion the cause that drives your life?

### **Perverted Practices?**

Possibly the greatest section of society is made up of those whose lives exhibit perverted practices, some of which are drinking, drugs, dancing, divorcing, and other forms of devilment. “Which cause” captures your time, talents, and treasures?