

The PROJECTOR

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

DR. DAYTON HOBBS, EDITOR

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Dealing with Unreasonable People

by Dr. Dayton Hobbs

Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith (II Thess. 3:1,2).

A N UNDERSTANDING of the word "unreasonable," as the KJV translates the Greek word *atapos*, will help us to appreciate what Paul is saying to the Thessalonians. West

translates the phrase thus: "That we may be delivered from the men who act in an improper and unbecoming manner and who are in active opposition to that which is good." This word translated "unreasonable" could also be translated perverse, unprincipled, wrong-minded, fierce, cruel, savage, or ferocious. As W.E. Vine indicates in his *New Testament Word Studies*, the Greek word *atapos* literally means "out of place."

continued next page

An Essay on Biblical Preaching

by John E. Ashbrook, Pastor

Bible Community Church

Mentor, Ohio

Pastor John E. Ashbrook learned his convictions on preaching at Faith Theological Seminary, Wilmington, Delaware. For the past forty-three years, he has been polishing them in the pulpit of the Bible Community Church of North Mentor. Our readers will gather that he has some definite convictions on biblical preaching.

SEVERAL YEARS AGO, we had a delightful black family in our midst. When my wife and I called in their home, I said, "You are black and we are white. Why did you choose Bible Community Church?" The husband answered, "Pastor, when I come to church, I want the preacher to read me a passage of the Bible, tell me what it says, and then tell me

what it means that I should do." He went on to say, "I can't find that in a black church, so I am here in this church." I thought to myself, "Sir, you just gave me a practical commentary on my favorite Preaching text:"

So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading (Nehemiah 8:8).

ILLUMINATING ISSUES

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Fundamental preaching in our country has come to an abysmal low. Many churches are being given a diet of topical preaching designed to push programs, parade erudition and pound pet positions. Hungry people are being fed on the wisdom of men. Those who pound the pulpit or pull the most tears are considered great preachers, and what they are doing is not preaching at all.

I would like to organize my thoughts around three points:

OUR COMMISSION IS TO PREACH THE WORD.

You recognize that my point is a partial quotation of II Timothy 4:2. The context of the passage is found in the previous chapter. In II Timothy 3:1 Paul says, *"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come."* At verse 13 he says, *"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."* What should we do when our civilization is falling apart? Paul answers that:

But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom
see ESSAY page 4

The Editor's Desk

Synchronized Flying

Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no division among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment

(1 Cor. 1:10).

The word *synchronize*, according to Webster's *New World Dictionary*, means "to cause to agree in time or rate of speed." As the pilot of a four-engine bomber when I was a young man, I quickly became aware of the value of synchronization. Two engines out of synchronization could be greatly annoying, but four engines out of "sync" could drive a pilot to distraction. Once the old propeller-driven B-24 aircraft was in the air and on its flight plan, the engines had to be synchronized by ear. By gently increasing the RPM of one engine and reducing the RPM of another, all four engines could be brought into perfect harmony. This could not be accomplished by gauges or other instruments but by the pilot's ear. When all engines were purring together, it was indeed a most delightful sound, but when one or more engines were out of synchronization, it was a very unsettling agitation. This discord would not necessarily keep the plane from completing its mission, but it certainly would cause irritation and distraction to the pilot and crew.

Those involved in a spiritual ministry for our Lord Jesus Christ are somewhat like the crew of that old W.W. II bomber. The pastor

continued next page

From UNREASONABLE cover

One of Dr. Bob Jones, Sr.'s sayings, which has been a tremendous help to me over the years in dealing with people, is "Good men are always reasonable men." Time and time again, it has been my experience in dealing with parents, administrators, and teachers in our Christian school; managers, coaches, and parents in our baseball program for the youth of our area (which we have operated for 38 years); and with officers, teachers, and lay people in Grace Bible Church, that good people are always reasonable people. When you run up against an unreasonable man or woman, you can be

sure of one thing: he is not right with God and is most likely unsaved!

Certainly, not all unsaved people are unreasonable, but I

do believe that this verse of Scripture teaches us that truly unreasonable people are people who have no faith.

Saved people are reasonable people. Saved people may not agree about something, but they will be reasonable in their dealings; they will look at each others' point of view with unprejudiced eyes and with an understanding as to where each is coming from, even if an agreement cannot, or possibly should not, be reached.

The problem with the "unreasonable" man is that he does not have faith—that is, he is out of place calling himself a believer. He not only is unreasonable, but he is wicked. It is impossible to reason successfully with such a person.

I am afraid many of our fundamental churches are chock-full of this breed of professor. He or she may ride along for some period of time, as long as nothing crosses him, but let that with which he disagrees become the issue and his true nature is revealed. Nothing will appease him except others' submission to his position or point of view.

Bible-believing churches today are sometimes careless about whom they receive into their fellowship, I am afraid. As long as a person is not a known "out-of-the-closet" sexual pervert, has not been openly accused of child molestation, has not been convicted of murder, nor has had a recent conviction for wife beating, he is accepted into the fold with little question. A "good" unsaved man or woman can cause

as much division and strife within a church as a "bad" unsaved man or woman. Churches, too often, rush to accept a candidate for membership. After all, if we are not winning souls and growing in numbers, all the other pastors and churches within our circle will think we are unspiritual and not interested in the lost. Also, we as pastors may not be asked to hold meetings for other pastors or be asked to preach at the preachers' meetings.

We fill our churches with unsaved people by weak evangelistic methods, by shallow man-centered preaching, and by baptizing professed converts without any outward fruit that demonstrates a changed life.

Then we cry and moan because of the unreasonable and wicked people we have brought on

board. The problems are too

enormous to be solved, and often the preacher determines that God has called him to go elsewhere. My criticism is certainly not true of many good churches and many good pastors, who make every effort to have a saved membership. Even the very best of churches can end up with "unreasonable" men and women in their membership and often in places of leadership. What can be done to be as sure as possible that the candidates for membership are indeed saved people? How should we deal with the "unreasonable" people who are already a part of the ministry?

FRUIT

The Scriptures tell us that we are to know the tree by the fruit it produces, even though it professes to be a good tree (Matt. 7:15-23). The Lord sees the heart of the one who professes faith in Christ and knows immediately whether his faith is genuine or not. I must wait for the evidence of fruit.

James emphasizes this aspect when he declares, "I will shew thee my faith by my works" (James 2:18b). Faith without works to demonstrate that faith is a dead faith. Again, the Scriptures say, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17). Is it asking too much to wait for a new believer to evidence his new found faith in his or her life before we bring them into membership in the church as

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believers? What's the rush? If their profession is genuine, it will be made evident in their lives, and if they endure for only a while and then fade away, as the sprouted seed did to which Jesus referred in Matthew 13, we will have spared the church from the possible problems that could have arisen had the unsaved professor been added to our rolls. Many a church business meeting battle could have been avoided if there were fewer unreasonable people on our rolls. Love them; be kind and generous in your dealings with them; help them and encourage them in every way possible, but wait for the fruit before they are tied in what I believe to be an unequal yoke with genuine believers.

HOW TO DEAL WITH UNREASONABLE PEOPLE

Obviously, you will not likely *know* who is, indeed, unreasonable until a full-fledged confrontation with them has developed, although you may have some idea by their response or attitude in other matters. I believe that the things I recommend on the basis of my understanding of the Word of God as well as from many personal experiences (I've learned more by my failures in these areas than by my successes) can be useful in resolving these confrontations with a minimum of bad results. We want to protect the ministry of God from harm and avoid damaging individuals as much as possible, whether they are saved or lost.

PRAY, PRAY, PRAY

I do not know of an area of our ministry where prayer is more important than in handling sensitive matters such as these. We don't know *what* we should say; we don't know *how* to say it; and we don't know *when* to say it. All of these weaknesses on our part need to be confessed to the Lord with the earnest prayer that He would guide in all three areas. Don't just breathe a little prayer while jumping into the fray. At the first hint of the problem, take it to the Lord in prayer. Pray before, during, and after the confrontation, but pray the most before any confrontation. Think things through, and pray things through before you make those mistakes that you wish later you could undo. You may go into a situation not

knowing what to expect and not knowing what you will say or do, but at least, do not go into that situation without having spent much time in prayer, seeking the Lord's wisdom and leadership in the matter.

PREPARE

The old Boy Scout's motto, "Be prepared," is certainly wise advice in this regard. Be as knowledgeable as possible in every area that may arise. The unreasonable person may not be helped by your knowledge of the subject, but he will know you have thought carefully about the matter at hand. If you are not able to resolve the matter in the manner you had hoped, you will at least have peace of mind that you did make every effort.

PROCEED

I'm afraid this is often the area where we fail. We get cold feet; we decide (and I believe wrongly) that the problem cannot be resolved or that we would rather live with it than face the unreasonable perpetrator of the problem.

I do not believe God allows problems to come our way for us to live with them. It is my firm belief that problems are for

solving. That is one way we grow. We are given little problems to solve so that we may be able to solve bigger ones. God is looking for problem solvers—those who will tackle problems, looking to Him for wisdom and guidance. Life in God's service is a process of problem solving. Problems are not to be left to fester and grow more serious, infecting additional people. Problems are to be resolved and brought to a head as quickly as possible. God desires His people to live in harmony and peace, not with constant bickering and fighting; however, this kind of tranquillity cannot be realized within a ministry if the problems that arise with unreasonable men and women are not efficiently and effectively dealt with. Good men are always reasonable men. "God deliver us from unreasonable men" was the Apostle Paul's prayer. Ω

God
is looking for problem
solvers—those who will tackle
problems, looking to Him for
wisdom and guidance.

Please remember
The PROJECTOR
in your prayers
and giving!

From EDITOR previous page

has the responsibility before the Lord to provide the leadership necessary to accomplish the assigned mission. Each member of his staff must execute his or her responsibilities in harmony with that mission. It is the Lord's desire within a ministry "that [we] all speak the same thing." Your ministry as a crew member will be successful in direct proportion to the success of the pilot, or pastor, in this regard. Those under leadership have a responsibility to be responsive to those in leadership positions in the same manner as those powerful engines were responsive to the pilot's gentle touch on the engine controls. The crew members are not responsible for assigning the pilot or making the flight plans—those orders come from higher up. Their job is to do their part to make the flight successful by being fully synchronized with the pilot and the other crew members in order that the airplane's assigned mission may be accomplished.

Synchronization is the pilot's responsibility. When an engine gets out of synchronization, it is his responsibility to, as gently as is necessary, bring it back into harmony with the other engines. It is my belief that, in a ministry, it is at least as sinful for one who has responsibility not to administer that synchronization when needed, as it is for one who is under authority to disobey that authority.

What a blessing for brethren to dwell together in unity. Synchronization makes for a smooth flight, a delightful ministry, and accomplishment of the mission. Ω

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From ESSAY cover

thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works (II Timothy 3:14-17).

"The Word" mentioned in 4:2 is the *all Scripture* mentioned in 3:16. Let me say two things which stem from that command.

We are responsible to preach God's point from each passage. God has

not licensed us to think up ingenious points and hope that we can find Scripture to back them up.

Rather, it is our business in preaching the Word to find out God's point and preach it.

I left home at 17 for college, moved into the service, went to seminary and on into a ministry. Every week I got a letter from Mother. She told me the news. Occasionally I got one from Dad. Whenever I got a letter from Dad, I knew that he had written because he had a particular point to make. He put in some news to make the letter palatable, but his purpose was to make his point. Likewise, in every passage, God makes His point; and that is what we are to preach. I have heard many preachers take a text and say, "I am not going to use this verse the way the Bible uses it here." Horrors!

Just as we are responsible to preach God's point, *we are also responsible as pastors to cover God's Word.* We are to preach *all Scripture*.

Anyone who ever went to college is familiar with the professor who got mired in the first half of the course and never covered the subject. I frequently meet some good brother who tells me that he has spent the last seven years preaching through Romans and has now arrived at chapter 9. That sounds noble, but it is not right. Our people need Romans; but they also need Genesis, Isaiah, John, Philipians, and Revelation.

To me, that dictates that we must preach the Word in paragraphs, and cover the Bible books in a reasonable period of time. Sometimes we may preach on a single verse,

and at other times we may cover a short book like Habakkuk. But basically, we must divide the Word into paragraphs and preach that way or we will never cover the course God intends us to cover.

OUR PURPOSE IS TO GIVE THE SENSE OF THE WORD.

Nehemiah 8:8 tells us that they *gave the sense*. If we are to give the sense, we must understand the sense of the section ourselves. Let me suggest three steps.

Study the passage yourself. There is no substitute for this. When a Catholic theologian studies a text he immediately

reaches for "the fathers" to see what they say.

On the contrary, it is a reformation principle that the Holy

Spirit illumines the believer to understand the Scriptures. Do you believe it? Then take your Bible. Read your passage. Make your own notes. Write down what you believe you understand. Jot down your questions about what you don't understand. Outline the passage by writing down its main points. Don't pick up a commentary until you have studied the passage yourself.

Read the passage in the original language if you can. Every pastor has not had the benefit of language study; but if you have it, use it. I discipline myself in the New Testament to write down every word I don't know and to parse all of the verbs. I confess that I do not do that in Hebrew. I studied hard at Hebrew, but it only tended to make me anti-Semitic. I count on Keil and Delitzsch to tell me the truth

there. When I read the passage in Greek, I try to do it with the best grammatical commentary I have on the book. In seminary, we cut our exegetical teeth on *Alford's Greek New Testament* and I still use it.

At this point, *make use of all the commentaries you have.* My Father used to say:

The fellow with a good education and poor books may make it in the ministry. The fellow with a poor education and good books may make

it in the ministry. But, watch out for the fellow who has neither. If at all possible, get both.

Build a good library. Try to find the best commentary on every biblical book and buy it. Don't collect batches of other people's sermons. Collect commentaries where you can look up the difficult verses. The depth of your library will limit the depth of your preaching.

OUR GOAL IS TO LEAD PEOPLE TO UNDERSTAND THE WORD.

At this point in your preparation you understand your passage. You know what the paragraph is talking about and you can see how the biblical writer supports it. But, you still do not have a sermon.

I believe in expository preaching. But for many, expository preaching is a boring ramble through all the clauses of the paragraph. It has nothing to focus the mind. To fix your message in people's minds your sermon must have a *theme* and *logical points*.

When we built our home there was a wall inside the back door. My wife said, "That is the perfect space to hang jackets and garden caps." I agreed. But, nobody ever hung a coat or cap there until I put up half a dozen hooks. As soon as the hooks were there, jackets and caps gravitated to the space.

Preaching is like that. Your people desperately need the help of clear points. Observe when a preacher begins a message.

If he says, "I want to give you four points about Christian living from this paragraph," people will dive for their pencils and paper to take notes. If he is just going to ramble they will let him ramble; but if he is going to give four points, they want to take them down. The points of a good message should stand out like the bones of a very skinny man.

Since we are talking about points, let me give you four things to do as you prepare a message.

(1) Write down the theme of your message. Your theme is a statement of the truth that the passage is talking about. If you were preaching from I

see ESSAY page 8

In every passage, God makes His point; and that is what we are to preach.

The points of a good message should stand out like the bones of a very skinny man.

TEACHING TIPS

by Mrs. Doris Peppard

GOOD NEWS; BAD NEWS

The good news is that your child can read! You have sent him to a good Christian school; he has learned phonics; and now, "Voila!" he can read! You have waited four or more years for this achievement and are thrilled beyond words that your child can now read to himself each night, or can entertain himself on rainy afternoons curled up with a book. You have it made!

The bad news is that your child may be reading trash! Many of the modern serial books, magazines, and fiction books available at minimum expense are (at best) ridiculous and (at worst) filled with satanic symbolism, moral decay, and rebellion.

As parents, we are responsible for our children's development. This, of course, includes their physical and spiritual needs as well as their moral code and outlook on life. There are many books which teach wrong things to children, and unless we are alert, they may cause harm. The messages of the books may be ever so subtle, but they speak loudly and clearly to children.

Some parents may be so thrilled that their children are reading that they do not take the time to consider the messages their books are teaching. All reading material should serve a constructive purpose, or it is a waste of a child's time and talent. Just as you would not want your child to do "nothing," you also should not want him to read an empty-minded book. There is a proper time for variety in reading materials: recreational, biographical, fictional, and educational. This variety helps form a well-balanced reading diet.

There are, however, several types of reading materials that are considered trash and should have no part in a Christian school or home. Be alert to when your child borrows or brings home reading material that you have not checked. You can sometimes judge a book by the type of its cover. If the cover or title is questionable, it is probably not a good book. Avoid any book whose story-line makes the parents appear stupid or uses the children to get the father or mother out of a "jam." These stories belittle the authority and discipline God ordained in the home. Disallow books for preteen girls that give worldly views of dating, love, and marriage. Shun modern books which depict children acting in a rebellious manner toward authority. Beware!

Books to avoid would include:

Certain science fiction, and ghost stories (horror to young children)

All books by R.L. Stine—most well-known are the *Goosebump* books (spooky and satanic leanings)

Babysitter's Club (not helpful advice on baby-sitting, but about young girls baby-sitting and solving problems in a humanistic manner)

Barenstein Bears (belittles father's role in family)

Sweet Valley Girls (preteen worldly viewpoint)

The New Nancy Drew (borders on immoral and worldly lifestyles)

What To Do When ... books (These books cover a variety of subjects, such as what to do when you are angry, afraid, get hurt, get an allowance, etc. The philosophy is very worldly. Example: The book on allowances states that parents "owe" their children an allowance.)

Children need to learn to turn to the Word of God when they need to know what to do. Most self-help books follow the same humanistic philosophy.

Watch out for those paperbacks! One title, *The Christmas Tree Ate My Mother*, is just one example of how some authors will write anything to make a buck. Many books put out by book fairs are not recommendable either. Parents have the responsibility to monitor their children's reading. Many of these paperbacks are humanistic, fleshly, and wicked.

"Christian" fiction books should also be monitored. Watch out for those that portray everyone involved in history as a Christian. We do have godly heroes to set forth as examples, and it is good for children to read such biographies. Young ladies also should be cautioned against reading "Christian Romance" serials. Be discerning!

As Dr. Bob Jones, Sr., said in one of his now famous Chapel Sayings, "There is no difference between the sacred and the secular; to the Christian, all things are sacred." Let's help our children find quality books to read—books that challenge and encourage them to do right and to please the Lord Jesus Christ. Anything contrary to that purpose is harmful.

Suggested Resources:

Some Christian universities and colleges produce a Recommended Reading List for given ages or grade levels. These are available upon request for a nominal fee plus postage.

Honey for a Child's Heart, G. Hung, Zondervan Pub. 847 Ottawa Ave., Grand Rapids, MI \$8.99

A Library Guide to Great Books, M.B. Melton, PO Box 940696, Plano, TX 75094-0696. \$9.99 plus postage.

A Family Program for Reading Aloud, Rosalie Slater, Foundation for American Christian Education, PO Box 9444, Chesapeake, VA 23321-9444. Inquire about cost.

FOCUS ON RELIGION

by Rev. Tod Brainard

Straw Man Arguments



WITHIN THE RANKS of Fundamentalism there are some men who argue positions based upon supposed problems they feel are unacceptable to Fundamentalism. Here are a few of the alleged problems much discussed:

Fundamentalists have not been heard by twentieth-century intellectuals.¹

This statement is true. So shall it ever be. Paul declared in I Corinthians 1:19-21, "For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise [intellectual], and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise [intellectual]? where is the scribe? where is the disputer [apologist] of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom [intellectual prowess and knowledge] knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

The Bible makes clear that the intellectual cannot know God by his wisdom and intellectual knowledge. It is the preaching of the cross to the heart of man that God is pleased to use to save them that believe. It is preaching to the heart of man, not the mind (intellect) of man that God uses to reach a sinner. It is foolish to reason and to debate with unregenerate intellectuals, for they will not hear or receive the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolishness to them (I Cor. 2:14).

Our mission is to proclaim the Word of God, the good news of Jesus Christ unto the lost, and let the Spirit of God call those who have ears to hear. "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews...unto the Greeks...unto them which are called [the ones who have ears to hear]..." (I Cor. 1:23-24).

Fundamentalists, by and large, are anti-intellectual.

To make such a statement is to imply that Fundamentalists are not thinkers simply because they may not write or publish their thoughts to be read widely by intellectuals. However, writing or publishing is not a true measure of thought or intellectual abilities, nor is it the Biblical standard for the believer's "life-of-the-mind" as many evangelicals phrase it.

It is true that some Fundamentalists do not think *rightly*. Some follow men and movements without Spirit-led thought *relative to God's Word*. However, it is my opinion that true Fundamentalists are the only true thinkers. The Biblicist reasons from the Word of God. On the other hand, the mind of the modernist or the Neo-evangelical is inhibited and corrupted, for it has rejected the authority of

the Word of God in its *full* sufficiency in practice. The separated, Spirit-filled believer, who studies and obeys the Word of God, will think what Christ thinks. No secular university, no religious professor, no intellectual can impart the wisdom of God, only the Spirit of God can impart truth and wisdom to the heart and mind.

The believer is not to weigh intellectually what Christ says with what current culture or political minds have to say and then determine his thinking in the matter. Rather, he is to have one mind with Christ, and he is to speak with one mind what Christ says in His Word. By and large, fundamentalists are considered anti-intellectual, because they are not interested in what the world's intelligencia has to say concerning life and godliness. So be it!

Continued

Letters To The Editor

Dear Sir:

Please send us the 8/\$1 pamphlet "The Promise Keepers Movement is Dangerous - Watch for De!" Enclosed is also funds to cover the postage.

Thank you for your assistance and for your faithfulness in proclaiming the Gospel.

Joyfully serving our Great God!

RCM, OH



Dear Dr. Hobbs:

In the mail I received the summer issue of The PROJECTOR. What a blessing and an eye-opener it is. Thank you so much for such valuable information and spiritual help for these days.

I would like to have this publication sent to my pastor. I attend an Independent Fundamental Baptist church and my pastor is right with you on these issues.

EL, CO



Dear Dr. Hobbs,

Sorry to be so slow in writing, but we do appreciate getting The PROJECTOR. It seems to be one of the few publications that is not enamored with the current ecumenical movements. While we would like to see the pendulum swing the other way, we hardly expect it to.

EH, SC





We still enjoy and profit by reading The PROJECTOR. I'm thankful for everyone who stands steadfast in these days—there do not seem to be many left who do. It's an encouragement to read your paper. I wish it came more often.

MG



Someone gave me "the winter PROJECTOR" and it was a blessing to me. [I] am 85 and a missionary to the Jew and Gentile and enjoyed Jewels of Grace: God's remnant. I would like to have The PROJECTOR sent to me and the article on "Promise Keepers."

EG, 32



Please send me the pamphlet Notebooks vs. Workbooks.

Thank you for the good article, Notebooks, Notebooks, Notebooks! Help!

I use notebooks to some degree, but need more instruction, myself. Thanks for your help.

W3, VA



Fundamentalists have failed to work out their theology for a comprehensive world-life view.²

The argument goes on as follows, and I quote,

"Fundamentalists will fail in their responsibilities to society if they simply apply their theology to matters such as women wearing pants, smoking, movies, etc. and neglect a fundamentalist theological approach to the great social problems of the day, such as war and peace, the nuclear arena, overpopulation, discrimination and racism, liberation and justice for the oppressed masses of the world, and a host of other problems that need to be addressed from the viewpoint of a fundamentalist apologetic."³

The Word of God gives the theological approach and answers to these great issues—when they will be dealt with, and who will deal with them. Jesus Christ alone will solve these great social issues when He returns to this earth in judgment and rulership. How foolish to think man can solve sin-problems in this world with his puny, finite, corrupted mind. Social ills are the result of sin, and Christ is the only answer to sin and its consequences! This is the only theological approach the believer has to the issues of this world. It is an issue of faith for the believer. Is God going to accomplish His work through His Son in regard to this world? Yes, He will. Therefore, the believer's role as a "pilgrim and stranger" is to faithfully obey God's Word and proclaim Christ as the only Saviour to a lost world. This is all we can and should do!

1. David Burggraff, *Fundamentalism at the End of the Twentieth Century*, Calvary Baptist Theological Journal, Spring 1995, p. 27.

2. James Singleton, *Fundamentalism: Past, Present, Future*, Fundamental Baptist Press, 1993, p. 32-33.

3. Ibid.

Ω

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From ESSAY page 4

Kings 18 about Elijah and the priests of Baal, you might write: "God never accomplishes His will through the force of the majority but through the faith of the minority." That is your main point, your theme.

(2) Write down the points of your message. Your points should be the truths in the passage which support or explain your theme. How many should you have? You should have the number of them that are in the passage. If you are preaching the Word of God the passage dictates your points.

There are many preachers whose points dictate their passages. They are not preaching the Word. Don't get your points out of your head. Get your points out of your passage. God called you to preach what He said, not what you said. Once you have your points written you can develop them with explanation, illustration, specific examples, testimony, and restatement.

I was taught in homiletics that you should phrase your points as short affirmative statements. That was followed up by saying that if you stated your theme and read your

points you would have a precis of your sermon. I do not always perfectly follow that procedure but you will find it a good guideline.

As you preach, your points show your listeners where they are in the passage. They need to see that you got your first point from verse 12, your second point from verses 13 and 14 and your third point from verse 15. Make your congregation use their Bibles and connect your points to the paragraph.

If you can phrase your points homiletically, that is wonderful. But, it is much more important that your points be accurate than it is that they be homiletical. I work on points to try to make them similar and parallel; but, sometimes they are not. Again, let your passage dictate your points.

(3) Choose the introduction to your message. The purpose of an introduction is to introduce your message. You cannot choose a good introduction until you have the theme of your message. Your introduction should lead directly to your theme.

(4) Choose the conclusion to your message. You have often heard someone's words quoted, "Preach for

a verdict." That is true. The black friend in my introduction said: "then tell me what it means that I should do." Every truth of Scripture should lead to an action of heart—a decision for thanksgiving, holiness, salvation, honesty, service, or giving. The connection may be clear in your mind, but make sure that you show your people exactly what it should mean to them in daily life.

Ideally, if you have prepared this way, and chosen an introduction to fit your theme, your introduction should come around and shake hands with your conclusion. You will end up clinching what you began.

What I have said, may seem to allow no place for topical preaching. On the contrary, I believe that the pastor should *occasionally* preach topical messages. When he does, his message should consist of the exegesis of what the Bible has to say on that topic. He should be just as biblical in a topical message as he is in an expository one.

In 1996 people are starving for the lack of biblical preaching. "Preach the Word." Don't try to feed your people on entertainment, tear-jerking, personal bombast, or hot air. Follow Ezra's example:

So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading (Nehemiah 8:8). Ω

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Proverb Practicals

by Ludwig Opager

*The legs of the lame are not equal:
so is a parable in the mouth of fools.*
Proverbs 26:7

GOD PROVIDED MAN with a pair of legs designed to work together to support the man. Legs work successfully together when one leg is as long, as strong, and as fit as the other. They work in unity toward a common purpose; walking, running, lifting, even supporting a man when he sits. Each leg does its share when each leg is equal to the other. It is comely for one leg of a man to be equal to the other leg. That is God's design.

The legs of the lame are not equal. They may not be the same length or the same strength; they may not even be a pair of legs. If one leg is missing, even with a modern prosthesis, the man-made leg is not equal to the God-made leg. The legs of the lame do not fit together, work together, or share the work equally. A lame man is very awkward in his manner of walking. Something is missing in the lame leg, and the strong leg cannot make up for the difference—no matter how much it tries. One strong leg cannot cover the weakness of the lame leg. Both legs are necessary to the proper functioning of the man.

A lame man does not normally engage in feats of strength and dexterity. Such displays simply exaggerate his lameness. Such efforts only cry out to all, "See my lameness!" "So is a parable in the mouth of fools." The fool, as he expresses a parable, cries out, "See how lame I am! See what a fool I am in speaking a parable my life knows not of." Who is to believe one whose words have no foundation in personal knowledge?

Now the parable in this proverb speaks of a *pithy maxim*. A pithy maxim is a wise saying, energetic words or expressions, or concentrated words from which a moral is drawn for instruction. We are to picture a

fool expressing moral instruction. This is a person who attempts to talk of subjects beyond his knowledge or of things that do not fit his character. His character witnesses against what he says. This is the rock star who cautions young people to stay off drugs. This is the teacher in the public school teaching "safe sex" instead of abstinence. This is the celebrity who attempts medical advice or recommendations, because he plays a doctor in a television series. This is the person who wears tee shirts with Bible verses printed on them while engaging in questionable practices.

*A parable expressed
from the mouth of a fool is
to be discounted as lame,
crippled, or invalid.*

This is the President leading in prayer while he approves of all sorts of ungodly lifestyles. This is Ronald McDonald depicting himself as an adult playing golf with adults in order to sell his Arch Deluxe Burgers to adults. (I say Madison Avenue can convince Americans of anything if converting a clown into an adult icon is successful!)

Examples abound of this hypocrisy today. A parable in the mouth of fools is the norm today, and it is accepted by most who listen. The lame lead the lame! Anyone can present a moral teaching regardless of his character. In fact, it seems the lower the character of the person, the better. But the Word of God is true! A parable expressed from the mouth of a fool is to be discounted as lame, crippled, or invalid.

Something is amiss here! A fool making a grand show of wisdom is the height of the ridiculous! A parable in the mouth of a fool simply confirms the hypocrisy of the fool. We are to examine the life of those who speak parables and test the parable against their life. Anyone whose life does not match up with his words is to have his

portion with the hypocrites. Someone has said that it is better to keep one's mouth closed and be thought a fool than to open it and remove all doubt.

Because man is a depraved sinner; no one perfectly matches his life with his words, but for a Christian a consistent walk, where words match deeds, is attainable by abiding in God's Word and daily appropriating God's grace. The moral is, if you are going to give out pithy sayings, if you are going to teach parables, weigh your words carefully and back them with a life of testimony that supports the teaching just as one straight, strong leg supports the other. Be not as the lame man who only points out his lameness by attempting strength and agility beyond his capability. Otherwise, the instruction you give will simply emphasize your lameness and invalidate your instruction. **Q**

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Stars of the Morning

by "Aunt Carolyn"

Dilly-Dally Dan
Part 2 - Continued from Spring Issue

Synopsis: All efforts to correct Dan for being pokey and late were of no avail. Dan did not understand such a fuss over such a small matter. The teacher kept him after school to make up his work. She stressed, "Time is a treasure given by God ... Don't ignore the God of time ... Do you not care about God or pleasing Him?"

Dan answered, "Oh, no, Ma'am. I care. I just seem to put things off."

"Yes," Miss Trent continued, "You are late to school; you are late with your homework; you are late with your assignments, and nothing we do or say seems to make you change."

Dan wished the teacher would hush and just let him get through what he had to do. But she continued.

"Dan, do you remember that nursery rhyme, 'A dillar, a dollar'?"

Dan stuffed his hands in his pockets and did not answer.

The teacher went on. "A dillar, a dollar, a ten o'clock scholar. What makes you come so soon?" She paused. "Can you finish the rhyme, Dan?" she asked.

Dan's face flushed red in embarrassment as she awaited his reply. At last he broke the long pause.

"Aw, Miss Trent! Sure I remember it. But that's kid stuff. I learned that rhyme in kindergarten or before!"

"Well, say it for me then," she insisted.

Dan began sheepishly:

"A dillar, a dollar,

A ten o'clock scholar.

What makes you come so soon?

You used to come at ten o'clock,

And now you come at noon."

"Yes, that's it," said Miss Trent. "You may have memorized the words in kindergarten, Dan, but you somehow missed the meaning. You see, the little scholar had a bad flaw in his character and then it kept getting worse. First, he was a little late to school, then he arrived at ten o'clock and finally at noon. That's the way sin grows, Dan. Sin not judged and forsaken when it is small only grows and gets a stronger grip on our lives. All sin has serious consequences. No one can fix this character flaw for you. You must confess it to the Lord and then depend on Him to help you overcome it ... Now, get to your work and let's see how quickly you can get finished!"

Dan finished his work, all right, but on the walk home, he could not get Miss Trent's words out of his mind. He was half mad at himself for

the "flaw in his character," as she called it, and half mad at Miss Trent for pressing him so hard. "All sin has serious consequences," she had said. "With that she had gone too far," Dan thought. "What serious consequences could come from being a little late? But that's the way with teachers," he mused, "they always take things too far."

In his conflict, he kicked a snowball beside the path. "Ow!" he muttered. "That had a rock hidden in it! Some brain-dead chump must have thrown that for a joke ... Some joke!" And a thin little voice inside repeated Miss Trent's words, "Sin has serious consequences ... Bad flaw in your character ... sin has serious consequences." Dan broke to run for home. He had to get this off his mind. Supper, homework, anything would be better than these haunting thoughts.

Dan determined to do better if for no other reason than to keep Dad, Mother, and Miss Trent from harassing him. He tried to take care of his responsibilities; he tried to be on time, at least for a while. Then he fell back into his old ways, and like the little scholar in the rhyme, he got slower and later as the days went by.

As Mother fed the baby one morning, she spoke sharply, "Hurry up, Dan! The bus is out there waiting!"

"I'm coming, I'm coming!" he called.

And he was coming. He fully intended to catch the bus, but as he ran out the door, the bus was pulling away.

"Oh, no! It can't leave me. I won't let it leave me!" he cried to himself. He ran as fast as he could, determined to catch the bus before it picked up speed. He fairly flew across the yard, shouting all the way. Racing down the sidewalk, his eyes fixed on the bus, he was unaware that he had come to the busy intersection until a loud horn blared. Dan tried to stop! The car screeched, trying to stop, but the icy street was too slick. It was too late! There was an awful thud, and the car with a boy's limp body under it careened farther into the intersection until at last it skidded to a stop.

Policemen, ambulance workers, and onlookers gathered around, but Dan knew nothing of all that. The first thing he knew was hours later when he awoke in the hospital. There stood his mother and father over his bed with worried looks on their faces. Dan murmured, "What happened? Where am I? What ...?" and then he faded back into unconsciousness.

After a while, he stirred again. This time his sight and thoughts began to clear. The bus ...

The blaring horn ... A car ... Oh, he knew now what must have happened. All he could remember was that awful thud, nothing more. He was too weak to talk, but his mind searched for answers. The bus ... He was late ... "Late ... I'm late ..." he mumbled. "The bus can't leave me ... I ..."

"There, there, Son," Dad spoke softly. "Just lie still. You'll be all right. Mother and I are just thankful you are alive! Be quiet now and rest."

Dan lay still, but his mind did not rest. He was late. He didn't get ready in time. Oh, why hadn't he listened? Why hadn't he done right? In his weakness, he seemed to hear Miss Trent's voice, "A flaw in your character ... Sin not judged only gets worse ... Sin has serious consequences ... Sin has serious consequences ... Sin must be confessed and forsaken."

"I know it, Lord. I know it! I'm sorry for my sin! Please forgive me, and help me, Lord, to do right from now on." He half whispered, half murmured, but the Lord heard, and that was Who mattered!

A few days later, his buddy came to the hospital to visit him. By now Dan was feeling better and could even jest a little. Turk quipped, "I told ya' you were going to be late to your own funeral!"

Dan turned serious. "Yeah, I thought that was pretty dumb the day you said it, but I don't think it's so funny now. Twelve, twenty, or fifty. Something can happen in a hurry. A funeral may not matter, but having to meet God surely does! I just want to be sure I'm always ready!"

"Yeah," Turk breathed, "Me, too! That's nothing to dilly-dally about!"

What about you, my friend? Are you ready to meet God? If you were to die today, would you go to heaven? Have your sins been forgiven by the Lord Jesus Christ? He is the sinless Son of God, Who gave His life for you on the cross of Calvary. He has paid the penalty, but you must accept that payment by faith. You must trust Him as your Savior. "As many as *received* Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that *believe* on His name" (John 1:12). Salvation is by grace through faith alone, not by any works you can do. Won't you receive Jesus Christ today?

Now, if you have trusted Christ as your Savior, how are you growing in your Christian life? Are you pleasing and obeying the Lord, or are there some sins that need to be forsaken? Perhaps, like Dan, you often waste time; perhaps you are sometimes disobedient, lazy, selfish, loud, stubborn, or hot-tempered. Remember, character flaws only grow worse when not renounced. The Bible says, "Let us lay aside every weight, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith" (Heb. 12:1,2). "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (I Cor. 10:31). May God help you to be all you can be for Him!

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Focus on: Compromising Christians

by Evangelist Barry Webb

We have a real problem with compromise in Christianity today. It is not new, but is increasing. The Lord is being replaced as head of church and home. Idolatry is becoming more rampant even in fundamentalism. I see many pastors, churches, Christian schools, and families bowing at the altars of these strange gods.

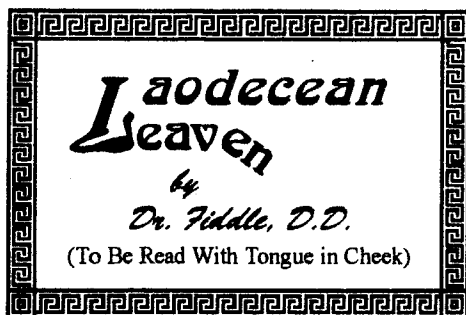
Pragmatism is one of these idols. "Whatever works" is the motto of those who worship at this altar. Churches are lowering standards. Under the guise of reaching more people they forsake sound biblical music, and allow an invasion of Contemporary "Christian" Music. Pastors quit preaching against sin and opt for crowd pleasing messages of psychology or politics because more will attend. Christian schools lower dress standards because carnal kids and their parents balk at them. Parents have no standards at home. They tolerate disobedience and rebellion from their kids hoping to make the home a more "positive" place. All this because society says it works better.

Popularity is another idol. Pastors avoid being "negative." They tiptoe by issues of ecclesiastical and personal separation wanting respect from other clergy and society. Churches drop standards for leadership since congregation lifestyles would make many ineligible. Accusations might arise that the church is unkind, or unloving. They practice no church discipline for fear of societal censure. Christian schools let Cheerleaders wear shorter skirts than dress codes allow so they won't suffer ridicule from other schools (*public and Christian*) they play. Parents let teens wear worldly fashions, entertain themselves with ungodly music, and engage in sinful activities so they will be well-liked in school.

The idol of **Possessions** is probably most popular. Scripture says the Love of money is the root of all evil. Many pastors do not preach against worldliness because some might get mad and leave, hurting church finances and their salary and benefits. Schools tolerate false doctrine and ungodliness because they need the bodies and the money they represent to keep going. And parents concern themselves more about teaching their children how to make a living and put money in the bank, rather than how to live and put treasure in heaven.

We need to return to courage, purity and holiness today. We need to heed the admonition of II Cor. 6:17—"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you."

From The Barry Webb Evangelistic Ministries Newsletter.
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"MAKING THE CONGREGATION COMFORTABLE"

ONE OF THE PRIMARY challenges facing the worship leader (by all means refrain from using the title preacher or pastor) is that of making the congregation/audience feel relaxed. The days when anxious people gathered for the sole purpose of singing hymns of praise and giving heed to a sermon are gone. Today's generation needs to feel "wanted," "needed," and "loved" when they come into your "worship center." After a week in a hectic world, which has forced them to wash down their tranquilizers with Mylanta, they need to find a place where they can relax in a comfortable atmosphere without being spiritually disturbed. Your church can be this haven of rest for the weary if you will follow a few simple guidelines.

First, establish a casual atmosphere by encouraging casual attire. Men in suits and ladies in nice dresses may be appropriate when meeting someone important, such as the President of the United States or the Queen of England, but church is a family affair and dress should be more casual. The worship leader can set the example by getting rid of his tie and suit jacket and rolling up his sleeves. You may even want to reach out to those who consider Sunday a day for recreation by having a "Beach Wear is a Blessing" Day and encouraging them to stop by for services on the way to the shore.

A more relaxed atmosphere can also be created by encouraging the audience to chat with one another. Expecting people to "be still" or "keep silent" is a sure way to kill the spirit in a worship service. You must first do away with the musical prelude before the service. The playing of hymns has a tendency to make people feel they need to be quiet and often, if the hymns are familiar, people will have a tendency to meditate on the message of the hymns more than to think of the people who are around them. If some out-of-date die-hards in your church object to the elimination of the prelude, you might use "non-intrusive" music such as the background music in the shopping mall. When it is time for the service to begin, you might have someone ring a bell, dim the lights, or blow a trumpet. The latter is

especially effective if your church is rapture-oriented. Opportunities can be created during the service for people to visit with each other. An old standard is the "shake hands with your neighbor and tell them you're glad they're here" method. If they don't do it now, they'll never take time after the service as they hurry to lunch or the golf course. Don't be afraid of using variations such as joining hands in large circles, group hugs, or (for the daring) the "holy kiss."

Finally, there is a great way to get your people to arrive early, and, perhaps, even come to Sunday School. Let us use an acrostic to remind us of a sure fire method.

Bagels
And
Pastry
Treats
In
Service
Time

This is easier to remember than:

Pastry
Rolls
Eclairs
Sweets
Bagels
Yogurt
Tarts
Eggs
Raisins
Icing
And
Neapolitans

(It is also cheaper.)

Coffee and snacks between Sunday School and Church are a nice way of getting people together. If you are adventuresome, you may want to try providing breakfast before Sunday School and brunch before Church. Remember, these people come to church to be fed and the better the food the happier they will be. Ω

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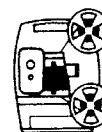
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