



The PROJECTOR

Dr. Dayton Hobbs, FOUNDED EDITOR

"Projecting the Light of the Word of God on the Issues of the Day"

On the Right Side of God and History

A Cautionary Review of Two Godly Men and Their Two Different Outcomes

Preached at the 65th Anniversary of Grace Bible Church, Milton, Florida
by Pastor Tod Brainard

What is a Separatist?

by Pastor Martin Masitto

Founder and President
of Fellow Helpers Ministries
Simpsonville, SC

Why is it that good people move to the wrong side of God? II Samuel, I Kings and I Chronicles tell the story of two godly priests, Zadok and Abiathar. These godly men worked side by side in the work of the Lord, yet in the end, Abiathar, the fourth generation descendant of Eli, made a seriously wrong choice by siding with Adonijah, the rebellious son of David (I Kings 1:7, 19, 25). His decision to move away from God's man, David, to support the contemporary and popular Adonijah, resulted in his removal from the priesthood and exile to Anathoth. The deposing of Abiathar by Solomon ended the priesthood of the house of Ithamar forever (I Kings 2:26-27). Abiathar was on the wrong side of God and History!

The account of Abiathar in the Old Testament Scriptures is a cautionary tale of a good, godly

man getting it wrong.

A review of the history of Abiathar and Zadok

Abiathar is first mentioned in I Samuel 22:18-23 as being the sole survivor of a vicious attack by King Saul. All of the priests were slaughtered by Doeg, but God spared Abiathar, the priest. David, took Abiathar under his watchful guardianship and in verse 23 says, *"Abide thou with me, fear not: for he that seeketh my life seeketh thy life: but with me thou shalt be in safeguard."*

By the time we reach II Samuel 15, Abiathar and Zadok are joined in the common cause of serving in the tabernacle, both serving God under the leadership of King David. I Chronicles 6:4-8 reports that Zadok was a descendant of Eliezer and Phinehas, the son of Ahitub. What a godly heritage he enjoyed! II Samuel 20:25 says, "...and Zadok and Abiathar were the priests."

Abiathar and Zadok were of great service to David, especially at the time of the rebellion of Absalom (2 Sam. 15:24, 29, 35, 20:25). Both Zadok and Abiathar carried the ark to the edge of Jerusalem until David and his followers were out of the city of Jerusalem and safely to the

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Part 1

Pastor Masitto has pastored several churches and administrated several Christian Schools during his 30 plus years of ministry. His unique understandings of ministry have allowed him in recent years to be used of the Lord to encourage and help mend churches going through difficult times.

You can reach Pastor Masitto at masittovilla@yahoo.com or visit his website at www.fellowhelpersministries.com

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This article is being written about a subject many of us might feel we already know a lot about – **Biblical Separation**. However, just because we hear a term thrown around often ourselves we have no guarantee that we understand its meaning. The lives of God's people today lend support to the fact that we need more preaching and teaching on the subject at hand.

FUEL FOR THOUGHT

While speaking in a week of

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EDITOR'S DESK

Guest Editorial

THE OMNIPRESENT ETERNAL GOD

DR. CLAY NUTTALL

We should have little patience with those who deliberately abuse the scriptures, particularly in central doctrines. At the same time, innocent statements can also be dangerous, even if they were not intended to be harmful. The Bible is about God, and His purpose in giving us the scriptures was to reveal Himself to us. His character is displayed in marvelous detail, and we are obligated to avoid statements that might mislead our listeners.

Here is an example of a careless comment, even though it might be intended to express the danger of rejecting the grace of God in eternal salvation. How often have you heard someone say that "to be lost is to be separated from God eternally"? It is true that the unsaved person will be separated from God's love and mercy, but separated from God eternally? Really? How could that be? David observed, "If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there". (Psalm 139:8b) I remember, as a child, hearing an evangelist shout "The worst thing about hell is that God is not there!" The truth is that the worst thing about hell is that God is there. The careless student might say that the issue is not important. The "cute" theologian may say that the place for the lost to dwell eternally is not hell, but is the Lake of Fire. That is true, but it is not the point of this discussion. After all, we are told "...and death and hell were cast into the lake of fire". (Rev. 20:14a) To say that God is not in hell or eternity is an attack on the omnipresence of God.

CHRISTIANITY LITE

Much of the doctrinal error suggested by people who only know "about" the Bible comes from an erroneous view of the doctrine of God. Whole denominations have invented ideas about the Holy Spirit that fail to recognize that He is God the Spirit. That includes, without exception, all the attributes of God that belong to Him. The Holy Spirit is eternally all-present in the first, second, and third heavens. Eternity is hard for us to conceive, but He is, has always been, and always will be totally God.

An example of the general misunderstanding of the Spirit surrounds the event of Pentecost. All that the Bible says on the subject is true. He did come at Pentecost in special presence and ministry. To hear some people tell the story, you would think that the Spirit had never been there before and was surprised at Jerusalem the first time He saw it. While that is farfetched, it is no more misguided than some of allegorical ideas that historical theology offers, or that experiential religious views press on the Bible.

The Spirit has always been omnipresent, so that is not the issue of Pentecost. The coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost has to do with the inception of His special ministry; and that ministry is clearly related to the Church, the Body of Christ, that came into existence on that day. Some aspects of

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The PROJECTOR

Dr. Dayton Hobbs, (1924-2006) Founding Editor
 Pastor Tod Brainard — Publisher and Editor
 Mrs. Carolyn Hobbs, Mr. Ludwig Opager,
 Mrs. Doris Peppard, Pastor Adam Watt
 Contributing Editors
 Layout-Mrs. Brenda Whitney
 Published Quarterly by Grace Bible Church

6331 Chestnut Street, Milton, FL 32570
 E-mail us at Issues@theprojector.org
 Visit us on the Web at www.theprojector.org
 Phone: (850)623-4671

The Projector is a fundamentalist publication that seeks to "project the light of the Word of God on the issues of the day." It desires to honor Christ by articulating a clear testimony for Biblical separation from error in these last days as God's answer to the deepening apostasy of the visible church.



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Mount of Olives. II Samuel 15 records this event. Both Zadok and Abiathar remained in the city of Jerusalem and kept David informed of Absalom's plans. When the rebellion ended with Absalom's death, it was Zadok who talked to the elders of Judah, influencing them to take David back as King (II Samuel 19:11).

Everything is going great for these two faithful men. Both are on the right side of God. Both are faithful in their calling and both are serving King David.

Something happens though that changes the direction of one of the faithful priests. Here is where you and I should take special note. We live in a day of conforming to the contemporary. We are expected to take our places in the culture and do what the culture pronounces. That is not what God would have for us. We are always to take our place with God and His people. Yet, today, we are witnessing the rise of the contemporary in our churches and Christian educational institutions. We think that if we do not conform to contemporary expectations we will be regarded as **irrelevant**. Wait just a moment, has God called us to be relevant to the culture? Is that truly the concern of God's people? Are we to be above all else **relevant** to the culture in which we live and move? Answer this question, Was Jesus considered "relevant" by the culture of His day when He was upon this earth? Hardly!

In order to be relevant, Abiathar landed on the side of hope and change. We are told in I Kings 1:5 that Adonijah, the attractive (I Kings 1:6), ambitious, yet rebellious son of David and brother of Absalom, "...**exalted himself, saying, I will be king!**" At that time, he was the eldest son of David.

By right of dynasty, he felt himself called to be the next king. However, he was not willing to wait for his father David to die. He wanted the position immediately. This wicked boy had never in his life been displeased by David his father. David had never once asked the perennial parental question, "**Why have you done what you have done?**" (I Kings 1:6). He was a young rebel groomed by default who had never been put in his place and as a result was fully set in his wicked ways.

Notice who comes to the support and aid of this ambitious rebel, none other than Abiathar, the high priest. Shocking is it not? We are told in verse 7 that Adonijah conferred with Joab, the son of Zeruah (David's half-sister) and with Abiathar the priest; and "**they followed Adonijah and helped him.**" The very next verse draws a striking contrast, for Zadok the priest, who did not side with Adonijah, supported God's man, David.

Abiathar made the wrong-headed decision to go with the contemporary choice. All of the king's sons, except for Solomon, were on board with Adonijah (I Kings 1:19). Interesting! The vast majority of the people sided with Solomon we are told in verses 39, 40, but there was a core of rebellious elites who sided with Adonijah.

Why did Abiathar side with Adonijah?

There are a few things that we can speculate concerning Abiathar's choice of Adonijah as the next king.

1) Adonijah wasn't David. David had been on the throne for 40 years. Do you suppose that Abiathar became bored with David, his king? Maybe this irreverent upstart had an appeal to Abiathar. It is clear that Abiathar did not guard his heart in this matter. He fol-

lowed his heart right to his own demise as the high priest. He let his emotions get the best of him which led to sin and wrong-headed choices which put him at odds with his God. King David had his problems, but he was still God's man. Abiathar linked arms with God's enemy to his own peril. We do well to pay close attention here! 2) Abiathar judged the whole situation wrongly. He saw David failing and Adonijah rising. He thought he was making a right choice. He was wrong and he should have known better. How often we get ourselves into situations where we judge things wrongly because we come at the issue from **our perspective** rather than from **God's perspective**. Abiathar had proven from the past that he could judge situations rightly. He had sided with David at a crucial period in the history of Israel when Absalom tried to wrest the throne from him. However, Abiathar at some point in his life, moved from a God-centered thinking pattern to a man-centered thinking pattern that proved very harmful.

As a young man in the ministry, my pastor, the late Dr. Dayton Hobbs, often counseled me, "**Tod, as you live your Christian life, stay on the right side of God!**" What wonderful advice! But, how does one stay on the right side of God? There must be that complete and total submission to the will and way of God. There must be that constant and consistent God-centric, Bible-anchored approach to all matters of life. Any other way is a downward spiral to ruin. **Abiathar never asked God who should be the next king. He went with his heart and made the wrong choice.**

3) He chose youth over experience. We all enjoy those who are

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FOCUS ON RELIGION

In our last issue, we compared the condition of Judah in the days of Jeremiah with the current plight of our own nation. Just like Judah, America today has become foolish, rebellious, complacent, and hypocritical. In Jeremiah's sermon at the gate in chapter 7, the Lord speaks through the prophet concerning the religious and spiritual sin of the nation. As religious worshippers passed through the gate to worship Jehovah, the bold message of the prophet contrasts their outward religious form with their inner secret life of idolatry. Instead of the obedience that God had requested in His covenant (verse 23), the people became rebellious, refusing to hear the Word of God through the prophets. After discussing the spiritual sin of rebellion (verses 24-28), Jeremiah turns his attention to the religious sin of the people—hypocrisy (verses 29-32).

The Root of Hypocrisy

Because the people had rejected God's simple desire for obedience, service to God became hypocritical. God told the city to cut off their hair (verse 29), implying the repudiation of the Nazarite vow in which one would be separated unto God. This separation, however, had caused the people to focus on the negative side, emphasizing what they "couldn't do." If the nation could only see that they were specially chosen to be God's own people, separated unto Him in a privileged position, then they would be able to serve Jehovah with desire and joy rather than through force or compulsion. When the privilege of being God's own is misunderstood, a forced service to God that does not

A Nation of Hypocrisy

by Pastor Adam Watt

come from the heart generates hypocrisy. The people of Jerusalem were continuing to come into the temple and worship (verse 2), but in their homes and in the streets of the city, idolatry was rampant (verses 17-18). Service to Jehovah was viewed as a burden instead of a privilege; in hypocrisy, therefore, the people believed they could appease obligations to Jehovah.

A Hypocritical Nation

In verses 30-31, Jeremiah highlights three qualities of hypocrisy that are seen in Judah. **First**, a hypocritical nation *pollutes the sanctity of worship*. Notice that the people brought the false gods right into the house of Jehovah and polluted it. Simply put, this is the "anything goes" mentality of worship in which man believes that God has to accept whatever we bring and offer. Rather than being sacred and pure, worship is filled with the gods of the world. When the Word of God and the truth of God is replaced in the worship of a nation, that worship becomes polluted. Preaching emotional messages and filling God's house with the world's sinful entertainment is a sin against the purity of worship. **Second**, a hypocritical nation *boldly displays their sin*. Since religious activity is still occurring, the nation believed that their sin did not matter. In verse 31, the idolatry and atrocious acts of idol worship were displayed in the high places so all could see. Idols are boldly brought into the temple and set up for all to see in the hills. This bold action is the result of a deceptive power in which the actions are viewed not as sin but as approved by God. Because of this deception, sin is promoted and displayed without fear of consequences. **Third**, the hypocritical nation *sins against the next generation*. As these idolatrous acts were committed, the children had to suffer barbarisms that

never entered God's heart (verse 31). The nation is so entrenched in its hypocrisy and self-centered ideas of spirituality that the next generation is given into the hands of sin and destroyed. Because of these actions, God would totally destroy the city, causing the prominent worship centers to become mass burial sites (verse 32).

A Modern Hypocritical Nation

Because of the boldness in sin, disregard for true worship, and complacency over the next generation, America, too, has become a hypocritical nation. According to the Pew Research Forum, 77% of Americans believe that religion is at least somewhat important and 63% believe in God. However, only 33% believe that there are clear standards for right and wrong, and only 36% attend at least one worship service a week. The disparity in numbers indicates that while a majority of people want to be religious, they have not allowed "religion" to affect their practice, a picture indicative of Jeremiah's day. While the nation hopes to be religious, worship of God and following standards of right is not even a priority as other "idols" have polluted the house of God and situation ethics has guided morality. Amidst this decline of true worship and standards, the voice of Jeremiah must continue to ring out clearly. Now is not the time for silence, compromise, or lower standards that will only facilitate the trends of hypocrisy and sin. May God strengthen His people to stand for truth while evidencing true religion in kindness and purity (James 1:27). Ω

<http://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/>



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Proverb Practicals

by Ludwig Opager

Proverbs 25:12, *“As an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprover upon an obedient ear.”*

God gives this proverb that we may learn what it takes for reproof to be of value. Reproof may be common, but successful; Biblical reproof is uncommon. Successful Biblical reproof results from a wise reprover, along with a hearing ear, which desires to profit from the reproof. This combination will guarantee growth in both the reprover and the one reproofed. God is interested in both parties profiting when reproof is in accordance with the Word of God.

Biblical reproof is good. Biblical reproof is an act of love for the benefit of the one reproofed. However, there are those who offer reproof with insincere motives. *“Lemme at him! I'll give him a piece of my mind. I gotta get this off my chest! He'll shape up or else! Nobody gets away treating ME like dirt!”* These are not wise reproofs for they are given only from a heart that has selfish motives.

The previous proverb in chapter 25 reminds us that: *“A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver”* This picture proverb is a word painting of exquisite beauty and grace. The beautiful silver basket frames the golden

fruit. Through metaphoric expression, there is a way that words spoken will be accepted more readily if spoken wisely and gracefully. God expects His children to use words that are fit to the need. He expects us to use words in ways that enhance the attractiveness of truth; in ways that enhance the word's ability to accomplish a purpose. As God sends forth His Word to bear fruit, so does He expects our words to be used in ways that also bear fruit!

Today's proverb asks us to picture an earring of gold upon an ear, an ornament of fine gold. Earrings perform no practical function. They do not help the ear stay attached to the head or improve physical hearing. However, earrings are worn to make the ear more attractive. Earrings of the right size and shape can enhance the appearance of the ear adding to its comeliness. But the earring is wrong if it simply draws attention to itself apart from the ear.

In Ezekiel 16:10-12, we are given a picture of God preparing Jerusalem as His bride. It is a lovely picture of the bridegroom preparing the bride to be exceedingly beautiful:

“I clothed thee also with broidered work, and shod thee with badgers' skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk. I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck. And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head.”

God placed earrings in His bride's ears. All of the ornaments and clothing were designed to enhance her beauty. All contributed to her comeliness. The earrings were a compliment to her ears just as wise reproof is a complement to the obedient one who hears. They go together; one encouraging the other!

If you are a reprover then you must be a wise reprover. If you are the receiver of reproof, then you must have an obedient ear. An obedient ear is more important than having to receive a wise reproof; however, both are the standard of God and both together will accomplish the greatest good.

Ω



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young. They have energy, enthusiasm and charisma. However, most of us are suspect of young brain surgeons, young heart doctors, and young cancer specialists. We want someone with experience when it comes to dealing with life-threatening conditions. We are not willing to trust someone straight out of medical school who has little or no experience. Let them get some years alongside a veteran specialist and then let's talk. For some unknown reason, Abiathar went with youth and lost his ministry.

What about Zadok?

In contrast, Zadok, of the house of Eliezer, had been a faithful man and very loyal to King David. He rejected the apostasy of the elites when they sided with Absalom and later with Adonijah. He refused to endorse Adonijah as king. He then poured out oil on God's choice, Solomon, and anointed him King of Israel. Zadok was then named the sole high priest of Israel, and his descendants continued as high priests for many years until the exile.

Because of Zadok's faithfulness, the priesthood permanently passed from the house of Ithamar to the house of Eliezer (1 Sam. 2:30-36; 1 Kings 1:19; 2:26, 27).

Abiathar's removal from the priesthood fulfilled that other part of the curse on the House of Eli—that the Priesthood would pass out of the House of Eli (1 Samuel 3:13-14).

Zadok was on the right side of God and history. In addition, Zadok and his sons we are told will minister directly before Jehovah during the future Millennial period (Ezekiel 44:10-31; 48:10-20) and they will be sanctified teachers of God's people. In Ezekiel 48:11, the Lord states that a strip of land that will surround the future Temple will be for the sons of Zadok, who were obedient and did not sin when Joab, Abiathar and the sons of David followed Adonijah. For the first time in human history, a Levite will have their own land within the borders of Israel!

There are three simple principles to follow in order to stay on the right side of History as Zadok the High Priest:

1. Seek out what is right, love what is right and do what is right no matter what!
2. Be loyal to those who are doing right and separate from those who are doing wrong.
3. Don't allow the prevalent culture of the day to deter you from doing right. Abi-

athar's choice was based on what the elite wanted rather than what God wanted. This will get you into trouble every time. He looked at the youth and attraction of Adonijah and he said to himself, "Joab likes him, the sons of David like him and he has youth on his side. I will go with him."

If you want to be on the wrong side of God and history, think like Abiathar.

The Take-Away

Abiathar was removed from the priesthood and banished to Anathoth because he was on the wrong side of God and history. That sounds harsh, does it not, for a man who had always made right choices? **It only takes one wrong choice to obliterate a lifetime of doing right and receiving God's Blessing! That is God's math system and you had better learn it well. Grace does not erase consequences.** It allows you to bear them, but it does not erase them.

My fellow believer, make right choices! Be loyal to the right people. Be loyal to God in spite of what others are doing for it makes all the difference regarding eternal rewards. May God help our church family to be Zadok's for God and not pandering Abiathar's. Ω

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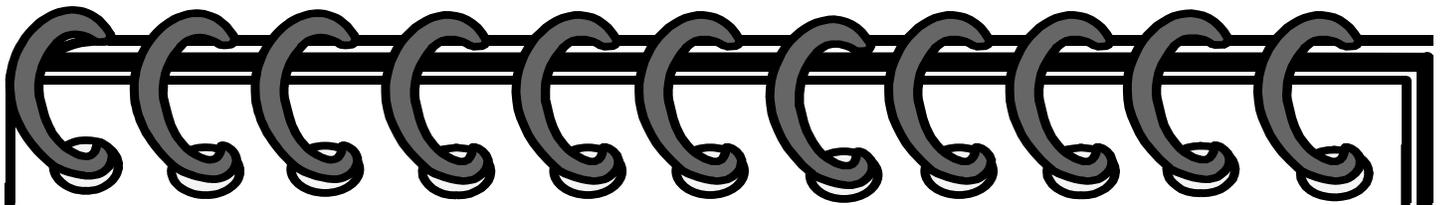
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Teaching Tips

by Doris Peppard

Decently and In Order

Our Christian philosophy of teaching comes from scripture and can be summed up in one very important verse - I Cor. 14:40, "Let all things be done decently and in order." We have been working diligently the week of pre-planning in order to get ourselves and our classrooms set up to do a humanly impossible job. Without God's blessing, we will be laboring in the flesh – and we all know how weak our flesh is.

Order! Ever since the fall, mankind has battled the whole idea of order. Where the world was once created orderly, because of sin, disorder came upon all of us. In order to have ORDER, we must "fight" our flesh every step of the way. This is not something that can be done as the saying goes, "once and done!" Order must be constantly and consistently maintained. Every procedure we put in place will require you to maintain it constantly and consistently throughout the entire 180 days of school! "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season, we shall reap, if we faint not!" That pretty much summarizes the hard part of your job! Maintenance! We are all maintenance men! Every day! Take the homeroom period: We must have our procedure in place, and maintain the procedure every day! Lunch time – rules of "eat first, then whisper" must be maintained – every day! How to line up! Oh, yes! This procedure in elementary school will require your attention every time your class lines up throughout the school year! Will this be tiring for you? Definitely! But... the result will benefit your students and is worth the labor.

All things are to be done. Every day! We may not slack off and omit things that must be done! That is work! "Finish the job!" is a quote for us teachers as well as for our students! Finish what you start! Follow through! This one principle can make it or break it for our students. If they figure out that they can get away with unfinished assignments, undone homework, unkept notebooks, then you will have reinforced their "fallen" natures and not pointed them toward Christ, who is the Author and Finisher of our faith! He set the example – Finish things you start!

All things are not only to be done, they are to be done decently! Decency is considered an old-fashioned word. Synonyms are "gracefully", "honestly", "conformity to recognized standards." This is one factor that will reflect your own testimony. Things ought to be done with thought and purpose.

Now, we come to the difficult word: ORDER! This one word will have the most profound effect upon our teaching methods. To do things "... in order," entails everything from our classroom organization, to our lesson plans, to our instructions during teaching time. Do you ever wonder why some students have a problem with organization? Well, they have not grasped the fact that they are fighting an impossible battle without God's help! They are fighting against their human flesh! What a battle! They will be fighting that battle all their lives! Human flesh (of both students and teachers) is naturally lazy, and we must rely upon God to help us gain victories throughout each day. Order will set a quiet and tranquil atmosphere in your classrooms. It will give your students a feeling of confidence and security in an insecure world. It alone will establish a climate conducive to learning. Ω



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His ministry had never been exercised before, and the Scripture makes it plain that they will be used from Pentecost until that moment when the Church of Jesus Christ is caught away. When the Church is removed, so will be that special ministry of the Spirit. (I Thess. 4:13-18; II Thess. 2:1-12) The Holy Spirit will still be all-present, but those special ministries He began at Pentecost will cease to function with men on earth.

COME, HOLY SPIRIT

What do people mean when they sing "Come, Holy Spirit"? He is already here, omnipresent. Why would we ask for something He already has given us, His marvelous presence? He came once in special ministry for the age of the church, and He is not going to come like that again. If we mean that we want Him to move in our midst with power and purity, bringing obedience to the saints, then that makes sense. It isn't healthy to confuse people, so we should say and sing only what we mean because the average Christian, who only knows "about" the Bible, may well think we mean something else.

Every true believer has the Holy Spirit indwelling his/her body. He is already there. God meant for us to utilize His indwelling, teaching, guiding, convicting, empowering, etc.; and the fullness of the Spirit is simply yielding to the indwelling

Spirit. Since we have the power dwelling in us, what are you praying for? God has already given us the answer, and we are not using it. Why are people looking for something new or additional?

Our world is at the edge of disaster, on the verge of a world war, and our nation is more divided than it was even at the time of the Civil War. One international or national spark could set off a war or cause fighting to erupt in our streets. Some folks have their heads in the sand in denial; others are frightened half out of their wits. Some Christians believe that revival is the answer.

If you are praying for revival, what are you praying for? Praying for others isn't wrong, but if you don't have revival and repentance of sin in your own heart, then don't waste your time. The greatest hindrance to revival is the need in each individual heart, and that is what each person should be paying attention to. Many believers pray in vain for revival because they embrace doctrinal error and expect God to honor their prayer while they abuse the Scriptures and are openly disobedient to Him. To take lightly the omnipresence of God, for instance, is a serious offence to Him.

IT IS NO CHRISTMAS PRESENT

Christmas time is one of those periods when people are habitually careless with Scrip-

ture. You have already heard my diatribe on this issue, but it illustrates the problem with misleading people about the omnipresence of Christ. We are told that Jesus came down to earth at Bethlehem. While that is true, much of the description is misleading. Where did we get the stuff saying that the angels wept at His departure because they would miss Him? On the day of His Birth He was still present everywhere. While He as a babe, clothed by God in flesh, lay in a manger, He was still the Creator and present everywhere in the universe. We see Him as a helpless babe, a man of little wealth, or a despised servant; He was still the all-present God.

It is no Christmas present to mislead people about the God/man even if ours are innocent comments. We don't need "cute" explanations when we come to questions about Christ in the flesh. We don't need to feel that we have to explain things that are not explained in the Bible. Those who are plagued by the "Lucifer Syndrome" want people to think that they know the answers to everything. Dr. Bowman repeatedly said, "We always begin with what we most assuredly know". Then we accept the clear, plain statements of the text. The mysteries of the Scripture remain embraced in the omniscience of God. Our task is to remain confident in what we know, such as the attributes of our Eternal God. Ω



(Continued from page 1 - What is a Separatist?)

meetings a few years ago, I stayed in the home of a man who worked at a Sohio (Standard Oil of Ohio - Now BP-British Petroleum) refinery in Lima, Ohio. One evening we were discussing the various types of fuels his company made-jet fuel, diesel fuel, and gasoline. I made reference to the complicated piping system that must be needed to transport all those various products. His reply surprised me. They can transport all types of fuel through the very same pipeline. They send through jet fuel, followed by diesel fuel, and then gasoline. The fuels stay separate as they travel through the pipeline to their next destination where they are then stored in appropriate and separate holding tanks. There is one pipeline and three fuels.

We want to look at the pipeline of separation and consider **three "fuels for thought"** flowing through that pipeline. They are:

Fuel for Thought One: Separation from the World – I John 2:15-17

Fuel for Thought Two: Separation from the Unbeliever – II Corinthians 6:14-7:1

Fuel for Thought Three: Separation from the Disobedient Believer – II Thessalonians 3:6, 14, 15.

SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD

The first fuel for thought that we want to run through the pipeline is separation from the **WORLD**. Personal separation from the world is a must in order to live a life of purity and holiness before the Lord. We find this taught in I John 2:15-17:

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any

man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

When my wife, Pam, and I were saved we knew nothing about ecclesiastical separation. We did know the Lord saved us and our desires changed from wanting to please those in the world to wanting to please those in the Lord. Without anyone confronting us, my hair was cut and my wife's dresses were lengthened. Without anyone confronting us, I bit my tongue and learned a new vocabulary and my wife bit her tongue and allowed me to be the head of our home. Without anyone confronting us, we lost our desire to go out for the night to the movies, the dark restaurant that served liquor and played suggestive music. But we found it hard to resist attending church services. Our new life in Christ and the exemplary lives of the Christians around us led in the path of personal separation.

We knew little about the fundamentals of the faith such as the inspiration of the Bible, the virgin birth, and the bodily resurrection. This all came in time as we listened to the faithful teaching and preaching of God's Word. The purity and holiness of the lives of the believers in our home church led us in the path of personal separation. We thank the Lord for this.

Things have changed since the early 1970's! Today believers seek ways to rationalize their compromise of personal separa-

tion. Those who seek to avoid the world's hair and dress styles, suggestive vocabulary, and sin-promoting establishments are labeled "legalistic." **The compromise of personal standards has brought the sins of idolatry and immorality right into the church pews, choir lofts, youth groups, and even pastors' studies.**

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Our passage for this point, I John 2:15-17, helps us understand the problem. The desire for the things of the world is winning over the desire for the things of the Lord in the life of the average Christian. Everywhere we turn there is a bold campaign being waged for our hearts. Internet, television, radio, books, and magazines, and even many church-sponsored activities and services are attracting us to *"the world and the things that are in the world."* Time in the Word and prayer seems boring compared to time with social media and talking with a friend about the changes you want to make in that living room. Time in a church service listening to a preacher seems boring compared to that action-packed basketball or football game you attended the other night or plan to watch as soon as you get home. Time planning for one's spiritual future seems boring compared to time spent in planning for that new car, new home, new career, or retirement. Spending money on the church or missionary endeavors seems unwise compared with saving for that RV or that second home in the mountains!

What can help us break this destructive cycle? We must seek to separate from these influences

(Continued on page 10)



(Continued from page 9 - What is a Separatist?)

and cultivate our hearts spiritually. This will involve turning off the technology, the televisions, the closing of books and magazines in order to make time for the study of God's Word. This will cause problems with your Christian friends who desire the world; they will seem minor compared to the blessings you will receive from fellowshiping with those who love the Lord. I told you this would be "fuel for thought!"

A lack of personal separation will distort your view of...

SEPARATION FROM UNBELIEVERS

The second fuel for thought that we want to run through the pipeline is separation from UNBELIEVERS. One who is alive in Christ cannot have fellowship with those who are dead in the world and still call himself a separatist. We find this taught in II Corinthians 6:14-7:1. Let's look at a couple of phrases from this longer passage:

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers...for ye are the temple of the living God...wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord...."

Shortly after Pam and I were saved, we started noticing that all churches were not the same. The lives of the people in other churches brought this out first. As we witnessed folks would say, "Oh, that's great, I go to church, too." But we could see that their idea of being a Christian and ours were not the same. They still did the things out of which God saved us.

WHY?

We asked ourselves why others who called themselves Christians lived no differently from the world, with the exception that they did occasionally attend church Saturday evening or Sunday morning. The answer came in time. As we grew in Christ our Lord our conversation included more of the Lord and His Word. Our friends expressed in no uncertain terms that they did not believe the Bible literally. One example immediately comes to mind.

Pam and I were shoe shopping one Saturday afternoon. A friend I attended high school with worked in the store. I knew this fellow had gone to church in high school so I was excited to tell him about my salvation. He got excited, too, but not in the way I expected! He began telling me how the Bible was full of contradictions and not true. I asked for an example and he pointed out that the Red Sea miracle was only an earthquake that dammed up the water for a short time. The dam broke when the poor Egyptians were crossing. There was not a miracle; only a coincidence. I asked how his explanation accounted for the "dry ground" that Israel crossed over on, which I had just read about in devotions. With that, he turned red and refused to sell me the shoes.

CONTACT WITHOUT CONTAMINATION

Pam and I learned the truth of II Corinthians 6 before we ever learned the passage. We could not have fellowship with those who did not believe the Bible and salvation through Jesus Christ alone. Contact with the unsaved, both

churched and unchurched, was acceptable because we wanted to witness to them so they might be saved. But our spending time in various activities with them would lead to our spiritual contamination. Our going to a church service or a concert with them would only cause us to be confused. These folks did not believe the Bible and sought to get us to see things their way. Our keeping separate from them saved us a lot of heartache.

Contact without contamination is even more important when dealing with those who do not even profess knowledge of God. It would seem obvious that such contact with unbelief would be harmful. Yet we have Christians listening to the music of the unsaved, sitting for hours each evening watching the sinful activities that promote the unsaved and their wares. We must watch for the unequal yoke in our daily activities. Many parents have not been careful in this area of separation and are now seeing the side effects in their children. They took their children to churches where the pastors no longer preach the Bible as true, they took their children to activities they knew were ungodly, and they allowed their children to daily attend schools that opposed the things of God. Their lives are now a spiritual mess. By the time contamination has worked its way to the surface where it can be seen its roots are thoroughly entwined in the heart. More "fuel for thought." Ω

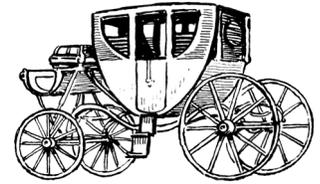
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Stars of the Morning

YOU CAN'T DO THAT! The Story of William H. Wilburn (Part VI) by Aunt Carolyn



(Synopsis: *On their wedding trip to visit his parents in Illinois, William and Cornelia endured rough stagecoach and wagon rides, almost intolerable food, intense plains' storms, and other dangers! Will they survive their Honeymoon? What lies ahead? Poor frightened Cornelia timidly asked, "Are there any more bad bridges to cross before daylight?" The driver replied, "Oh, yes, several; but you mustn't be skeered; we all must die sometime, ya' know!"*)

"Not exactly! I'm just married! Why don't you get down and carry her off the bridge? It will hold her, if it won't hold the team."

The newlyweds thanked God for His safekeeping so far and prayed earnestly for His continued protection. And so the trip continued. At noon the next day they stopped at a one-room log cabin, the only house in miles, hoping to get some food. The whole family inside was desperately ill. "What's the matter?" "Oh, we've all got the agers, bilious, and congestive." "Any died?" "Oh, yes, two or three, and I reckon the rest of us'll be dead soon, for there ain't one well enough to wait upon another." "I suppose there's no chance for breakfast then." "If you are willin' to take what you can ketch, we wouldn't like to see you starvin'." And as sick as she was, the old lady offered them the best she had.

"Hold the horses then," he said, and William managed to crawl to their heads and keep them steady while the driver lifted Cornelia onto the shaking timbers and back to the bank. Cold, drenched to the skin, and terrified, the preacher and his new bride stood for an hour while the driver backed the team down and then went to find a place where the team and coach could cross the swollen current.

Welcome Home

Their "dream honeymoon" trip didn't improve. At one stop, Cornelia was given a bed to sleep on and William slept on the floor, that is, until a great, big rat ran across her pillow! That ended her sleep for the night! The next night wasn't any better. — They were riding in an old broken down stagecoach with the windows out and with bags of mail piled on the front seat. The horses plunged through rain, mud, and muck, barely moving at a snail's pace and often stalling in very bad places. Toward morning, the driver suddenly shouted, "Out! Out! Out for your lives! I'm on a bad bridge, and I reckon we'll go through!"

There were more narrow escapes on the dangerous journey, but at last they arrived at the preachers' convention. They were exhausted after the five day trip, but they were refreshed by the preaching of God's Word and the fellowship. A few more days of hard travel across the great open prairie brought them finally to William's old home. After being away so long, it was wonderful to sit by his father's fireside again. Greetings between father, mother and brother were joyous and long, but William soon disappeared from the house. He hurried to the stable to see his dear old Charlie! The horse knew William's voice, rubbed his nose against his cheek and laid his head on William's shoulder. And William, no wonder, threw his arms around Charlie's neck as tears filled his eyes. Ah, there's no bond like a man and his horse!

William opened the door, jumped out into the darkness, and found himself somersaulting down a bank of mud and landing in a swamp. "You don't expect my wife to get out here, I hope!" he yelled at the driver.

After a month-long visit to his old home, William had to return to duty. The return trip to Washington was just as dangerous and difficult as their forward journey, but now Cornelia at least knew what to expect. If this honeymoon was any indication of their future, they were in for some hard times! Did the refined city girl resent this new life? Would she scorn her blind, physically weak husband and these adversities? Oh, no! Her husband and his ministry became her heart and ministry. When he was away traveling on

"Ya' want her neck broke, do ya'" he shouted.

(Continued on page 12)



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 ★ (Continued from page 11 - You Can't Do That!)
 ★ conference assignments, she made their small home
 ★ in Baltimore a place of retreat and blessing. She
 ★ became William's closest friend and companion. She
 ★ became his shining light in a dark place. Through
 ★ her eyes and vivid descriptions, he was able to enjoy
 ★ the world of nature. Her eyes were also his way into
 ★ great understanding and knowledge as she read to
 ★ him by the hour the writings of great philosophers,
 ★ historians, and statesmen. And it was through her
 ★ pen that William was able to have put on paper his
 ★ own sermons, books, and chronicles. She was,
 ★ indeed, his "helpmeet" given by God!

God is Faithful

★ Once again, God proved that His way is best, and
 ★ William proved that he could do whatever God gave
 ★ him to do. Then in His grace, God gave him a wife
 ★ who was also willing to do whatever God wanted her
 ★ to do. Facing difficult times, daring experiences,
 ★ strange food, and unthinkable circumstances, she
 ★ weathered every storm, and by God's grace, became a
 ★ faithful, noble wife and mother and through many
 ★ years was dedicated to her husband's life and
 ★ ministry. Man or woman, boy or girl, "You can do
 ★ anything you ought to do." No job is too large or too
 ★ small. Every job is important if it is in God's will
 ★ and for His glory! "Behind God's commands, He
 ★ puts omnipotence!" (Dr. Bob Jones, Sr.) God will see
 ★ you through, and He will reward faithfulness! *"...It
 ★ is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful
 ★ (1 Cor: 4:1)."*

(To be concluded next issue.)

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