

## The Prophet's Column

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### "Beware of False Prophets"

Over and over again in God's Word He warns us of false representatives of Him, or those who claim to be from and of Him, but are not. After so many betrayals and knifings in the back from those who profess to know the Lord I have been made to ask the question; "Lord, who is saved?" I know only a few people are saved, only a few believe God's Word. How many times has a leader, preacher, or teacher, whom you believed to be saved,

turned and rended your heart. How do you know a false prophet and how can you not be deceived by them? The Lord said "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" (Matthew 7:15-16). After God saved me in 1972, I thought a Bible teacher and his wife would rejoice in the Lord saving me. But very soon their hatred and resentment

came out and their rebellion cut me to pieces. Get this, any soul who does not rejoice in the salvation of a lost, hell-deserving sinner is not saved. And any soul who doesn't trust me or another believer is not saved. That puts a lot of knowledgeable preachers and religious leaders in the category of false prophets. All believers know the Lord and have a mutual love, faith, and trust in one another. Next to my salvation, the greatest joy is to hear that someone has been saved. There is a sweet fellow-

ship between two believers in Christ that is out of this world. It is from the third heaven. Listen to God's Word; "Then they that feared the Lord spake often to one another, and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book or remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." (Malachi 3:16). Yes, for all of you who get together and speak of the Lord, He is keeping a book of remembrance on you. What grace!!

## Churches can continue to politick

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WINSTON-SALEM — A federal lawsuit filed against the Christian Coalition for partisan political activity has some churches concerned about their own political involvement.

Churches have a tradition of giving information to members and exposing them to candidates' positions on issues, and the government needs to keep its hands off that type of activity, the Rev. C. Mark Corts said.

"I think that any time that the government seeks to restrict churches' activities, that's a dangerous thing, because I believe in a separation of church and state," he told The Winston-Salem Journal.

Many ministers and tax experts say the lawsuit does not mean that churches have to forsake all forms of politicking.

"There's a great deal of interest in what the boundaries are," Oliver Thomas, a tax attorney for the National Council of Churches, said. "There are no boundaries under the Constitution. Churches are able to get as involved as they want to, under the Constitution."

But if a church wants to preserve its tax-exempt status, that all changes.

According to the Internal Revenue Service, churches may engage in political activity, but they must do so with strict neutrality.

"What they can't do is get involved in campaigns," Thomas said. "They can't give

money to a campaign, can't endorse a campaign."

They also cannot oppose a specific campaign.

What they can do is speak out on political issues, such as abortion or welfare reform, and individuals can support or oppose certain candidates as long as they do not do it with the church's backing.

A nonprofit organization with tax-exempt status — such as a church — can do some lobbying as long as it is not a substantial part of the group's activities, according to the tax code.

But if the organization engages in partisan political activity, it runs the risk of losing its tax-exempt status. Contributors no longer would be allowed to write off their donations to the organization, and the organization would have to pay taxes.

The civil lawsuit that the Federal Elections Commission filed July 30 against the Christian Coalition deals with a different matter.

The Christian Coalition is not covered by the same section of the tax laws that apply to churches, and the suit does not deal with tax laws at all. The suit, which says that the coalition improperly aided Republican candidates through its voter guides and other activities, involves election laws.

The coalition is considered a "social welfare" organization under tax laws, which means it has more flexible guidelines for politicking than churches and other kinds of organizations enjoy. Because of how it is classified under the tax laws, the coalition does not

have to pay taxes, but contributions to it are not tax-deductible.

Corts, who is pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, said that his congregation has a committee that discusses political involvement and related issues.

Calvary allows the local chapter of the Christian Coalition to meet at the church each month, as it would similar groups, and any candidate who comes to services at the church around

election time is simply introduced, he said.

"For the government to say I can't do that, I would fight that pretty vigorously," Corts said.

The Rev. Serenus T. Churn, pastor of Mount Zion Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, said that religious leaders can — and should — discuss certain issues with their congregations.

"The truth of the matter is that politics never can really and truly be divorced from religion," he said.

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