

Our purpose is to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints,” and to “prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

“To continue speaking the truth in love,” “endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace,” “keeping the ordinance as delivered.”

“Thus saith the Lord, ‘stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.’ (Jer. 6:16) “And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in.” (Isa. 58:12).

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NO. 10

WONDROUS THINGS

By *BILLY D. DIKINSON*

Psalm 119 consists of 176 verses, the longest of any in the Bible, and it proclaims the glories of God’s word. Matthew Henry wrote that “this psalm may be considered as the statement of a believer’s experience,” meaning that David had experienced in his own life the (need and importance of divine revelation. Another source described it as “the Christian’s ABC of the praise, love, power and use of the word of God ... for here we have set forth in inexhaustible fullness what the word of God is to man, and how a man is to behave himself in relation to it.” When the Psalm is read, it is discovered that almost every verse in it mentions the word of God (with only four exceptions).

Using different terminology to describe various aspects of God’s word, David speaks of law, testimony, judgments, statutes, commandments, precepts, ordinances, etc., providing us with one of the greatest tributes ever written to God’s expressed will. Surely one of the most beautiful statements made is found in verse 18: “Open thou my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.” Notice that David did not ask for a plainer law, feeling that it was something beyond his comprehension, but his desire was to have a heart that was open and receptive to the truth. After all, he didn’t want anything to hinder him from beholding those “wondrous things.” He went on to write, “Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them. The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple” (verses 129-130).

The truth is that Bible reading and studying the Scriptures involve an exercise that is both exciting and profitable! When people look upon it as being boring and a waste of time, it shows that they lack the understanding that David came to possess in his life. His attitude was, “O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day” (verse 97), but what about us? If that is not our practice, it shows that we don’t

love God’s word like the “sweet psalmist of Israel” (2 Sam. 23:1) did, indicating a failure on our part to appreciate what we have been given. Let’s notice three specific areas where those “wondrous things” can be found.

THE WONDERS OF DOCTRINE

There are great doctrinal truths that are treated in God’s word, revealing things that need to be understood about God and our relationship to Him. When he expressed his desire to “behold wondrous things,” it’s interesting that David used the term “law” in that statement. Do you find that shocking? While liberals seem to hate the very concept of law itself, even denying that we are under any kind of law today, David spoke of “wondrous things out of thy law.” Another statement found in Psa. 19:7, for example, is representative of the whole revealed will of God-- “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.” This can be viewed as a general reference to the rule of God for the conduct of man, being “perfect” in its ability to guide and give us the understanding we need in spiritual matters.

Certainly the law of Moses itself, which David lived under, contained many “wondrous things.” God being the author, it was “the law which the Lord had commanded by Moses” (Neh. 8:14). Paul informed the Galatians that “the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith” (Gal. 3:24). Think of all the beautiful types, figures, and shadows that gave a picture of the coming Savior, helping us to understand who He was and what His heavenly mission accomplished. There is a lot that we can learn from the Old Testament about God’s view of justice, holiness, righteousness, and other things. No wonder Paul wrote in Rom. 15-4: “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”

One of the purposes of the law of Moses was to bring to man a consciousness of sin (Rom. 3:20), but it’s in the New Testament scriptures where the true remedy for sin is

continued on page seven

CONTENTS

Vol. LXXXVI No. 10



ADVOCATE

Wondrous Things 1
 Editorial 2
 Querist Column..... 3
 Pages From The Past 4
 Holy Ground 5
 Bible Relevancy To The Young Person .. 8
 A Lack Of Knowledge 9
 The Father of Lies 9

FROM THE FIELDS11
 THE BACK PAGE..... 12

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Editorial

THE FOUNDATION OF GOD STANDETH SURE

By DON L. KING

In II Timothy 2:19 Paul wrote: “Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”

The subject of Paul is unscrupulous false teachers. He had named Hymenaeus and Philetus as two examples. They had taught that the resurrection was already past and, as is often the case with false teachers, had caused some to fall away from the truth. (Verse 17) False teachers are perhaps the most dangerous men with whom any Christian will ever come in contact. Such men are far more damaging than ordinary worldly people would be. A worldly person may harm a Christian in many ways, (See 1 Corinthians 15:33) but the false teacher brings ruin to our very foundation as a Christian. False teaching leads to a falling away unless it is corrected soon. If you look at the great apostasy which took place during the years of the early church, you will notice that the false teachers came beforehand and perverted the teachings of the apostles. It is still the same. False teachers come among the church teaching false doctrine, and eventually a new faction is born.

In the passage before us, Paul shows how great and good men may somehow turn from the truth. They may make shipwreck of their own souls and also lead others down to ruin. However, the foundation of God remains firm and sure. God’s faithfulness to Himself, to all of His promises, and to those who trust Him as the basis of all hope stands sure and the seal is given. What is that seal? It would appear to be at least two-fold. First, “The Lord knows them that are His.” Second, “Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” (Verse 19) God’s people are known by God and they should be different from the sinful world.” This is quite an identifying thing. If Christians fail to live a consecrated life the purpose of the Lord is thwarted.

In the past number of years, we have seen men whom we believed to be faithful turn away from the truth espousing unscriptural things. Their teaching has caused huge damage to the Lord’s church in some places. Just this week we received word of some who have returned

continued on page eight

QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: How important is it for the older women to teach the younger women those things listed in Titus 2:3-5?

Answer: It is important enough for divine inspiration to include this teaching in God's revelation. The verses read "the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things, that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed." Unfortunately I seldom hear of older women engaged in such teaching. Nor do I hear of younger women who are willing to listen and learn from those who are older. The things listed by Paul are all of supreme importance. Young women need to be encouraged and who better to do that than experienced older women. The younger women here mentioned have children who are not yet grown. They are to be encouraged and admonished to love their husbands. This points out that in our Western society a man and woman fall in love and then get married. But in the East, marriages were less romantic. Often a couple got married and then had to learn to love each other. The older women who had to learn these things when they got married, were now in a position to teach the younger women. Paul affirms that these younger women need to be taught how to love their children. Young children can often be difficult to handle and train. Young inexperienced women often become frustrated, cross and even irritable. It is here that older women can be of great value to a young inexperienced wife and mother as she struggles with the difficulties of parenthood. It seems almost strange to suggest that a young mother needs to be taught to love her children. The pressures of marriage, however, often tempt the young mother to fail in her duties of teaching and properly training her children. The younger women are to be taught to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good and obedient to their husbands. Young wives and mothers need to be calm, wise and prudent. It is in these areas where the older women can render such valuable service. Young women are also admonished to be workers at home or

homemakers. Caring for the home is the idea. She is to manage the affairs of the household. The home is her domain. She provides a pleasant atmosphere for the family. She "guides the house." She is not always running around town as a busybody or gossip. She does not neglect her household duties. The house is well kept and does not look as though a tornado just passed thru it. When the husband returns home from work he is welcomed to a place of peace and serenity. It is very unfortunate but there have been times when an older Christian woman offers her services to a younger wife and mother only to be told "mind your own business. I can take care of my own problems." Such statements have made many older women hesitant to offer help and advice to those who are younger. This is a tragedy. Some young Christian women struggle with difficulties today that could be improved if they would only seek and heed advice from women who are older and experienced in raising children. I often see young mothers who struggle during the assembly with children who are loud, disrespectful and disturb the service in general. When an older woman offers to help they are essentially told, "mind your own business." This is regrettable. These instructions given by Paul are designed for the learning and improvement of younger women as they struggle with the duties of a wife and mother. Such teaching as here commanded by Paul can not only improve difficult situations but just might save a marriage in the process. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 14352 Springfield, MO 65814 or ronnywade36@gmail.com)

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PAGES FROM THE PAST

The following article, by Brother E. A. Lowry is from the July 1937 Issue of The Old Paths Advocate. The only thing I know about Brother Lowry is from his biography in the Old Paths Pulpit No.1 It states he was born, November 17, 1858 in Chattanooga, TN. Living in Chattanooga, he must have been right in the middle of the “cups movement”. He certainly didn’t have a problem “calling out” G.C. Brewer and some of the other proponents of individual cups. Rick Martin

FOLLOW ME

BY E.A LOWRY

“Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you brethren, that you remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you,” 1 Cor. 11:1, 2. I presume there is not a preacher today in the church of Christ, but can read. Therefore, no one is excusable for not keeping and preaching just what Paul taught the Church to preach, and practice. “If any man think himself to be a prophet (teacher), or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord,” 1 Cor. 14:37. Paul also wrote 1 Cor. 16:1, 2, but there are few who believe it from the way they act. He wrote 1 Cor. 11:23-29, but the BIG PREACHERS say something else will do as well and often better.

Paul instructed Titus to “ordain elders in every city,” but the “Big ones” say, “That is all bosh, the Mormons do that.” “But though we or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.” Gal. 1:8, 9. And he will be; there can be no escape. These substitutions are sins against the Holy Spirit.

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap, “Gal. 6:7. Men are sowing the wind, when they substitute something for God’s Plan. Woe unto you ye worldly wise, who trample the teaching of the Holy Spirit under your unhallowed feet. Know ye not that God has only one way to do everything?

“Brethren, be ye followers of me, and mark them which walk so as you have us as an example,” Phil. 3:17. And

please read on two verses and get the picture of those who have gone “in the way of Cain.”

“And Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him,” Col. 3:17. Jesus gave thanks to God for the “Cup”; but the Cainites can’t do that. They had to change their prayer. It would sound a little strange to hear them give thanks for “their cups”.

“Therefore brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle,” 2 Thes. 2:15. I can only add my prayer and exhortation to Paul’s.

“All scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to all good works, “2 Tim. 3:16, 17. If these innovations that are being introduced are “good works,” why do the scriptures not furnish them? I challenge G. C. Brewer, N. B. Hardeman, T. Q. Martin, or any other advocate of these damnable errors, to step out and answer.

Here is why they are so quiet. “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but having itching ears, they will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts. And shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables,” 2 Tim. 4:3, 4. What more proof do you want, when you look at most of the churches of today that that time is here in its fullness? The denominations used to say, when you told them baptism is immersion, “that is Campbellite doctrine.” Now these people have jumped into the demon’s shoes, and Mormon doctrine, hobby rider, fogy, moss back, “you can’t preach in My church.”

Now brethren, I don’t want to go to hell when I die, and I don’t want any of you to go there, but just as sure as God condemned Cain, Nadab and Abihu, Aaron, Moses, David, and others for not following the exact word that He gave them speedy and certain punishment; just that certain will Jesus Christ condemn you for not following His plain teachings. There is no escape. For the hope of eternal happiness I pray you, REPENT.



HOLY GROUND

BY TERRY STUDDARD

The story of Moses is one of the longest, most interesting, and most important narratives found in the Bible. Moses was born at a time when Pharaoh had decreed that all newborn Hebrew males be thrown into the Nile River. That is not said of Aaron, Moses 3 years older brother so; it must have been a relatively new and particularly harsh proclamation. For the first three months of his life, Moses was hidden by his mother. Eventually that was no longer possible and He was put in a little basket (ark) and hidden in the bulrushes of the Nile where Pharaoh's daughter was known to frequent. Through God's providence, she took Moses as her own and even hired his own mother to be his nurse.

Moses was brought up knowing that he was a Hebrew. He was taught about God and he also had the distinct privilege of being a part of Pharaoh's household and all the luxuries that went along with that. In spite of all the benefits Moses had at his disposal as a member of Pharaoh's household, he identified himself with his Hebrew lineage.

In Exodus chapter 3 God has a conversation with Moses about Holy Ground. The ground where Moses stood was not holy because it was an inheritably holy place. There was no tabernacle or altar there. Neither had God in any way previously proclaimed it to be holy. It was holy ground because God was there and that is where He chose to meet with Moses. Although Moses did not understand everything that he soon would learn about God, he instinctively recognized the seriousness of his situation.

When we read through the dealings of God with Moses and the establishment of His statutes, form of worship and, His expectations, we cannot escape this idea of the seriousness of being in His presence on Holy Ground.

WE ARE ON HOLY GROUND TODAY

When we come together as the Church, we stand on the most holy ground we will ever occupy on this side of eternity. Gathering together as the Church in the presence of Christ is the most serious gathering we will ever be a part of in this life.

Paul writes to Timothy: I Timothy 3:14-15 14 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: 15 but I tarry long, that thou mayest know how

thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

Paul's main idea here is "how the Church is set in order" concerning worship, and the ordaining of deacons and elders. Our Corinthian brethren had a problem understanding the seriousness of the assembly during the first century. They were not serious enough about being in the presence of Christ when they came together. They did not understand the significance of "The Lord's Supper." They had a misconception of spiritual gifts. And, they also had a problem with mutual respect for one another and for Christ. Paul wrote unto them:

I Corinthians 11:17 - Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse.

Paul finishes these instructions in:

I Corinthians 14:40 - Let all things be done decently and in order.

After assembling with the Lord's people for over forty years, I have noticed some alarming behaviors that have crept into the Church and our worship services that we really need to evaluate and correct. Because of societal trends, these things have become so much a part of our conduct that perhaps we are even unaware of them. However, they so reflect our attitude toward God, His Church and our brethren that we cannot help but address them. Also, with each passing year we are rapidly losing ground! It is, therefore, a most urgent matter!

WHAT CAN WE DO?

What can we ourselves do to make our worship services acceptable to God and show more awareness for the holy ground on which we stand? I want to address a few things that are too prevalent amongst us. Except for a few isolated exceptions, they once did not exist. Now they are much more universal problems!

1. We should all come to the assembly of the Church prepared **MENTALLY** for worship.

John 4:23 - But the time cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him.

For our worship to meet God's expectations it is necessary that we anticipate the Lord's Day and prepare for it before we actually arrive at the meeting place. We should be in a quiet, respectful frame of mind. Of

all days, this should be the one where we take special precautions not to be involved in confrontation with others and spoil our minds before we get to the service. We all enjoy laughing and cutting up with each other but this is not perhaps the time. Something much more important is on the agenda. Along those lines, it might be a good idea to get up a little earlier than absolutely necessary. This would provide a good time for prayer, meditation, and reading the Bible as part of our preparation for worship.

2. We should all come to the called assembly of the Church prepared PHYSICALLY for worship. We should be on time for the service. Being tardy ruins our opportunity to offer worship that is truly "in spirit." And, it also negatively affects the entire congregation. Think for a moment. Have you ever been in a worship service when someone came in late and walked up through the middle of the aisle smiling and nodding to others? Then they made their way down one of the rows to their favorite seat still nodding and smiling while stepping on the toes of those who got there on time. This is about the assembly of The Lord's Church. Dear Abby once said that habitual lateness is a passive-aggressive sign of contempt. Think about it.

Along the same lines, we should get to the meeting place early enough to take care of our rest room needs. Notwithstanding absolute emergencies, the worship service should not be interrupted for any reason. It is a lack of forethought, preparation, and respect for that to become a habit. Too often the preacher has to watch members get up, go to the rest room, read the bulletin board, get a drink, wander around, then act like he didn't see it.

3. We should all come to the called assembly of the Church DRESSED for worship.

Exodus 19:10- And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes,

Keep in mind that the clothes these people had lasted forty years. However, God said, "let them wash their clothes." In other words, "Let them wear the best they have when they come before me." It is well understood that everyone in a given congregation is not financially equal. However, that is not the problem. We live in a "blue jean and T shirt world." Dressing down seems to be the mantra of our society. We have let it creep into the Assembly. Example: I was once a visitor in a

congregation where a young man waited on The Lord's Table wearing a T shirt with a marijuana slogan on it. I was so shocked that it took me a while to get my mind back on the cross (as best I could). Most people keep a set of clothes for special occasions (funerals, weddings, job interviews). What could possibly be more important than assembling to worship God? What would be wrong with having or obtaining a set of clothes for worship? It would be a benefit to all and an excellent investment!

We should all come to the called assembly of the Church (worship service) prepared to REVERENTLY worship God. Not only should we put away every foreign thought from our minds, for our worship to be reverent and "in truth and spirit" we need to put away all foreign things. I don't know of any of our congregations who have adopted the secular idea and practice of having a "nursery" for the children. That is good! But, in too many places we have gone one better and brought the nursery in with us. Not only do we bring in a menagerie of toys, art supplies, and playthings, we have taken to bringing in candy, gum, and refreshments of every conceivable variety. It seems that we have gotten to the point where we can't get through a service without bottled water and snacks.

Along those same lines we have to mention our electronic devices. I was in an assembly lately when the announcement was made, "This would be a good time to silence your electronic device." How did we get here? Have you ever been in the assembly "on time", "in the right frame of mind", "prepared in every way" and one of those things go off? There is a time and place for everything. During worship services the place for your electronic device is in the car or at home. Nothing is worth interrupting the worship service.

I have one last idea to present. How long has it been since you were in a worship service when all of the male members got down on their knees for prayer?

Isaiah 45:23 - I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.

Romans 14:11 - For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

Philippians 2:10

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

Bowing our knees before God seems to be an important posture of reverence to Him. As a youngster, I remember

how impressed I was that the male members of the congregation knelt for prayer. I asked one of the leaders once, "Do you think it is necessary to kneel for prayer?" His response was, "With what Jesus has done for me, I think it is the least I can do." I made up my mind to ALWAYS kneel for prayer, ALWAYS! It is my hope that it will have the same impression on my children. I pray that it will have an affect on my grandchildren. I hope my brethren benefit as well. Mostly, I want to show reverence to God. "It is the least I can do." I am sorry that kneeling for prayer has gone the way of so many other things.

CONCLUSION

The Church is the greatest institution that has ever been or ever will be in the world. I love Her with all my heart. I know you do too!

John 4:22-24

22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.

23 But the hour cometh! and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.



WONDROUS THINGS . . . continued from page one

explained in clear and precise terms. God's word declares many wondrous truths-- the grace and love of God, what one must do to be saved, the forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ, what happens after death, the reality of heaven and hell, the second coming of Christ and the judgment day, the resurrection of the dead, and on and on it goes. No other book but the Bible can give you the information you need to these and other Bible topics! It can still be said today in all truthfulness, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psa. 119:105).

THE WONDERS OF PRECEPT

God's word not only tells you what you need to know, but it also obligates you to live a certain way (bringing blessedness and dignity into your life). Using this term at least 21 times in this psalm, David said, "Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way" (verse 104). This word involves the idea "to take notice or care of a thing; to attend; to have respect to; to appoint; to visit." It has reference to God's commandments that take notice of our way, having respect to the whole of our life and conversation. You might say that they "visit" us in all the

concerns and duties of life. God's word is life-changing and practical because it deals with matters that affect both time and eternity.

Instead of despising God's standard of conduct, we should have David's godly attitude-- "Behold, I have longed after thy precepts; quicken me in thy righteousness" (verse 40). There are many wondrous precepts in God's word that bless and enrich our lives because they show us how to have supreme love for God and a right relationship with our fellow-man (Matt. 22:36-40). Instructions given on topics like marriage, parenting, morality, money, and health (respecting our bodies) have both earthly and eternal consequences. As Paul wrote in I Tim. 4:8, "For bodily exercise profits little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." Someone compared it to a tea bag: "The longer the tea bag sits in the cup of hot water, the stronger the tea becomes. The longer you steep yourself in God's word, the stronger you will become. And the stronger you become, the more blessings you will receive." That leads to our final point...

THE WONDERS OF PROMISE

Think of all the wonderful promises made to us in God's word! Being the believer that he was, David declared, "Thou art my hiding place and my shield: I hope in thy word" (verse 114). Since Peter described them as "exceeding great and precious promises" (2 Pet. 1:4), that certainly fits the idea of something being "wondrous." The reason we can hope in God's word is because God is faithful and always keeps His promises (Heb. 10:23). However, we must remember that all spiritual blessings are found only "in Christ" (Eph. 1:3) and there is no promise of salvation to the unfaithful and disobedient (Matt. 7:21).

As we face the trials of life and near the end of life's little day, the wondrous promise of eternal life is that source of great comfort unto us. Knowing that our "labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58), we remain steadfast until we cross the river of death. We have already noticed that Rom. 15:4 talks about the "comfort of the scriptures." Not only are we comforted by the assurance of our own salvation, but we also have hope that we will be reunited with those who have died in Christ. After assuring us that "the dead in Christ shall rise first" (before living saints at Christ's return take their flight to glory), Paul says that we're all going to heaven together: "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

EDITORIAL... continued from page two

to digression overseas. Why? More money promised.

It is amazing that anyone could preach a false doctrine in order to make more money. Yet, it has happened again and again through the years in many places. This is just one example of many we could mention. However, let's look at the positive side of the matter.

The Other Side of the Coin

While it is sadly true some have left the faith, others are stalwart and faithful to the uttermost. We have lost some preachers to false doctrine through the years; but we rejoice to see a number of men now preaching the truth without fear or favor of anyone. We have many preachers holding a lot of gospel meetings now, some younger and not so young, who are worthy of our praise and admiration. When we hear them preach, we are impressed at the depth of their preaching and knowledge of the Scriptures. We see men who love and cooperate with each other as they preach far and wide. God be thanked for all such men! The Lord has blessed the church with studious and sincere men who are a real blessing to His Cause. We also have others who, while getting older, are still holding up the blood stained banner of the gospel of Christ. Yes, we can look at the "glass half empty," but we need to see it half full.

While we lament the closing of some congregations around the Brotherhood, we need to also consider that not all closed because of sin. Some have closed because brethren died, or moved away justifiably. Some young people have had to relocate for work; and while their absence may have caused the local church to suffer, their presence somewhere else has been a real blessing. Congregations also ceased to exist during Bible times for various reasons. Brethren, we don't have to see everything as dark and gloomy. The truth is, many congregations are doing well and growing.

Our foreign work is doing very well. We personally know that the work in the Philippines is still growing and spreading over the many islands. Our understanding is that this is also true in other lands.

It is such a pleasure to see younger members growing and taking a genuine interest in their local congregations. In our home congregation, we are seeing that take place. Young men are growing in their teaching abilities and knowledge and their growth can be seen almost monthly in some cases. In some places a growing awareness of

the need to make our singing as good as possible is also taking place. Brethren are realizing that singing is just as much a part of the worship as anything else.

In other words, the church as a whole is alive and well, and we look to the future with optimism rather than with pessimism. The Scriptures teach us that the Lord is coming again at some point to take His people to Heaven. This indicates that there will be those who are still faithful when that occurs. Think on these things.

BIBLE RELEVANCY TO THE YOUNG PERSON

By AARON BATTEY

Perhaps you consider yourself a young person or others consider you as such. How relevant is the Bible to you and me? I am only 21 years old, but my peers at college and some in the church often scare me with the words they speak. There is a pervading thought among young people in the religious world that we should follow our heart and not worry about making mistakes since they teach us the most.

The idea that the word of God is to be a lamp unto our feet (Psalms 119:105) and we are to be members of the organized body of believers, known as the church, is not relevant to many youth. However, if you claim to love God then you must certainly love the Holy Scriptures which were written for our living. 2 Peter 1:19 says, "And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place..." This word is as relevant to you and me in the 21st century as much as it was to the disciples of the first century. More than this, the Bible has much instruction directed right at young people.

The book of Proverbs was written by the wise King Solomon to his son Rehoboam. The book covers a broad number of issues that fall under the categories of wisdom and foolishness. Here is a brief list of some issues Solomon addresses: laziness, correction, the tongue, wine, wrath, deceit, common sense, greed, gluttony, generosity, honesty, mockery, pride, humility, sexual immorality, etc. The last three topics on this list receive considerable attention by Solomon. After all, what young person does not struggle with pride and sexual temptation to some degree? The book has only 31 chapters. Since most months have 30 to 31 days, reading one chapter per day is very feasible and would be a great blessing to the young and old alike.

“A LACK OF KNOWLEDGE”

BY COLBY CULBERTSON
Hosea 4:1-6

In the Book of Hosea, we find some interesting passages of scripture that point out quite a problem for the children of Israel. Verse 6 particularly points out that problem. It reads, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.”

Why was a lack of knowledge of God’s Word problematic for the children of Israel? They were chosen by God to be his people! They of all people should be knowledgeable of the God that they serve. They could do so by studying His Word. But because they lacked knowledge, or as the writer says, “has rejected knowledge,” God says he will in turn reject them. Was this fair of the Almighty God? Of course it was! He had delivered them out of their bondage in Egypt, provided for them throughout their journeys through the wilderness, and finally led them to the land of Caanan. Despite all of that, the children of Israel turned from God in sin on several occasions, and many times complained a great deal about their wandering through the wilderness, which they had brought upon themselves!

Now the question to be asked is simple; will Christians today also be destroyed for a lack of knowledge? The answer; absolutely. Many O.T. instances, serve as examples for us today. If we claim to be followers of Christ’s commands, yet do not know what his commands are, then we cannot fulfill our duty as a Christian. Knowledge is mentioned as one of the fruits of the Spirit in 2 Peter 1:5. The word knowledge is mentioned 169 times in the entire Bible and is used in various ways in certain scriptures. One verse in particular comes to mind and it is found in Philippians 3:8. Paul says, “Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.” Paul was an apostle of Christ our Lord, and he says he counted everything but loss all to better know or have the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. That’s how important the knowledge of the scriptures is for the Christian!

It is shocking to see Christians today who’ve been members of the church for years, but who have no knowledge of God’s divine will. What’s the result of a lack of knowledge for us today? Paul outlines the penalty for this in Romans 1:28. “And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;” Paul issues several warnings of things to guard against. One of those things was a lack of knowledge. He says that without proper knowledge of the Word, God would give them over to a reprobate mind. This simply means that because they didn’t care to be knowledgeable of God He would reject them, and He will do the same to us today if we do not familiarize ourselves with the scriptures!

The importance of having a strong knowledge of the scriptures cannot be overstated. There is much more that we could look at on this topic, but it is the hopes and prayers of this writer that all who have obeyed the gospel would become more knowledgeable of the Word of God.

THE FATHER OF LIES

BY MARK GRANT

Brian Williams the “NBC Nightly News” anchor who was once the most trusted name in news has been suspended for six months without pay for coming under fire by misleading the public. The disastrous fall stems from Williams’ lying about being shot down during his coverage of the war in Iraq. In his original 2003 reporting, Williams said his helicopter was flying in a convoy when another helicopter was hit by enemy fire. But in 2013, he told David Letterman that his helicopter he was in had been hit. The exaggerated tales from the Iraq War mission was called “inexcusable” actions by CEO Steve Burke, of NBC Universal. Williams now faces scrutiny over claims he’s made about his experiences during Hurricane Katrina and the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah War. There is a widespread belief among NBC staffers that he may never actually return to the anchor chair he has held since 2004. And if he does return, he’ll return in a diminished capacity.

While we may smile, and find this story amusing, the fact is there are serious consequences when we tell lies because it destroys our credibility and can hurt others. There is no amusement when we are lied to and cheated in a business deal or when an untruth threatens our reputation. But what is a lie? Essentially, a lie is the

utterance by speech or act designed to be false with the intent to deceive. In Leviticus 19:11 we read, “You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie to one another” Unfortunately, lying has become a way of life for many people in our society today. Several years ago a survey found that ninety-one percent of those questioned lie routinely about matters they consider trivial; thirty-six percent lie about important matters; eighty-six percent lie regularly to their parents; seventy-five percent lie to their friends; seventy-three percent lie to their siblings; sixty-nine percent lie to their spouses.

When we lie in order to deceive others, then we are following Satan’s example. It is Satan who is called a liar and the father (originator or source) of all lies by Jesus himself. Jesus describes Satan when he said, “He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it” (John 8:44). Jesus confirms that murder and lies are identified specifically as works of the devil. From him falsehood first proceeded, for it was Satan who tempted Eve with a lie with the intent to deceive (Gen. 3:1-6). That is why when we speak a lie, then we characterize his spirit and are under his influence.

While there are various forms of lying, the motivation for most lying is a desire either to hurt the one against whom the lie is directed or to protect oneself, usually out of fear or pride. It was Cain who tried to protect himself by becoming evasive with God after he killed Abel and God asked him, “Where is Abel your brother?” (Gen.4:8-10), Abram lied to the Egyptians by telling them that Sarai his wife was his sister because he was afraid that they would kill him in order to take his wife for her beauty (Gen. 12:11-20). Jacob put the kidskins on his hands and neck and served up dainty meat to his old blind father Isaac, passing himself off for his brother Esau, acting out a lie so that he would receive the blessing (Gen. 27:15-29). Peter denied knowing Jesus three times before the rooster finally crowed (Matt. 26:69-75). Ananias and Sapphira wanted others to believe they had sacrificed everything when in fact they had given only a portion to the Lord, and in doing so lied to God and died (Acts 5:1-11). No matter what the reason may be when we tell a lie, we need to realize that it is only going to compound the problem for there are grave consequences for lying. Solomon wrote, “A false witness will not go unpunished, And he

who speaks lies will not escape” (Prov. 19:5). There is no escape for the person who breathes out lies for he entangles himself in his own web of deception. Austin O’Malley said, these words “A lie has no legs. It requires other lies to support it. Tell one lie and you are forced to tell others to back it up. Those that think it permissible to tell white lies soon grow colorblind.”

Lying is sinful first of all, because it alienates us from God who is truth itself. “Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, But those who deal truthfully are His delight” (Prov. 12:22). Second, lying to each other disrupts unity by creating conflicts and destroying trust. It tears down relationships and leads to open warfare in the Lord’s church. “Therefore, putting away lying, “Let each one of you speak ‘truth with his neighbor,” for we are members of one another (Eph. 4:25). Because each member belongs to the rest, the fellowship of the church should be marked by a refreshing openness rather than deception. Truth is the first condition of mutual confidence that is the basis of all unity. A third reason lying is sinful is that it destroys the liar himself. The contradiction between the liar’s knowledge of the truth and his participation in the lie will leave him helpless to discriminate between reality and delusions. One lie will ultimately lead to further lies to cover up the first. This web of falsehood produces a kind of bondage that will sooner or later be exposed. “The wicked is ensnared by the transgression of his lips, But the righteous will come through trouble” (Prov. 12:13).

While lying may be the universal vice of the world, it is God’s Word that appeals to Christians to throw off falsehood and speak the truth to each other. “Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him” (Col. 3:9-10). We as Christians must understand that lying and falsehood are incompatible with the divine nature of God because He cannot tell a lie. The apostle Paul wrote in his letter to Titus, “Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began” (Tit. 1:1-2). The biblical opposition to all lying originates in the fact that the people of God are to serve and glorify “the only true God” (John 17:3). Jesus Christ

is “the truth” (John 14:6). The Holy Spirit is “the Spirit of truth” (John 16:13) The Word of God is always “the truth” (John 17:17). If Christians are going to model their behavior on God’s character, then it should motivate us to speak the truth. There is no middle ground for the people of God, because every habitual liar of every kind, along with other unrepentant sinners, will be in the lake of fire. “He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death” (Rev. 21:7-8). The choice is between the way of God and the way of Satan. Between being set free for knowing the truth (John 8:36), or exchanging the truth of God for a lie (Rom. 1:25). Let us do as David said “Remove from me the way of lying, and grant me your law graciously. I have chosen the way of truth; Your judgments I have laid before me” (Psa. 119:29-30). To live and speak any

Field Reports

Roger Owens rowens700@yahoo.com: Summer is ending and so much has been accomplished. Two trips to Wyoming this Summer. First trip to contact and speak with some 30 contacts from past correspondence, In August I met Bill Ferguson in Riverton to conduct a week long mission meeting. The meeting was attended by folks from the community every night. One man met two days in a row for private study. We are going back to do a follow up meeting late Sept, with a number of folks promising to attend and bring others. We are most excited and ask your prayers in this effort. Also the TV “Let the Bible Speak” has been reinstated since Aug. 9th, 2015. Our hope is to establish a new congregation through these efforts. A number of congregations are supporting this effort and God be thanked for what each of them has done to bring about good result so far. I regret to note that the Freeman Road Congregation in Neosho Missouri will meet for our final service Sept. 17th. Due to deaths, work related ills, spiritual ills, and ongoing vandalism issues and so we must move from our location. It was with great sorrow and tears this situation has had to take place. During our 7 years we baptized 16, won back a number of erring souls. The sorrow is some of these have fallen away and refuse to return. Our success was the result of affirmative preaching and local teaching. We gave no space to the devil and at times it cost us but the work is depending

upon our steadfastness to the truth. A number of great preachers held meetings for us and we love them all. Our work in Brumley continues but even there we have had some disappointment. I have a new cell number 1-417-766-8969. The work goes on. I must say the fourth meeting was a great treat and some powerful PREACHING was spoken for the Lord’s cause. God bless the truth and those still willing to defend it.

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550 oldpaths@juno.com: September 7- It is nice to be at home. The church is doing well and working together in peace. The report from the Philippines is both sad and encouraging. The sad news is that one of the preachers suddenly passed away from a heart attack. The encouraging part is that the work is still growing in spite of Satan’s efforts to slow it. They have a good Brotherhood and competent preachers to spread the good news. We are to begin in Ada, OK in about two weeks and hope to see many of you there. We look forward to hearing from our preachers with reports and articles this month. God bless those who are His.

Johnny Elmore, 419 K SW, Ardmore, OK 73401 johnnyelmore@gmail.com, August 10 Since my last report, have spoken one or more times at Wichita Falls, TX, Ada and Galey, OK. I enjoyed the 4th of July meeting at Springfield, MO. The singing, as usual, was superb. Then to Pontiac, MI for a meeting July 18-26. I commend the congregation there, under the leadership of Ron Courter and Aaron Willis, for the good attendance and outstanding hospitality. This meeting was significant to me in that Pontiac was the first place I went away from home as I set out to preach 65 years ago. The singing at Marietta, GA was a grand occasion and the visit with Rick Martin and family was every bit as pleasant as I anticipated. On Sunday, August 16, I spoke at Napoleon, AL and enjoyed the company of the gentle people at that place. I was happy to have a part in the summer series on Saturday at Moore, OK August 29, 30, where good crowds prevailed. I commend the Fossil Creek congregation in Ft Worth for a great Labor Day meeting September 4-6 at the Grapevine Convention Center. Attendance was estimated to be between 450-500 people at every meeting. The Lord willing, I plan to be at Turlock, CA, along with Matthew Barnes for a meeting September 30-October 4. I hope to see many California friends one more time. Then, to Glendale, AZ October 16-18.

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THE BACK PAGE...

WHEN I MET SATAN

By CARL M. JOHNSON

Legendary author Robert Louis Stevenson once said, "You know the Caledonian Railway Station in Edinburgh? One cold east windy morning, I met Satan there." (Wm Barclay, Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians 216). We do not know what Stevenson's actual experience was, but we recognize the experience. We have all experienced the force of evil influence which seeks to make us sin (Rom. 6:23). Paul is essentially speaking of that force when he speaks about demons in Ephesians 6:12. He says, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

Paul clearly warns that our enemies are not merely humans ("flesh and blood"), but we wrestle against an army of demonic creatures assisting Satan in his attacks on believers (Cf. David Lipscomb, GA Commentary on Ephesians pg.127).

In the gospels the terms "demons" and "evil spirits" are used interchangeably, and are probably interchangeable with "fallen angels." John hints that one third of the angels fell with Satan when he rebelled against God (Rev. 12:4). Peter adds that "God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness..." (2 Pet. 2: 4; Cf. Jude 6).

When Paul uses the terms "principalities" and "powers," he is probably referring to different ranks of authority among the evil spirits. The term "rulers of darkness" refers to the realm of their operation. "Darkness" is the realm in opposition to God. Paul says that Christ has made it possible for us to be delivered from "the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son" (Col. 1:13). John adds, "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth" (1 Jn. 1:6).

The expression, "spiritual wickedness in high places," is also translated, "spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places (NASB). Paul identifies "heavenly places" as the realm into which God places us when we are baptized into Christ (Gal. 3:27; Eph. 1:3). In other words, the focus of this spiritual wickedness is not upon God in heaven, because God has already won that war (Col. 2:14-15). The focus now is upon the church, sometimes in the pews and sometimes in the pulpit, in order to deceive and capture souls. They use deceptive doctrines and counterfeit worship to turn souls from God to the kingdom of darkness.

Paul says the leader of the evil dark force is "the devil" (Eph. 6:11), but he has many different names. "Devil" means "accuser," because he accuses God's people (Rev. 12:7-11). He is called "Satan," which means "adversary," because he is the enemy of God. He is also called the tempter (Mt. 4:3), murderer and liar (Jn. 8:44), a lion (1 Pet. 5:8), a serpent (Rev. 12:9), and a thief (Jn. 10:10). J.W. Shepherd lists 27 different aliases given to the devil and each one is descriptive of his energy and power (GA 128-129).

He is not only powerful, but he is wise and subtle (Eph. 6:11), and we cannot afford to be ignorant of his devices that includes the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (2 Cor. 2:11; 1 Jn. 2:15-17).

The devil is not an eternal being as God is, but he is a created being. Therefore, he is limited in his knowledge and activity. He is not all-knowing, all-powerful, and everywhere-present as God is. He has accomplished so much because he has at his command the innumerable demonic forces of the dark kingdom.

Alone we are no match for the devil and his forces, but fortunately we have a way to stand against them victoriously. Paul says, "Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand" (Eph. 6:13 NKJV).

Paul identifies the armor of God as truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace, faith, salvation, and the Word of God (Eph. 6:14-18). These components are readily available to all of us and should already be a part of our makeup. Paul lists constant prayer as one more element that MUST complement the armor of God (18).

How powerful are Satan and his evil forces? Paul reveals, "ALL HAVE SINNED..." (Rom. 3:23; Cf. I Jn. 1:8, 10)). At one time or another we have all fallen to the great deceiver. In one way or another we have all had the experience Robert Louis Stevenson describes. There was a time and place when we met Satan and were overcome.

However, it is thrilling to know that now and in our future as Satan unleashes the forces of hell against us, we can stand triumphantly if we are donning the spiritual armor of Almighty God.