

## WHO STIRS UP TROUBLE?

By Keith Greer

For many years brethren have begun to "point the finger" of blame at the local preacher for "stirring things up". More and more I am seeing this attitude take hold of many local churches. What do they mean?

If a gospel preacher gives sermons on "controversial" subjects he is just "asking for trouble". One young preacher went to an older gospel preacher to seek advice on how to approach some difficult subjects. What advice did he receive?

"I don't preach on those subjects. They cause too much trouble. Avoid teaching on them." Say what? Avoid teaching on some point of truth. What saith the scriptures?

"Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God." {Acts 20: 26,27}

"Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; " {2 Timothy 4:2,3}

"Holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict ... whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain." {Titus 1:9,11}

The debate has raged between brethren for years whenever a division occurs. Who split the log? Who drove the wedge? Please allow me to answer from one gospel preacher's vantage point.

Whoever departs from the word of God is to blame! Period! Error will always cause division where people love and support truth. Whenever brethren, for whatever reason they may give, depart from the pattern, trouble is not far behind.

"... to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed." {Galatians 1:6-8}

There is a great danger for error to take hold in a local congregation when there is a lack of teaching the whole counsel of God. That includes the difficult subjects people don't like to hear, the negative as well as the positive. Preachers want to keep everyone happy and that is impossible. Any person who believes it is easy to preach a lesson, knowing that brethren disagree with you before you utter one word, has never been there!

Personally speaking, a preacher that will not tackle the "difficult topics" should find a new occupation! Many churches are weak and ripe for error to come in and take over. "Preventive preaching" can save a church and strengthen it.

God never told preachers to give them what they want, but what they need! Brethren who are ignorant on the "issues" will soon divide over them when the truth is presented. Again, who is to blame? The coward who failed to do his job or the one who taught the whole truth?

Over next few weeks I will be teaching some sermons on some "issues" that the local church here must address in the next few months. Please keep an open mind and open Bible to follow along. Questions are welcomed if you need any clarifications concerning the things taught. Any church that the Lord will recognize must follow His teachings in every area – period! \*\*\*