

For the Love of the Family Ministries

Missionaries to America's Forgotten Mission Field, the Family

Recommending The Wrong Things

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Recommending The Wrong Things

God has allowed me to be a pastor for more than 30 years. I have pastored 5 churches in that time. It never ceases to amaze me some of the things I am sent by letter and e-mail. Recently, I was sent an e-mail and letter by two different men recommending different people. I read the correspondence in amazement as I had personal knowledge of the folks in question and obviously know that what was said in the e-mails recommending them, that the person writing the e-mail and the letter obviously did not have all the facts, they ignored the facts, or did not check out all the facts.

I was recently asked by someone to send a recommendation for him to the subscribers of For The Love Of The Family. The man has been a friend of mine for several years. I am still praying about that because I recognize the need to be cautious in such matters. I do not know everything about the person although my time with them when I have been with them has been enjoyable. The reason I pray about such matters and check things out is because my recommendation will hold some weight with people. I will also be responsible before God and to other people if I carelessly recommend someone. People can get hurt.

For several years now I have received numerous e-mails of people wanting to know if I would recommend them to a church. People I have never met! Of course, I do not recommend someone I do not know. That is the reason we started the Church Placement list through For the Love Of The Family. It is a place for pastors and churches to connect. We currently have 350 pastors on the list and 16 churches needing pastors. The church list has been as high as 50 at one time. **The Church Placement list is not a recommendation but a place to connect. The church and the pastor will need to sort out whether they are compatible.** For more information on this visit our web site at www.fortheloveofthefamily.com. Click on "Pastors and Churches."

In fundamentalism there is a wide swathe and much of the swathe is not “godly.” I read with amazement these e-mails and letter because I know of the multiple immorality issues involved in the family that the man recommending said was a “godly” family. I also know that the person who was recommended has had serious issues in their past and has had problems in every ministry they have been involved with creating havoc. Many times men recommend people for various reasons. Sometimes it is the good old boy system, the “fellowship” reason (if he is a member of our fellowship he is a good man), political reasons, ego reasons, get back at someone else reason etc.

As I read one of the e-mails the man talked about the other man “as a great friend of this or that” which was false. He stood by his convictions etc, when in fact he is and was a total disaster and so were his children, I Timothy 3:4-5. The church was a disaster as well for years. Just flat false information being given out.

Many pastors are on an ego trip and want to be known in their “fellowship” or “group” as a mentor or leader of men. They desire the praise of men, when in fact they are just a compromiser wanting others to believe they are more than they are for political reasons, Proverbs 16:18. That is one of the reasons that many pastors have quit going to preachers fellowships because of the pride, arrogance, and politics involved.

Recommendations come very easily in this day of compromise with sin. I get to read this stuff because here at For the Love Of The Family we are asked to give recommendations all the time. I also have had the opportunity to counsel with many people who lives are destroyed because of such foolishness, Proverbs 13:13. I get to hear about a lot of folly and foolishness as well from the thousands of subscribers to For the Love Of The Family.

Sadly, people will send out an e-mail or letter recommending someone positively or unfortunately negatively giving out information with out knowing all the facts. **It is a violation of Proverbs 18:13. Proverbs 18:13, “He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto Him.”** Folks, there is a lot of folly and shame going on today.

Proverbs 10:18, “He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander is a fool.

I have found in fundamentalism there are a lot of people who use the words “godly” and “ungodly” very easily. **Proverbs 10:19, “In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise.”**

Folks, I have found one person’s view of “godly” may not be “godly” at all in the Biblical sense. In fact, since he is a friend or a part of my fellowship or group, he is “godly” is not the Biblical test.

It is the right thing to make sure I know all the facts as best as I can before I recommend anyone. One of the things I find amazing in this age of compromise and apostasy is a person can go from church to church without anyone ever talking to the previous pastor. Years ago I served as an intern in a ministry and we had a family that came to the church that wanted to be a member. The pastor asked me to call the previous pastor of where he came from. The pastor told me a horrible story of years of immorality, lying, deceit, and generally creating havoc. He encouraged me to call the previous pastor to him. Same story and I went back seven pastors. We met with the man and explained to him what we had found out. We lovingly (Ephesians 4:15) encouraged him to go back to these pastors and make the matter right with these churches. Of course, he exploded and went out the door and said, in anger, "we did not preach the blood, the book, and the blessed hope." He was a nut house case. We saved ourselves and our church a multitude of headaches. I learned a valuable lesson as a young man.

Folks, it is very important for us to make sure we have checked all the facts. I find it interesting that people can move from one church to another and the pastor does not contact the previous pastor!? Now, you may not agree with the previous pastor on some things, but it is unwise to take people into the membership of your church without talking to the other pastor. You need to hear what he has to say. Every body is entitled to their own opinion, but my opinion can be wrong if I have not heard both sides of a story.

A rule of thumb that we have used is what is the ministry of the recommender? 1. Does he take a strong stand on the Bible? In one of the instances where the e-mail said, "he stood for his convictions" the man who the writer recommended told me on one occasion "that anyone who stood for the KJV was cultic." Obviously, the recommender did not know even know where he stood on the Bible! That is something I would want to know. However, it was a "political" e-mail so I understood he probably really did not care where he stood. 2. Does he allow compromisers to come and speak at his church? 3. What is his stand on correct music? Does he allow Contemporary Christian music, Christian Rock, or Southern gospel music? Does he allow people to come to his church that do or promote such things? 4. Does he have a church that is activity oriented with music and activities that appeal to the flesh, (very important to read and understand Romans 6:11-19). 5. Is the church doctrinally sound? 6. What type of dress standards does his church have? You can tell a lot about a church by looking at the pictures on the web site and a picture of the pastor's family. Does he have good dress standards himself? Are his wife and children dressed properly in public as the Bible outlines. 7. Does he allow people who have been publicly immoral in the past to be leaders in his church? In one instance the e-mail talked about these families being "godly" families when in fact they have created havoc in the past in others lives and churches by their immoral lifestyles. Pretty reckless to say these are "godly" families. 8. Does he allow divorced people who have been divorced because of public immorality to teach or be leaders in his church? 9. Does he take a good stand on Biblical separation both personal and doctrinal? 10. Does the church have an interest in seeing people truly repent of their sins and then discipling them after they are saved? Or is the church a place for multiple activities to draw people, but never see Biblical change in their lives?

When people invite us to speak at For The Love Of The Family meetings I immediately look at the churches web site to see if they are a totally activities oriented church with something going on every day to appeal to the flesh (Romans 6:11-19) or does it show a spiritually minded church.

These are just some of the things we check out. Folks another thing I have watched for is how many recommendations have I received form this person? Many times people write “political” letters and e-mails to make themselves look good or because they wish to look good as a “leader” or “mentor” in their fellowship or group. Sad, but that is the day we live in.

If you are a pastor reading this I am sure you have had people leave your church in the past and no one ever contacted you because they did not want to know the facts or only heard a sad sob story of slander of their previous pastor or church. Sometimes people are very good at snowing the new pastor. They can sit in front of you and cry and seek to emotionally manipulate you. They will tell you how badly they have been treated, yet it is just a cover for their own bad behavior. Other times people have left a church for good Biblical reasons. It is unwise to take someone into your church if you have not checked them out on either side. Some pastors are so desperate for people they will accept anything. It is unwise to recommend someone you do not know well or someone who is a novice. I Timothy 3:6, “Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil.” Things like this just blow your mind, but it is a sad day when someone can be immoral, go from one church to another and then end up being a leader in the other church or receive a recommendation from that church. Much havoc has been done by such folly and foolishness.

Down through the years our churches have been known far and wide as a church that takes a strong stand against immorality. People have read where we stand on For the Love Of The Family and in our books and pamphlets and many articles on the web site. We have taken a good stand on the Bible, music, dress, and leaders. For the past twenty years I pastored Elwood Bible Baptist Church in Elwood, Indiana. After many years there God led us to come to North Little Rock and pastor another church. I am thankful for my son-in-law, Pastor Ron Steege, following me as the pastor of Elwood Bible Baptist Church, Elwood, Indiana and he takes those same strong stands as well. A missionary out of our church Dan Tessin, recently told me that “Elwood Bible Baptist Church has been known far and wide as a sound church that takes a good stand” on the things I mentioned above. Kim and I take those stands as well. For The Love Of The Family takes the same stand. Our family has taken those stands for years and will continue to do so.

Things have changed dramatically over the last 30 years with churches going into Contemporary Christian music, Christian Rock, Southern Gospel, Emerging Church, activities galore, dropping of dress standards, changing to perversions of the Bible. It behooves each of us to be wise in what we read and hear, but do our home work. Why do we not? We are supposed to be protectors of our churches and the faith.

We live in a day when people call evil good and good evil. “Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.” Apparently and sadly “godly” is as well.

Dr. Terry L. Coomer is the Pastor of Hope Baptist Church, and the Director of For the Love of the Family Ministries. He has also served as the Publisher of the nation's fastest growing daily newspaper. Pastor Coomer holds Family Conferences in the local church. To have a meeting at your church or other needs he may be contacted at (501) 819-0446, tlcoomer@juno.com. There are many helpful articles and material on our web site to help you change your life at www.fortheloveofthefamily.com. We serve the God of answers. If you need help finding those answers you may contact us at tlcoomer@juno.com. To be removed from our mailing list send an e-mail to tlcoomer@juno.com.