

Gospel Truths

April 2010

Lying # 2

Front Page

by H.E. Phillips (Deceased)



What Is a Lie?

One may tell something that is not true and yet not be lying. For instance: Someone calls and asks if my wife is at home, and I say, No. If I knew she had left home to go to the grocery, and I did not know that she had returned home, I would say, No. But if, indeed, she had returned home and I did not know it, I would be wrong, but I would have no intention to deceive. I would be mistaken, but I would not be lying. The one who tells a lie knows he is trying to deceive. Lying is the attempt to mislead. However, if I knew she had returned home, and I told the caller that she was not at home, I would be lying: I would intend to deceive, for whatever reason. Lying is the intent to misinform and beguile, regardless of the nature and consequences of the deception. A “little white lie” is as damning to the one who tells it, as the most consequential deception he can conceive.

Lying is deception from the heart. It is not an accident; it is an effort from the heart to mislead others. “For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies . . .” (Matthew 15:19).

I could lie by slightly altering the truth with a view of misleading the person who hears me. We hear this kind of lying every day by people with whom we come in contact. I could be lying by speaking when I ought to be quiet, or being silent when I ought to speak. In either case I would be attempting to deceive others by my maneuvering truth.

Hypocrisy is pretending something that is not true. Jesus repeatedly called the scribes and Pharisees “hypocrites” because of their continual practice of beguiling the people in promoting their “traditions” and religious corruption in the name of God. Phariseeism is not dead.

Why Do Men Lie?

Obviously, there must be some reason in the mind of a liar for him to lie. The temptations vary, and the rewards desired are different, but the underlying causes remain the same. There are a few that are apparent to all:

1. Many people lie to cover their sins and to feign innocence. “Some shall depart from the faith,” speaking lies to cover their sins (I Timothy 4:2); hypocritical lies to cover hate for one’s brother when he must love him (I John 2:9).

2. Some will concoct lies to avoid correction and punishment for sins in their own lives. The business world is full of such sins of lying.

3. Many people will habitually lie to get the attention of people important to them, and to entertain anyone around them. Some feel important when they can get other to laugh with them, and lying is one of their tools to accomplish such.

4. Many, including members of the church, use lying to obtain and keep money. If we could see what God sees in the hearts of members of the church, we would be astonished at the number of “righteous”(?) Christians who will frequently lie in their personal life, as well as in their business life, to “make money.” When the saints in Jerusalem sold their properties and gave the proceeds to the needy in Jerusalem because they were in need, the divine Book records the actions of a man and his wife, Ananias and Sapphira, who were members of the church. But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God” (Acts 5:3-5). Ananias fell dead for his lying. Three hours later, Sapphira, his wife, came in with the same lie, and she fell dead also. Both of them died with a lie on their tongue, and it concerned their own money about which they were lying, with greed in their hearts. They used deception to receive the credit for giving as other disciples were doing, yet

keep the money they were supposed to be giving. Countless thousands rob God each week by pretending to give as they have been prospered, while holding back a “part of the price.” Read II Corinthians 9:6-7.

5. Many people, both in the church and in the world, lie to get revenge and hurt others whom they have come to hate for some supposed injury done to them. Countless millions will find themselves in the lake of fire and brimstone for eternity for such senseless behavior.

6. Many will lie by concealing their real feelings to deceive others whom they want to impress or to avoid some responsibility to them. This is common behavior for many church members who try to evade their responsibility to others. This is the seething pot for serious trouble in any local church. Countless millions will be lost in eternity for this type of lying. It is difficult to work with such people.

7. Many lie by pretending to be religious when, in fact, they care nothing about God and His word. “If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth” (I John 1:6). “Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie . . .” (Revelation 3:9). “He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him” (I John 2:4). One is a liar when he plays the hypocrite in his profession at serving God.

8. Most destructive to the work of Christ and his church is the brother deceive brother scenario. Such is based upon lies that fomented the situation, and lies that perpetuate it. “Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds” (Colossians 3:9). “But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth” (James 3:14). “Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another” (Ephesians 4:25).


Consequences of Lying

There are bitter consequences to lying that should keep every person who knows the word of God from lying. I do not understand it, but it seems that most people who read the Bible and claim to understand and believe it, are not impressed by the certainty of being lost eternally if they do not obey Christ. Somehow, the vast majority do not seem to wince at the fact that all those who do not obey the gospel will be lost in hell forever. Immediately before the judgment, Christ will be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, “In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel, of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power” (II Thessalonians 1:8-9).

Lying will cause believers to be lost. “And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (II Thessalonians 2:10-12).

Lying will keep people from going to heaven. Most people who have any religious convictions at all believe there is a heaven. They usually have no real understanding what it is like, but they think they are going there. These people consistently lie in some way every day of their lives, yet they know they are going to heaven. Of the beauties described in Revelation 21, we read this: “And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life” (Revelation 21:27). People who lie will not enter heaven. “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murders, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie” (Revelation 22:14-15). Just think about how many will be denied eternal life in heaven because they lied just a little.

The final consequence of lying is to be cast into the lake of fire for eternity. That does not make much impression upon people today. Sin has hardened the hearts of millions and they do not want to think about it now. Inspiration says, “Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen” (Romans 1:24-25). “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death” (Revelation 21:8).

Truth makes men free from their sins. “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). Men must love the truth to preach it and defend it against the onslaught of lying from all quarters. The truth is God’s word: “Sanctify them through truth: thy word is truth” (John 17:17).  **Editorial . . .** J. T. Smi



EDITORIAL . . .

J. T. Smith, Editor

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Indwelling of Deity

WHEN we discuss Deity, we are discussing three individual persons. In Genesis 1:2 we read that in the beginning “The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.” Genesis 1:26 “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness;... ‘.’” These plural pronouns spell out for us the facts that more than one person was involved in the creation.

The New Testament gives us further information. John 1:1-3, 14 “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” Also in the New Testament there are also passages that mention all three. Jesus was speaking, “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you” (John 14:26). These three, then, are the Father, Son (Word) and Holy Spirit.

What About Persons?

Three individual beings are clearly set forth in the Scriptures as persons. But are there three persons? Some have taken the position that there is only one person because a person must have flesh and bones – therefore Jesus was the only “person.”

In Hebrews 1:3 we read, “who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.” The word “person” in this passage is from the Greek word:

“Hupostasis – substance, (a) in Hebrews 1:3, of Christ as ‘the very image’ of God’s ‘substance’; here the word has the meaning of the real nature of that to which reference is made in contrast to the outward manifestation” (from Vine’s *Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*).

When we speak of Deity we are speaking of those who possess the qualities of characteristics of Divinity. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit make up the (for lack of better words) God family. All three are Omniscient, Omnipotent, and Omnipresent. When we speak of the human family, we are involving all those who possess the qualities and characteristics of a human being. The same is true if we speak of the bird family, etc. Each individual possesses all these essential attributes and characteristics.

Definition of the Term “Attributes”

“The attributes of God are those distinguishing characteristics of the Divine Nature which are inseparable from the idea of God and which constitute the basis and ground for His various manifestations to His creatures.

Why do we call them ‘attributes?’ We call them ‘attributes’ because we are compelled to attribute them to God as fundamental qualities or powers of His being.”

A Spirit Has Location

Father and Son Are In Heaven

Matthew 6:9 “In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven...”

Mark 11:25-26 “And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. ²⁶But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.”

Daniel 7:13-14 “I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. ¹⁴Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be de-

stroyed.” A being, then, has location.

The word “person” does not always mean “outward manifestation.” John 4:24 teaches, “God is Spirit.” Since we are made in the “likeness of God” (Genesis 1:26) we are therefore spirit beings. James said, James 2:26 “For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.” God made the body out of the dust of the earth and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and he became a living being.

Solomon further emphasizes this in Ecclesiastes 12:7 “Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, And the spirit will return to God who gave it.” So, the person or substance of man is spirit as God is Spirit.

Is the “Indwelling” Literal or Figurative?

It is interesting that most people who talk about “indwelling” only attribute this occurrence to the Holy Spirit. The fact of the matter is, there are more passages that either say or imply that both the Father and the Son dwell in us than there are that teach that the Holy Spirit dwells in us. A total of 6 passages tell us that the Spirit dwells in us. A Total of 16 passages indicating that Christ is in us. John 6:56; 15:4-5; 17:23, 26; Romans 8:10; II Corinthians 4:10-11; 13:5; Galatians 2:20; 4:19; Ephesians 3:17; Philippians 1:20; Colossians 1:27; 3:11; I Peter 3:15. And a total of 8 passages indicating that God (the Father) is in us. II Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 4:6; I John 3:24; 4:4; 4:12-13, 15, 16.

It is obvious that if the Holy Spirit directly and personally (His substance as a person) indwells the physical body of every Christian, then the Father and the Son also directly and personally (Their substance as persons) also dwells in every Christian. But if each one is a person (substance) then if they all three dwell in me (and that is their location) how can they abide in anyone else? Is there then a solution to the problem? I believe there is.

To Dwell In = A Relationship – Fellowship

I John 4:15 “Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwells in him, and he in God.” John 14:20 “At that day you will know that I (Jesus) am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.” How do we “dwell in Him?” When we answer the question we will know how He dwells in us.

I believe the answer is given in John 15:1-6. “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. ²Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. ⁵I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. ⁶If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.” In fact, in verse 5 Jesus says, “He who abides in Me and I in him...” In fact this relationship must exist or else we can do nothing.

I John 1:7 “But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.” So the facts are these: if the “indwelling” or being “in” someone means that we sustain the proper relationship – are in fellowship with, then it is possible for all three to abide in us and we in them. Shouldn’t that settle it? It does for me! ☞

A Warner Doesn't Retire

by Steven C Harper



Last Friday, Cardinals' quarterback Kurt Warner announced his retirement from the NFL. I have to say that, while I understood his reasons and could not argue with his decision, I am disappointed and I am not looking forward to next season as much as I would have if he had decided to stay one more year. Kurt Warner was a humble, truly kind person, and a man not ashamed to give God credit for his many blessings and opportunities — a stark contrast to the egotistical, selfish, and money-hungry players that seem to be the norm today. I, for one, think the league will be a lesser organization without him.

But that's not what the headline reads, is it? And why are we talking about Kurt Warner and football? Well, this article is not about Kurt Warner, the recently-retired football player, *per se*, but about you and me and all disciples. Coincidentally, while I was thinking about Warner's announcement, I just happened to be reading a passage that talked about another kind of warner; you see, **we** are warners [pardon the stretch here]. The apostle Paul wrote the Colossian brethren that he was one of those who preached Christ, "*warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ*" (**Colossians 1:28**). Yes, Paul believed it necessary to warn men because there were **reasons** to warn!

Many people have come to believe that the gospel is nothing but good news, and they love to tell you so should you dare tell them they are in sin or are following error. It seems that if anyone should point out that a doctrine or practice does not agree with [or plainly contradicts] the written and revealed word of God, someone will almost certainly take offense and heatedly complain, "I thought the *gospel* meant 'good news'; why are you being so negative?" It is a weak and irrelevant response to those who correctly point out the various errors that now exist, and demonstrates a lack of understanding of what the message of Jesus Christ actually is and what actually comprises the entirety of the gospel we should be preaching.

When Paul was headed back to Jerusalem, he took the time to stop in Miletus, where he called for the elders of the church in Ephesus to come down and, when they had come, he warned them of "*savage wolves*" who would "*come in among you, not sparing the flock,*" and "*men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves*" (**Acts 20:17-30**). Paul then said, "*Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears*" (**verse 31**). Do you think Paul was right in **warning** these spiritual leaders, or was he out of line? If we remember Paul spoke and wrote by inspiration, we would understand Paul was absolutely correct in warning these men of the certainty of dangerous ones who would come in their midst. As 'uncomfortable' as it may have been to hear [especially since he directed the warning directly at them], it was necessary for the saving of souls!

Do you think Paul thought there ever came a time when he could cease warning people about "*righteousness and self-control and the coming judgment*" (cf. **Acts 24:25**)? Do you think there was a time when Paul would tell Timothy to **not** "*Preach the word*" (**II Timothy 4:2**)? Do you think there was a time when Paul thought he no longer needed to warn brethren to "*Flee from sexual immorality*" (**I Corinthians 6:18**), "*flee youthful passions*" (**II Timothy 2:22**), or "*Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ*" (**Colossians 2:8**)? No, I do not believe for a second that Paul ever had such a desire because he understood those dangers [that **is** what they are — dangers] would never go away and, if not alert to them, disciples could be overcome by sin or error and be devoured by the enemy (cf. **I Peter 5:8**).

In fact, I don't even have to guess about that because Paul would write, near the end of his life, "*I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing*" (**II Timothy 4:7, 8**). Paul understood the duty to warn unbelievers and brethren alike is a truly never-ending responsibility and did not cease to warn others whenever the opportunity arose, whether great men or small (cf. **Acts 26:22**).

As a professional football player and quarterback, Kurt Warner faced the opposition and excelled. Whenever he dropped back, there were at least three or four guys on the other team who were trying their best to get to him, to shake his resolve, to affect his accuracy, and to prevent him from advancing. He was one of the best who ever played the position and, in his prime, could hit receivers like Isaac Bruce, Torry Holt, and Marshall Faulk or, later, Larry Fitzgerald, Anquan Boldin, or Steve Breaston in stride and the defense would be caught off guard while the ball went down field and, often, resulted in yet another score. But Kurt Warner will be the first to tell you he didn't always get the ball off in time. In fact, some of those times are why he decided to retire. Sometimes, the opposing team was successful in getting to him and he ended up on his back; many other times, he got the ball off but was hit anyway. As a professional football player, though, he had to get back up and try it again...and again and again.

Disciples who are involved in the work of the Lord's kingdom and who do it well can understand the joys of success — and the pains of waking up the next day having suffered failures and defeats. Mature disciples know that not every unbeliever will gladly hear the word of God and that some will, in fact, try very hard to oppose you

at every turn (cf. **Acts 17:5-13**), but that they must pick themselves up and keep trying it over and over. Disciples must continue to warn the lost of the impending Judgment and the fact *all* must give an account (**2nd Cor. 5:10**); there is no such thing as vacation, much less retirement! After all, our efforts are **much** more important than some game played on a 120-yard patch of grass where many players earn millions of dollars and enjoy luxuries beyond the imagination of most people. The task of the disciple is to win souls, and there is no quitting. We cannot *afford* to retire.

And while Kurt Warner was good, it is a fact that he didn't complete 100% of his passes. He kept throwing it, though. He occasionally fumbled the ball or cost the team the game by throwing interceptions. But He also knew the only way to win was to keep going at it. He knew, also, that he was a part of a *team*, and not out there on his own. [If he had to do it all by himself, I think he would have retired a lot earlier!] He depended on his offensive linemen to protect him and he depended on the running backs, tight ends, and wide receivers to run their patterns and do their assigned duties so he could do his and the team — as a whole — would achieve success. He knew that his responsibility was to learn his responsibilities and motivate others and work with them to help them accomplish theirs.

We, too, must realize that we are part of a team. Brethren at the local church where you work and worship are there to help you achieve success in spiritual matters, but we must all learn to work together and each do his or her duties; if we do, success will come (cf. **Ephesians 4:11-16**). Will we win 100% of the souls we teach? No, but we keep trying! We must keep warning the lost of their eventual end (cf. **Matthew 7:13**) and try our best to lead them in the right way (**verse 14**). We may get tired and beat up, but it is certain we cannot afford to retire.

But for Kurt Warner, he had the option of retiring. The decision was his to make, and several factors led him to choose retirement over another year of playing. He weighed the risks and decided it was time to call it quits.

Disciples of Jesus cannot do that — *must not* do that. One whose responsibility is to warn the lost of the certainty of the Judgment, the pains of eternal punishment, and who warns brethren to not be drawn back into the world of ungodliness can never retire from this essential task; souls are at stake! God told Ezekiel that if he did his duty and warned the sinner to repent, even if the sinner rejected the warning and died in his sin, Ezekiel would preserve his own soul (**Ezekiel 3:17-19**). If he listened, both would be saved! As a watchman, it was his duty to warn the sinners, and he could never shirk that responsibility, regardless of what others do. Neither can we. ☞



Why?

Geneva Brown Smith

“Truly the light is sweet, and it is pleasant for the eyes to behold the sun; but if a man lives many years and rejoices in them all, yet let him remember the days of darkness, for they will be many” (Ecclesiastes 11:7-8).

As Christians we enjoy numerous blessings in Christ. We have the forgiveness of sins, the privilege of calling God our father, and the promise of Heaven. Another great blessing we enjoy is the kinship with others of the same precious faith. Most of us enjoy many material blessings also. We live in comfortable homes, drive fast automobiles, eat nourishing and delicious food, and wear good quality clothes. God has been so good to us!

Dark days? For the Christian? Could it be?

In the book of Job we read about a man of God who was blessed with everything one could possibly desire in this life. He had family (wife and children), possessions, and popularity. In addition, because of his faithfulness,

God was proud of him. To Satan God said, “have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?” Satan said, “have you not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has, on every side? But now stretch out your hand, and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face.” God said, “behold he is in your hand, but do not take his life.”

Satan caused the loss of Job’s cattle, the death of his servants, and all his children. He struck Job with painful boils from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet. Even Job’s wife from whom he should have received comfort and support told him, “curse God and die.” Job, in his despair over the loss of his children, and in his own physical torment wrestled with the question “WHY?”

As Christians today, amid all the wonderful blessings we enjoy, there are at times dark days in our lives. Many of our families have been torn asunder by the evils of divorce. Some of our beautiful and talented children have fallen into the pitfalls of drugs and/or fornication—perhaps even to their own destruction. Some of us have seen our loved ones stricken with serious physical or mental disease. Others have stood at the graveside of a beloved parent feeling the loss of that nurturer-mentor forever. Frequently, in our own despair, we also wrestle with the question “WHY?”

Job, even in his darkest hour, never entertained the idea of turning his back on God. He knew that his creator was the source of all his strength. He remained upright and righteous in spite of his adversity. When Satan was finished, Job possessed a faith that was as genuine and precious as pure gold. Everything that had been lost was returned to him in abundance. Though he did not understand why he was tried, his blessings far exceeded the losses he had sustained.

When dark days come to us, we should remember and imitate the faithfulness of Job. We, as Job, may not know why Satan’s slings and arrows are so brutal. We do know, however, that we must remain faithful. Of course we sometimes ask “WHY?” We are only human! But God has given us answers to every human problem imaginable. Bright days and dark days come to all of us. Adversity, from time to time rears its ugly head. But let us not despise it! In James 1:2-3, also 12-13, “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man.” Remember, if we endure and remain faithful through every trial, we, as Job, will receive a blessing (Heaven) which far exceeds anything we could ever imagine. ☞



by Maurice Barnett

What Kind of Sinner Was Jesus? # 1

NUMEROUS theories about the person of Jesus have littered the pages of history from the time of His personal ministry to the present. Such theories have been the cause of division and destruction that comes with doctrinal error. Today, brethren are not immune to such theories and the division that follows.

Words are the vehicle of thought. They represent ideas. They form the nature of communication. God has communicated His mind to us in human language, words, I Corinthians 2:10-13. If we miss what those words mean, the ideas they represent, then we miss the mind of God. That leads us into error on any subject. The examples of this error are beyond imagination. We must understand that there are different meanings to words, and even phrases. Words and phrases may not, necessarily, mean the same thing in every place they are found. For example, there are fourteen meanings of the word “spirit,” several meanings of “faith,” etc. If we don’t get the

meaning right in a particular verse, we miss the mind of God and espouse error.

Mormons believe in Jehovah God and Jesus Christ. But, when they finish defining what they mean by those words, they don't believe what the Bible teaches. They believe in millions of gods that populate millions of worlds in this universe. They claim that the god of this world, earth, was once a human just like we are but on another world and was obedient to the god that ruled over his particular world. As a reward for his faithfulness, he was made a god by a counsel of gods and allowed to create a world and populate it with his literal offspring who would worship him. Thus, the aim of every Mormon male is to become a god of his own little world, or worlds. So, for a Mormon to say that he believes in the god of the Bible and in Jesus Christ does not, of itself, tell us anything about what they believe. When they finish explaining it, they don't believe what we do nor do they believe what the Bible teaches. Other religious groups are just as wrong in other directions.

Over the past few decades, the theory was energetically pursued that Jesus was a man, just a man and nothing more than a man. Certainly, the Bible says that Jesus was "a man" but some made out of it other than what is biblically meant by it. Supposedly, He was subject to every weakness and desire as any other human, was ignorant of who He was and where He was going. Some went so far as to claim that Jesus "lusted to do evil" but just didn't convert the lust into action. That alone meant that Jesus was defiled from the heart out because such lust is sinful of itself, Mark 7:21-23, and Jesus could not be the sinless savior. That certainly isn't the Jesus in whom I believe. The entire issue was a result of the way they defined terms. Biblical images were changed.

Calvinism has had an extremely profound effect on modern religion, even on brethren. This has traveled in numerous directions. One reason this has happened is because brethren depend on commentaries and dictionaries that are written, either by avowed Calvinists or those greatly influenced by Calvinists, and they accept what they read without question. Preachers pick up those ideas and preach them. Brethren thus become infected with error. Many songs we sing are written by Calvinists and reflect their doctrine. In places, brethren are brainwashed in Calvinism three times a week.

The area we want to specially look at is the death of Jesus. Calvin and even Martin Luther claimed that Jesus literally became a sinner in order to accomplish salvation for us. Martin Luther says in his Commentary on Galatians, page 213—

"And this, no doubt all the prophets did foresee in spirit,—that Christ should become the greatest transgressor, murder, adulterer, thief, rebel, blasphemer, that ever was or could be in the world. For he, being made a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, is not now an innocent person and without sins..."

The same thing is said by Calvinists. Perhaps the most graphic picture of what Jesus supposedly endured "in our place" is the following from J. Rodman Williams in his book, *Renewal Theology*, page 359—

"As the one great Sinner—the one who had become sin, the one who was accursed beyond all that ever lived—all the wrath of God Almighty was poured out upon Him. The head of the serpent was someday to be crushed (Genesis 3:15), but at this moment Christ had become so identified with evil that the crushing was on Him. This weight of the divine fury directed against sin at the cross is humanly inconceivable. For at Calvary all the sin of all the world was receiving the outpoured vials of divine wrath. It was for Christ alone to bear that awesome punishment and to experience its indescribable torment and anguish."

To present an echo of these theologians, here is a short piece from Foy E. Wallace, Jr. It is taken from a taped sermon he preached some years ago. As a matter of fact, it was a sermon he often preached in meetings all over the United States.

"And when it says that God saw that He poured out His soul unto death, that means that Jesus died a spiritual death. We picture the agonies of the cross of Christ as excruciating physical pain He suffered. And, of course that was terrible but the thieves suffered physically. The message of the cross is not the physical suffering of Christ. He poured out His soul unto death. But the soul cannot die in any way but spiritually. The only way a soul can die is in the sense of separation. That's the only way it can die. And when Jesus died, the spiritual death, poured out His soul unto death, it meant that Jesus died spiritually. That meant that Jesus Christ was separated from God on the cross of Calvary. The sinner is separated from God and He took the sinners place. But He couldn't take the sinners place without getting in it and He had to be separated from God....Redemption called for it, it had to be

done. When God saw that He poured out His soul unto death, He was satisfied. That means the law was satisfied. Sin was so great that it had to be reckoned either with the punishment of the sin or the banishment of the sinner. And God's justice could not permit sin to go unpunished but God's love could not permit the sinner to be banished and Jesus Christ took the sinner's place. And the law was upheld, legally satisfied."

A statement brother Wallace makes regarding sin that it was so great that it required "either...the punishment of the sin or the banishment of the sinner" makes very little sense. The fact is that sin has to be punished or *the sinner forgiven!* What brother Wallace presents here is straight out of Calvinist textbooks. It presents a theory from Anselm in the eleventh century and amended by Calvin. Yet, it is all based on the ideas of Augustine from centuries before. By preaching this sermon for so long a time, to so many hundreds of brethren, brother Wallace influenced them toward this view and thus it is no wonder the theory is so widespread. Even a Jule Miller filmstrip that has been used for decades as Bible studies says that Jesus suffered "the hell we deserve."

Brother Wallace bases his whole argument on the phrase "*poured out his soul unto death.*" However, his interpretation of the phrase only *asserts* that it refers to spiritual death rather than physical death. From this he then concludes that Jesus took all of the sins, guilt and punishment of the world upon himself while on the cross. Jesus took the sinner's place, Calvinist substitution. This, he said, was required by the law of God.

However, the specified phrase is like that said of Rachel in Genesis 35:18, "as her soul was in departing (for she died)..." What is meant regarding Jesus is stated for us in the gospels, Matthew 27:50, Mark 15:37 John 19:30. Luke 23:46 says—

"And Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said this, he gave up the ghost."

This only meant that Jesus *died* because the spirit departed from his body and the body without the spirit is dead. "Poured out his soul unto death" in Isaiah 53:12 refers to the same event as Luke 23:46.

Further, in the phrase "bare the sin of many" in the same verse, "bare" is from the Hebrew, *nasa*. *Nasa* may be translated in some passages as "forgive" or "pardon," such as Exodus 32:32, 34:7, Numbers 14:18. *Nasa* is also translated by "forgive" and "pardon" in the following verses—

"So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did unto thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spake unto him." Genesis 50:17.

"Now therefore forgive, I pray thee, my sin only this once, and intreat the LORD your God, that he may take away from me this death only." Exodus 10:17.

"Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD." I Samuel 15:25.

Must we conclude from these verses that the sins of the people involved were *transferred* to Joseph, Moses or Samuel? Were their sins *imputed* to these individuals? No, they were not. In some places, even though the words "bore" or "bear" are used, it may mean only "removal." The conclusion that *nasa*, "borne," refers to a transference of sins to the one who "bears" is a false conclusion. There is no imputation of sins inherent in the word any more than there is an imputation of the righteousness of Christ to us, the "imputation theory" of Calvinism. To bear sins is to remove them, not impute them to Himself. See also John 1:29, Hebrews 9:26, 28, I Peter 2:24. There is no hint at all of imputation/substitution in these verses or any of the verses in Isaiah 53:4-12, but to the contrary.

Consider the consequences. If Jesus took all of every sin that man has ever committed onto Himself then He is the blackest of ungodly individuals who ever lived, as was claimed in the quotations we looked at before. No one human commits every possible sin that one can do. It is said that Jesus took EVERY sin of mankind into Himself on the cross. He became a sinner so great that God could not stand to look upon Him. I deny that any such scripture says such a thing but to the contrary the scriptures deny it.

If this doctrine of substitution is true then no one has any sins because Jesus took them away 2000 years ago; no one should feel any guilt about anything because Jesus took our guilt upon himself. No one should feel any fear of punishment for their actions because Jesus took all our punishment for sinful conduct on Himself. In fact, whatever we do we cannot call any of it sin because we have no sins; Jesus took them all away before we were born. Why do people today feel guilty for transgressions of God's word when they are not guilty of anything? Why does God still threaten us with punishment for sins we don't have when He put all of our guilt and punishment on Jesus 2000 years ago?

Just the death of Jesus, what happened on the Cross, meant absolutely nothing without His resurrection and ascension to become High Priest to complete the offering for sin, I Corinthians 15:17, Hebrews 9:11ff. Paul said that if Christ had not been raised, “ye are yet in your sins.” If our sins were all removed on the Cross, there would have been no need for the resurrection, ascension and Priesthood of Jesus. Substitution is an attack on the gospel of Christ. ☞

More Next Month



Evolution ? Living Proof Against It

If you ever doubted that God exists, meet the very technical, highly engineered dromedary camel.



When I’m hungry, I’ll eat almost anything — a leather bridle, a piece of rope, my master’s tent or a pair of shoes. My mouth is so tough a thorny cactus doesn’t bother it. I love to chow down grass and other plants that grow here on the Arabian desert.

I’m a dromedary camel, the one-hump kind that lives on hot deserts in the Middle East . My hump, all 80 pounds of it, is filled with fat –my body fuel — not water as some people believe. My Mighty Maker gave it to me because He knew I wouldn’t always be able to find food as I travel across the hot sands. When I don’t find any chow, my body automatically takes fat from the hump, feeds my system, and keeps me going strong. This is my emergency food supply.



If I can’t find any plants to munch, my body uses up my hump. When the hump gets smaller, it starts to tip to one side. But when I get to a nice oasis and begin to eat again, my hump soon builds back to normal. I’ve been known to drink 27 gallons of water in 10 minutes. My Master Designer made me in such a fantastic way that in a matter of minutes all the water I’ve swallowed travels to the billions of microscopic cells that make up my flesh.

In an eight-hour day I can carry a 400-pound load 100 miles across a hot, dry desert and not stop once for a drink or something to eat. In fact, I’ve been known to go eight days without a drink, but then I look a wreck.

Normally my blood contains 94 percent water, just like yours. But when I can't find any water to drink, the heat of the sun gradually robs a little water out of my blood. Scientists have found that my blood can lose up to 40 percent of its water, and I'm still healthy.

Doctors say human blood has to stay very close to 94 percent water. If you lose five percent of it, you can't see anymore; 10 percent, you can't hear and you go insane; 12 percent, your blood is as thick as molasses and your heart can't pump the thick stuff. It stops, and you're dead.

But that's not true with me. Why? Scientists say my blood is different. My red cells are elongated. Yours are round. Maybe that's what makes the difference.

Even though I lose a lot of water on the desert, my body conserves it, too. Way in the beginning when my intelligent Engineer made me, He gave me a specially designed nose that saves water. When I exhale, I don't lose much. My nose traps that warm, moist air from my lungs and absorbs it in my nasal membranes.

But how does my nose get cool? I breathe in hot dry desert air, and it goes through my wet nasal passages. This produces a cooling effect, and my nose stays as much as 18 degrees cooler than the rest of my body.

I love to travel the beautiful sand dunes. It's really quite easy, because my Creator gave me specially engineered sand shoes for feet. My hooves are wide, and they get even wider when I step on them. Each foot has two long, bony toes with tough, leathery skin between my soles, which are a little like webbed feet.

They won't let me sink into the soft, drifting sand. This is good, because often my master wants me to carry him 100 miles across the desert in just one day. (I troop about 10 miles per hour)



My eyelashes arch down over my eyes like screens, keeping the sand and sun out but still letting me see clearly. If a grain of sand slips through and gets in my eye, the Creator took care of that, too. He gave me an inner eyelid that automatically wipes the sand off my eyeball just like a windshield wiper. Some people think I'm conceited because I always walk around with my head held high and my nose in the air.



Desert people depend on me for many things. Not only am I their best form of transportation, but I'm also their grocery store. Mrs. Camel gives very rich milk that people make into butter and cheese. I shed my thick fur coat once a year, and that can be woven into cloth. A few young camels are used for beef, but I don't like to talk about that.

For a long time we camels have been called the "ships of the desert" because of the way we sway from side to

side when we trot. Some of our riders get seasick. I sway from side to side because of the way my legs work. Both legs on one side move forward at the same time, elevating that side. My “left, right left, right” motion makes my rider feel like he’s in a rocking chair going sideways.

When I was 6 months old, special knee pads started to grow on my front legs. The intelligent Creator knew I had to have them. They help me lower my 1,000 pounds to the ground. If I didn’t have them, my knees would soon become sore and infected, and I could never lie down. I’d die of exhaustion.



By the way, I don’t get thick knee pads because I fall on my knees. I fall on my knees because I already have these tough pads. Someone very great thought of me and knew I needed them. He designed them into my genes. It’s real difficult for me to understand how some people say I evolved into what I now am. I’m very technical, highly engineered dromedary camel. Things like me don’t just happen.

Author Unknown



A Tribute to Pauline (Polly) Phillips



PAULINE FAY PHILLIPS was born October 26, 1918 in Springfield, Missouri. She passed from this life June 26, 2010 at the age of 91 years. She is survived by daughters Carolyn Phillips King and Elaine Flatt. One brother, John R Younger and one sister Irene Dunford, 11 grandchildren, 26 great-grandchildren and 5 great-great-grandchildren.

Yesterday, June 29, was a sad and joyous occasion. Sad, because we had lost a person whom we loved so dearly, and joyous because she had been a good Christian. A wife to H. E. Phillips a mother (biologically) to three daughters (Carolyn, Juanita and Elaine – whom they raised to be faithful Christians) and a “mother” to hundreds of others who came to Florida College and were invited into their home and became a part of the Phillips’ college family.

We first met brother H. E. Phillips and Polly in 1962 when we moved to Tampa. I was a student at Florida Christian College and preached for the Belmont Heights congregation. Brother and sister Phillips were working with the Forrest Hills congregation in Tampa.

It was interesting how I became so closely associated with the Phillips family. About the time we moved to Tampa, brother Phillips began having heart problems. Having known us for a while, Polly called one day and asked me if I played golf. I replied, “well I have some golf clubs but hardly ever go.” (You will notice that I avoided the question, for usually what I did on the golf course was not fun). She replied, “if you have the time would you call Elwood and ask him to play golf with you. The doctor told him that the exercise would be good for him.”

By James P. Needham
No James P. Needham fact that I had a wife and four children, was taking ten to twelve hours of college courses each semester and doing full-time work at Belmont Heights, I had neither the time nor money to play golf.

Anyway I learned from brother Phillips that there was a par three course in town that would let preachers play free. OK, so I could go for that. I began calling every few days to encourage him to go play golf. Sometimes he had the time and would go and other times he couldn't. I learned later that as he and Polly were driving along one day, my name came up in the discussion. "Do you think brother Smith will make it as a preacher," Polly asked. He replied, "I don't know. It seems like all he wants to do is play golf." Do you think she told him of "her scheme" to get him on the golf course – NO! We were all together later and I gave him the facts. We all had a good laugh. Ah, what a joyous person! It was always a delight to be around Polly.

I was visiting them one time when some students from Italy had come to spend the summer with them. Polly was teaching them to speak English in preparation for their entering college in the fall. Now being from Tennessee I am able to speak two languages (southern and hillbilly) I came across one of my native words. The boys looked at one another and then at Polly and tried to repeat what I said. She said, "don't try to repeat what he says, he doesn't speak English, he speaks hillbilly."

Many more humorous things could be remembered and repeated. What was her greatest asset? A love for God, for family and for her fellow man. She was a good Bible student and a wife that her beloved Elwood was proud of. Did she make mistakes? We all do!

Yes, one of the great mothers in Israel has gone on to her reward. But as was always the case, when you went to see Polly, you always expected that radiant smile. She never lost it. Even during her last days in the nursing home when I would visit her. When she saw me coming in, there was always that smile. May God smile on you, dear sister, through eternity.

-- Editor



Preachers and Preaching

by James P. Needham

IN the 1960's I was preaching for the Expressway church in Louisville, KY. It was a wonderful work, but not without problems. It was the result of a split in the largest and most widely known church in the state (Taylor Blvd.). The split was over the institutional question. Expressway church had good working elders, and members that were faithful, dedicated to the cause. We baptized many people during my stay there, most of it was done by the members. It was a wonderful work.

Churches across the country were struggling with the institutional and sponsoring church issues. I had been deeply involved in this struggle, so I was urged to move to Louisville and take the work with the faithful brethren at Taylor Blvd. Which became the Expressway church. One of the elders told me my salvation could well depend upon whether I came to help them. Once we got the Expressway work started and settled, the elders urged me to hold as many meetings as possible where I could help churches with problems. So, I began to hold 12 to 15 meetings a year in all parts of the country. The work was trying but rewarding. I carried on the work at home as best I could when I was there, and never missed publishing a weekly bulletin with thousands on the mailing list. Much good was accomplished.

During those years I also was doing a good deal of writing for *Truth Magazine* of which I was part owner and for which I had written almost from its beginning. During that busy time the editor, Cecil Willis, asked me to write a series of articles on Preachers and Preaching, which I did while holding those meetings. The series was so well received that brethren urged me to put it in book form, which was published in hard back. The first edition sold out

rather quickly, and a new and enlarged edition was published in soft cover. I still hear from preachers who say they have been tremendously helped by that material. (The second edition is still in print and can be ordered from me or from book stores).

I have said all that to say this. True gospel preaching is hard and tedious work, calling for hours of study and research, good judgment and the courage to speak the truth, come what may. We sow the seed and God gives the increase. We never know what problems we may face, nor what good we are accomplishing.

There always are mixed results. Some will love you for preaching the plain truth, others may be offended by it and become your enemy. Paul said, "Am I become your enemy because I tell you the truth" (Galatians 4:16). Some will support you to your face, and stab you in the back. Paul spoke of "perils among false brethren (II Corinthians 11:26). I can certainly identify with that.

Preachers have a tremendous responsibility to guard that which is entrusted to them, namely, the gospel (I Timothy 6:20). You would be surprised to know what some brethren will accept as gospel preaching if they like the preacher. You would be surprised how some will criticize and nit-pick the preacher they don't like even though he preaches the truth. They hang on his every word.

Preachers have a tremendous influence on the minds of the brethren. It is largely true that as the preacher goes, so goes the church. In the institutional and sponsoring church controversy, if the preacher was in error on the subject, the church turned out liberal. If the preacher was sound on the issues, the church turned out conservative. Now, I know there were notable exceptions to this, but they were few. It emphasizes the absolute necessity of teaching the truth. The Bible speaks of people who "did as they were taught" Matthew 28:15. And so it goes. No wonder Peter said, II Peter 1:12 "Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth."

I have lived through at least two apostasies during my 60+ years of preaching. I witnessed the soft-soaping and compromising attitude that lead to these apostasies. Stern warnings were sounded of the black clouds on the horizon but those who warned were sometimes called "alarmists," "these brethren can smell a rat when there is no rat," "they are orphan haters," "they don't believe the Great Commission," "they are antis, and trouble makers." These epithets and falsehoods came after they had miserably failed to produce scriptural authority for their innovations. This followed the pattern of past apostasies, so those who knew the history of past departures were not surprised by the vitriol of the present.

A faithful remnant of faithful brethren and churches survived the melee, and experienced considerable growth for a time. New churches were started as the result of division over those issues in many communities.

Today, we are reliving the history of those departures. It has been said, "Those who refuse to learn from history are bound to repeat it." Today the pulpits of some conservative churches are occupied by career preachers, who, if they know the whole truth, refuse to preach it and make waves. They are drawing nice salaries with nice perks. Many brethren in these churches are so ignorant of the truth that they can see no problem. The problem is easily detected when one sees the sermons list for gospel meetings. The sermons are largely devotional that could be preached and accepted in most denominations. I was unemployed as a regular preacher for a year. I sat and listened to a preacher in a local church for that year. I can truthfully say that his sermons could have been preached and better accepted in any Methodist church in the community. A young preacher was asked how long it had been since he preached a lesson on the identity of the New Testament church. His answer: "I never have!" One wonders if he could do an acceptable job if he tried. I'm not a prophet nor the son of one, but I am pretty sure serious trouble lurks down the road, as many churches prepare for a future they cannot see due to a lack of knowledge.

I held a meeting for a church whose preacher had been there 12 years. At the end of the meeting he said to me, "I have been here 12 years, and this the only meeting since I have been here that one could tell the difference between the Lord's church and denominationalism." I think his description of these gospel meetings would describe many gospel meetings that I have observed.

Devotional preaching and self improvement lessons are profitable to a degree, but when that is all one preaches, he is failing to do his duty as a gospel preacher. A true gospel preacher will strive for balance in his preaching. There is room for devotional and self-improvement in preaching but there must be doctrinal lessons, and false doctrines must be exposed. The preacher who soft peddles the truth and falls for the current political correctness debacle (don't offend anyone) is not worth the salt in his bread. He will lead a church down the primrose path to

apostasy. An uninformed church is a vulnerable church to almost anything that comes down the pike. The Lord and the apostles couldn't preach the truth without offending some, so who are we to think we can?

Here I point out a fact seldom considered: It is possible for a gospel preacher to preach for a life time and never preach any error, and still go to hell for failing to preach all the truth—all the counsel of God (Acts 20:27)..He can tickle ears, and soft peddle the truth and appeal to the weaker element in a church and be well liked. Or he can do his duty and preach the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; nothing more, nothing less, and nothing else and be appreciated by those who love the truth and hated by those who don't. It is a choice one has to make. The choice one makes depends upon his view of the mission of a gospel preacher.

I grew up in West Tennessee. I became a Christian when I was 13 years old. I did much of my early preaching in West Tennessee. I held many meetings in the area in small communities. One could not mention denominations or their false doctrines without having several of the members jump on him at the front door after the service. Mainly the people who held jobs in the community or were in business there. At my first location I held some tent meetings in the area and baptized several people. I started a new church near-by. Things were going along quite well until the elders called me to a meeting and said, "We are here to discuss the kind of preaching we are going to have in the future. You are not to mention the word hell or denominations in the pulpit. To tell people they are going to hell is an insult and harassment." I honestly don't remember telling people they were going to hell in that language. I am sure it could have been implied from my lessons. I said, "Jesus told people they were going to hell." To which they replied, "but you are not Jesus." If I can't follow Him, whom can I follow? (One of the elders was County Superintendent of Schools, and another was a Justice of the Peace and had a business in town).

The elders went to Dyersburg and consulted with Ross O. Spears. They asked, "What can we do with our young preacher who is hurting our business." Brother Spears said, "The best thing you can do is support him in his work."

I was held in high esteem in the area in my early preaching years. One summer I held 7 meetings in the general area. I preached the truth on the work of the church in each one and I haven't been back since to a one of those churches, and don't expect to be invited.

This was the general atmosphere in the churches of West Tennessee. They called hard hitting preachers fighters, and they didn't want them for meetings.

Most of the churches in West Tennessee contributed to Tennessee Orphan's home. And when this began to be questioned openly, all hell broke loose, about 90% of the churches in West Tennessee maintained their allegiance to the orphan's home and the sponsoring church concept, and they refused to even discuss the situation, and if they did, their defenses were juvenile and ignorant. Liberalism swept West Tennessee almost a hundred percent. There were only 3 or 4 churches between Nashville and Memphis that stood for the truth.

It is said that insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result. It's not going to happen. This prevails in church history. Brethren keep doing the same thing from generation to generation thinking it will yield a different result. What is wrong with brethren? Don't they realize God's inalterable law that one reaps what he sows. If we keep sowing the same old seed of softness and compromise, it will keep on yielding apostasy. Why is that so difficult to understand?

The soft-peddling preachers of today are laying the ground work for a repetition of the West Tennessee scenario. As Foy E. Wallace, Jr. used to say, "soft-soap in the pulpit won't cleans the sinner in the pew."

Conclusion:

A case in point: Today we are facing the greatest threat to the church in the history of our country, namely, Islam. They are bound and determined to take over the world and make their religion the only religion. Certain groups in this country are helping them take over this country. When they do Christians will be given three alternatives: (1) Embrace their false religion, (2) Submit to it and pay taxes to it, or (3) failing that, death by beheading. And yet, gospel preachers are saying almost nothing about this. The periodicals and internet postings that I get are practically void of any mention of this. If you think this is not a danger of which everyone should be informed, then you are helping with the Islamic take over. I have written much about it, enough to endanger my life if the Muslims get hold of what I have said. Some denominational preachers are doing a much better job exposed this danger than are gospel preacher. For shame! ❏



Enduring To the End

by James R. Dunigan

JESUS said, “Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. And you will be hated by all for My name’s sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved” (Matthew 10:21-22).

Perhaps one of the verses that will give me a lot of reflection is the one I listed above. As I reflect on my life, first and foremost, as a Christian and later as an evangelist this verse has come to mean a great deal to me. As I look back on my life I am often reminded of how I cannot really please everyone I meet, no matter how hard I might try. I also think on the examples set by my fellow Christians and understand that they will not always react kindly or set the best example for others to see. For example, Christians who are lax in their attendance can in no way set the example for me to follow. So, I must step out and teach and set an example of how to truly serve God, even if the example and teaching causes friction. I can only do my best to teach a better way and set an example by living that way.

Christ warns His followers that we will find ourselves at odds with others because of our service to Him. Sometimes in this life I cannot seem to win for losing. I talk to many people in the course of a week. Recently, one week I knocked 8 blocks of doors inviting people to services and not a single one voiced an interest in visiting, most refused to accept the pamphlet I offered them. Some reacted in what appeared to be disgust I was even at their door. Christ warns we would be hated by all, and some days that surely seems to be the case!

Have you ever felt like you just couldn’t win? You try to live right and do the things God asks of you, but somehow, in some way, it just seems like everyone is on your case. Jesus told us we would have days like that! It seems that our own family members are often the ones who get on us the most. Especially when they don’t seem to understand our own personal commitments to God. Matthew 10:34-36 “*Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. For I have come to ‘set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law’; and ‘a man’s enemies will be those of his own household.’*” (Luke 12:52-54.) How do we handle these issues? What we do is develop the faith to endure. *I John 5:4 “For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.”* We may be at odds with family members over our commitment but nevertheless we remain committed through faith. The promise of eternal life is offered to those who endure to the end, not to those who surrender. (Revelation 2:9-11; 25-27.)

There is nothing worse than to have those that we love turn on us. Whether those people be those of our physical families or the family of God. Our children can break our hearts it seems almost on a whim and daily basis. Children who are attracted by the world learn to not submit to their parents. Obedience becomes alien to them. They have loving parents who are trying to teach them the way of the Lord and yet they want to resist that at every turn. Paul did not leave anyone out of his writings! He addressed fathers, mothers and children! In Ephesians 6:1-2 he writes “*Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.. “Honor your father and mother,” which is the first commandment with promise*.” We cannot lose our faith and our commitment when those we love so much turn to the world instead of God. We must endure faithfully even then.

Sometimes we find ourselves at odds with our other family members and friends. We believe we have scriptural authority for what we teach and do, and perhaps they do not believe that we do. Even when we show them book, chapter and verse, they refuse to hear. They see us as narrow minded, then they speak out against our dedication and commitment to God, even then we must endure and continue in our service unabated. We serve

God with all our hearts, minds and souls because we love Him, more than we do the world, more than we love the acceptance of those who fail to understand! We do it to please Him. (Matthew 6:24; 22:36-38; Mark 12:29-31; Hebrews 12:28; I John 4:18-20.) While these friends and family may not understand our dedication, we continue in it regardless.

There is an old thought that the two worse things that can be discussed at family gatherings are politics and religion. In matters of religion, family members can be turned off because one of them demands proof of authority in a matter and perhaps think what is being done by us is unscriptural. Then they simply say that's your opinion, your interpretation, even when book, chapter and verse is shown. We find this in not only our physical families but among God's people as well. Whatever the cause, families (physical and church) are destroyed because some stand with the Lord and some do not. Jesus once quoted from the book of Micah (7:6.) "*A man's foes will be those of his own household.*" Once again we must have the faith and endurance to deal with these situations.

As I noted before there are days that it seems that everyone I meet just doesn't like me. I like to be liked to be sure. But I also understand that not everyone will be my friend. The Bible describes good friends (Psalm 15:3; 18:24; 27:9) and bad friends (Psalm 41:9; I Corinthians 15:33.) When it comes to friends I know we often have the closest friends among those whose personalities and ours "work together". Friends that share the same strong convictions will make the closest friends, usually. I have come to learn this: *If you stand for nothing, then you can agree with everyone.* When it comes to the Word of God when you stand solidly for the truth and you stand on the premises and principles of God's Word you will have many call themselves your enemy. Your very presence can be a reminder of their lack of conviction and sin. Oh, these people may threaten your good name, in the work place they may try to get you fired, they may even make an effort to take what you have and make it their own. But Christ gave us a thought, a conviction that we can stand by and use to strengthen our resolve to stand firm. "*These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer. I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD.*" (Philippians 4:6-8.)

To remind you the reader of this, since Jesus has overcome, it is not only possible but necessary for us to overcome with Him! John said in Revelation 2:10 "*Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.*" Christ promises us VICTORY! (I Corinthians 15: 53-58.) It is indeed sad when we find ourselves at odds with family and friends. It hurts when they turn against us. But it is also necessary for us to maintain our faithfulness and steadfastness. We must endure and set the example for them in all things. We must be determined to be and to do what the Lord teaches. We may even feel like we are losing for the moment but I know this. I will be VICTORIOUS in the final outcome! Romans 8:18; II Corinthians 4:16-5:8.) Whatever circumstance we find ourselves; Whoever we find ourselves at odds with, may God give us the faith and strength we need in that hour to endure. ☞

The Work of An Evangelist

by Donald Townsley



PAUL told Timothy to "*Do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry...*" (II Timothy 4:5) The word "evangelist" means "a messenger of good"... "Denotes a preacher of the gospel"... *W. E. Vine.* I sometimes think that the work of an evangelist is the most misunderstood work in the church of our Lord. In this article we hope to give you a better understanding of the evangelist and his work.

The work of an evangelist is a work designed and planned by God to be carried on in the kingdom of Christ. God planned to save lost men through the preaching of the gospel. Paul said, "*For after that in the wisdom of God*

the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe” (I Corinthians 1:21). Jesus said, “*Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned*” (Mark 16:15, 16). I think we can see from these verses that preaching the gospel to the lost is the **most essential work in the world**. It is the only work that a man can do that will reach into eternity and abide throughout the ceaseless ages! Why anyone would want to despise this work and look upon it as not being very important is more than I can understand!

From Satan’s standpoint I can understand why he would defame the work of an evangelist. If he can cause God’s people to look upon this great work as not being very important and make them believe it should be only a part-time job, then he will be able to stop the growth of the kingdom of Christ. Satan rejoices when he can persuade an able young preacher to believe it is more important to become rich in this world’s goods than it is to “*endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ*” (II Timothy 2:3). Satan (through his agents) says to the young preacher, “You can make three or four times the money you are now making if you will enter the business world. Don’t let your family suffer”. What the young preacher needs to realize is that while he is making all that money he is letting souls go to hell that he could be saving! While he is making all that money he is not able to study as he should, thus he is not feeding God’s people the word of God as they should be fed. He should realize that God will take care of him and his family if he is faithful in doing the work of God. He needs to think on the words of David, “*I have been young, and now I am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread*” (Psalms 37:25).

The Qualifications of An Evangelist

Someone says, “I didn’t know that the evangelist had any qualifications”. Yes, the New Testament lays down many principles of truth that are to govern the lives of men who give their lives to preaching the gospel. A man who is going to preach needs to study these things carefully and prayerfully to see if his life measures up before he sets out to do this great work.

A man who is going to preach the gospel is to **be a Christian in the fullest sense of the word**. He must be an example of the believers (I Timothy 4:12); He must be a man who takes heed unto himself (I Timothy 4: 16; I Corinthians 9:27); He must be a man who behaves himself at all times (I Timothy 3:15; I Thessalonians 2:10); He must strive at all times to flee youthful lusts (II Timothy 2:22); He must know how to treat the women in the church (treat the older women as mothers and the younger women as sisters, with all purity –I Timothy 5:2); He must be a man who flees the love of money (I Timothy 6:6 – 12; Acts 20:33); And he must be a man who follows after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness, and peace (I Timothy 6:11; II Timothy 2:22).

A man who is going to preach must **be a careful student of the word of God**. He must “*give attendance to reading*” I Timothy 4:13; He must study (II Timothy 2:15); He must meditate (I Timothy 4:15). A man who does not like to study had better find something else to do. This work cannot be done with any kind of success by a man who will not study. It is a shame when a man stays at one place two or three years and has run out of anything to preach – so he starts his “re-runs”.

A man who is going to preach must be “**apt to teach**” or “**skilled in teaching**” (II Timothy 2:24 – 25; Acts 20:20; I Timothy 2:7). A man who has no aptitude to teach had better find him something else to do. Many a man has wanted to preach but has not had ability as a teacher and fails to do very much good because of his inability. Brethren are constantly asking this kind of man to find him some other place to labor. This brings frustration to him and to the local church where he tries to labor. This kind of man would have been much happier working with his hands and doing something else in the kingdom of God.

A man who is going to preach must **be impartial** in his dealings with the brethren (I Timothy 5:21). When a preacher is in the pulpit he must have no friends. He must deal with the sins of each person alike.

A preacher **must not seek the glory of men** in his preaching (I Thessalonians 2:6). He must at all times seek to please God (Galatians 1:10).

A preacher of the gospel must **be bold** in his preaching (Ephesians 6:18–19). The pulpit is no place for a coward or compromiser. One who preaches boldly will have enemies (Galatians 4:16).

The preacher must **speak with all authority** (Titus 2:15). That is, he must preach the gospel not as if it were advice or counsel but as it is in truth the requirements of God. Too much preaching today sounds like good advice instead of God’s requirements.

Attitudes Christians Must Have Toward the Evangelist

The preacher is to be among Christians “*without fear*” (I Corinthians 16:10). The evangelist is to have a friendly reception in the midst of Christians. He has a right to expect kindly cooperation from the people of God. When the preacher is forced to struggle against unfriendly discrimination, jealous opposition and antagonism his success as a preacher is minimized. When the preacher’s work is hindered the salvation of men is hindered (I Corinthians 1:21). The brethren who hinder his work will someday stand before Christ and give an account of their ungodly deeds (II Corinthians 5:10).

The brethren are to realize that the preacher “*worketh the work of the Lord*” (I Corinthians 16:10). This is not the work of man but the work of God (I Corinthians 15: 58). This is **the most important work on earth!**

The brethren are not to “despise” the evangelist (I Corinthians 16:11). To despise means “to set at naught; treat with contempt”. Being guilty of a lack of respect toward a preacher and his work is shabby business for people who call themselves God’s people! If the devil can break down respect for the preacher who is engaged in the work of warning against him, then his work will be much easier. Brother or sister, when you despise a faithful preacher you are doing the work of the devil, and there are too many brethren engaged in the devil’s work today!

The man who has forsaken all to give himself to preaching the gospel to the perishing of the earth deserves to be respected and to have his hands held up (Philippians 2:29; I Corinthians 16:18). Brother or sister, if you have had the wrong attitude toward the preacher and his work, won’t you repent while you have the time and opportunity?

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Promoters and Planners

Austin Taylor says:

“The Lord has told us what to do and by example shown us how to do it. This is enough for all who want to “fear God and keep his commandments,” which is the “whole duty of man.” All institutions and organizations of men only show weakness and lack of faith. “Let God be true and every man a liar.” Anything unscriptural will bring strife and trouble. When a church has the spirit of the Pharisee who loved the praise of men, and of Diotrephes who wanted preeminence, the desire to glorify Christ is shut out. The real spiritual power of a congregation is within itself, not borrowed from another. Others may see the good works of a church and be encouraged to glorify God in the same manner, both following the same Guide, not one following the other. A showing of zeal may arouse zeal, but unless it is coupled with truth and with humility it is worse than no zeal. All departures, large and small, have been flattened and the promoters gone down beneath the weight of their disgrace in the eyes of good people. The Christian Missionary Society has been a failure in every way It developed at one time that ninety percent of the money sent went to promoters, and ten percent to preachers on the ground doing the work. The plans that were promoted years ago around Sherman and Dallas turned out the same way. It was the same way with Don Carlos Janes. There are always some thieves connected with these projects; and selfish men connected with them who want to make a show, take advantage of the innocent and the ignorant. These beggars never bother here; if one comes he will be given a “warm” reception. This “getting ready” to save souls across the sea by building institutions, colleges and relief sheds is attracting interest, but when it comes to preaching the plain gospel to Catholics and Lutherans, and typical foreign classes in this country, the fever goes down below normal. But this **preaching** must be done if souls are saved. I do not know a sponsoring church that would support a **real gospel meeting**, such as held by great gospel preachers of the past, in the place where they are located. Straight gospel sermons would empty their pews. There are 140,000,000 people in the United States of America who have not obeyed the gospel. Multitudes of them would obey the gospel and be saved if they were taught. It is a false idea to wade through millions of people who have not heard it, and tread the ocean, to reach a limited few of the same kind of people; it is the wrong appeal; the wrong plan; and makes the wrong impression. If someone would say, “judge not that ye be not judged,” remember that Paul said, “warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.” It is up to a few of you to preach the truth; some will falter, and others fall by the wayside, but many will endure to the end.”

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