



The Burning Bush - Online article archive

Why this shameful silence??

"And it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they watched him. And, behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy. And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day? and they held their peace. And he took him, and healed him, and let him go; and answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day? And they could not answer him again to these things," Luke 14:16.

The silent response to the Saviour's challenges stands as a lasting monument to the wicked opposition by these men to Him. They were against Him but could not fault what He was saying or doing.

Such must surely qualify as an utterly shameful and cowardly position to adopt.

Sadly, we see a situation developing before us in the Free Presbyterian Church which bears some resemblance to this scene in Luke's gospel.

It is not religious lawyers or Pharisees we are dealing with but brethren who profess faith and obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ. These men, for one reason or another, have chosen to side with compromise and disobedience to God's Word and a rejection of the historic God-honouring and Biblical separatist stance of the Free Presbyterian Church, in favour of siding with the Democratic Unionist Party's wicked support for and endorsement of sodomy and its league with Sinn Fein/IRA.

The above verses in Luke's gospel were part of my daily Bible reading today. This morning I was speaking in Kilskeery Christian School and as is my habit, before I went down to the school I started to read the four chapters allocated in Murray McCheyne's 'Bible Reading Calendar'. Luke 14 was the third chapter on my list but I only got as far as the first six verses when I was compelled to reach for my pen.

The following is what resulted!!

Since 2006 I have been seeking to protest against the folly that brought the Democratic Unionist Party, led by Dr Ian Paisley, into a political union with terrorist supporting, Sinn Fein/IRA. It was not merely because of the moral wrong of such a political manoeuvre, but more importantly, I was concerned at the fact that Dr Paisley, being the Moderator of the Free Presbyterian Church, his link with Sinn Fein/IRA would regrettably mar and blemish the testimony and witness of the Free Presbyterian Church by linking it with the wickedness of the Irish Republican terror group.

The Free Presbyterian Church had on a previous occasion seen such a political set-up as morally wrong. It had issued a public statement denouncing the agreement between the Ulster Unionist Party, led by Mr. David Trimble, and John Hume's, Social Democratic & Liberal party, a nationalist group, in just such a 'power-sharing' union. That was in 1998, just nine years before Dr Paisley entered an agreement in 2007 with Sinn Fein/IRA.

The 1998 statement, of which Dr Paisley was the chief author, said:

"The Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster recognising the Bible as our sole rule of faith and practice – vehemently opposes the recent April Agreement (the Good Friday Agreement).

Our opposition to the Agreement stems from the fact that it is unscriptural, unethical and immoral.

Scripture makes it abundantly clear in Romans 13:1-5 that it is the duty of the Government to punish evil and reward good. The fundamental principle which lies at the heart of any stable and peaceable society has been dispensed with in this Agreement. Set against a backdrop of lies and deceitfulness it ensures that those who have supported and advocated violence will



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sit in government over our people . . . Such a position is contrary to the divine law of God where He commands punishment of an evildoer (1 Peter 2:14)."

What was 'unscriptural, unethical and immoral' in the arrangement between the UUP and the SDLP in 1998 was even more so in the union entered into by the DUP with Sinn Fein/IRA in 2007!

What I consider most significant about my own protests against these events was the total absence of any public response. I had written, spoken personally and preached against the shameful actions of 2007. Yet no attempt was ever made to reply to what I said or refute my allegations.

Yes, there was opposition to me as a result of what I said. Shameful attempts were made to stop me speaking in Presbytery on these issues. A proposal that I be charged before Presbytery with 'Rebellion' was proposed by one minister and seconded by an elder from his congregation. However, when I welcomed such a procedure for it would give me the opportunity to defend my position without the hindrances I had so far encountered, the 'powers that be' ignored the proposal and unconstitutionally 'passed on by on the other side'!

I was quietly shunned by many pulpits where once I would have been welcomed until only less than ten churches remain open to me!

And so it has continued. I have written and preached tens of thousands of words against these sinful Free Presbyterian Church links with gross sin by reason of elders being in membership of a sodomite-embracing political party, the DUP, and in coalition with Sinn Fein/IRA. Never once has an officer of the Presbytery or any member of it sought to refute what I have said and written. I have emailed Presbytery officers personally on these issues but never once was I extended the courtesy of a response!

WHY THE SILENCE?

How these men deal with that silence when they pray and when they preach is a mystery to me!

The day of my protesting will soon end. But others have been faithful in seeking to face Presbytery with these issues. Nearly 50% of the members of the Presbytery, ministers and elders, have voted on two occasions recently for action to be taken against those who thus compromise and shame the witness and stand of our denomination as it soon reaches its 70th or 'Platinum' anniversary. Such attempts have been frustrated by specious arguments, ecclesiastical self-preservation on the part of some, combined with a sad degree of loyalty to a party that has betrayed all it once professed to uphold!

I have no doubt that the majority of members of the Free Presbyterian Church do not support the position that the Presbytery, led by its officers, have chosen to defend. What our Church stood for in 1951 is still believed in by the majority and it is their wish that such a stand continues and that the compromising, God-offending links with the DUP should be broken.

It is time for ministers and elders, who are quite prepared to voice their opposition to the present state of affairs in comparative privacy, to come out and stand for God and His truth!

If that is not done then the present compromise policy embraced by the Free Presbyterian leadership will lead to the death of the separatist witness within a very short time.

I trust that such will not be the case by default or that I am home in glory before ICHABOD is written over the Church and it is said, 'the glory is departed . . . for the ark of God is taken'.

Rev Ivan Foster (Rtr)

28th February 2020.