

The PROJECTOR

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

DR. DAYTON HOBBS, Editor

P.O. Box 643, Milton, FL 32572

VOL. 21, NO. 4

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APPROVING EXCELLENCE

By: Rev. Tod Brainard

One of the most frightening trends of the fundamental local church of the last days is its downward spiral into the slob-culture and philosophy of contemporary Neo-Evangelicalism. The contemporary sound rings in the walls of our churches. It is my opinion that the contemporary "support group" mentality is eating the Church alive with its slanderous philosophy of meeting the needs of the "hurting and dysfunctional" (if there are such categories) apart from the preaching of the whole counsel of God. According to some, the preaching and teaching of the Word of God is no longer sufficient to meet the needs of people. God's matchless grace is no longer perceived as sufficient to cope with the believer's needs. The unquestioned Doctors of "Christian" Psychology declare that their methods of dealing with the believer's woes must be explored and put into effect. Does this not indicate the declining state of "fundamental Christianity"? I believe so. True Biblical excellence in doctrine, methodology, music, and morals is rare indeed. Excellence is but a word flippantly tossed around to describe anything that appeals to the mind, appetites and tastes of the human heart.

O. Talmadge Spence in his book, Satan: Sanctuary or System, gives a summation of what is lacking in the heart of the fundamental believer today. "When we live to exalt the Lord Jesus alone, we are not always and only making choices between good and evil; we are making choices between good and best." How true! We often pride ourselves with being separated from evil; yet separation

unto God involves making choices between what is good and what is best.

The Apostle Paul longed for the Philippian believers to come to the place where they might "approve things that are excellent." (Phil. 1:8-10). There is no premium on mediocrity in spiritual matters. God wants our best, deserves our best, and desires that we approve what is best.

But how do we know what is excellent? The Word of God speaks to this question and gives clear guidance as to the answer.

FULL KNOWLEDGE

In Philippians 1:9-11, Paul gives the guidelines by which believers are to "approve that which is excellent."

Paul's desire was that the believers in Philippi might abound in love, yet this love was to operate within the guidelines of the full knowledge of God's truth and proper discernment of that truth (verse 9). Scriptural love never travels beyond the bounds of Scriptural truth and purity. Notice the two confining guidelines of love that Paul desired for these believers.

Firstly, Full Knowledge. These dear believers needed more than head knowledge of the Word of God; they needed the practical experience of obedient living in the Word of God. Dr. Kenneth Wuest in his Word Studies in Philippians stated the Philippians' difficulty in this way, "There was an eager and enthusiastic spirit among these new converts, but a lack of deep understanding." See Excellence, Page 2

DIVINE EFFICACY OF PRAYER

By: Arthur Pierson

(Continued)

(Written approximately 100 years ago)

Prayer Imparts God's Power

In favor of close contact with the living God in prayer, there is another reason that rises perhaps to a still higher level. Prayer not only puts us in touch with God, and gives knowledge of Him and His ways, but it imparts to us His power. It is the touch which brings virtue out of Him. It is the hand upon the pole of a celestial battery, which charges us with His secret life, energy, efficiency. Things which are impossible

with man are possible with God, and with a man in whom God is. Prayer is the secret of imparted power from God, and nothing else can take its place. Absolute weakness follows the neglect of secret communion with God--and the weakness is the more deplorable, because it is often unconscious and unsuspected, especially when one has never yet known what true power is. We see men of prayer quietly achieving

See Prayer, Page 4

EDITOR'S DESK

(Guest Editorial)

THE CURSE OF SELF-ESTEEM

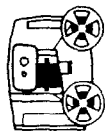
"The curse (of self-esteem) helped breed the now ubiquitous cult of the victim, wormed its way into our legal system, where criminals argue they shouldn't be held responsible for their crimes because low self-esteem made 'em to it, and spawned book after tedious book on how to become more self-absorbed," writes John Rosemond for the Knight-Ridder Tribune. He complains that today's American mother listens to the experts and does all she can to raise her children's self-esteem. Rosemond says, "By contrast, previous generations of American parents concentrated on making sure children developed respect, responsibility and resourcefulness."

Even the world is beginning to see problems with emphasizing self-esteem. (See *Newsweek*, February 17, 1992.) How long will it be before Christians will realize that self-esteem teachings did not come from the Bible and hop off the self-esteem bandwagon?

What do Larry Crabb, Robert McGee (Rapha Ministries), James Dobson, and Neil Anderson have in common? They all stress the great importance of self-worth, self-esteem, and significance. They have all been influenced by humanistic psychology. And, their popularity continues to expand.

PsychoHeresy Update, Summer, 1992

The PROJECTOR



EDITOR
Dr. Dayton Hobbs

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ANNOUNCEMENT

Rev. & Mrs. B. Tod Brainard were united in marriage in East Wilton, Maine, on July 11, 1992. Mrs. Brainard is the former Beth Turner, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Wayne Turner of Farmington, Maine and presently of Greenville, SC. Rev. Brainard, whose column, "Focus on Religion," appears in The PROJECTOR, is the son of Mr. & Mrs. Philip Brainard of Milton, Florida. He is the Assistant Pastor and Music Director of Grace Bible Church in Milton, Florida, Music Director in Santa Rosa Christian School, and National Director of Gospel Projects Baseball. Mrs. Brainard joins him in the ministry, working in Santa Rosa Christian School and The Children's Bible Club.

Our congratulations and prayers are with this new couple as they begin their service together for the Lord Jesus Christ.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Brother Dayton:

We appreciate your work and your stand! It has been too long since we sent anything to help out with The PROJECTOR - better late than never, I guess!

In His Love,
B.R.C
Athens, GA

Dear Dr. Hobbs:

I appreciate your ministry through The PROJECTOR. I always look forward to receiving it, and I have profited a lot by understanding the principles you set forth. Truth is worth searching for, and I can never understand how some people don't seem to care whether they have it or not.

I hope you keep going until the Lord comes.

Sincerely,
M.G.
Birmingham, IA

Excellence, From Page 1

standing of the truth, and also a lack of a sensitive moral perception..." Full knowledge does not come to the casual reader of the Scriptures. Rather, full knowledge comes to the student of the Word who loves truth and desires to understand the truths of God by the illumination of the Holy Spirit.

ALL DISCERNMENT

This brings us to the second of the guidelines that confine this love that Paul desired from these Philippians, that is discernment. In the KJV, this word is translated judgment, which in this context is our word for discernment. Discernment is sensitivity to truth and error and the ability to perceive fine distinctions between the two. This word also involves the ability to distinguish the good from the best or excellent. In the citrus industry, it is the keen eye and properly trained taste of the orange grower that distinguishes or discerns the good oranges from the best oranges. These senses are developed over a period of time. Such is the case with the believer in the spiritual realm. Exercise in the Word of God and development of a keen sense of discernment are marks of maturity and growth in love and grace. Notice this commentary on Philippians 1:9-10 by Dr. Wuest "...a Spirit-produced love in the heart and life of the saint, which as been confined like a river within the limiting banks of a full experiential knowledge...is the thing that sharpens the moral and spiritual perceptions for the discernment of the finer qualities of Christian conduct. This will result in the saint being sincere and without offense until the day of Christ, which latter expression refers to the Rapture of the Church." Notice in our passage (verse 11) what is at stake when we do not in love by full knowledge and with all discernment "approve things that are excellent" - *The fruit of Righteousness which is by Christ unto the glory and praise of God*. What a tremendous purpose and responsibility the Word establishes for our understanding and benefit.

See Excellence, Page 4

Stars of the Morning

By: "Aunt Carolyn"

The Cliffs



(Continued from last issue)

His foot slipped on the sandy ledge. In an instant, both feet were out from under him, and he felt himself sliding down the slippery incline. He reached out for a stone, a root, but nothing held! His fingers left long scratch marks in the soil as he strained to break his slide. He dared not turn over from his back to get a better grip. He hardly dared breathe. The slightest motion could send him on an uncontrollable plunge toward the last break in the steep slope. From there it would be a shear drop off straight down the cliff to certain death on the rocks below!

Danny's heart pounded in fear! His cries for help went unheeded. He knew Skip would be home by now, so there was no one near to hear his cries. He dug his heels into the thin soil. He grappled and clawed with his fingers trying to inch his way back up the steep slope, but every effort failed. One false move would send him reeling headlong to a death crash below. Oh, if someone would only see him! If someone would only help!

"Oh, help me! Somebody, help me!" he screamed, but his call was drowned out by the roar of the river. Oh, why had he come this way? Why had he not gone home as he was supposed to? Why had he wanted to go his own way? Why?--Why?--It was of no use to ask now. It was too late! Danny felt the sand giving away under his fingers. He could hold on no longer. He was going to be dashed to his death on the rocks below!

His mind raced. Now he guessed it was not enough to be a "pretty good boy." It was not enough to be "obedient most of the time." That was really disobedience. This calamity was proof enough that just one breach of Dad's rules was deadly. His forehead was wet with the sweat of fear and agony. He tried to force his fingernails deeper into the shale but only felt the sand trickle out from under his hands, bringing him closer and closer to the drop-off point. He would soon be dead! Dead! No one would ever know how scared he was! No one would ever know how sorry he was he had disobeyed! He would never see his parents again! He would never see Skip again! He would never see his dog again! And he wasn't ready to die! "Oh, help me!" he screamed again, unable to restrain his terror!

Then above he heard a calm, deep voice. "Danny, don't move! Settle down and be quiet. I will get you."

Danny's eyes closed in relief. It couldn't be Dad, but it was! He had come!

Dad's voice was steady and calm. Danny was never so glad to hear that voice, but what good would it do? Dad could not climb down that thin shale. It would crumble under him, too.

"Be quiet, Danny." Dad continued talking slowly and reassuringly. "I have tied this rope around myself. When I drop it to you, grip it carefully, and I will lift you up."

Danny's hands were nearly numb from clinging to the cliff, but when he felt the rope dangle near him, he tightly gripped it first with one hand, and then the other.

"Hold on tightly," Dad called. "Just be still. I will pull you up." It was not easy. Dad had to find a good footing far from the ledge and pull with all his strength to lift Danny's weight. If his footing and weight should give way, both man and boy would be killed! Danny held on for dear life. He was almost afraid to breathe for fear of losing his grip, but slowly he felt his body being lifted up the cliff and, at last, over

the top onto level ground.

Danny lay limp and exhausted on the ground, his face drained and his hands raw and bleeding from scratching and clawing in the sharp shale. He was still and silent, expecting, dreading the railing rebuke that was sure to come from his father, but it never came. None was necessary. Danny knew what had caused his plight. He knew how close he had come to death, and he knew how fortunate he was that Dad had come to his rescue.

When at last Danny was able to breathe freely, Dad helped him to his feet and gave him a nudge on the shoulder, "Come on, Son," he said. "Let's go home."

What a danger! What a peril! What a daring rescue! At the risk of his own life, Dad had accomplished the courageous task of saving his self-willed boy from certain death.

In a more wonderful way, the Lord Jesus Christ came from Heaven, and accomplished a greater rescue by dying on the cross of Calvary for self-willed, disobedient sinners like us. Just as Danny knew Dad's rules but wanted to have his own way, we have God's rules and laws in His Word, but we want to go our own way. *We have turned every one to his own way.* (Isa. 53:6). We were born sinners, and then we prove that our hearts are sinful by the wrong things we do and say.* Yet God loves us. He does not want us to die and be punished for our sins, so He gave His only begotten Son to die in our place. Jesus did not simply risk His life, He gave His life for us. He took our punishment. He died in our place.**

Like Danny, we must acknowledge our sin and guilt. We must admit that we deserve punishment, and with a repentant heart, accept Jesus Christ as our Savior.

Danny could not save himself by clinging to the cliff, clawing in the sand, or pulling up on the rope. He had to accept and take hold of the rope offered

See Stars, Page 7

Excellence, From Page 2

**ASSOCIATION:
THE SEPARATION PRINCIPLE**

"Abstain from all appearance of evil." (I Thess. 5:22). Separation from evil unto God is essential to achieving and approving excellence in the Christian life. The believer is not to be tainted by sin nor should our "good be evil spoken of." "Holiness unto the Lord" is God's divine standard of excellence. "Be ye holy, for I am holy." (I Peter 1:16). Now, behind every command of Scripture is God's grace and His omnipotence. As Dr. Bob Jones, Sr. often said during his long ministry, "You can do anything you ought to do." Our failure to abide by such a Biblical standard does not alter or void God's stated standard. It is important to remember that our benefit is God's Holy purpose for Biblical standards.

The key, however, to this verse is found in the prepositional phrase, "from all appearance of evil." C.I. Scofield noted on pg. 1234 of his reference Bible that, "Separation is not from contact with evil in the world or the church, (what we today call Isolationism) but from complicity with and conformity to it." Complicity with evil implies association or participating in or as if in a wrongful act. The appearance of evil can taint and stain the believer just as powerfully as being conformed to the evil. Abstain from, do not be found in complicity with, the appearance of evil. Excellence demands Biblical Separation from evil unto God.

**STANDARDS OF
EXCELLENCE**

In Philippians 4:8, Paul gave to these dear believers standards of excellence to use in life's situations.

Chart of Excellence
Philippians 4:8

KJV

1. Whatsoever is True
2. Whatsoever is Honest
3. Whatsoever is Just
4. Whatsoever is Pure
5. Whatsoever is Lovely
6. Whatsoever is of Good Report

WORD STUDY TRANSLATIONS

1. Lit. "True in Character" - Wuest
2. Lit. "Honorable" -
A.T. Robertson
3. Lit. "Righteous" - Wuest
4. Lit. "Pure in all things"-Wuest
5. Lit. "Pleasing, amiable" -
A.T. Robertson
6. Lit. "Sweet to speak of" -
H.G. Moule

Expositor's Greek Testament translates the latter portion of Verse 8 in this manner, "Whatever excellence there be or fit object of praise, these things make the subject of careful reflection." These six areas provide undeniably clear standards of how God desires His children to walk, think, and act in this corrupt and wicked world. Anything less is not excellence. As believers in Christ we must "prove (discern) what is acceptable unto the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." (Eph. 5:10-11.)

To compare "ourselves among ourselves" is to measure up to a poor and changing standard. Let us compare ourselves to the unchanging and excellent standard of the Word of God. May we approve what is excellent in our service for Christ and reject the waste of human philosophy and thinking.

Prayer, From Page 1

results of the most surprising character. They have the calm of God, no hurry, no worry, or flurry, no anxiety, or care, no excitement or hustle or bustle--they do great things for God, and, like John the Baptist, are great in His eyes, yet they are little in their own eyes; they carry great loads, and yet are not weary nor faint; they face great crises, and yet are not troubled. And those who know not what treasures of wisdom and strength and courage and power are hidden in God's pavilion wonder how it is. They try to account for all this by something in the man--his talent, or tact, original methods, or favoring circumstances. Perhaps they try to imitate such a career by securing the patronage of the rich and mighty, or by dependence on organization, or fleshly energy--or what men call "determination to succeed" --they bustle about, labor incessantly, appeal for money and co-operation, and work out an apparent success, but there is none of that power of God in it which cannot be imitated. They compass themselves about with sparks, but there is no fire of God; they build up a great structure, but it is wood, hay, stubble; they make a great noise, but God is not in the clamor.

Nothing is at once so undisputable and so over-awing as the way in which a few men of God have lived in Him and He in them. The fact is, that in the disciple's life the fundamental law is, "Not I, but Christ in me." In a grandly true sense there is but one Worker, one Agent, and He Divine; and all other so-called "workers" are instruments, and instruments only, in His hands. The first quality of a true instrument is passivity. An active instrument would defeat its own purpose; all its activity must be dependent upon the man who uses it. Sometimes a machine becomes uncontrollable, and then it not only becomes useless, but it becomes dangerous, and works damage and disaster. What would a man do with a plane, a knife, an axe, a saw, a bow, that had any will of its own and moved of itself? Does it mean nothing when, in the Word of God, we meet so frequently the symbols of passive service--the rod, the staff, the saw, the

See Prayer, Page 5

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Prayer, From Page 4

hammer, the sword, the spear, the threshing instrument, the flail; and, in the New Testament, the vessel? Does it mean that in proportion as a man is willful God can not use him; that the first condition of service is that the human will is to be lost in God's so that it presents no resistance to His, no persistence beyond or apart from His, and even ventures to offer no assistance to His? George Muller well taught that we are to wait to know whether a certain work is God's; then whether it is ours, as being committed to us; but, even then, we need to wait for God's way and God's time to do His own work, otherwise we rush precipitately into that which He means us to do, but only at His signal; or else, perhaps, we go on doing when He calls a halt. Many a true servant of God has, like Moses, begun before his Master was ready, or kept on working when his Master's time was past.

Intercession

There is one aspect of prayer to which particular attention needs to be called, because it is strongly emphasized in the Word, and because it is least used in our daily life, namely, intercession.

This word, with what underlies it, has a very unique use and meaning in Scripture. It differs from supplication, first in this, that supplication has mainly reference to the suppliant and his own supply; and again, because intercession not only concerns others, but largely implies the need of direct Divine interposition. There are many prayers that, in their answer, allow our co-operation and imply our activity. When we pray, "Give us this day our daily bread," we go to work to earn the bread for which we pray. That is God's law. When we ask God to deliver us from the evil one, we expect to be sober and vigilant, and resist the adversary. This is right; but our activity in many other matters hinders the full display of God's power, and hence also our impression of His working. The deepest convictions of God's prayer-answering are therefore wrought in cases where, in the nature of things, we are precluded from all activity in promoting the result.

The Word of God teaches us that intercession with God is most necessary in cases where man is most powerless. Elijah is held before us as a great intercessor, and the one example given is his prayer for rain. Yet in this case he could only pray; there was nothing else he could do to unlock the heavens after three years and a half of drought. And is there not a touch of Divine poetry in the form in which the answer came? The rising cloud took the shape of a man's hand, as though to assure the prophet how God saw and heeded the suppliant hand raised to Him in prayer! Daniel was powerless to move the king or reverse his decree; all he could do was to "desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret;" and it was because he could do nothing else, could not even guess at the interpretation, inasmuch as he knew not even the dream--that it became absolutely sure, when both the dream and its meaning were made known, that God had interposed, and so even the heathen king himself saw, felt and confessed.

All through history certain crises have arisen when the help of man was utterly vain. To the formal Christian, the carnal disciple, the unbelieving soul, this fact, that there is nothing that man could do, makes prayer seem almost a folly, perhaps a farce, a waste of breath. But to those who best know God, man's extremity is God's opportunity, and human helplessness becomes not a reason for the silence of despair, but the argument for praying in faith. Invariably those whose faith in prayer is supernaturally strong are those who have most proved that God has wrought, by their conscious compulsory cessation of all their own efforts as vain and hopeless.

George Muller set out to prove to a half-believing Church and an unbelieving world that God does directly answer prayer; and to do this he purposely abstained from all the ordinary and otherwise legitimate methods of appeal, or of active effort to secure the housing, clothing and feeding of thousands of orphans. Hudson Taylor undertook to put missionaries into Inland

China by dependence solely upon God, asking no collections and even refusing them in connection with public meetings, lest such meetings should be construed as appeals for help. He and his co-workers accustomed themselves to lay all wants before the Lord, and to expect the answer, and answer always came and still comes. The study of missionary history reveals the fact that, at the very times when, in utter despair of any help but God's there has been believing prayer, the interposition of God has been most conspicuously seen--how could it be most conspicuous except amid such conditions?

Every church ought to be a prayer circle; but this will not be so long as we wait for the whole Church, as a body, to move together. The mass of professing Christians have too little hold on God to enter heartily into such holy agreement. To all who yearn for a revival of the prayer-spirit we suggest that in every congregation a prayer circle be formed, without regard to numbers. Let any pastor unite with himself any man or woman in whom he discerns marks of peculiar spiritual life and power, and without publicity or any direct effort to enlarge the little company, begin with such to lay before God any matter demanding special Divine guidance and help. Without any public invitation which might draw unprepared people into a formal association--it will be found that the Holy Spirit will enlarge the circle as He fits others, or finds others fit, to enter it--and thus, quietly and without observation, the little company of praying souls will grow as fast as God means it shall. Let a record be kept of every definite petition laid before God--for such a prayer circle should be only with reference to very definite matters--and as God interposes and answers follow let the record of His interposition be carefully kept, that it may become a new inspiration both to praise and to believing prayer. Such a resort to united intercession we have ourselves known to transform a whole church, remove dissensions, rectify errors, secure harmony and unity, and promote Holy Spirit administration and spiritual life and growth beyond all other possible devices. If in any church the

See Prayer, Page 6

Prayer, From Page 5
 pastor is unhappily not a man who could or would lead in such a movement, let two or three disciples who feel the need and have the faith meet and begin, perhaps, by praying for him. In this matter there should be no waiting for anybody else; if there be but one believer who has power with God let such a one begin intercessory prayer. God will bring to the side of such an intercessor, in His own time and way, others whom He has made ready to act as supplicants.

Not long since, in a church in Scotland, a minister suddenly began to preach with unprecedented power. The whole congregation was aroused and sinners marvelously saved. He himself did not understand the new endowment. In a dream of the night it was strangely suggested to him that the whole blessing was traceable to one poor old woman who was stone deaf, but who came regularly to church, and being unable to hear a word, spent all the time in prayer for the preacher and individual hearers. In the biography of Charles G. Finney similar facts are recorded of "Father Nash," Abel Cleary, and others.

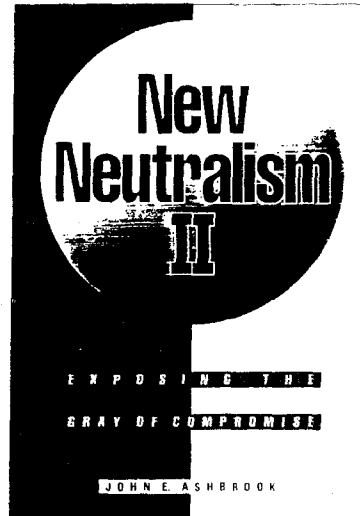
Examples might be multiplied indefinitely. But the one thing we would make prominent is this: God is summoning His people to prayer. He wills that *men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting; that, first of all, supplication, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men.* (I Tim. 2:8.) If this be done first of all, every other most blessed result will follow. God waits to be asked. In Him are the fountains of blessing and He puts at the disposal of His praying saints all their abundance; they are, however, sealed fountains to the ungodly and the unbelieving. There is one key that always unlocks even heaven's gates; one secret that puts connecting channels between those eternal fountains and ourselves. That key, that secret, is prevailing prayer.

God has no greater controversy with His people today than this, that with boundless promises to believing prayer there are so few who actually give them-

selves unto intercession. This is represented as being a matter even of Divine wonderment:

And there is none that calleth upon Thy name, That stirreth up himself to take hold of Thee (Isa. 64:7.)

(To Be Continued)



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Since its official birth in 1948, the religious philosophy of New Evangelicalism has swept like wild fire across the churches, Christian colleges, missions, and youth movements of the world. The philosophy is represented by such men and movements as Evangelists Billy Graham, Dr. Bill Bright, *Christianity Today*, Fuller Seminary, Campus Crusade, InterVarsity and the National Association of Evangelicals.

It is the author's contention that New Evangelicalism has proven to be an enemy of the sound doctrine, reverent worship and holy living which marked Biblical Christianity 50 years ago. He sees New Evangelicalism as taking former fundamental ministries back to a reunion with the apostasy which their forefathers left in the 1930's. In the course of the book the author names men and movements identified with this philosophy. It is the author's hope that the book will strengthen some fundamentalists and rescue some New Evangelicals. Those involved in the New Evangelicalism will scoff at the book, but they will have to answer the mass of evidence presented in its pages.

New Neutralism II is a sequel to a 1975 book by the author's father, William E. Ashbrook, titled *Evangelicalism: The New Neutralism*.

John E. Ashbrook is pastor of Bible Community Church in Mentor, OH where he has served for the past 40 years. He holds a B.S. Degree in the field of Chemical Engineering from



Northwestern University and a B.O. Degree from Faith Theological Seminary, Wilmington, DE. He is a member of the Ohio Bible Fellowship and serves as a featured editor for the Bible Fellowship Visitor.

THE APOSTASY OF THE VISIBLE CHURCH

(Part Three)

Dr. Dayton Hobbs

EVIDENCES OF THE APOSTASY

II Timothy 3:2, "This know also in the last days perilous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of their own selves." This is, of course, the general condition of mankind in these "last times", but Paul is describing the condition of the Christian Church, of Christianity, at the end of this age.

SELF-LOVE

The primary indicator of the last days as far as the Church is concerned is self-love; that is, looking out for, taking

care of, interested only in "Number One." Love of self, is the first thing mentioned here. Read on. "Covetous." This continues to have to do with people who love themselves. They are "covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection." This is greatly evidenced today in the world and in the Church as well, where parents have children who are unruly. I think they are often unruly, because they do not have discipline, but neither do they have genuine love. They have a form of love, a sentimental, soft, soupy kind of love but not the strong kind of love that

See Apostasy, Page 7

Stars, From Page 3
 by his father. We cannot save ourselves by trying or working. Our only hope is to be rescued from above. The blood of the Lord Jesus Christ is the rope to which we must cling. *The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.* (I John 1:7b). That is sure salvation, and it can be yours today if you will receive Christ as your personal Savior. *He that hath the Son hath life.* (I John 5:12a).

*See Romans 3:10,23
 **See John 3:16

(Story based in part on an incident in the boyhood of Dr. George Pabody. Used by permission.)

Apostasy, From Page 6
 the Scripture teaches. That results in parents and people without natural affection; they mistreat their children. People without natural affection mistreat their parents and do not take responsible care of them. In other words, there should be a relationship among families, where people naturally love their own. They naturally take care of their children and their parents. In the past when families were closely knit, it was considered unthinkable to let someone else take the responsibilities for one's family. You took them yourself and looked after such concerns. That is all part of this matter, "without natural affection."

"Truce breakers"; their word is not good. "False accusers." It is amazing the kinds of accusations that people bring against others with absolutely no truth to them. People will not only color a story in their direction, but worse than that, they will make up accusations that are just absolutely, totally untrue. They are "False accusers." "Incontinent" - that has to do with sexual impurities. "Fierce, despisers of those that are good." They do not like those who walk uprightly and in line with the Word of God. They consider that life too straight. They say that is carrying religion too far when it affects everyday life. "Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than, (rather than) lovers of God." There is no comparison here that

indicates they almost love God as much as they love pleasure; it is the opposite. They love pleasure; they do not love God. Their thoughts are for pleasure and self. Their thoughts are on vacations, freedom, making life easier, and feathering their own nest. "Lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God."

OUTWARD FORM

Now comes the verse we really need to get ahold of, because this identifies these people for us. If this verse were not here we might say Paul was talking about the world; he must be talking about the conditions in America, France, Europe, etc. He is not, however, for these have a form of godliness. They have a religious routine. They have prayers and religious meetings and activities. They go to Sunday School, church, prayer meeting, church business meetings, and deacons meetings. They have all the form, but it is just a shell, just a hull. There is nothing inside; there is nothing to it. In college I had a friend whose father was a fisherman.

He would set out his nets and his boys would go out to help pull in the nets. They would take out the good fish, ice them down, and sell them. This was their life and livelihood. Sometimes, however, in the net they would find a beautiful looking fish that should weigh ten pounds or so and sure to bring good money, but when they picked it up it was nearly weightless. It was really nothing but skin. There was nothing inside. In those waters there was a certain deadly eel that would enter a trapped fish's mouth and completely eat out everything inside that fish, until there was nothing remaining but the outer skin. Such a fish would appear to be a fine catch, but there was no meat to it. There was nothing but skin, only a hull.

This is an impressive illustration of sin. Sin can totally destroy an individual from the inside until his personality, character, and ambition, is eaten and ruined. This is also an illustration of the condition of the church at the time of the
 See Apostasy, Page 8

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strained license, freedom, doing what they want to do, just as the rock groups with all the dirty language and filth. People are set upon having, doing, and living as they want. That condition is very prominent out in the world, but it is also overshadowing the church. It may not be as bad in the church, but the same spirit is there. The shell hides the real condition of the church. We are in the apostasy!

I received a book from someone through the mail. In the book the author names many so-called great organizations, tells how many people are being saved throughout the world, and what a great thing is taking place in all the listed evangelical organizations. He tells how many are being saved in different movements, how many thousands are being saved in third world countries and what great revivals are taking place. Now understand me, God is calling out a people for His name and there are those who are being saved around the world. In some places there are even outstanding things taking place where it seems there is genuine revival and where people are being genuinely saved. But, folks, that is the rare, the unusual thing. The vast majority of the decisions reported by these so-called great organizations are primarily part of the shell, leaving the church full of people who are unsaved.

(To be continued)

Apostasy, From Page 7
 apostasy. Now folks, this is important. Viewing the church people might say, "What a big church; see how many people have been saved; see how many people are in it; see what a great organization it is; see how great it is. But they see only the shell. They see only the outside, because it takes spiritual discernment to know the inside. The natural man, the unsaved person, can only see the form of godliness. He can only see the shell. He really does not know what is inside. You hear of some great big churches across America with thousands in attendance. There is one in Korea reporting a hundred thousand or so attending on Sunday. They have to come every hour on the hour all day long to get the services in, and they count the people each service. There are churches which are a huge shell with a form of godliness. They appear to be great institutions yet are eaten up inside. There is nothing really in the heart! There are multiplied thousands of people across America who are in church each Sunday, who attend church regularly, who have made some kind of a decision, signed a card, shaken a pastor's hand, been baptized, or joined a church, but who have never really repented of their sin. It is a matter of serious concern. The Scripture says that we are to examine ourselves whether we be in the faith. I am not one of these

preachers who is constantly trying to get saved people unsaved, but I do warn. I do warn! Do you have the genuine article or are you just a shell? Do you really have Christ? Is he really yours? Have you, in fact, been born again, or is there just a form of godliness? Is your heart full of pride, boastfulness, and love of self? We need to be sure whether or not we are in the faith, whether we, indeed, have been born again and really know Jesus Christ as our Savior. Has the blood been applied? Have our sins been cleansed and forgiven, or do we just have a form of godliness without the power? The Holy Spirit is the power, but you can have an outward form without the power. That is the present day condition in the visible church, and that is why the apostasy will not be recognized. I believe that we are presently in the midst of the apostasy. The apostasy will be full blown at the time of the rapture. The rapture is going to take place and the average church will not miss a beat. There may be some folks missing and some happenings that are not understood, but primarily the church will be relieved when true Christians are gone. They will be so glad to have true Christians out of their hair, because, as we read in II Thess. 2, it is the Holy Spirit who hinders unrighteousness. It is the Holy Spirit who resists unrighteousness in the world. Today most people are for unre-

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