

THE SIN OF BEING NEUTRAL

If there was ever a time for men to be taking a stand for Truth and right, it is now. The church is facing troublesome times in its battle against sin in the face of a new liberalism and softness toward doctrinal error. We see efforts of brethren on every side trying to take a neutral stand. They think they can win the struggle for right by failing to take a stand. Evidently, they feel that by being quiet the devil will go away. Not so.

You will recall that the prophet Balaam tried to be neutral, but failed. Balak wanted him to place a curse against God's people. Balaam knew, and confessed, that he must speak that which the Lord put in his mouth (Num. 23:12). At the same time, he seemingly wanted to please Balak. Balak's doctrine is stated in Numbers 23:25: "And Balak said unto Balaam, Neither curse them at all, nor bless them at all."

We are either for the Lord or against Him (Mat. 12:30). Let it be understood, we are not talking about personal disputes where there is the possibility of both parties being in the wrong. Instead, we are thinking of doctrinal matters. For instance, one preacher said that he is not a premillennialist, but neither was he "anti-premillennial." Another has said, he was not advocating instrumental music, but that he was not "anti-instrumental music." There are many who would disclaim false doctrine in their own preaching, but they will embrace those in fellowship who teach and preach false doctrines. Brethren, let us get off the fence.

In Judges 5:23 we read, "Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." God's people were in a battle for their lives. God was mightily concerned, but where was the house of Meroz? They were still abiding in their sheepfolds. They were content to remain idle and let others do the fighting, but God was displeased. He ordered a curse be placed against them.

What was their sin? The same as many of our brethren today! They wanted to remain neutral. They wanted others to do their fighting. There are those even now who will not join in the battle against error in the church. They look upon themselves as lovers of peace. They even become critical of those who are known as "fighters" or "brotherhood watchdogs." Some of these are trying to do

a balancing act on the fence of neutrality. If the Truth prevails on some issue and error is exposed to the point that it is unpopular, they will fall off on the side of the majority and proudly claim, "We have won the victory"—yes, and "we killed a bear, but papa shot it."

—B.C. Carr
Deceased