

A Quarterly Journal

(Presented by email)

Bob Oliver, editor

(Please use the following email to contact me.)

boliver@mccallie.org

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“LIGHT” FOR OUR AGE”

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Psalm 119:105

Feature One: Editorial

Do We See As God Sees?

The toddler could move fast. Ginny turned her back on her son for just a second. She and her family were living at Logan’s Lake while her husband was in college. Their two year old was playing in the spacious front yard. Ginny noticed that her son was not nearby. To her horror she saw him walking up the middle of highway 45 in West Tennessee. He was walking up an incline in the highway used by many large trucks. She broke into perhaps the fastest run of her life. She reached for her son and took him back to safety. I was that toddler. Obviously, I have no idea what might have been going through my mind in those fog laden early years of my life. I can only guess that the road looked inviting. It was large, smooth, and looked like a fun place to walk and play. My mother saw it differently. She saw it filled with extreme danger. I was fortunate that day.

Do we not often believe God sees everything as we see? Yet he proclaims in Isaiah 55:8-9 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. [9]For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my

ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Just as my mother's thoughts were higher than mine, God's are higher than the mightiest student of the Bible today. We cannot out think God. We cannot reason Him into a corner. But notice some Biblical examples of man's reason versus Gods.

Some years ago I taught a high school Bible class at the private church school here in Chattanooga. An assignment I often made was to ask my students to figure out how God would judge some situations. One of these was the story of a prophet that was instructed by God to go into the Northern Kingdom of Israel and cry out against the pagan god that was being worshipped.

This prophet boldly went into the king's presence where the pagan worship was about to begin. He proclaimed the message that God had given him. The king was furious and stretched out his hand and told his guards to "Lay hold on him". As he did so, his arm and hand "dried up" or "shriveled up" so that he could not pull it back. The king begged the prophet to ask God to restore his arm. The prophet asked God, and God restored his arm.

Next the king asked the prophet to come into his house and be refreshed and receive a reward. But the prophet of God told him he was not allowed to do that. He had been instructed by God to have nothing to eat or drink while in this land, and to return to his own land by a different route.

There was a false prophet in the land that heard of this prophet of God and his actions. What better way to cause people to believe he was a real prophet than to have this prophet come to his house. This false prophet went after the man of God and found him resting under an oak tree. He invited him to his house for refreshments and was given the same answer as was given the king. However he told the man of God that he too was a prophet and God had spoken to him through an angel and instructed him to come back with him and eat bread and drink water. Then the text says, "But he lied unto him." Believing this, the prophet of God went back with the false prophet and was given food and water.

Now we come to the roll you must play. What did God do? His law had been broken. Who was to blame? What should be the punishment?

I remember one year my seniors got real involved with this problem. Like you, I

had not given the text and no one in this class was familiar with the story. The discussion began. One student felt that God should kill the lying prophet, and sternly warn his prophet. After all, his prophet had done the hard part. He stood up to the king and delivered the message. His heart was right because he refused the king's palace. He would have obeyed correctly, but he was tricked.

Another student stated that God's prophet needed to be punished in some way because after all, he did disobey the command. He suggested that the man could no longer serve as a prophet. At this the class became infuriated. That's too harsh they said. Maybe suspend his work as a prophet for several months to allow him to think about what he had done. The discussion raged on for the entire class period. Near the end of the class I told them to turn to I Kings 13 and read the story. Needless to say, they were stunned when they read the following:

1KI 13:23 And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, to wit, for the prophet whom he had brought back. [24] And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, and slew him: and his carcase was cast in the way, and the ass stood by it, the lion also stood by the carcase. [25] And, behold, men passed by, and saw the carcase cast in the way, and the lion standing by the carcase: and they came and told it in the city where the old prophet dwelt. [26] And when the prophet that brought him back from the way heard thereof, he said, It is the man of God, who was disobedient unto the word of the LORD: therefore the LORD hath delivered him unto the lion, which hath torn him, and slain him, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake unto him.

They discovered that God does not see things as we see them. God gave the man a command which he broke. It may have seemed like a very minor point to us, for this man had obeyed the "hard" part of the command. What real difference did it make whether or not he ate and drank in Northern Israel? Keep in mind it was his desire to obey God. The old prophet had lied to him. But it was simple in the mind of God. A command had been given. It was not up to the prophet to discuss the importance of this command, it was his duty to obey it. The prophet did not do what God had instructed him. He let a man countermand what God had said. Therefore, he disobeyed.

Would I have judged the way God did? I doubt it. I, too, don't always understand the "whys and wherefores" of God's commands. The commands are fairly straight forward, however. When people say "I don't understand why God commanded baptism as a requirement for salvation." Or "I don't understand why it is sinful to use instrumental music in Christian worship." I suggest we keep this story in mind. What might seem meaningless to us, or unimportant to us, does not mean God sees as we do. As the writer said in 2 Peter 1:10 "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure...."

Editorial for the next issue: Worship or Entertainment?

Feature 2: An article from Light:, February, 1955 by R C Oliver

HUMILITY

Every synonym has its antonym, and the antonym of humility is pride. Perhaps one of the hardest battles we Christians have to fight is the battle against false ambition. Truly, pride is one of man's worst enemies, for a man's pride shall bring him low. – Proverbs 29:23. Such, you recall was the fate of Haman.

The Lord says: "Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." –Luke 14:11.

We should learn, then, that God's man is the humble man, for He has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty. –I Corinthians 1:27.

Behold, how marvelous! Of all the trees, God chose the vine, Of all the beasts, God chose the lamb, Of all the fowls, God chose the dove, And of all the men, God chose the humble. God's man is the humble man! "Be ye therefore humble, and He shall exalt you in due season."

Feature 3: Our Communication ---

I will never forget a sermon my Father preached when I was a teenager and we lived in Clawson, Michigan. I guess it was the only sermon he ever preached that really angered me. It was on the subject of “euphemisms”. Basically, a euphemism is a softer term for a harsher concept. An example of this would be saying after a funeral that we are now going to the “memorial garden” for internment. We could get the same idea across if the funeral director said; “Now it’s time to go to the ‘graveyard.’” Obviously, this would be very hurtful and offensive to the family. In that sense the euphemism is good.

There is a situation, however, where the euphemism is not good. Most, if not all of us, would never use the words often termed as “four letter words.” These words do have euphemisms, however. When we use words such as “gosh” or “golly” we are actually saying “God,” and using his name in vain. The word “darn” is euphemistic for the word “damn.” Just about every “four letter word” has its euphemism.

What angered me was I didn’t mean those words. I had one euphemism that I used often. I remember I was so upset over that sermon that I walked to his office on Monday to challenge him on his point. Dad pointed to a dictionary on his shelves and asked me to look up my euphemism. I did, and the definition was the “four letter word”. It was even identified in the dictionary as a euphemism. As the wind went out of my sails, I said to Dad, “but that’s not what I mean”. His reply was, but it’s not what we mean, it’s what other people understand us to say. It was hard breaking that habit. Remember Colossians 3:8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. We would never use these “four letter words”, so we should not use their euphemisms.

Feature 4: Bible Questions

If you have a Bible question send it to me by email and I will enjoy studying it with our readers. If it is a question that you would like an immediate answer, indicate that and I will try to return it to you personally. Remember, if you would like to communicate with me, use my school email address in that this is the one I most often use.

(boliver@mccallie.org)

Brother Oliver: If I meet someone that does not believe in God, what is the best way to teach that person? You can't use the Bible because they don't believe it.

While there are many good arguments proving the existence of God, one of the most basic is in my mind the best. It is the argument of design. When we look at things we can see evidence of design. If you look at a watch you know there was a designer. Imagine how ridiculous it would be if I held up a watch and told you this story.

One day I was walking down the road and I saw some bits of metal and glass. I heard a big truck coming and jumped back just in time to see that truck run over that metal and glass. I walked back over and to my amazement that metal and glass had become a watch. Everything just fell into place just right. In fact it was wound up and set to the correct time.

Who would believe such a story? Yet that is what the atheist must believe on a much more grand scale. The universe is the basis for how we set a watch. It is so exact that we can send space craft to outlying planets with pin-point accuracy. We know where the planet will be months after the rocket fires away from earth. If we can see the design in a watch, how can we not see the design in the universe? If the watch demands a designer, so too, must the universe demand a designer.

In Closing:

Thanks for letting me come into your home once more. If you know of anyone else that might enjoy this e-paper, just send me their email address. Have a good day.

In the Master's service,

Bob Oliver