

The Brown Street Beacon

*"...Shine out among them like beacon lights,
holding out to them the Word of Life" (Phil 2:15-16)*



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Going to the House of God

By Steve Niemeier

Psalm 122:1 states "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go into the house of the Lord.'" David even with all of his bravery in fighting and even with his weaknesses was glad to go and humble himself before the Lord. David in his writing of many Psalms always praises the Lord and looks to the Lord for guidance and comfort. Yet, he is constantly humbling himself before the great Lord and does not mind stating that his help and ours is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth (Psalm 124:8).

When it was time to go worship services when I was a boy it was a major event and really it was THE event of my youth that I remember the most. We were prepared to go and meet the Lord in worship. While we did not have a lot of money we had "church clothes" and those were special clothes bought and taken care of so that we could wear them to meet the Lord in worship. These clothes were not to be worn except to worship, to a wedding or to a funeral.

Something that stands out in my mind today is the dress of those brothers who were farmers back in those days. They had two pair of overalls. One pair was strictly for worshipping the Lord. They would wear them with a clean white shirt and many would wear a tie. Their shoes or boots were always polished and they were clean. The other pair of overalls was their everyday pair. They looked different than the "going to worship" pair and they were not suitable for worship according to those who wore them. About once a year the farmer would buy a new pair and then rotate the pair he had been wearing to worship to the everyday pair and wore the new pair to worship.

Today, I am amazed at how we have become so casual in our whole approach to worship. You see the respect for the Lord that we are taught in His Word to have for Him has not changed. However, our attitude has and we look back on those of years gone by as being somewhat foolish and even "extreme" in their thoughts about respecting the Lord.

The Lord has not stopped asking us to "seek Him first" (Matthew 6:33) nor has he told us to "soften" our approach in showing respect and honor to Him. It seems that elders and preachers have to spend an enormous amount of time trying to get the members of the church of our Lord just to come to services. So much so that we hear many say "I don't care what they look like as long as they are here." Certainly I understand that reasoning but I am not sure that a person who approaches the worship services of the Lord's church so casually is able to offer their worship in spirit and truth as required (John 4:23-24).

A brother once told me if you want to see the children of God dressed in their "church clothes" you will need to go to a funeral or wedding as that is the only place you will see them. Now, if you want to see the everyday clothes a child of God has then come to worship services as they will display them there. The question that we all face concerning a statement like this is "Are we putting

God first in our respect and honor for Him?”

It is amazing that large corporations pay huge amounts of money to researchers to tell them about the productivity of an employee who dresses casually or in “business attire”. The researchers will quickly tell the businesses that how an employee dresses will affect their attitude. Let me sure you that God knew this long before the researchers did!

Are you glad when it is time to go to the house of the Lord? Are you prepared to meet Him in worship when you go? Please remember He is seeking you to worship properly.

That Negative Default

By Terry Sanders

Default is a word used in computer terminology. It means “a particular value for a variable that is assigned automatically by an operating system and remains in effect unless canceled or overridden by the operator.” In other words the default is what has been selected by the operator as what is the normal manner in which a program will run. The factory or original defaults are always saved and can be restored in case of some monumental program failure.

Now I have met a few (but far too many) brethren who operate in a negative default. This means that just about anything that happened was either rejected out of hand or regarded with suspicion. I was once well acquainted with a brother who operated in the negative default about all the time. His normal reaction to something was usually, “*I know something is wrong with it, I just haven't figured out what.*” One time I had opportunity to work with some folks in the Christian Church. Some were relatives of ours and other were friends. I mentioned to this negative default brother what I was doing and that I thought some of them were close to leaving the Christian Church. I thought he might rejoice, but that was not the case. He said, “*I hope they know what they are doing.*” Talk about a downer! Not only were they immediately under suspicion, but I was apparently too incompetent to teach them what they needed to know. By the way, this brother never could understand why people didn't warm up to him.

Consider this. The brother of the prodigal son is an example of one who was in the negative default. He couldn't see anything good about his brother's return (Luke 15:25-32). He really put a chill into things! Everyone else rejoicing, but him—no way.

I daresay that there are more positive things in the New Testament than there are negative. Even when Jesus was denouncing the Pharisees it was with a positive attitude—hoping they would change for the better.

This negative default is disappointing and usually kills off what could be a lot of progress. Paul encourages the Philippian brethren to think positively (Philippians 4:8). Maybe by thinking more positively, there can be an escape from the negative default.