

Assignment 14

Arthur Hay, October 2026

1. The second passage is the example Christ set in being God not just coming down to Earth to live in this fallen world but also humbling Himself extremely, taking the role of a servant and even dying a painful and most uncomfortable death for us. That shows how much God really loves us to put Himself through such pain so us sinners could have eternal life with Him.

The first passage is diluted by comparison but shows how the second passage should set our minds. We did not start off as God and it does not tell us to humble ourselves so much but Christ's example of putting humanity before Himself shows how we should view and relate to our fellow believers.

Paul's flow of thought was Christ's humility, from His example right down to us.

2. Colossians 3:1-6.

2.1 The Colossians were new Christians and still to grasp the full reality, their mindsets were still earthly, thinking of man-made rules and earthly matters, Paul needed to get across to them what would perish and what was eternal.

2.2 We have the same issues, many in the church, churches in general, today still focus on earthly matters, and not so much on eternity, but now in this regulated society we have a lot of man made regulations come in to the churches - working with children clearances, kitchen hygiene regulations etc. Sometimes busying can overreach. I have been in one church where money was needed for a project and with hindsight the leaders clearly lacked faith for the Lord to provide and used earthly tactics to try and get the money.

2.3 The theological principal is to focus on Christ and eternity and not on passing matters of this world.

2.4 The Bible is God's book to guide us towards eternity and this passage fits with those who have come to the Lord and how to move forward.

2.5 We are all concerned with what is happening in our lives, our work, our health, our families etc. In the church it means we must focus on the Lord. Man made rules, legalism etc can be a stumbling block, especially to new believers enjoying their first love of the Lord. It includes the need to have more faith and be less stressed about how to make things happen.

3. The epistle

Background. After a church split which also split my family church wise, we moved to the Adelaide Hills and all settled together in a new church, Aldgate Baptist Church. After 6 months I was noticing how shallow the church was spiritually and a big issue for me was the fact that in so many Sunday morning services there was no sermon, talks about the works of man in the mission field, themed services of entertainment and the general feeling I was not with many Christians. I raised the matter with 2 elders who were very dismissive and I was starting to boycott services if I knew there was going to be no sermon or putting my collection money somewhere else and not financially supporting the church. In the evenings I would go to another church to hear a sermon, alone, which took me away from my family and made me angry with the pastor. I church hopped before I ceased to be a Christian but my family, after the split did not want to move again, I would go back occasionally to visit and I think the pastor went off his calling, he was volunteering in a refugee camp for illegal boat arrivals and coming back preaching divisive politics in the pulpit. I think he was influenced by a Roman Catholic after he called them our brethren and got the whole church to recite the Nicene Creed each Sunday during Lent once in preparation for Easter, Baptists don't observe Lent. At that point I told my family to leave the church, it took them another two years to when they finally saw the church for what it was. This was 15 years ago, it still troubles me now and my family is now divided along denominational lines.

I spoke to the retired pastor of the church that had the split, which was after he had retired. This letter is based on the advice he gave me, but I have adapted it to include more people who were troubled by the situation and the timeline is not quite

the same as when things happened. As a side note, after I started keeping the Sabbath he tried hard to counsel me back to Sunday but, even a seasoned aged and respected pastor could not convince me.

From Ted, retired pastor to the flock at Burnside Christian Church and member of the ministers' fraternal of pastors in the Burnside area.

To the faithful believers at Aldgate Baptist Church and their families, and any others whose desire for the Lord is hindered by the leadership.

Grace and peace to you all and may our Lord Jesus Christ sustain you in the spiritual austerity.

Brothers and sisters I urge you to pray for yourselves and each other as the enemy will see the weakness and will come in with strength, while the leaders may not be close to the Lord you can be, and by prayer seek the Lord's guidance and wisdom in this situation. Remember you are Priests in the order of Melchizedek, that is, you are in direct relationship with the Lord and not via other men. As saints, and there are many saints in many fellowships you need to consider where best to nourish your souls before you suffer from spiritual malnutrition.

Aldgate was once a great fellowship and even established a Christian school, but oh how it has fallen, lukewarm like Laodicea, the well to do in the world going through the spiritual motions but showing minimal contact with the Lord. The church is living off its spiritual capital which is fast dwindling away.

I hear the pastor is not feeding you but tickling your ears with entertainment, events and getting caught up in worldly matters, he thinks he is doing good works but is coming back to the church and preaching messages to divide you, over worldly matters which will then become spiritual matters.

I also hear there are women elders, Paul was very explicit about the roles of men and women in the church and a woman should not be in a position where she can have authority over men, as that might give her charge over her husband which will violate the structure of the family that God established in the Garden of Eden. It is wrong for men to sit back and warm the pews while the women lead even the services, God calls men to lead, were any of the priests in the Old Covenant women?

I know some have spoken to the elders about their concerns but alas the elders are not interested, they are like blind leaders neglecting their responsibility for spiritual oversight and just looking at the earthly welfare of the congregation, if they even do that.

I hear the pastor is letting himself be influenced by worldly matters and calling those of the false churches "brethren" and is bringing some of their habits in to the fellowship, thinking he is good because of the worldly matters he involves himself in.

I would say it is good that the pastor is retiring but I know the next one does not believe in the Word of God, especially creation, is he saying God is a liar?

This all sounds to me like a counterfeit church and I urge you to either withdraw to yourselves, remember when two or three are gathered together in the Lord's name He is there amongst you or to find a true fellowship to join, but do not stay, be out of that church, lest you find yourselves fallen away and no longer walking with the Lord.

I pray the Lord will guide you and you may keep with Him.

Your brother

Ted.