

SUNSET IS IN THEIR FELLOWSHIP....

This may seem like an odd pronouncement, but I think it is safe to say that the title of this piece is **not an overstatement**. Last week in Bible class we were studying Peter's warning of false teachers and the ways they enter in among the flock. It goes without saying that, in most instances, when false teachers/doctrines begin to enter in to congregations, only on rare occasions does the majority reject them when there are powerful forces condoning the perpetrators.

Without going back to review the events of almost six years ago, we now see that the seeds of that chasm between brethren has opened up a level of "fellowship" previously unimaginable to even the most jaded observers. That event has given way now to a **complete acceptance** of any and all comers who are on the side of those involved in the re-election/reaffirmation of elders process, and is now worse.

It now is apparent to anyone wishing to look that the Sunset International Bible Institute is no longer *non grata* among "the faithful." As a matter of fact, it seems that one way onto the big tent circuit is to have participated with a few Sunset speakers, or to have even gone all the way to a Sunset Workshop and spoken several times.

Now maybe I'm jumping the gun on this one, but to acknowledge where that institution has been on many doctrinal matters over the last forty years, and then to **sweep all of that error under the rug** because some of "the best and the brightest" have rubbed elbows with the Sunset folks over the last six years seems a little odd to me. Some may feel that this is being overly judgmental, or that it really does not matter one bit where someone speaks (or how often). However, I don't recall those positions from these same men **just six years ago!**

There is hardly a large, institutionally-backed lecture program going on around the country that does not include Phil Sanders and/or Brad Harrub. They certainly aren't the only brethren who have been among the "Sunsetters," but they definitely are among the more prominent—the more widely known and published. Yet, they are also traveling to and being embraced by places/congregations that (still) would not dare even to have "Sunset" on their lips! This (incredibly) is the continued fallout from the Bert Thompson situation. What is more troubling is that there really is no end in sight for those who are now entangled in this web of peek-a-boos as they turn a blind eye to these episodes of fellowship (ignoring that they even exist; **are Sunset's Workshops fashionable now?**).

The points being made are probably largely ignored except by the not-silent minority as more and more are (wittingly or not) being sucked into a (spiritual?) comfort zone based on numbers and name recognition. In discussions with a number of brethren, it is clear they do not want to rock any boats, even as they admit that they are quite uneasy with many of the recent developments.

But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, . . . and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of (2 Pet. 2:1-2).

These brethren will go their way, cheerily dismissive of the things that are mentioned here. They will give whatever reasons for not having to respond, or they will simply say nothing altogether, hoping the minority will go away. Recall the words found in Jude 3—"Contend. . . ."

—Johnny Oxendine
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