

Chapter Thirteen

THE PROBLEM OF CHRISTIAN MATURITY (13:1-14)

IDEAS TO INVESTIGATE:

1. What is the "charge" Paul says must be sustained by "evidence"?
2. Why bring up the subject of Christ's "weakness"?
3. What "test" must the christian not fail to meet?
4. What "improvement" does Paul want the Corinthians to make?
5. Do christians have to "agree with one another"?

SECTION 1

Maturation Through Submission (13:1-4)

13 This is the third time I am coming to you. Any charge must be sustained by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ²I warned those who sinned before and all the others, and I warn them now while absent, as I did when present on my second visit, that if I come again I will not spare them—³since you desire proof that Christ is speaking in me. He is not weak in dealing with you, but is powerful in you. ⁴For he was crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God. For we are weak in him, but in dealing with you we shall live with him by the power of God.

13:1 Witnesses: We have a written record of Paul's first visit to Corinth (Acts 18:1ff). In II Corinthians 2:1 he wrote that he did not want to make "another" "painful" visit — implying that he had already made one "painful" visit after the initial visit recorded in Acts. Now he indicates his plan for a "third" visit. He announces this "third" visit three times (12:14; 13:1, 10). The New Testament never claims to be a day-to-day, detailed, record of the movements and circumstances of each individual mentioned. In fact, the Lord Jesus said and did many things which are not recorded in the Gospel records (see John 20:30-31). The absence of documentary evidence that Paul visited Corinth the "third" time should not be a problem to the discerning student of literature.

We do not know the specific "charge." Actually, the Greek text reads, *pan hrema*, "every word." Paul is quoting Deuteronomy 19:15. "Every word" being spoken against him in Corinth will be called to account when he arrives on his "third visit."

Some think Paul's warning here goes all the way back to I Corinthians 6 where the Corinthians had lawsuits against one another. He is trying, they say, to tell them how God wants such things settled. Others think Paul intends to "set up an ecclesiastical court" when he arrives for the third visit, try those who are "sinning without repenting" and execute needed apostolic punishments.

In the context of these last four chapters, however, it seems better to assume he is referring to slanderous "words" ("charges") his opponents have brought against him. There are innuendoes and hints all the way through II Corinthians that such slander was going on. Charges were being made against him about the way he handled the money collected for the saints at Jerusalem, about his "preying" upon them, about his vacillations, about his weaknesses, etc. It appears he aims to bring these out in the open (see II Cor. 10:1-6) and demand that his opponents prove their "charges" with two or three witnesses, or repudiate them and vindicate his integrity.

If Paul's opponents are truly followers of Christ they will be glad to clear up any "charges" against him. And they will do so by this scripturally sanctioned procedure. Evidence, by eyewitnesses, must establish every "charge." This is the procedure Jesus ordered for his kingdom here on earth (see Matt. 18:15-20). This same procedure is to be followed in Christ's kingdom (the Church) to this very day! This is the way to deal with "charges" against a minister of the gospel or an elder or a Sunday School teacher, or any member of a congregation. Preachers are especially plagued with the problem of immature christians who pass on innuendoes, gossip, hearsay, and speculations from one person to another. Many preachers have been deeply hurt in their souls by this "plague." Christians need to *grow up!* Christians need to understand that every "word" implying a preacher is not ministering in the spirit of Christ must be established or "sustained" (Gr. *stathesetai*, from *histeme*, "stand up") at the "mouth" (Gr. *stomatos*) of two "witnesses" (Gr. *marturon*, Eng. *martyr*, one who testifies). This is the adult, mature, christian way to deal with charges about a man's character. It is certainly out-of-character for a christian

THE PROBLEM OF CHRISTIAN MATURITY

to charge a preacher with misconduct on the basis of hearsay or gossip or innuendo.

13:2 Warning: Evidently, Paul had not previously demanded evidence and witnesses for the slanderous things said about him when he visited Corinth the "second" time. He had let the matter pass, believing the Corinthians would know better than to be seduced by the false teachers.

So what did they do? They accused him of "weakness" and "vacillation" because he tried to let the matter pass. He had hoped to spare the brethren and himself the pain of a "powerful" visit. But the seduction worsened! Many were about to be led astray! Paul must face the seduction down. The truth must be established. Innuendoes and gossip must be tried and exposed. The liars must be repudiated.

He had warned them during his "second visit" that if the matter of the false teachers was not settled, he would come a "third time" and would not spare them. It appears there were some in Corinth who had been persuaded that Paul had not proved Christ's authority in his ministry. They insinuated that he must demonstrate some proof — perhaps some "powerful" miracle or divine revelation.

Paul's replies, in essence, "You have asked for proof that I am what I claim — the true apostle of Christ. You shall have it but you will not like it. I will show you my power by not sparing those who need punishment." The Greek word used here, *pheisomai*, is almost always used in connection with "sparing" some punishment. Paul had demonstrated his power to punish false teachers ("servants of Satan") when he miraculously made Elymas blind (see Acts 13:4-12).

The mature christian does not need continual demonstration of apostolic "power." The mature christian will respond with repentance when confronted with verbal warning from an apostle. But these Corinthian christians were immature! (see I Cor. 3:1ff; 14:20ff). And so are many christians today!

Spiritual "children" insist on demonstrations of authority. And all Christians are spiritual "children" at their beginning walk with Jesus. The Biblical record of miracles done in the presence of eyewitnesses is there to supply the need for a demonstration of "power" and "authority." Once that record is established and believed, however, the christian "babe" needs go on to christian maturation and not require repeated demonstrations of apostolic

authority.

13:3-4 Weakness: It is probable that the false teachers at Corinth had led some of the church members to think Christ had been crucified because he was "weak." Remember, this was what the Jewish rulers thought — Jesus of Nazareth was a weakling. It was what the majority of the populace of Jerusalem thought. It was what Pilate thought. It was even what his own apostles and disciples thought until after his resurrection.

There were those in Corinth having difficulty with the resurrection of Christ (see I Cor. 15). This very significant problem to their faith would present the Judaizers a ready-made opportunity to persuade some that a "crucified Messiah" is a "weak" Messiah. Furthermore, Judaizers would try to convince believers that a Messiah not advocating the Mosaic Law and Judaistic system was a "weak" Messiah.

But Paul says, "The Messiah is not weak in what he is doing in you, is he? He is powerful! The very fact that you are Christians in comparison to what some of you were (I Cor. 6:9, 11) is a demonstration of Christ's power!" Furthermore, all the powerful spiritual gifts they had been exercising by Paul's mediation in the name of Christ was proof of Christ's power! It should have been clear that they did not get this regenerating power and their charismatic miracles from the Mosaic Law or the Jewish system.

Many philosophies and theologies today look upon the Christ of the Bible as a "weak" Christ. Unbelieving theologians look upon the miracles of the Gospel accounts as mythological embellishments by "ignorant ancients" to give an "aura" of power to the religion of pacifistic, weak Jesus. So, to restore the "historical Jesus" to the world and to give him and his "religion" more power, these theologians aim to "demythologize" the Gospels. That is, they set about stripping the Gospel accounts of all miraculous events or deeds or prophecies. They would eliminate all absolutes, all commandments, all Jesus' claims to deity, the virgin birth of Jesus, Christ's resurrection from the dead and all other miracles. Thus they would give us a strong, "historical Jesus."

Jesus was "weak" according to an unbelieving world's criterion of "weakness." He did go meekly to the cross with no physical resistance. He made no struggle to free himself. He appealed only to

the truth and to men's consciences to deter them from crucifying him because he was innocent of their accusations. But the literal, historical, actual, bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead proved all his claims to divine power, proved all his claims to moral perfection, proved all his claims to supernatural revelation, and proved that he did not die in "weakness" but in the power of God. His resurrection proves the power of his death to vicariously atone for all the sins of those who believe and trust in his grace. He proved by his resurrection that he had overcome the ultimate enemies of the human race — sin and death. That is power! No other being has ever had that power!

Believers should have no problem acknowledging the power of Jesus. He has demonstrated his power objectively in history, over sin and death. And because of this historical act of power, his power for righteousness (through his grace) works in all human beings who surrender to him in faith. Any doubting of his power is a retrogression toward spiritual immaturity.

SECTION 2

Maturation Through Self-Examination (13:5-10)

5 Examine yourselves, to see whether you are holding to your faith. Test yourselves. Do you not realize that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test! ⁶I hope you will find out that we have not failed. ⁷But we pray God that you may not do wrong—not that we may appear to have met the test, but that you may do what is right, though we may seem to have failed. ⁸For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth. ⁹For we are glad when we are weak and you are strong. What we pray for is your improvement. ¹⁰I write this while I am away from you, in order that when I come I may not have to be severe in my use of the authority which the Lord has given me for building up and not for tearing down.

13:5 Checking Oneself: The whole purpose of preaching is to produce self-examination in the hearer. A major difficulty most preachers

face is this very concept. Too often some of those who sit and listen to their preacher's sermons believe the preacher is "examining" them. Resentment builds, and people are offended, and congregations are divided. And sometimes people, like some of the Corinthians, do not understand that preaching the apostolic word is intended to produce *self-examination*.

Socrates said, "The unexamined life is not worth living." He also said, "Know thyself." There is only one way a person can really examine "self." That is by reading and believing the Bible. The prophet Jeremiah said, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately corrupt: who can understand it? I search the mind and try the heart, to give to every man according to his ways, says the Lord" (Jer. 17:9). No human being can know his own heart, regardless of how often and how thoroughly he thinks he examines "himself." Man is prone to "self-deception." The apostle Paul verified the idea that human beings cannot accurately examine "self" when he wrote that he would not even judge himself because he would be an imperfect judge of himself. Paul contended that only the Lord could judge him (know him) perfectly (I Cor. 4:3-5).

Yet, here is the same apostle telling the Corinthians to "examine" (Gr. *peirazete* "test, try, prove") themselves to see if they are "in" (Gr. *en*, "in") the faith. He repeats, "Test yourselves" (Gr. *dokimazete*, "prove as the purity and worth of metals are proved in a crucible"). Both Greek verbs are present tense, imperative mood. Literally translated they are apostolic commandments for christians to go on or continually prove and test themselves to determine whether they are "in the faith" or not. The spiritual immaturity of these Corinthians which would make them vulnerable to false teachers made their standing "in the faith" tenuous, so Paul said they needed a "theological check." The Bible is the living word of God, operative (Gr. *energes*, "energized") and incisive (Gr. *diiknoumenos*, "penetrating") exposing the soul and spirit, discerning (Gr. *kritikos*, "critiquing") thoughts and intentions of the human heart (see Heb. 4:12-13).

It should appear altogether logical that if a person wants to "test" himself as to whether he is "in the Christian faith" or not he will *compare* his thinking and acting to the *objective standard* in which the Christian faith is delineated and documented — *the Bible* (especially,

the New Testament). This is what Paul is telling the Corinthians to do here. They are to "examine themselves" according to the truth of God which he had preached and written to them. The apostolic documents are the divinely sanctioned, objective standard, of the Christian faith. Paul is saying to the Corinthians what he said to the Galatians (Gal. 1:8-9). Any "other gospel" or "other Jesus" than that of apostolic preaching and writing is false and based on a false teacher's *subjective* "imaginings" and "arrogances."

Both of the Greek words Paul uses (*peirazete* and *dokimazete*) are words used to indicate a procedure by which something is tried, tested, submitted to examination in order to prove genuineness, reality, truth and factuality. Both words indicate a procedure by which something is compared with an objective standard to prove its conformity to the standard. If it passes the comparison with the objective standard, it is proved to be real and true.

Spiritually mature christians take the Bible in hand, read it, believe it, and examine their thoughts and deeds according to what Christ and his apostles say in it. They do not lay the Bible aside, disregard it, and examine their thoughts according to what *they*, subjectively or wishfully, *want* the Lord to say. They are seeking the Lord's will on every matter and circumstance — not their own will. They are determined to understand what Christ and the apostles actually say and write, according to what words mean, contextually, historically, grammatically.

Pooled human knowledge, sociologically accumulated mores, technological advancement, human autonomy, has no right to say the words of Christ and his apostles mean something different today just because the words were spoken and written some two thousands years ago. The words of the Bible mean what they meant as used by the writers and they mean the same thing today! In practice they may have to be applied to fit technological advances, but spiritually, morally, psychologically, philosophically their principles and standards of conduct remain the same, because they *mean* the same! The moral principles and doctrinal tenets of God are absolute — they never change. They are never to be altered. God's word, the Bible, is a divine revelation in human language, a perfect, absolute, unalterable benchmark or touchstone (standard) by which any human being may examine himself to see if he is "in the Christian faith" or not.

But the huge majority of the world (including many religious people) want to “examine” the human heart by “subjective” standards. They want to rewrite the Bible to conform it to “subjectivism.” That is simply a “cop-out” (a “smoke-screen”) designed to usurp God’s sovereignty and enthrone man’s!

13:6-8 Comparing With Others: It is very important to notice the *order* of Paul’s statements in these next verses. First the Corinthians are to examine themselves (by the word Paul preached to them) to see if they have received God’s grace. Second, if they have become christians (by receiving the Gospel invitation through faith and obedience), *then Christ is in them*. That is the promise of the objective standard — the word of God. They need no subjective, emotional experience to assure them that Christ is in them if they “pass” the “examination.” Parenthetically, Paul hopes his ministry has not failed to bring them into Christ. Third, if they have received the Gospel, are in God’s grace and “in” Christ (which they can know by “examining” themselves according to the objective standard), Paul prays they will not do *wrong* (Gr. *kakon*, evil) but that they will do *right* (Gr. *kalon*, good). This is what Paul wants for the Corinthians, even if they have judged (subjectively is the only way they could have made such a judgment) Paul to be a failure. Paul is not saying a person has to be “right” or “good” to qualify for the grace of God or to become a christian. But he is saying that *after* a person has become a christian, by the grace of God, he should continually examine himself according to God’s objective standard of “good” and “right” and continue to strive for it by the power of Christ which is in him. We belong to God by grace. But that does not mean grace is to be “taken for granted”! The inexpressible unsearchable, infinite grace of God extended to sinners through faith in Jesus Christ should lead such sinners to constant self-examination and mental submission to God’s direction as to what is good. Surrender of the mind to God’s objective standard of “good” will result in the christian doing deeds which his word says are “good.”

Paul is trying to point out that even if the Corinthians considered him a “failure,” that would not justify the Corinthians from refusing to examine themselves by the Gospel of Christ which he preached (proved authentic by objective demonstration of miracles). Men *do* fail — even apostles (e.g. Peter in Gal. 2:11) — God *never* fails. His standards *never* vary! His grace *never* disappears! If a person has

received God's grace by faith in Christ, he must move steadily toward the "good" of God no matter what other men may do!

While it may appear to the Corinthians that Paul was a "failure" he avers that his every word and action toward them was motivated by his desire to do the truth. He testifies that he would never *knowingly* do *anything* against (Gr. *kata*, opposite, beyond) the truth. He morally and conscientiously, always wanted to be *for* the truth. If he failed, it was not because he was *against* the truth. Even when he was persecuting christians, he believed he was "doing God a service" and standing *for* the truth.

The person who is *for* the truth, even though ignorant of what the truth is, can become a follower of Jesus! But those who have no intention of doing what is true because it displeases them, even if they know what the truth is, can never become christians no matter how "orthodox" their behavior! There are such people. God knows that no human being can be perfect, but any one whose desire is to *know* the truth and *have* the truth and *do* the truth will come *under his grace* where there is *no condemnation* (see Rom. 7:21 — 8:8).

13:9-10 Correction the Objective: The goal of all the "visits," the letters, the sending of co-workers to Corinth was to get them to "mend their ways." It was spiritual maturation, or, as Paul puts it, "for building up and not for tearing down."

The Greek word *katartisin* (13:9) is translated "improvement," but it literally means, "set in order again" or "restore" or "repair." It is the same word which is translated "mend your ways" in 13:11. In other words, Paul urged the Corinthians to return to their "newly-wed" status with Christ. They needed to restore their "marriage" to Jesus and renounce any and all relationships to the false teachers who would enslave them to legalism. Paul used this same Greek word in I Corinthians 1:10 where it is translated "united." Our relationship to Christ needs constant "repair" or "restoration" or "rejoining." The apostle hoped this letter would "repair" their relationship to Christ. If it did not, he would have to use his apostolic authority, "severely" (Gr. *apotomos*, sharply, curtly, cuttingly, abruptly).

Does apostolic authority wielded "curtly" edify (build up)? It did in the first century! Check the book of Acts. After the experience with Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5), great fear came upon the whole church, and upon all who heard of these things . . . and more than

SECOND CORINTHIANS

ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women. Paul's "curtness" with the Corinthians, Galatians, and others was one of his apostolic methods to save vulnerable "babes in Christ" from the "wolves in sheep's clothing" (false teachers). Jesus spoke "curtly" with Pharisees to try to save their souls. Jesus wrote "curt" letters to the seven churches of Asia Minor (see Revelation ch. 2-3). The prophets of the Old Testament spoke "curtly" to an idolatrous nation of Israel and saved a remnant to bring the Messiah into the world. God's word, the church, Christians are dealing with eternal matters — with heaven and hell — forever. All the severity necessary to "restore" or "mend" a person's "marriage" to Christ will receive glad thanks as the eons roll by in heaven! It may not be appreciated here, where too often our perspective is limited by the desire for ease and comfort for the flesh, but no discipline is pleasurable for the moment — it yields its peaceable fruit unto righteousness over the "long-haul," (see Heb. 12:11). Paul was a man who cared for people's eternal blessedness. He was willing to sacrifice their momentary displeasure with his apostolic "curtness" for their salvation! Are we???

Maturing Christians should be able to handle "curtness" from the word of God. If life consisted only of pleasantries and flatteries and inanities there would be no spiritual growth. The life that leads to spiritual growth must be "salted" with the "fires" of warnings, chastenings, corrections, severities and even "curtness" if necessary.

SECTION 3

Solidarity (13:11-14)

11 Finally, brethren, farewell. Mend your ways, heed my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you. ¹²Greet one another with a holy kiss.

¹³All the saints greet you.

14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

13:11 Agreeableness: Christian maturation (growth) is dependent upon Christian accord. At the same time, Christian accord produces

christian growth. They go together like "love and marriage." Once again Paul uses a series of Greek verbs in the present tense and imperative mood. They are like the staccato bursts of sub-machine-gun. The Greek text reads, *Loipon, adelphoi, chairete, katartizesthe, parakaleisthe, to auto phroneite, eireneuete. . .* There are five imperative verbs in that sentence! They all end in "ete" or "esthe" or "eite." Literally, the Greek phrase would read, "For the rest (of the time), brethren, you rejoice, you restore yourselves, you admonish yourselves, the same thing, you all think, you be at peace. . . ." These they are to do continually.

This is not exactly the most tactful way to end a letter. He is saying, "Straighten yourselves out!" The Greek words *to auto phroneite*, mean literally, "I order you to go on continually being of the same thinking. . . ." Remember, Paul started his "first" letter to the Corinthians with the same admonition (see I Cor. 1:10). Paul does not mean that every christian has to have the same opinion, where opinions are permissible. But he *does* mean every christian *must think the same way* where the Bible specifically clarifies itself and where its commandments and doctrines are clearly made. The Bible is *God's* word, not man's! And when God commands, every man must see the command the same way, think the same way about it, and do the same obedience. Where there are no specific commands, every christian *must think the same way* about *how* opinions are to be exercised, not *what* opinion may be held. The matter of "thinking the same" must be of utmost significance for Paul to begin and end his two epistles to Corinth with an imperative admonition about it. Apostolic doctrine, apostolic principles, apostolic authority is of supreme importance. What we *think* about the Gospel and apostolic doctrine determines our eternal destiny and the destiny of others!

13:12-13 Affection: Genuine affection is a sign of spiritual maturity. Mature christians will find ways of expressing brotherly love. Paul uses the imperative verb, *aspasasthe* ("greet, salute, welcome, pay respects") urging the Corinthians to "greet one another" with "a holy kiss" (Gr. *en hagio philemati*). The "kiss" of greeting was an ancient custom and generally upon the cheek, forehead or beard. The "holy kiss" (or cheek-to-cheek embrace, as in France today) was adopted as a formal greeting among christians of the first centuries (see Rom. 16:16; I Cor. 16:20; II Cor. 13:12; I Thess. 5:26; I Pet. 5:14). The

“holy kiss” was given by men to men and by women to women. Peter exhorts christians to “love one another earnestly from the heart” (I Pet. 1:22). Peter uses the word *agape* (divine-kind-of-love) in his exhortation. Christian affection is not merely sentiment or feeling. It is that, but much more. It is caring and serving and dying to self for others when one does not even “feel” like doing so. That is *mature* christian affection. Affection that will not die-to-self for others is not mature — it is a sham, facade, and feigned (hypocritical).

13:14 Association: Ultimately, christian maturity depends upon the association a believer has with his Lord! Paul closes his “second” letter to the Corinthian christians with a benediction (prayer) that “the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit” be *with* (Gr. *meta*, “together with”) all of them.

If christians have the “grace of Christ” and the “love of God” and the “fellowship of the Holy Spirit” they need nothing more! This is Paul’s summation of all he wishes for the Corinthian christians. Sum up all he has said in this epistle and the “first” one, and this is what they needed.

Sum it all up, and *in every circumstance* we may find ourselves, starving to death, dying in a hospital, being killed by persecutors, this is all we need! For this body, which we so devotedly try to preserve (by eating, sheltering, dieting, exercising, protecting, doctoring) *must be shed* before we enter Paradise. All of that which we *think* we *desperately* need, in the end, is not needed at all.

If we are trusting in the grace of Christ, trusting in the love of God, and sharing with the Holy Spirit of God in his work in our lives and in the world, *nothing* can separate us from Paradise. As a matter of fact, we would probably be more apt to have the grace of Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit if we had *less* of what *this* world has to offer. Most certainly, if we have more of this world than we need, we had better be giving some of it away so it can make “friends” for us in the eternal abode because sooner or later it will all be left behind — even our physical bodies.

Let us learn to be content with weaknesses (transitoriness) because in that, with grace, love and the Holy Spirit, we can be eternally powerful. And with an association in the Divine Godhead of grace, love and fellowship, all our problems, whether saint or preacher, will

THE PROBLEM OF CHRISTIAN MATURITY

become powers.

APPREHENSIONS:

1. How many visits did Paul make to Corinth?
2. What is Paul indicating he is going to clear up when he arrives in Corinth?
3. What does the Bible say about accusations, slander, gossip — how is it to be dealt with in the kingdom of God?
4. What did Paul mean when he said he would “not spare” them?
5. Was Jesus crucified because he was “weak”?
6. How did God prove Jesus’ death was not due to weakness?
7. Are christians to “examine” themselves, or not?
8. How is this “examination” to be conducted?
9. Was Paul’s ministry to Corinth a “failure”? How do we know?
10. What if it had been a failure?
11. Why did the Corinthians need “improving”?
12. Was being of the same mind significant at Corinth? Why? How do you know?

APPLICATIONS:

1. Is the Biblical instruction on dealing with accusations, offenses, disharmony relevant for today’s circumstances and situations in the church?
2. Are these instructions being followed by the 20th century church? Why?
3. Did Paul have any right to “warn” the Corinthians that he would not “spare” them on his next visit?
4. Should christians today consider the apostolic writings as “warnings” to them.
5. What should be done about apostolic “warnings”?
6. Do you have any “power” from Christ in your daily life? What? How?
7. Have you “examined” yourself lately to see whether you are “in the faith”?

SECOND CORINTHIANS

8. How did you conduct that examination?
9. Can any person (christian or non-christian) make the same examination?
10. What if another christian "fails" in his christian witness? Does that mean you do not have to do "right"? Why?
11. Does God expect us to always be "for the truth"? Are we? How much should we love the truth?
12. What "improvements" or "restoration" have you made in your christian life recently? Have you ever had to "mend" your ways?
13. If you had everything taken away from you like Job, and had left only the grace of Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, would it be enough for you?

Special Study

THE TASK OF THE CHURCH IS TO EQUIP MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL

The end product: An evangelist:

1. Whose aim is love issuing from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith, I Tim. 1:5
2. Who will be committed to *waging* the *good* warfare, holding faith and a good conscience. 1:18
3. Who will urge supplications and prayers for political leaders in order that the gospel may be preached. 2:1ff
4. Who will know how brethren ought to behave in the church of God and be able to lead in selecting elders and deacons. 3:1ff
5. Who will be able to instruct the brethren about deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons. 4:1-5
6. Who will have nothing to do with silly myths. 4:7
7. Who will train himself in godliness. 4:7
8. Who will so command and teach that no one will be offended at his youthfulness. 4:11-12
9. Who will set an example in speech, conduct, love, purity. 4:12
10. Who will *attend* to public reading of scripture, to preaching, to teaching. 4:13
11. Who will *practice* the above duties, who will *devote* himself to them, so that all may *see* his *progress*. 4:13
12. Who will be able to treat properly younger and older men and women, instructing them. 5:1ff
13. Who will know how to properly make public rebuke of persistent sinners. This he is charged to do in the presence of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels. 5:20 *Who will not be partial*. 5:21.
14. Who will not participate in wrong doing. 5:22
15. Who will take care of his physical condition. 4:8; 5:23
16. Who will teach and urge proper human relationships with the world. 6:1-2
17. Who will shun materialism. 6:3-10
18. Who will aim for righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness and gentleness. 6:11ff

SECOND CORINTHIANS

19. Who will charge the rich in this world to do good deeds with their riches. 6:17ff
20. Who will avoid godless chatter and contradictions or what is falsely called knowledge. 6:20-21
21. Who will kindle a spirit of power and love and self-control in himself. II Tim. 1:7
22. Who will not be ashamed of testifying of Christ. 1:8
23. Who will take his share of suffering for Christ. 1:8
24. Who will follow the pattern of apostolic sound words. 1:13
25. Who will *guard* the *truth*. 1:14
26. Who will be *strong in grace*. 2:1
27. Who will commit the gospel to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also. 2:2
28. Who will shun encumbrances not relative to service for Christ. 2:3ff
29. Who will be able to charge others not to dispute about words. 2:14ff
30. Who will be able to handle aright the word of truth. 2:15
31. Who will purify himself as a vessel for the Lord. 2:21
32. Who will shun youthful passions. 2:22
33. Who will not be quarrelsome, but kind to *everyone*. 2:24
34. Who will be an *apt* teacher. 2:24
35. Who will *comprehend* real opposers of the truth and *avoid* them. 3:1-9
36. Who will continue in what he has learned and know those from whom he has learned it. 3:14
37. Who will *preach* the *word* even when it is not seasonable, with *urgency* and long suffering. 4:1-4
38. Who will be always steady, and endure suffering. 4:5
39. Who will do the *work* of an evangelist, and *fulfill* his ministry. 4:5
40. Who will beware of the enemies of the gospel. 4:9ff
41. Who will assist and strengthen the hands of their "fathers in the faith" 4:9ff

The raw material: Young and old people from all circumstances:

Examples of all types may be found in the scriptures

TASK OF THE CHURCH

1. I Corinthians 1:26-29
 - a. not many wise
 - b. not many powerful
 - c. not many of noble birth
 - d. the foolish
 - e. the weak
 - f. the low and despised

2. I Corinthians 3:14
 - a. babes in Christ
 - b. jealous
 - c. divisive and factious

3. I Corinthians 6:9-11
 - a. formerly immoral
 - b. formerly idolaters
 - c. formerly adulterers
 - d. formerly homosexuals
 - e. formerly thieves
 - f. formerly greedy
 - g. formerly drunkards
 - h. formerly revilers
 - i. formerly robbers

4. I Thessalonians 4:11-12; II Thessalonians 3:6-14
 - a. nosy
 - b. busybodies
 - c. lazy
 - d. overly dependent on others
 - e. idle
 - f. unruly

5. Hebrews 5:11-14
 - a. incapable of distinguishing good from evil

6. I Corinthians 12:1ff
 - a. those of differing talents and capacities

SECOND CORINTHIANS

7. I Corinthians 14:37-40
 - a. those who misunderstand spirituality
8. Galatians and Romans
 - a. those with tendencies to legalism

Examples of all types may be found in the apostles

1. Peter - impetuous, big-mouthed, rough and ready to fight
2. Simon the Zealot - politically right-winger
3. Matthew - social outcast
4. Thomas - melancholy, dubious
5. James & John - ambitious, sectarian
6. Philip - inquisitive but dense
7. Judas Iscariot - complainer, criticizer, thief, traitor
8. Paul - pharisaic, intellectual, cultured, zealous
9. Nathanael - guileless, naive

All the apostles had some of the following characteristics provincialism, pride, ambition, materialism, sectarianism, spiritual dullness, impetuosity

Our task: demands as much of the nature of the Master Teacher we can assimilate:

1. The propositionally revealed Word of God, the Bible, must *always* take precedence in training evangelists. Content, methods, ministerial ethics must all conform to this Word
2. Instructional excellence
3. Understanding, humor, sincerity
4. Patience, longsuffering, love, forgiveness
5. Forthrightness, consistency, adaptability
6. Firmness, discipline
7. Courage to face and denounce that which is false
8. Sacrifice of self for the end product
9. Refusal to accept anything but the best from each individual

In short, our task is greater than imparting a few methods or ways to

TASK OF THE CHURCH

quick success. We are not even primarily interested in preparing persons for a life's vocation. We are not aiming just at changing the lifestyles of people. **WE ARE IN THE BUSINESS OF CONVERTING PEOPLE. IF WE SUCCEED IN CONVERTING, WE SHALL SUCCEED IN EQUIPPING A MINISTRY. IF WE FAIL IN CONVERTING, WE SHALL FAIL IN EQUIPPING!**

Special Study

VALUES ARE . . .

Introduction

C.C. Crawford, in *Common Sense Ethics*, defines the subject: "Morality is the relation of man's free deliberate acts to the standard to which they must conform in order to be suitable to man as such, to confer on him the perfection of which he is capable and to bring him to the ends for which he exists."

- I. THE MORALS AND VALUES OF MAN ARE AN INSEPARABLE PART OF THE STRUCTURE OF THE TOTALITY OF BEING.
 - A. "When Gentiles who have not the law (*revealed* standard of right and wrong) do by nature what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts . . ." Rom. 2:14-15.
 - B. Ultimate moral truth is *incorporated* in the *structure* of human nature and human natural relationships. This is sometimes called "natural moral law," or just "the moral law."
 - C. Cicero said: "The law is not in opinion but in nature." In other words, there is a common standard of right and wrong which may be understood by anyone with common sense, and it has nothing to do with individual feelings.
 - D. There is a universal moral law, as distinct from a moral code, which consists of certain statements of fact about the nature of man; and by behaving in conformity with this moral law, man enjoys his true freedom:
 1. The universal moral law is not a question of feeling, but of fact.
 2. When it has been ascertained, a moral code can be drawn up to direct human behavior and prevent men, as far as possible, from doing violence to their own nature.
 3. Defy this moral law and the race will perish in a few generations (See Rom. 1:18-32, esp. 1:28).
 - E. Man's external relationships, seen from this "natural moral

VALUES ARE . . .

order" are three:

1. Dependence — upon the laws of nature and nature's God.
2. Equality — with his fellow human beings.
3. Proprietorship over subhuman orders and creation.

These relationships inhere in the nature of things; they are the "givens" — man does not create them, nor can he change them in any way; he finds them here on his arrival in the world; and from them all his rights and obligations derive.

F. THE MORAL LAW IS THAT LAW WHICH IS THE PROMULGATION IN MAN OF THE ETERNAL LAW, THE WILL OF GOD, THE LAW BY WHICH THE HUMAN BEING IS CONSTITUTED A PERSON AND BY WHICH, THEREFORE, HUMAN NATURE AND HUMAN NATURAL RELATIONSHIPS ARE ORDAINED TO BE PRECISELY WHAT THEY ARE.

1. The primary principles of the Moral Law are set forth in the TWO Great Commandments (Matt. 22:35-40, etc.).
2. The secondary principles of the Moral Law are incorporated in the broad general norms of the Decalogue (Ten Commandments) Exod. 20:1-17.

G. The basic principles of the moral law are amenable to human apprehension (even to reason unaided by special revelation) by means of the principle of universalization.

1. The determination of the goodness or badness of an act on the ground of what the result would be if the act were universalized — that is, if everybody did it.
2. Murder, theft, adultery, lying, perjury, covenant breaking, disrespect for parents — universalized, would destroy social order!!!

II. VALUES, DEFINED, (GREEK WORD FOR VALUES IS *AXIOS*, "WORTH")

A. Value-judgments are the very core of our being. They are the essential fibers of life. "To live is to act, and to act is to choose, and to choose is to evaluate."

All human beings have a set of values or a value-system by which they make choices and act.

B. Values come from *meanings*. In other words, we evaluate

SECOND CORINTHIANS

everything — things, actions, people — according to our concept of the *meaning* of existence and life.

- C. Meanings come from what we *believe* about origins, purposes, goals, destinies.
- D. The bottom line is that our *values* depend upon what we *believe*! There are no people who believe nothing! Everyone has a “faith-system” because everyone has a belief about “meanings” and everyone evaluates and makes moral decisions on the basis of that belief!
- E. Values are what human beings live *for* and live *by*. Our thoughts motives, and actions are geared to our value-system. Every facet of human life is affected by our value-system. We choose our jobs, our mates, our education, our friends according to our values. We rear our children according to our values.

We try to make our life count according to what we value most.

- F. Value means “worth.” We “rate” things and people and life by our value-system. We rate things and ideas and actions and relationships on a worth-scale. And we invariably, inevitably live out our lives doing, thinking, relating, to what we have decided is WORTH the most!
- G. The crucial question, then, becomes, WHO OR WHAT DETERMINES FOR A PERSON WHAT IS “WORTH” THE MOST?
- H. *Principle* is another synonym for *value*. A “principle” is an ultimate, a primary basis of thought and action, a settled rule, a governing motive for action. A moral principle is a truth (principle) for resolving competing claims. There are exceptions to rules, but never to principles. A moral principle is not only a rule of action, but a reason for action.

III. VALUES WILL ALWAYS BE ADOPTED AND DECIDED ON THE BASIS OF SOME *AUTHORITY*

- A. The human mind finds meaning and reality from some authority. To find *ultimate* meaning and reality, there has to be an *ultimate* authority! Authority determines meaning — meaning determines values. Values are always chosen on the basis of what is *believed* to be ultimately *real*, ultimately *final*,

(absolutely real or final).

- B. *Authority* is not optional — without it there is chaos and anarchy. All of life necessarily revolves around authority; learning, the social structure of the home, civil society, vocation — all depend upon some authority for their very existence.
- C. Authority is inseparably connected with life. We cannot enjoy life or accomplish anything of worth without authority. Man is not the author of his own existence; he is creature — not Creator.
 Man is a contingent being (dependent). Every human being inevitably subjects himself to some authority outside himself whether he thinks so or not (even the Bible tells us this in Rom. 6:16; Prov. 5:22; John 8:34; Acts 8:32; Rom. 7:23; II Pet. 2:19).
- D. “If human equality has any worthwhile significance, it is obvious that no person has any inherent authority over another person. How, then, can nothing be added to nothing (some 250,000,000 times, or *ad infinitum*) and get something?” Sovereignty, therefore, cannot *de facto* be in the people. Hence, it is a fundamental of Biblical ethics that God alone is Sovereign of the universe; that, therefore, all human exercise of authority is by His sufferance. Cf. Rom. 13:1; Jer. 18:7-10; 27:1-15; Isa. 10:5-19, I Pet. 2:13-17, etc.).
- E. Values derived from human authority alone are inadequate!
1. Logic proves it. The mind of man must think functionally within the framework of reality (this present creation). The mind receives information from the data of reality — sifts that info through the innate logical categories — and produces concepts and ideas. The great apostle Paul tells us that our data (creation) forces the mind to acknowledge a power or authority *higher* than itself (a god) (Rom. 1:18ff). Now the human mind may “refuse” to acknowledge *Jehovah* as that higher authority — but it cannot dismiss the *logical demand* for a higher authority!
 2. History (both ancient and contemporary) proves it. Surely the history of man is long enough, broad enough, detailed enough to document the bankruptcy of human concepts

of a higher (divine) authority. The inhumanities and obscenities of ancient civilizations, compared with the moral stature and cultural refinement of the Israelites (when they *accepted* the authority of Jehovah) show the stark contrast! The ethical and cultural leavening of society by true, Biblical Christianity contrasted with godless ideological (fascist, communist) societies proves it.

3. Contemporary experience proves it. Evolutionism has proven irrelevant and powerless to fulfill the needs of contemporary man. Humanism (man as the ultimate authority, ultimate meaning, ultimate reality) has proven not only impotent, but illogical and self-contradictory. All humanistic systems of authority and value have experientially produced only *despair* — this can be documented from the writings of humanistic philosophers, theologians, and artists.

The "Nego" (*Life* magazine, May 25, 1962) . . . "This is a world of madness-absurd, stupid. Nothing's solid. There are no values to depend upon. . . I haven't any goals because I don't know what to aim for. . ."

THESE WERE STUDENTS FROM SOME OF THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS PREP-SCHOOLS IN AMERICA, 25 YEARS AGO, INTERVIEWED ABOUT THEIR VIEWS OF LIFE'S MEANING, VALUES, GOALS. AND DO YOU KNOW WHERE THEY PUT THE BLAME FOR THEIR DESPAIR? ON DARWINISM, FREUDIANISM, HUMANISM!

4. Man is finite and all his knowledge is limited by his finiteness. Death is the ultimate authority on the human level — and that can produce no other perspective (view-point, meaning, reality) than DESPAIR!

All humanistic values, when death is the ultimate, become *worthless!*

"Life is never more *absurd* than at the grave" — Camus. Existential philosophy is teaching people today (young people in H.S. and college) that man is a meaningless passion thrust into an unwanted, meaningless, existence.

VALUES ARE . . .

If meaningless is man's ultimate authority — his value-system will tell him that there is no value in anything or anyone — not even in life itself!

VALUES CANNOT BE DETERMINED BY CONSEQUENCES (PRAGMATISM) BECAUSE MAN DOES NOT KNOW THE FUTURE. . . . NOR CAN HE PERCEIVE OR PREDICT "HIDDEN" CONSEQUENCES!

III. VALUES ARE NEEDS — NOT WANTS

A. Values must come from some objectivity outside the human ego itself. Values *cannot* be left to total subjectivity for their source.

1. Man is innately self-centered, egoistic, selfish. The "flesh" (humanness) focuses on self-preservation at all costs.
2. When human beings are honest with themselves they will admit this (Paul the apostle did — Rom. 7:15-25; Gal. 5:16-17).

Everyday experience teaches us this truth. We are always "wanting" and seldom saying, "I need" — especially when it may be physically or psychologically unpleasant.

3. Conscience proves this truth! Often we "want" things or evaluate things (or relationships) as "worthy" *against* our conscience which tells us we do not "need" what we "want."
4. The very fact that we feel "oughtness" tells us that our value-system must come from without — apart from our own selves.
5. All human beings do, as a matter of fact, come to their values from some source outside themselves.
Even those humanists and existentialists who strongly advocate that values must come solely from within the human being himself, ARE TELLING OTHERS (AND WHEN YOU TELL SOMEONE SOMETHING YOU BECOME AN "AUTHORITY") WHAT THE SOURCE OF THEIR VALUES SHOULD BE!!

B. Because values are primarily what we NEED instead of what

SECOND CORINTHIANS

we want we must have values revealed to us from an ABSOLUTE SOURCE . . . AN ABSOLUTE AUTHORITY.

We must find an absolutely Sovereign Person who knows and is able to reveal what is absolutely valuable for us.

1. Without an absolute, infallible source, revealing values to finite human beings, such beings are left with finite, relativistic values.
 2. Without an absolute, final, unimpeachable source for values outside of finite man himself, he will invariably decide what is valuable for him relative to THE FLESH, TO HIS HUMANNESS, AND SELFISHLY . . . EGOCENTRICALLY!
 3. Of course, the humanist is going to say, "What is wrong with ego-centricity?"
What is wrong with it is — MAN IS A SOCIAL BEING!
He is thrust into a social existence, whether he wants it or not. He does not, cannot, exist without others and relationships with them.
To practice a value-system based totally on egocentricity is impossible, and, were it possible, it would lead to social chaos and destruction.
 4. Total egocentricity in the determination of meaning, choice of values, and in actions is the EXISTENTIAL DOCTRINE (but not the existential practice).
- C. The Bible clearly teaches that what man often wants is not what he always NEEDS!
1. Paul wanted God to take away his "thorn in the flesh," but God said that His grace was sufficient (what Paul needed) for Paul II Cor. 12.
 2. What the rich young ruler wanted was to be a disciple of Jesus and keep his riches; Jesus said what he needed was to give all his riches to the poor and then be a follower, Matt. 19; Mark 10; Luke 18.
 3. What the seven churches of Asia Minor wanted and what Jesus said they needed (repentance) were very different.
 4. Even things which seem innocent and correct enough in themselves are not always valuable or needed (I Cor. 8-9-10; Rom. 14).

5. THE ONLY WAY MAN CAN BE SURE HIS VALUES ARE WHAT HE NEEDS AND NOT MERELY WHAT HE WANTS IS TO LET AN INFALLIBLE SOURCE REVEAL IT TO HIM!

V. VALUES ARE ULTIMATELY SPIRITUAL

- A. Human beings are not just matter — not just physical beings, they are also spiritual — essentially, spiritual.
1. Man transcends physical limitations (by mind). He can transcend time and space mentally. He reasons; he communicates; he plans; remembers; ideates (conceptualizes); symbolizes; loves; hates; wishes; imagines.
 2. If man were *only* physical, he would function only by instinct without any conscience (he would neither regret nor approve); he would condemn no one else's behavior nor approve it. He would be completely amoral — have no feeling of responsibility.
 3. Man is an eternal spirit, made in the image of his Creator who is Eternal Spirit.
- B. Human beings are persons.
1. Their problems are *personal* problems — not merely mechanical or physical problems. They often have problems totally unrelated to that which is material and physical. And even those problems that seem related only to the physical are ultimately related to the spiritual — philosophical — mental essence of man.
 2. We cannot be sure of what is valuable or worthy until we see it *proven* worthy or valuable in a *person*.
 3. The reality or non-reality of the world, of life, and of values (or morality) must be found preeminently in a person, and the ultimate point where reality meets our problems will be acceptable **ONLY IN AN ULTIMATE PERSON!**
- C. Truth and Love and Life and Immortality are more than abstractions — they are personal — they deal with the spirit and not the material.
1. If the reality of the world and morality is to be affirmed or denied, it must be at the personal, philosophical,

SECOND CORINTHIANS

spiritual level not the physical.

2. If the meaning of existence is to be found, it must be at the personal, spiritual level. If the meaning of suffering is to be found, it must be at the personal, spiritual, philosophical level, not the physical (II Cor. 12, etc.)
- D. Spiritual beings must have a spiritual authority-source by which to establish their values.
1. Spiritual values cannot be established "scientifically" (empirically). They cannot be arrived at through biological, physiological experimentation.
 2. They must be arrived at mentally, philosophically, through a "faith-system" — a spiritual pilgrimage.
 3. This spiritual authority must be a spiritual Person.

VI. THE VERY STRUCTURAL FOUNDATION OF LIFE

A. Values are motivators.

1. People's actions are predicatable according to their values because people are motivated in the direction of their chosen values.
2. What people consider worthwhile, is what they do . . . determines why they act, what they act for, and what they expect to result from their actions.
3. People do not act according to biological conditioning, they act according to *philosophical conditioning* which has to do with meanings, values.

The reason so many people act like animals today is not because they are animals . . . but they have been taught to believe that gratification of animal (physical urges) is the ultimate meaning in life and the only thing valuable in life.

ANIMALS LIVE TOTALLY ON THE PHYSICAL PLANE BECAUSE OF INSTINCT . . . ANIMALS HAVE NO CHOICE . . . THEY HAVE NO OTHER VALUES TO CHOOSE . . . BUT MEN DO!

4. To change human behavior, we must change what a human values.
5. It is not necessary to change environment or stimuli to change human behavior — human beings can change

VALUES ARE . . .

their behavior in spite of their environment if their values are changed.

THIS IS WHERE IT'S AT TO USE POOR ENGLISH AND THE HIP VERNACULAR! THIS IS WHAT JESUS CAME TO DO WITH THE GOSPEL . . . TO CHANGE PEOPLE'S VALUES AND THUS TO CHANGE THEIR BEHAVIOR!

AND WE MUST GET THIS IN THE RIGHT ORDER . . . WE MUST BE HONEST, FACE REALITY, AND QUIT TRYING TO CHANGE BEHAVIOR WITHOUT *FIRST* CHANGING VALUES (CONVERTING PEOPLE)

PEOPLE CANNOT BE FORCED, MANIPULATED, CONDITIONED, OR MANAGED INTO RIGHT BEHAVIOR IF THEIR VALUES ARE WRONG!

- B. Values are character-builders.
 - 1. People become what they value. Hosea 9:10.
 - 2. If people have despicable values, false values, fleshly values, that is the kind of persons they become . . . that is their viewpoint, and that is their character.
 - 3. People can be trusted only so far as their values are trustworthy! What a person values is what he is! AND THAT IS WHAT HE WILL BE FOR ETERNITY!
- C. Values provide reasons for living . . . they determine *how* we will *use* our lives and *what* we will use life for. Values determine what a person expects to *get* from life—
- D. Values determine how we relate to other people — what our evaluation of another person's worth is; how we will treat another person (WHETHER WE WILL USE THEM AS A MEANS TO AN END . . . TO BE MANIPULATED FOR OUR OWN BENEFIT, OR WHETHER WE WILL SERVE THEM FOR THEIR BENEFIT.
- E. Values determine our concept of ourselves . . . worth, identity, meaning.

Special Study

VALUES ARE ESTABLISHED BY . . .

Introduction

DO YOUNG PEOPLE NEED A VALUE-SYSTEM TODAY?

“Pursue a discussion with any rebellious youth as to why he commits acts that the older generation regards as depraved, self-destructive or irresponsible, and again and again you will hear the reply, ‘Why not?’ Try to answer ‘Why not?’ If you are a transitional creature living in a half-way house, one who has given up faith while continuing (in order to hold your life together) to act as if you still had it, *you have no answer*. True, you still — by and large — live by certain moral principles, but you cannot say why. Therein lies the basis of the curious guilt so often felt by parents in the face of insufferable behavior by their young, and their consequent indulgence of children who reject them.

“The young rebel’s ‘Why not?’ has at least two meanings: not only ‘What’s to stop me?’ but simultaneously, ‘Give me a reason I can accept.’ *For the young person wants, needs, is in fact desperate, to believe in something*. He is in constant search of it — in ‘mind-bending’ drugs, in Zen Buddhism, in puppy-love, astrology, the Peace Corps, a new society, radicalism, hedonism, nihilism — anything but his parents’ ism, which he regards as dishonest and cowardly.

“The young rebel has not found his belief yet. The experience of learning that an entire civilization is founded on nothing solid morally; that it is shot through and through with what he regards as hypocrisy; that he finds nothing in it to give his life meaning — this has been so overwhelming a shock that it has left him largely mute, inarticulate, confused, unable to cope. *He can literally be sure of nothing*. And if there is one word that most aptly describes the emotional reaction of the young to finding society without a useable moral basis, it is disgust.”

Reader’s Digest, March, 1970 — IS THERE A SUBSTITUTE FOR GOD?” by David R. Klein

Dr. John J. Meng of Fordham University states: In the college classroom, “Subjects are almost always discussed in terms of problems, almost never in terms of absolutes. Now a student does need to be made aware of the problems of life — but if this is all he gets from his educational experience, the results can be tragic.

“The professors, he concludes, have no final answer to anything! Can he be blamed if he concludes that ethical and moral principles are as subject to change as are the theories of economics or the historical interpretations of the causes of the First World War?

“. . . by saying nothing, we commit a grave sin of omission that leaves the young person at the mercy of his highly unreliable feelings and drives. We make it easy, too easy, for him to be immoral.

“I have found, from my experience, that often the students are more inclined to be strict than the faculty. *They know, and want, rules to give them some support as they struggle to make moral decisions.* They don’t want to be confused by a multiplicity of unanswered problems and a paucity of positive replies to the great questions of life. Without a minimum agreement, at least, on a set of ethical and moral values, our colleges and universities will continue to teach only a part of the truth they are dedicated to pursuing.”

JUST THIS WEEK, OUR JOPLIN SCHOOL BOARD APPOINTED A COMMITTEE TO INSTITUTE A PROGRAM FOR THE TEACHING OF VALUES AND MORAL STANDARDS IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS!!!!

I. INDOCTRINATION — (TEACHING)

- A. Redemptive (Christian) values are *learned* — they are not innate or genetically inherited. (Certain general values, as we said in the first lecture, may be *revealed in the natural order of things . . . all man has innately are logical categories [categories by which to reason] and the moral imperative [“oughtness” or conscience]. But those values by which we are redeemed for the kingdom of heaven we must LEARN from Christ.*

SECOND CORINTHIANS

1. People value what they do because that is what they have been *taught* to value.
 2. The Television advertizers know that! The average American child watches an average of 7 hours of television per day! During that time he sees an average of 135 commercial ads! IS IT ANY WONDER THAT THE VALUES OF TV'S GENERATIONS ARE FOCUSED ON *MATERIALISM*??
 3. Paul wrote in Heb. 5:14 "But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their faculties trained by practice to distinguish good from evil."
Paul wrote to the Ephesians in that marvelous 4th and 5th chapters, ". . . you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. . . . You did not so learn Christ. . . . Let no one deceive you with empty words . . . try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord."
 4. Then, in the 6th chapter he commanded, "Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" 6:4.
- B. Redemptive values are learned from the *Bible* — and from no other source.
1. Joseph T. Bayly wrote nearly 20 years ago in *Eternity* magazine, ". . . you'd think that young people who have grown up in an evangelical milieu would be firmly grounded in the Bible's authority. They're not. In my experience, at least, I don't usually find the reflex, 'The Bible says it and so it must be true,' among young men and women. The reaction of a student in a Christian college, from an evangelical background, on being reminded that the Bible forbids premarital intercourse, is rather typical of the attitude I've found. 'Maybe the Bible says it, but if it does, that isn't what it means.'
"If my impressions are correct, we are in danger . . . since it is questionable whether morality and ethics — even faith (Rom. 10:17) can stand, apart from the support of accepted biblical authority."
 2. This is the really important thing to communicate to the young — complete submission to the Bible's

authority. . . .

- C. The Christian Gospel offers the only absolute, workable, *MOTIVE* for morality. *MOTIVE (RATIONALE, REASON WHY, POWER-TO-DO) IS PRIMARY, CRUCIAL!*
1. Sydney Cave said, "The Christian Gospel is Good News of God, not news of man, and has for its *first concern not what men must do but what God has done. . . .* In Christ's words and deeds, in his *cross and resurrection*, there is disclosed the nature of God's character and rule, and so the secret of this mysterious universe . . . Christian ethics is derivative; it asks, Since God has so acted, what ought we men to do?"
 2. ". . . the Christian message is not to be commended because it meets . . . patent needs of modern men. Were it merely useful, it would soon cease to be of use. It demands attention not because it may be helpful **BUT BECAUSE IT IS TRUE. . . .**'
 3. "The contribution of Christianity to the problems of personal character and corporate activity does not lie merely, or even chiefly, in the teaching of Jesus (*per se*). It lies in the significance of *God's action* for men in Jesus Christ . . . for the grace of God in Christ demanded and received the response of faith; and gratitude to God for what he had done in Christ became the inspiration and the norm for Christian character. To know what God would have us do, we need to remember what God himself has done."
 4. The absoluteness of the Gospel (or of God's revelation, the Bible) for a moral norm has its foundation in **GOD'S EXISTENCE AND IN GOD'S CHARACTER**. If the existence (his omnipotence, omniscience) and his character (justice, love, faithfulness) be demonstrated we have a sufficiently authoritative *motive* for moral behavior.
 - a. The Bible is a historical record documenting God's existence **HE HAS ACTED, IN HISTORY THROUGH DEEDS AND PERSONS, AND FINALLY CAME TO EARTH AS A PERSON HIMSELF IN JESUS CHRIST.**

SECOND CORINTHIANS

- b. The Bible is a historical record documenting God's character **HE IS FAITHFUL TO KEEP HIS WORD** — thousands of prophecies have come to pass showing **HIS WORDS ALWAYS COME TO PASS**
 - c. The Bible has demonstrated itself to be a divine book — historically, archaeologically, scientifically, philologically, pragmatically, prophetically, textually, and every other way.
5. If ever we are to bring young people in their “free deliberate acts to the standards to which they must conform in order to be suitable to man as such, to confer on them the perfection of which they are capable and bring them to the ends for which they exist . . .” **IT WILL HAVE TO BE THROUGH TEACHING THEM TO RESPOND TO THE GRACIOUS GOSPEL OF CHRIST WHICH DELINEATES THE CHARACTER OF GOD UPON A SOUL!**

FOR THE GRACE OF GOD IS THE ONLY SUFFICIENT *MOTIVE* TO PRODUCE A GODLY MORAL CHARACTER IN ANY HUMAN BEING'S HEART!

Alexander Campbell wrote in *The Christian System*: “Moral facts develop moral character . . . all the works and words of God are moral facts and truths . . . you find the works and words of God in the Bible . . . when these moral facts are brought into immediate contact with the mind of man, they delineate the image of God upon the human soul. . . .”

Alexander remembers . . . “It was the rule that every family member should memorize, during each day, some portion of the Bible, to be recited at evening worship. . . .” “They (the Scriptures) have not only been written on the tablet of my memory, but incorporated with my modes of thinking and speaking.”

I AM NOT PERSUADED WE HAVE GIVEN OUR YOUNG PEOPLE A WONDERFUL ENOUGH MOTIVE FOR CHOOSING RIGHT VALUES!

WE HAVE NOT GIVEN THEM CREDIT FOR ABILITY TO BE MOTIVATED BY WHO GOD IS AND WHAT GOD HAS DONE. . . . WE HAVE THOUGHT TO MOTIVATE THEM BY PAMPERING, ENTERTAINING, ATTRACTING THEM — *RATHER THAN TEACHING THEM ABOUT GOD!*

D. We have not taught them!

1. In 20 years or more of giving the simple AABC Bible Content Test to incoming Bible college freshmen, the average scores continue to be in the 30% to 40% correct level. THESE YOUNG PEOPLE COMING, FOR THE MOST PART, FROM RESTORATION MOVEMENT, "PEOPLE OF THE BOOK" CHURCHES, CANNOT EVEN PASS A SIMPLE MULTIPLE CHOICE BIBLE CONTENT EXAM! CAN'T EVEN SCORE 50%!!!
2. The church has only one *mandate* — TEACH!!! Every thing the church of Jesus Christ does is to center in TEACHING. *Worship* in its purest form *teaches* us; *evangelism* cannot be done without *teaching*; *benevolence* *teaches* us about God's character. The work of ministry is teaching (see Eph. 4:11-16; Col. 1 & 2).
3. Of course, the church's work of teaching cannot be done only on Sunday and Wednesday! It has to be done in the home, every day of the week!

SOME WAY, OR ANOTHER, THE CORPORATE CONGREGATION (THE CHURCH) MUST SEE THAT IT'S YOUNG PEOPLE ARE TAUGHT *BIBLICAL CONTENT* SO THEY WILL LEARN *BIBLICAL VALUES!* YOU CAN'T HAVE ONE WITHOUT THE OTHER!

E. The Christian Gospel (the Bible) offers the only absolute, workable *CONTENT* for morality and values worthy of mankind.

1. All humanistic systems of ethics and values logically and inevitably reduce to *totalitarianism*, either of the individual or a class of individuals. Man is left to his own limited, finite, fallible resources to determine what is moral and to try to motivate himself and others to do what he feels is moral.

SECOND CORINTHIANS

Manifestly, there must be a law somewhere that has higher obligatory power than the law of the individual, tribe or state. There must be a law that is superior to the will of one man or that of a few men, or even that of a majority of men.

2. The Christian Gospel is that *highest* of all value-systems. The Christian Gospel (which includes all the New Testament writings) offers both absolute precepts and absolute principles.
 - a. There are certain, definite, clearly enunciated precepts which are absolute and imperative (commanded) — both “dos’ and “don’ts.”

THE N.T. FORBIDS, LYING, MURDERING, PRE-MARITAL AND EXTRA-MARITAL SEX, DRUNKENNESS, HOMOSEXUALITY, THIEVERY, ROBBERY, IDOLATRY, REVILING, GREED, HATRED, AND MANY OTHER SUCH SINS.
 - b. The N.T. clearly commands that it is right to feed the hungry, to tell the truth, to pay taxes for government services, to punish evil doers (even capital punishment), to forgive those who offend us, to work for a living, to mind our own affairs, etc.
3. But, Christianity, as the N.T. presents it, is not a value-system of legalism (and there is a difference between law and legalism). The Christian value-system does not provide us with a code of rules dealing with *every* case of conduct.

Instead, it speaks of the grace of God in Christ which evokes the response of a faith which leads inevitably to LOVE.
4. In the main, Christianity exhorts us to be God-like because of what God is like! (Eph. 5:1-2) . . . In other words what sort of men ought those be, who have experienced God’s grace in Christ — and then it tells us and shows us what we ought to be like by showing us what God is like as He revealed himself in Christ Jesus and through the Spirit in the N.T.

VALUES ARE ESTABLISHED BY . . .

5. *Agape* love is the fundamental power offered to us for a value-system (II Cor. 5:14 — “The love of Christ constrains (controls) us . . . ;” and I John 4:19 — “We love because he first loved us”) So also is our hope of heaven a “controlling” factor (I John 3:1-3); “. . . the love you have for all the saints, *because* of the hope laid up for you in heaven . . .” Col. 1:5.
Even the fear of the Lord is to be used in developing our value-system . . . “Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men . . .” II Cor. 5:11.

DON'T EVER LET ANYONE TELL YOU THAT BEING GOOD THROUGH FEARING THE LORD ALMIGHTY IS AN UNACCEPTABLE MOTIVE . . . IT IS CONSISTENTLY TAUGHT IN THE N.T. BY JESUS AND THE APOSTLES! ALONG WITH LOVE.

Christian love is not some sentimental mush . . . it is not really based on feelings at all! It is a deliberate principle of the mind and a deliberate conquest and achievement of the will — OFTEN IN SPITE OF FEELINGS. It is the power to love the unloveable, to love people whom we do not like . . . to care for people when one does not care for their ways.

It involves three deliberate acts; recognition, consideration, care. It does not have its origin in passion or philanthropy.

It is not a matter of taste or inclination.

To love in the sense of recognizing, considering and caring is a matter that lies with the control of the will and therefore we can RIGHTLY BE *COMMANDED TO LOVE* in the Biblical sense.

If *agape* love for God and our fellow man is our directing principle of behavior, all actions, all persons, all thoughts will become relative NOT to feelings and selfish desires, BUT TO GOD'S REVEALED ENDS FOR MAN'S REDEMPTION AND REGENERATION!

WE HAVE GOT TO CONVINCING OUR YOUNG PEOPLE THAT

SECOND CORINTHIANS

CHRIST *COMMANDS* THEM TO LOVE (CARE). LOVING FOR THE CHRISTIAN IS NOT A MATTER OF CHOICE . . . IT IS A COMMAND!

CHRISTIAN LOVE IS TAUGHT . . . IT IS LEARNED . . . IT IS SOMETHING WE DO. WE ARE NOT BORN WITH IT, IT IS NOT INNATE . . . NOT INHERITED (EXCEPT BY EXAMPLE).

AND LOVE IS *NOT* SELF-DEFINING! CHRISTIAN LOVE IS NOT FELT . . . IT IS REVEALED. GOD TELLS US EXACTLY WHAT AND HOW TO LOVE IN HIS WORD. WE CANNOT DECIDE IT ON OUR OWN!

F. Aside from the clear, direct “dos” and “don’ts,” there are certain principles (absolute principles) mainly written out in Paul’s epistles.

1. Christian freedom in matters not spelled out in the N.T.
2. The Christian is to do everything so it will glorify (bring honor and “weight” — respect, authority) to God. Nothing in life is excluded from this principle (I Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17)

Christian liberty is bounded by the glory of God.

The christian is never free to do anything which would bring dishonor to God and Christ.

3. The Christian is to do nothing that would defile his own conscience.
 4. The Christian must never do anything that would cause a weaker person to sin or violate his conscience.
- G. Is the Bible *all-sufficient* as a basis for establishing a value-system, a morals-system in this life? IT CLAIMS TO BE.
1. It claims to be able to keep man from sin, Psa. 119:9-11; 37:31
 2. It claims to sustain life everlasting, Deut. 8:3; John 6:63
 3. It claims that it gives *all that is necessary to life and godliness*, II Pet. 1:3-5.
 4. It claims to *equip* the man of God completely *for all good works*, II Tim. 3:16-17.
 5. Romans 5 & 6; Col. 1-5 claims that sin (and the N.T. lists a number of attitudes and actions which are clearly sinful) needs to be “put to death” in our lives because we do not need sinful actions and things to enjoy life even in the

here and now.

On the other side, the N.T. tells us to bring alive in our lives certain specified righteous attitudes and actions because we DO need these things to enjoy life now.

Christian ethics are based on our faith (trust) in these pronouncements. In other words, we trust these pronouncements because we believe Christ's resurrection gives him the authority to call us to this kind of value-system.

As Paul says, "If Christ is not raised, let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die . . ." I Cor. 15:12-19; 15:32.

6. New Testament system of values is, of course, for the citizen of the kingdom of God — one who has willingly accepted the *rule* of Christ over his life. The Christian is constrained by the love of Christ. He sees everything and decides everything from a spiritual viewpoint. (See II Cor. 5:11-16; 8:21; Rom. 6:11; 8:5-8; Gal. 2:20-21; Phil. 2:5-13; Gal. 5:22-24). **CHRISTIANS SHOULD NOT HAVE TO BE FORCED TO DO RIGHT.**

On the other hand, **LAW AND FORCE** restrain the carnal minded worldling. Those "outside" God's kingdom must be forced to do right. (See I Thess. 4:12; I Tim. 1:8-11; 2:1-4; Rom. 13:1-7; Acts 25:11; I Pet. 2:13-17, etc.). If Law is to restrain it must have a penalty and that penalty must be commensurate to the crime and **MUST BE ENFORCED.**

- H. Even a Christian value-system (ethical system) to be *practiced* in this present world where wickedness is on every side, must be *designed* for the world that now is, not for the world, that **OUGHT TO BE. AND THE BIBLE HAS THE ANSWER FOR THAT PROBLEM, TOO!**

1. There is, in the Bible, apparently a condescension on God's part to the fact that even Christians must practice (when dealing with wicked people) a *HIERARCHY OF PRINCIPLES*. It is apparently practiced in some cases in both O.T. and N.T. with God's approval (we will illustrate later).
2. The *HIERARCHY* operates on a scale beginning with the

SECOND CORINTHIANS

highest ideal and scales downward according to necessary circumstances.

- a. W-1 The glorification of God.
W-2 The attainment of God's redemptive purpose for as many people as possible.
W-3 The preservation of human life.
W-4 The maintenance and development of God's creation.
W-5 The avoidance of pain and discomfort of God's creatures, particularly human beings.
W-6 The representation of truth to others.
W-7 The maintenance of relationships of mutual trust among people.

3. The HIERARCHICAL approach:
 - a. Draws a distinction between "good" and "right."
 - b. Posits the "good" as an *ideal* which may or may not be fully realizable.
 - c. Posits it as "right," however, to do that which would most fully actualize the "good."
 - d. Contends that it would be wrong to do less than maximum "good," *if* one could do more.
 - e. This recognizes that there will be some cases in which the *best* that can be done falls far short of the *ideal*.
 - f. The best option available may be the *lesser of two evils* (for this approach does believe in intrinsically good and intrinsically evil).
 - g. Yet this action, although it cannot be unequivocally termed "good," is "right" in the sense that it is that which one ought to do.
 - h. The hierarchical approach attempts to recognize and acknowledge the brokenness (hardness of heart) of the world in which we *now* live . . . which is *not the ideal* or the kingdom of God in totality.
 - i. Whereas there is an *ideal* that god desires men to attain, the world as we *now* find it may be in such a state as to render that objective *unattainable in practice*.
 - j. Thus God's will in the *ultimate* sense (W-1) would be

the fully "good." Yet God's will (W-2 or W-3 or W-4, etc.) is that man should do what most nearly approximates that complete "good" — the *ideal*.

4. Example of HIERARCHICAL VALUE-SYSTEM
 - a. It may be God's will that no human life should *ever* have to be taken. This would be the *good* (absolute good).
 - b. Yet, given our world in which men are greedy, hateful, lustful, lawless, fearful, I may find myself called upon to take the life of another human to defend an *innocent* victim.
 - c. We may say in this case then (with Biblical precedent to back it up) that this was God's will (W-2 or 3 or 4, etc.) down the scale of hierarchical principles and it thus becomes the "right" while it is not the ultimate "good."
 - d. I cannot say that what was done was "good" (W-1), but I can say that what was done (defending the innocent) was "right." For doing "right" I should feel no guilt. But I should regret intensely that sin in man's heart makes such a choice necessary. It should make all men repent of the sin which causes such action (capital punishment) necessary.
 - e. The distinction between the *good* (the ideal) and the *right* (the expedient), is an important one. For a christian to discuss the morality of war, divorce, civil order, civil rights, civil protest, taxation, etc., **WITHOUT OBSERVING THIS DISTINCTION** invites confusion and frustration.
 - f. Christians must clearly face the reality that they live in a sinful, corrupted world. The Bible does! It is a world in which the **BEST** that can be done is far from the **IDEAL** that God wants.
 - g. *Ideally*, no enemies to God would exist; no marital unfaithfulness would exist; no thievery would occur, no hatred and murder would be perpetrated.
 - h. Under the **IDEAL**, complete, verbal truthfulness could be practiced. Vows and contracts would be

SECOND CORINTHIANS

- kept; property of others would be safe.
- i. Under the IDEAL there would be no need for secrecy, deception, spying, force, prisons, courts, wars, policemen, legal contracts, no need for lawyers.
 - j. An ethic, a value-system to be practiced *presently* in this world of the far-less-than-ideal, must be a system designed for the world THAT NOW IS, *not* for the world THAT OUGHT TO BE!

God's Ideals

1. No taking of human life at all
2. No divorce at all
3. No withholding truth at all
4. No enslavement or bondage at all

Man's Ethical Expedients

1. Wars of defense against aggressions, death penalty, self defense.
2. Divorce for unfaithfulness, remarriage, divorce for desertion.
3. Secrecy, deception, no right to know for those who would use truth to harm, etc.
4. Bondage to governments in conscription in war time; to employers; to creditors, etc.

5. Biblical examples of HIERARCHICAL ETHICS *practiced*

- a. Abraham and the kings of the East
- b. Jacob and Esau
- c. Hebrew mothers and mid-wives
- d. Jonathan and Saul
- e. Joshua (God) and Ai (Joshua ch. 8)
- f. Jesus and Herod
- g. Apostles and two swords

II. EXPERIENCE

A. Human beings do most of their learning by *doing*.

1. Heb. 5:11-14 “. . . For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of God's word. . . . You need milk, not

VALUES ARE ESTABLISHED BY . . .

solid food; for every one who lives on milk is *unskilled* in the word of righteousness, for he is a child. (WE ARE TO BECOME "SKILLED" IN RIGHTEOUSNESS) But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their faculties trained by practice to distinguish good and evil."

The word translated "practice" is the Greek word from which we get *gymnasium*. RIGHTEOUS LIVING IS SOMETHING YOU "PRACTICE" LIKE YOU WOULD SHOOTING BASKETS . . . OVER AND OVER AND OVER AGAIN!

2. Repetition, habit, practice is a fundamental principle of learning — even in learning what is right vs. what is wrong.

Aristotle said: "Moral excellence is the result of habit or custom. By doing just acts we become just, and by doing acts of self-control and courage we become self-controlled and courageous . . . acts of any kind produce habits or characters of the same kind. . . ."

The Duke of Wellington said, "Habit is ten times nature."

3. The way we learn morality, ultimately, is by engaging in moral actions. All learning is a private, individual activity.
4. Adults, parents, teachers, youth leaders, must have the patience, concern, and wisdom to allow our young people to face the realities of life and the realities of God's absolute word about values and *guide these young people into habitual acts of righteousness* as God's word defines righteousness. THEY LEARN WHAT GOOD IS BY DOING GOOD!
5. Shepherds of youth must *allow young people to be hurt by the consequences of wrong moral choices*. THIS IS ANOTHER PART OF LEARNING BY EXPERIENCING!

We all, even adults, learn through reward and punishment. That is a Biblical way of learning values. The Bible teaches this principle both by precept and demonstration

SECOND CORINTHIANS

in history.

- B. There could be actual learning-by-doing events planned and carried out with young people participating in **DOING GOOD**, and thus learning to make right value judgments by doing.
1. Works of benevolence will go a long way in learning values by doing. They will learn the value of service, the value of help, the value of human life, the value of thankfulness, the value of being responsible, true, compassionate, etc.
 2. Placing youngsters in positions of trust — where they will have to choose honesty vs. dishonesty, responsibility vs. irresponsibility, truth vs. falsehood, is also a good way to learn values by doing.
 3. Discipline, correction, punishment — when necessary to reinforce that a wrong value was chosen, is a way of learning-by-doing.

DON'T NEGLECT IT, OR DOWNGRADE IT . . . PRACTICE IT, FAIRLY, FIRMLY, CONSISTENTLY AND FAITHFULLY.

III. LEADERSHIP

- A. Adults must supply *authority resources* for youngsters.
1. Parents, youth leaders **MUST BECOME A PRIMARY SOURCE OF AUTHORITY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.**
 2. Adults not only have a Biblical mandate to **BE** (to a certain extent) the **AUTHORITY** in values for young people, they are ordered to **BE** by Jesus Christ in the Bible. (e.g. parents are ordered to do so in Eph. 6:4; I Tim. 3:1-7, esp. v. 5; I Tim. 5:1,17ff; Titus 2:1-10 . . . and of course the O.T. is profuse in such instruction).
 3. There is a great deal said about the younger, and spiritually immature obeying the older Christians **AS SOURCES OF AUTHORITY IN LEARNING AND DOING GOOD** (see scriptures listed above plus Heb. 13:7,17 etc.).
 4. The simple fact of life is, young people need, must have, their value systems authoritatively given to them by adults!

Al Capp, famous creator of the comic strip, "Li'l Abner" was being interviewed on a college campus"

"Student: Do you think the opinions of 18-year-olds are valuable?"

Capp: Certainly. But only on subjects they know something about, such as puberty and hubcaps.

Same Student: But only a few weeks ago, on that very platform, a politician told us he considered 18-year-old students just as smart as he is.

Capp: Any man over 40 who thinks 18-year-olds are just as smart as he is, is probably right."

- B. Young people want adults to BE authoritative so they may have a ground of wisdom and experience upon which to base their value choices.
1. They may say they don't want anyone telling them what is right and wrong, but that is only "surface" — it is a signal they are struggling with finding identity. Deep down, their insecurities, fears, confusions are crying out for leadership, *authority*, reality, truth to guide them in finding their identity. Jesus even told adults (Peter at Caesarea Philippi) that they would find *their* identity when they surrendered to *His authority!* Matt. 16.
 2. Dr. Bruno Bettelheim, director of the school for psychotic children at University of Chicago writes: "The political content of student revolt (back in the 60's) is most of all a desperate wish that the parents should have been strong in the convictions that motivate his actions . . ." from *The Permissive Society*, by Boris Sokiloff, p. 213.
 3. Peer pressure is extremely unsafe as an authoritative basis for teenagers (or even for adults) in finding a value system. Peer pressure is only "pooled" teenage insecurity and ignorance. It is what Al Capp said multiplied by as many teenagers as it takes to make a peer group.
 4. Teens have not lived enough years and faced enough realities of life as it is really lived to act on any basis but their *own immediate feelings!*

SECOND CORINTHIANS

They have not garnered enough experience concerning the *consequences* of moral choosing (either from their own personal experiences or that of their peers) to THINK clearly and logically, and thus to exercise any *convictions* about what is valuable and what is not.

5. The Bible clearly teaches that young people must respect their elders (and I don't mean necessarily church officers) — the older generation. According to the Bible, age is supposed to be equated with wisdom, leadership, authority.

That isn't always the case, of course. Some older people are more immature than the younger generation. Usually because they are afraid of growing older and try to think and behave like youngsters!

YOUNG PEOPLE DO NOT REALLY WANT THEIR YOUTH LEADERS TO THINK AND ACT LIKE CHILDREN! WHAT KIND OF LEADERSHIP AND AUTHORITY DOES THAT PROVIDE FOR THEM?

- C. The time is now! **ADULTS MUST EXERCISE THE AUTHORITY GOD INTENDED THEM TO EXERCISE, IN THE COMPASSIONATE, FIRM, FAITHFUL WAY GOD INTENDED THEM TO EXERCISE IT.**

1. Authority, God-saturated and centered authority, is imperative to perpetuating a God-revealed value-system.
2. Christian value-systems have to be handed from one generation to the next. **CHRISTIAN VALUES DO NOT HAPPEN AUTOMATICALLY!** They are not bred into people — they are taught! **AND THERE IS NO TEACHING WHATEVER WITHOUT THE EXERCISE OF AUTHORITY!**
3. **YOU, S.S. TEACHERS, PREACHERS, YOUTH LEADERS, ELDERS, DEACONS, AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, PARENTS, MUST NOT ABDICATE AN AUTHORITATIVE APPROACH TO PASSING ON VALUE-SYSTEMS TO THE NEXT GENERATION.**

The hue and cry today from the President of the U.S. down to the school board member in Joplin, Missouri, is

VALUES ARE ESTABLISHED BY . . .

that the adult world (parents, churches, schools) *HAVE abdicated* the authoritative approach to perpetuating value-systems.

4. IT MUST NOT BE SO AMONG YOU.

You must *tell* them what God has *told* the world in his Word and you must speak and teach it with authority. Then, most significantly, you must live what you tell!