The Moral Twilight of our Times
Dr. Chester Tulga
From the booklet
“The Doctrine of Right and Wrong in These Times” pp. 36-48

Continued from Last Issue

This depreciation of the critical spirit often takes a curious turn: opposition is expressed against the critic rather than the one who provoked the criticism. The one who violates the moral law or departs from sound principles will often get more support than the one who objects. Those guilty of scandal will be defended against the critic of the scandal. It seems at times to be worse to expose a scandal than to commit it. Surely there is a strange reversal of values in our day. To expose scandal, to protest against wrong, is to expose oneself to the charge of “mud-slinging;” so much sin remains unexposed and unrebuked. Many therefore are permitted to pursue their destructive course unexposed, so that many are deceived and led astray. Edmund Burke once said that “evil can triumph if good men will keep still.” By strange confusion of values good men today who refuse to keep silent are treated with more intolerance than the perpetrators of the evil deed.

The function of criticism must not be hindered, or corruption will go on unexposed and unchecked. The right to criticize moral wrong is a moral right. The duty to criticize or expose wrong is a God-given duty. When this right is criticized by a morally tolerant society or the ethically shiftless, it is an evidence of the moral flabbiness of those who object to moral criticism and not a mark of superior piety as some suppose. The widespread depreciation of the critical spirit is a mark of the excessive moral tolerance of our times. The fact that the right of criticism is abused is no reason for abolishing it.

4. The Moral Confusion of Our Times is Expressed in its Glorification of the “Positive Approach” and (Continued on page 6)

Left in a Place of Great Danger
I Samuel 2:11 – 22
Pastor Tod Brainard

After reading verse 11 it may appear as though Samuel was being left in a place of protection and shelter; after all it was the Tabernacle of God. The Tabernacle should have been such a place. But unfortunately, it was not.

Young Samuel ministered unto the LORD in less than a protected environment. I believe that Elkanah and Hannah both knew the environment that they would leave their son Samuel in was not optimal, as a matter of fact, it was outright dangerous.

The Evil and Dangerous Character of Eli’s Sons (vs. 12)

Eli’s sons are identified in the text as “sons of Belial.” Belial was a
Daniel was forced to make a serious decision that was not of his own doing. The temptation created for Daniel by others was not to the committing of some act of idolatry or horrible sin. Daniel would never have fallen for that. Rather, the temptation was to neglect temporarily (30 days), the praying to God, the doing of something right and holy.

All Daniel could have done was to compromise with the king and abstain from prayer for 30 days and the enemies plot would have come to nothing. Or would it? Daniel’s habit was to pray three times a day. He worshipped God, asked what he needed, and gave adoration to him. Around that simple activity all of Daniel’s life was structured. There was to be no compromise even for 30 days.

To neglect prayer for a single day would have spelled disaster for Daniel. Therefore, he prayed “as he did aforetime.”

This passage teaches me a few things:

1. Dr. G. Campbell Morgan once said, “The occasional is always affected by the habitual.” When my life is centered on Christ, I must leave circumstances out of my control to the directing of the ONE in whom I place my trust. Daniel refused to compromise his habitual prayer time with God even when it meant going against a government’s temporary decree. He was right to ignore the decree, but he still had to face the consequences of the violation of the temporary law. This is a lesson we all need to take in.

2. Compromise, even a temporary one, always calls us to neglect that which is important. Neglect is forbearance to do anything that should be done or that is required to be done. Neglect may occur through carelessness or by intention. Daniel was not in the business of compromise of his closely held values. Today, the calls to compromise are everywhere, especially within “Christian” circles. If Daniel had given in just this once to a temporary neglect of his prayer time, he would have lost all moral authority to lead others into prayer to Jehovah God. You cannot restore moral authority once you compromise it.

3. Compromise of godly virtues, even when temporary, is nonetheless sin and therefore condemned by God. There is a strain within religious circles, that teaches that God gets the most glory when we sin, because He gets to exercise His grace. Pastor Tim Keller of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City is one who espouses this lawless compromise with sin. He goes so far as to say that an “indiscretion” using his word, is acceptable with God, because in that sinning God is glorified. (Every Good Endeavor, published 2012.) There is a very serious error with this line of reasoning. It is totally unbiblical. Note...
pagan male sex god who embodied all the pagan aspirations of wicked and perverse living. It is also another name for Satan, especially in Apocryphal and Rabbinical writings. Belial is evil personified. The phrase, “sons of Belial”, indicates worthless, morally depraved, lawless and degenerate individuals. This designation of the sons of Eli presented a significant problem seeing that these sons of Belial were in line to succeed their father as high priests and were already functioning in ministry roles within the Tabernacle. Their domain was the Tabernacle; God’s Tabernacle. Because of their overt iniquity, the Tabernacle had become a dangerous place.

We are also told in the text that Eli’s sons “did not know the LORD.” LORD is a tetragrammaton (four large capital letters in Hebrew, YHWH) - designating the highest name of God in the Israelite vocabulary, Jehovah. The lower-case Lord is the name Adonai. Eli’s sons, though priests of God, did not know HIM. What a stunning and revealing description of these priests!

A Modern-Day Comparison

Let me digress for a moment. There are many parents who send their children to church or the Christian school and feel very comfortable about it. Please do not misunderstand me. Our ministry here in Florida is a local church that operates a Christian school. I promote Christian education. I serve on two Christian education association boards. I thank God for Christian schools that are following the Word of God in their daily operations.

The problem is this; parents put their boy or girl in a good place, and then they stop doing two things. They stop serious prayer and serious parenting. Unbeknownst to the parents, that child may be in the most dangerous situation imaginable. Mom and dad may not seriously pray and seriously parent that child because they do not feel the need. They have abdicated their roles as parents to the church or the Christian school. Other parents feel fine and secure in the fact that their child is in a local church youth group or Sunday school. Folks, that’s where the Devil goes to prey on young people.

I saw a video recently of a rat snake that had made its way up a 45-foot power pole and attacked a bird nesting on top. The bird was chirping away and perhaps thought it was high enough to escape danger. The bird was wrong. The snake struck, capturing the bird and devouring it. You are wrong if you think for one second that your child will escape danger in the local church or the Christian school. In my 33 years of ministry, the most difficult challenge has been to get across to families that Satan lurks in the Christian school, the Christian college/university, and in the local church. We prefer to think that these institutions are a haven from the world, the flesh and the Devil, and they should be. However, the Devil is a serpent climbing on the pole of perceived safety to take his prey. Beware!

The Upper Room Danger

Don’t ever forget that Satan was in the upper room with Jesus Christ. Christ and the Disciples were there celebrating what would be the Last Supper. We are told that the Devil was there in the room with Jesus and the disciples. That night, the upper room was the most dangerous place in Jerusalem because Satan was there!

Yes, as believers we enjoy the care and protection of the LORD, but dear friends, we are also told to put on the whole armor of God that ye may “withstand the wiles of the Devil” (Ephesians 6:11-13) Jesus warned Peter there, in Luke 22:31-32, “And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.”

John 13:27, “And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou dost, do quickly. Satan entered Judas in the upper room after the sop to do his corrupt work.

From that room Peter would go out and deny Christ. From that room Judas would enter his wicked and perverse activity, filled with Satan. From that room the disciples would scatter in fear.

We need to remember that the child who attends church or the Christian school still needs serious prayer and faithful parenting. They may be in the most dangerous place of all.

Samuel is in a dangerous place; the Tabernacle of all places, and his mother is going to continue to pray for him and parent him, you can be sure of that.

How about it parents? Are you trusting everybody else to take care of your child spiritually while you forget to pray and parent and then blame everybody else for when...
Samuel was to serve as a holy and pure contrast to the corruption of Eli and his boys. Samuel’s contrasting life tells me something. You don’t have to follow evil examples. Oh, how we make excuses. “Well my son (or daughter) fell in with bad company.” You can stay away from bad company, AMEN! The reason they fell in with bad company is because they wanted to fall in with bad company. Let’s call it for what it is, shall we? As my dear mother repeated to my siblings and I growing up, “Birds of a feather flock together!”

Ultimately, these corrupt ministers did not stop the work of God. It may look like it at the time; but every time there are men like Eli’s sons, God raises up someone like a Samuel. God’s work does not stop when God’s ministers become corrupt.

The Continuing Influence of a Godly Mother against the Danger (vs. 18-19)

It is interesting that an outer garment is pointed out in these two verses. Verse 18 says that Samuel was girded with a linen ephod. The ephod was a sacred vestment worn originally by the high priest (Exodus 28:4), and afterwards by the ordinary priest (1 Samuel 22:18). It was characteristic of the priestly office (1 Samuel 2:18 1 Samuel 2:28; 14:3). It was worn by Samuel, and also by David (2 Samuel 6:14). It was made of fine linen, and consisted of two pieces, which hung from the neck and covered both the back and front, above the tunic and outer garment (Exodus 28:31). The ephod of the high priest was embroidered with various colors. The two pieces were joined together over the shoulders by clasps or buckles of gold or precious stones, and fastened round the waist by a "girdle of gold, blue, purple, and fine twined linen" (28:6-12). The breastplate, with the Urim and Thummim, were both attached to the ephod.

Samuel, at a young age, had already entered the ministry of the Tabernacle. The ephod symbolized this duty. While Samuel is growing up under the influence of Eli and his sons, Hannah does not forget about her son. Hannah loves Samuel. She promised to give him back to the Lord in good shape for His service and she did. We see the continuing tenderness of her affection by her giving of this outer ephod to Samuel each year adjusted for his growth. This outer coat was such as the priests wore; it is the
Proverb Practicals
by Ludwig Opager

Proverbs 25:11, A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.

We are given this proverb in a comparison format for the purpose of edification and clarity. God is good to us in doing this because we may not understand fully the whole without first analyzing the parts. Before we consider the first idea, "a word fitly spoken", let us focus our attention on the second phrase "apples of gold" and something called “pictures of silver.”

At first glance, it appears that God is talking about metallic things; perhaps apples made of gold metal in pictures made of silver metal. However, the Hebrew form of the word “gold” reveals that it is not referring to metal but simply golden-fresh delicious apples.

The phrase "pictures of silver" means a fashioning of silver metal so arranged as to form a delicate basket or bowl to present the golden fruit. We can conclude that the golden apples are equal to the "word" of the first phrase and the silver basket (i.e. pictures of silver) is equal to the word "fitly" in the second phrase.

As apples may be good; a word spoken may be good. But the word, if presented “fitly”, as the apples in a silver basket, then the words “fitly spoken” will be desired more readily. There is a way of choosing words that will be accepted more readily if spoken properly. This truth is reinforced in Proverbs 15:23, A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!

God expects His children to choose words carefully: words that enhance the attractiveness of truth, words that frame truth in a way that attracts, words that increase the ability to accomplish a purpose. Truth can be presented in such a way that it repels rather than attracts the listener. God desires that truth be presented in a fitting and acceptable way.

Look at Jesus Christ as the Word of God. He is “fitly spoken” by God. Remember His discourses: the living water; the bread of life, the door, the good shepherd, etc. Note how they arose naturally in the conversation. He is the ultimate example of the Word “fitly spoken.” The Word of God fits the times, the seasons, and the ages. A word fitly spoken is what God uses to accomplish His purpose. As Isaiah 55:11, says, So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

We are told that God spoke the worlds into existence (Hebrews 11:3; Psalm 33:9). God believes in connectivity and we see that everything He does fits together. All the trees of a forest fit together. All the worlds He called into being fit together. All His Word fits together in the person of Jesus Christ.

God accomplishes His purpose through His Word. Our words should be carefully crafted. For instance, when rebuking, it should be “fitly spoken”, spoken to accomplish a purpose. When instructing, it should be “fitly spoken” to be effective. When encouraging, it should be “fitly spoken” to accomplish the purpose.

God expects His Word to be “fitly spoken” so that truth will be communicated clearly. James 1:19, tells us, Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath. Slowness of speaking implies carefulness in choosing words. Fitting speech takes thought, time, and prayer. We must consider not only what we say, but how we say it, to whom we say it, the time we say it, and the place we say it.

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its Condemnation of the “Negative Approach.”

There are many mistaken saints who would abolish moral criticism by the “pious” device of questioning the “negative approach.” This device is very useful for it silences the critic as either irreligious or “unwise.” This is a hangover from John Dewey and his optimistic view of the nature of man and not derived from the Scriptures. It has been a very effective device in religious and educational circles, and many evangelicals have adopted it without sensing its departure from Biblical methods. The exhortation to be “positive,” to be “constructive” and not negative, has been given in such a holy tone of voice that even some of the elect have given up the right and duty of moral criticism, for an ineffective sentimentalism which seldom advances the cause of righteousness and truth.

Edwin McNeill Poteat (Mandate to Humanity, pp. 149-150) writing from the liberal viewpoint on the Ten Commandments, recognizes the problem of the “negative approach” and says, “There have been those who complained that the Mandate is put in negative terms. This is a derivative of the ‘never say-don’t’ school of child training and rests on the spurious notion that a proposition negatively stated is less effective than when positively put because something in the psyche resents being forbidden. To tell a child not to touch a hot stove will induce him perversely to do so. Therefore, tell him to touch something cool and thus deflect his interest and intercept the danger. All the facts do not support this...It is necessary to say both ‘do not’ and ‘do.’ Very often the former is more direct and for that reason more easily understood...We doubt seriously that a series of moral maxims scrupulously phrased in positive terms would turn out a fellowship of saints.”

The appeal of the unthinking of our day to confine ourselves to the positive approach to the neglect of the negative is based upon the liberal view of human nature, rather than the scriptural teachings concerning man. The Biblical approach includes both the positive and the negative as the time and circumstances demand. The moral flabbiness of our day is manifested in this opposition to the negative and permits moral cowards and soft compromisers to take refuge in this piosity rather than engage in the conflicts of life.

5. The Moral Confusion of our Day is Seen in the Widespread Disapproval of Moral Indignation Vigorously Expressed.

Moral indignation against wrong and evil persons is in disrepute in religious circles which have been deeply affected by the pacifist philosophy of nonresistance to evil men. Moral indignation and moral denunciation are held to be in bad taste, but if one must denounce something, denounce the sins of the world but not the sins of the church (Read the Book of Amos). Moral denunciation is held to be a violation of the law of love, unless it is so vaguely expressed as to be valueless as a weapon against evil. Again, men are being judged by a concept of love not found in the Scriptures but born of liberal theology which has largely eliminated the manly virtues from its idea of love.

Love, in Amos, denounced false priests, false religion, and unrighteous conduct in words that still burn with holy indignation. Love, in Isaiah, denounced empty ritualism and the backslidings of Israel, in words that penetrate to this day. Love, in Elijah, held the false priests of Baal up to scorn, and called the fire of God down upon their false worship, thus declaring a clear line of demarcation between truth and error. Love, in Jesus, exhausts the imagery of language in describing the hypocrisy of the Pharisees in Matthew 23. Love, in Paul, called the curses of God
Teaching Tips  
by Doris Peppard

Heartfelt Apologies

When children do wrong, it is important that they learn how to apologize correctly. If this training does not happen at home, the Christian school teacher must assume the responsibility to teach children how to make a sincere apology.

Lesson One: Realize you are wrong. This is a BIG lesson! Our sinful nature doesn’t want to face the realization that we are in the wrong - without trying to justify ourselves. Proper apologies cannot be made until we face our own fault. This lesson will require the teacher to point out the wrong and the child to accept the truth of their own actions.

Lesson Two: Admit your fault to those you wronged. This is also a BIG lesson! Human nature always tries to sweep our faults “under the rug” or make our faults seem little or insignificant.

Lesson Three: Accept responsibility for the consequences of our wrongdoing. This is another BIG lesson! Children who do not accept the consequences of their wrongdoings are not truly repentant. Whatever the consequence may be, children must learn that they are obligated to accept their punishment without resentment. Those who belittle the punishment or try to get out of the punishment, will not be able to give a proper apology.

Lesson Four: Be sorrowful and request forgiveness. This is the biggest lesson of all! With a contrite heart a child should learn to ask for forgiveness and a restoration of friendship with those wronged. The apology should include not only the request for forgiveness, but also an opportunity to reestablish a respectful relationship with those they wronged.

Teaching these skills requires patience and time. Teachers must be willing to use their time on teaching this valuable skill. Many times we get in a rush and just want to continue our class subjects to keep on schedule. However, these skills are vitally important and the time you spend teaching your students to apologize properly, is time well spent!

This skill will also help your students learn to apologize to God for their sins. God tells us that we all sin and that God hates sin. He desires that we confess our sins and has promised to forgive and cleanse us. (I John 1:9) We must all learn that we should tell God as soon as we sin that we’re sorry we displeased Him by sinning. We must offer Him a heartfelt apology! After our sins our confessed and forgiven, we can then return to a close relationship with God.

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down upon a false gospel, even though it should be preached by an angel from heaven. Love, in John, the apostle of love, called upon Christians to refuse hospitality or fellowship to those who did not bring the doctrine of Christ or brought a false doctrine of Christ. Love, in Revelation, is seen destroying the forces of Satan which defy the Almighty God. An effeminate liberalism shudders when it hears the manly tones of the Biblical writers, and hastily assures the people that none of the Biblical writers really understood love like latter-day apostles. William A. Spurrier (Basis of Christian Ethics, p. 17) says wisely, “Christian love is not that emotion which oozes pity on some unfortunate person, nor is it that spineless sentimentality which refuses to take swift and decisive action for fear someone might get hurt or be offended and thereby not be ‘loved’ properly. And Christian love is not running out and ‘doing good’ and being a ‘nice boy.’”

Moral indignation and moral denunciation appear constantly in the Scriptures; their disappearance in our day and the disapproval of the manly virtues of Christianity by anemic saints, is a sign of moral flabbiness of our times and not a sign of Christian piety as some suppose.

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what the Bible says about this line of reasoning. “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid.” (Romans 6:1)

A study of the first eleven verses of Romans 6 destroys the whole concept of compromising godly values with sin under the guise of “grace-teaching.” Christian, the following verses are still in force to this very moment:

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. Psalm 1:1

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. James 4:4

“Abstain from all appearance of evil” I Thess. 5:22

4. To ignore the commandments of God, even to temporarily compromise them, is a dangerous business.

James 4:17, “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth [it] not, to him it is sin.”


Churches close their doors, Bible colleges and universities close their doors, pastors step down from churches, missionaries come home from the field in disgrace when compromise of godly values, even temporarily, takes place.

Contrary to current thinking in our “Christian” culture, you don’t receive an exemption from consequences because of your willingness to compromise. Just ask those wealthy individuals who compromised the college entrance protocols by cheating to get their children into prestigious schools if they are exempt from the consequences. Some will experience serious jail time for their offenses. The same is true in the realm of the Christian life. Daniel chose the better road. He refused to compromise his faith even temporarily to reduce the pressure on himself. God spared his life when he could have been devoured in the lion’s den. Why did God spare Daniel? I think it is quite evident. He refused to compromise even temporarily and God was not done with such a man! Amen.
same word that is used for the priest's robe in Exodus 28:4, and this, it is very likely, was altogether of her own spinning, weaving, and sewing; which were works women did in those times: and this Hannah did partly out of her great love to her son Samuel, and partly to lessen the expense that Eli, or the congregation would incur. The Talmudists observe, that a priest might wear a garment, and minister in it, if his mother made it; and they give instances of priests, Ishmael and Eleazar, for whom their mothers made garments. There are certainly no prohibitions given in Scripture regarding a mother making an ephod for her son, the priest.

She brought the coat to him when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice: whether at the Passover, or at Pentecost, or at the Feast of Tabernacles; and it is very probable she came with her husband to all three yearly events. Though she was not by the law obliged to attend, her religious zeal and devotion to God and to her son brought her faithfully. No doubt in these moments together, she taught, encouraged, admonished, and conducted herself as a godly parent should toward Samuel. What he wore reminded him of who he was, even in a dangerous place:

1. She kept on praying and offering sacrifices to the LORD.
2. She kept on parenting.
3. She made sure he had a new outer ephod each year as a reminder of home, love and care that was there for him, but also of his duties as a priest of God.

Alertness to Danger!

Elkanah and Hannah left their child, Samuel, at a young and impressionable age, in a dangerous place. Were they derelict or negligent in their parenting? Were they in the wrong for leaving him with Eli and his wicked sons? I think it would be unjust and willfully ignorant to impose any sanction against Elkanah and Hannah. A vow had been made to God regarding Samuel and it was fulfilled. God took up the role as supreme protector in behalf of Samuel and removed the evil from this young and impressionable mind. Hannah continued to parent and to pray for her son.

That is not to say that there was no collateral damage due to the dangerous companions in Samuel’s life. It is ironic that Samuel’s own sons, Joel and Abiah, did not walk in the ways of the LORD and took bribes; seeking money for themselves through graft and corruption. We read this in 1 Samuel 8:1-5, and the people of Israel used their wickedness to demand a king in place of them as judges.

Dear friends, there is no question that the Tabernacle, God’s temporal house on earth, was a dangerous place made so by evil men. There is no question that all of us in this world of sin; a dangerous place. But oh, how we need to recognize the danger of this world, the flesh and the Devil. Satan was the first creation ever to manifest a will opposed to the will of God and he continues in this rebellion to this very hour. You and I as believers are left in a place of danger. Satan, the accuser of the brethren, attacks and counter-attacks the children of God because of his hatred of Christ.

Let us take up the armor of God, the shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirit, and face the wiles of Satan against our families, and know the victory that comes to alert believers in the battle for truth.

Dr. Oliver B. Greene
By the late renowned Radio Preacher and Evangelist

“Moreover, he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil” (1 Timothy 3:7).

There are two things every child of God needs to remember: 1) He has a WISE Keeper; 2) He has a WILY enemy who is always seeking to entangle a believer in snares. I want to point out several snares of the devil.

1. PRIDE:

Pride is the snare into which the devil himself fell (and as a result was changed from the “shining one” to the “loathsome one”). Ezekiel 28:10-15 gives a description of the king of Tyrus (which applies to Satan), and from these verses we learn that this magnificent creature was perfect in wisdom, perfect in beauty, every precious stone was his covering, and he was referred to as “the anointed cherub that covereth.” He was the “high sheriff” of God’s throne; he was next to the Trinity in position in God’s great heaven. God gave him that position, and Ezekiel 28:15 says. “Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created till iniquity was found in thee!”

PRIDE was the iniquity that was found in Lucifer. Isaiah 14:12-15 clearly sets forth the sin that caused his downfall. He was no longer willing to be subordinate to God, and therefore he attempted to overthrow God and take
In this verse, Paul is advising spiritual soldiers. In the opening verse of this chapter, he says, “Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.” Later in the same chapter the admonishes believers to study to show themselves approved unto God, workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly handling the Word of God. He tells us to shun “profane babblings”; but we are to increase in godliness; we are to purge ourselves and be a vessel of honor-sanctified, set apart, and dedicated for the Master’s use, prepared at all times to do every good work.

Believers should be sober and alert at all times, because the devil—either as a roaring lion or an angel of light—is always on the alert to place snare in our path. If he cannot damn a soul and send a person to hell, he is next move is to cause that believer to become a slothful, asleep-on-the-job Christian.

4. IDOLATRY:

“And Gideon made an ephod...Which thing became a snare unto Gideon, and to his house” (Judges 8:27). Idolatry is committed when anything or anyone takes the place of God in our life. God must occupy first place in all that we are and in all that we do if we hope to receive His blessings. To put anything above God in our thinking, living, planning—or in love—is to become an idolater. This is a snare used by the devil to trap and damn the sinner, and to rob the believer of his spiritual birthright of joy unspeakable and full of glory, with a full reward at the end of life’s journey! If a believer allows the snare of pride, riches, sleepiness, or idolatry to come between him and God, he will lose part, if not all, of his reward. This truth is clearly set forth and outlines in 1 Corinthians 3:11-15. God deliver us from the snare of idolatry. My prayer is, that I may create the things of God the idol of my every thought and action. Whether I eat or drink or whatsoever I do, my desire is to do it all to the glory of God.

5. FEAR:

“The fear of man bringeth a snare” (Prov. 29:25). The believer is to fear none save God—and if we fear God, we need fear nought else. God is Almighty, all-sufficient—and “If God be for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31). “Fear Not; I am the first and the last: I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death” (Rev. 1:17).

The snare of fear has robbed many Christians of their spiritual birthright. In the Book of Acts, we read of disciples who were fearless. They were “daresaints.” Even after they were dragged into the council halls and threatened, they went back to the same streets to preach Jesus Christ-cruccified, buried, and risen! They did not fear the rulers—they feared only God and were determined to proclaim the whole Gospel.

Fear of men has caused many a minister to deviate from preaching the pure, full Gospel, lest he lose his church, or some influential member might leave the church because of the boldness of the preacher in naming sin and preaching against worldliness and ungodliness. If the preacher preaches the doctrine hidden by Jesus to be preached, he can rest assured that he will not be well spoken of by all men; but every minister and every believer should know, “Beware of him of whom all men speak well.”

6. The last snare we will mention is EVIL COMPANIONSHIP:

“They shall be snares and traps unto you” (Joshua 23:13 in part)

If we walk with the world, our spiritual life will become tarnished. If we are friends with the world, we are enemies to God. We are commanded, “Come ye out from among them...and touch not the unclean thing.” Paul admonishes the believers in Thessalonica to “Abstain from all appearance of evil.” John commands, “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, 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” (1 John 2:15-17). The children of God must not love this present world. The lighter we cling to things of the world, the tighter our grip on heaven. All that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, the pride of life—will lead us FROM God, not TO HIM. The love of the world and the evil IN the world are snares.
“Dazed, she lay still, not sure if she was dead or alive. Everything was dark…she lay crumpled on the ground in a bloody heap.” But wait. Don’t let me get ahead of the story. Let’s go back a few decades to see how it all started.

Navajo Angel

Some call her the “Navajo Angel” and well they should, as Miss Betsy has been a special friend to the Native Americans on the huge Arizona Navajo Reservation for decades. How did this frail little lady light on such a place? It was no accident! In 1970, Jim and Betsy Frazier were ministering in New York when God burdened Jim’s heart for the Navajos in Arizona. Their dire need for physical help was exceeded only by their desperate need for salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. With no fanfare, no deputation, no mission board backing, the Fraziers simply left the conveniences of life in Brooklyn and moved cross-country to the dry barren Southwest desert, where they faced bitter cold winters and extreme, hot, dry summers with no electricity, no running water, and no telephones.

Jim built a small frame cabin. They lived in a small part and in the other end stored food, clothing, bedding, and such, and began ministering to the poor Native Americans on the vast, desolate reservation. The Trading Post was far away, and money was scarcer than neighbors. Some Native American families received government checks (social security, welfare, etc.) but the money was soon spent for alcohol, tobacco and drugs, leaving women, children, and old people with nothing. When word spread about help at the mission, people began to flock to it. Their needs were gladly met as long as Jim and Betsy had anything to share, and no one went away without a Gospel tract or Bible and a personal witness of God’s love and salvation.

The message, that the Bible was God’s Word and that the God of Heaven, who created the world and everything in it, loved them and gave His Son to die for their sins, was foreign to the Navajo. They were steeped in the worship of nature and in superstitions handed down through generations. It took much time, prayer, and patient love to win the confidence of these neglected people, but the supply of free food and other necessities kept the dear people coming back, and little by little, one by one, a child, man, or woman would believe the Gospel and be saved. What a change! What rejoicing!

God blessed this simple faith mission and before long, Christians across the United States began sending UPS and Fed Ex shipments, and car and truckloads of provisions, mostly used goods no longer needed. The missionary couple lived simply just as the Navahos, and God supplied their needs. Jesus never failed!

Setbacks and Rumors

They named it “The Widow’s Mite Mission” after the account in Mark 12:41-44. The work was not always “smooth sailing”. Satan always opposes God’s work. Building and getting started may have been difficult, but when their cabin burned to the ground with all the provisions inside, it was a great setback! Discouraging murmurings circulated – the mission would probably close. Jim and Betsy would have none of it! Instead of rebuilding the cabin, Jim bought a bus and moved it onto the property. No doubt living in that metal shell was steamy hot in summer and icy cold in winter, but they carried on!

Sometime later, that bus also burned. Once again a few naysayers took opportunity to whisper of the death of the mission. However, this time the Lord supplied a structure better than before. A group of men in Flagstaff heard of the plight and stepped in to build a mission house with a concrete floor and brick siding. What a blessing! Once again God defeated the enemy and the ministry pressed on in its outreach to the needy and hurting.

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The Work Grows

God’s provision was amazing and after several years, the mission was given more room – ten acres just outside the Reservation twenty seven miles north of Flagstaff. There they have a small house and large storage building, later adding the trailer of an 18-wheeler, and other sheds to divide and house all the donated goods where needy, often destitute Native Americans can search through canned goods, used clothing, shoes, bedding, and household goods to find what they need.

Critical Needs

In severe winter weather, the needs are compounded. The winter of 2008-09 is an example. In the vast desert, many live far away from stores and will walk a long way. One man in his 70’s walked over fifteen miles to the nearest trading post but never returned home. They searched for him for two weeks before they found his body curled up in a ball as if trying to keep warm. That same winter, three other men, alcoholics, were found frozen to death.

Pancake Shoes

One cold morning an old Grandfather appeared at the mission door asking Betsy if he could have “that scrap lumber by the fence.” “Sure.” Questioning him about it, she learned he needed it for heat. -- She led him to her own woodpile.

Meanwhile, please pray for Betsy and The Widow’s Mite Mission.

Sources: The Widow’s Mite Prayer Letters and Website

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