

# The REMINDER

The weekly newsletter of the church of Christ in Bellaire, TX

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## PROVOCATIVE

Got your attention! The word provocative can suggest so many things in our culture. However, more often than not, when one thinks of something as being provocative, it lends itself toward sensuality. Provocative means, "Likely to provoke". It comes from the Latin *provocare*. That word is compound in origin. With "pro" meaning forth and "vocare" implying to call. As we use the word provoke today it carries the definition of "to cause anger, resentment or deep feeling, to stir to action." In short, provoke seeks to stir into action or force a feeling. It can carry either positive or negative connotation.

"And let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds" (Heb. 10:24). In the King James translation, the passage just noted uses the word provoke in place of stimulate. In that sense it is conveying a positive perspective of the word. Whereas in Heb. 3:8, 15 the word is clearly being used in a negative sense. We need to appreciate the difference. In so doing we can gain some insight into God's will that allows us to be spiritually provocative.

There are some who like to think of themselves as being "provocative" in a spiritual sense, yet miss the point. They hide behind a wall of confrontation and overt challenges to others. Challenge for the mere sake of "sport". Holding to a form of spiritual pugnaciousness that defiles explanation considering what attitude the Scriptures point out we must have in our possession. To be sure, there are times when we need to challenge individuals and certain teachings, but never at the point of doing it just to be provocative. Precious souls are at stake. "Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another" (Gal. 5:26).

Rather than seeking to be provocative just to agitate we need to learn how to be provocative with respect to stimulate a fellow traveler as we journey in concert with one another toward the goal. Peter, in both of the epistles that he penned sought to be spiritually provocative by "stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder." He was aware of how vital positive stimulation is to each and every member of the household of God. "For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust" (2 Peter 1:4).

Paul on his part also sought to be provocative in a spiritual sense. In all of his letters he openly urged individual children of God to keep focused on the goal. Passages such as Phil. 3:-14, culminating with, "brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

So how provocative would you say you are? Have you taken the time or made an opportunity to afford spiritual stimulation or encouragement to a brother or sister? Has it been your intent to build up or stifle? In the long run, which application of the word provocative to you think is of greater value?

Bruce Evans

# Bulletin Board



AM Lesson - Steve - "Authority From Heaven"  
 PM Lesson - Jack - "Greater and Lesser Evil"

Please keep the following members in mind who have difficulty being with us due to prolonged illness: **Dee Boyd, Doris Norman, Billie Glitsch and Don Hurd.**

**NEWS AND NOTES:** Just a few updates to the sick list. Keep Anna in your prayers. Nothing new to report, but her difficulties continue. Give her a call this week just to let her know she's in our thoughts. David Davila's sister spent several days in the hospital last week. Possibly food poisoning. Mike is home from Dallas, but Linda is still there. Deban and baby are doing fine.

Several out of town this morning. Jim is gone for a couple of days. Anita and I leave Thursday for a trip to Kentucky to see kids and grand ones. Stephanie Akinson is gone for most of the week. Many others will also be gone. My list is never complete. Hopefully we can catch up today.

Teachers meeting today at 4:15. Mostly about the graded classes, but anyone is welcome to participate.

Youth Devo tonight after services at the Smith's house.

Next Sunday night David Haley will be the speaker.

## Our Greatest Need

*If humanity's greatest need had been entertainment, God would have sent a performer.*

*If our greatest need had been technology, God would have sent an engineer.*

*If our greatest need had been money, God would have sent an economist.*

*But since our greatest need was forgiveness, God sent us a Savior.*

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*"An inadequate concept of God will result in a weak faith, for faith depends on the character of God just as a building rests on its foundation."*

*"A man never gets so confused in his thinking that he cannot see what's best for the other fellow."*

*"The most dangerous age is any time between one and ninety-one."*

*"There's only one way to handle the ignorant or malicious critic. Ignore him. Almost everybody else does."*

*"Few self-made people include humility in their make-up."*

### Assignments for today Sunday, May 18, 2014

#### Morning Service

Announcements.....Jack Smith  
 Hymn Director.....Lee Williams  
 Scripture Reading.....Phil. 2:5-11  
 Scripture Reader.....Chris Cecil  
 Opening Prayer.....Bob Ward  
 Closing Prayer.....Jack Smith

#### Evening Service

Hymn Director.....Steve Garrett  
 Opening Prayer.....Mike Pharris  
 Closing Prayer.....Jack Smith

## BELLAIRE church of Christ

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### Schedule of Services

<b>Sunday:</b>	<b>Wednesday:</b>
9:30 AM Worship	7:30 PM Study and Devotional
11:00 AM Bible study	<b>Minister and editor</b>
5:00 PM Worship	Jack Smith and Steve Garrett

*The Reminder* is published weekly by the church of Christ in Bellaire