

A Quarterly Journal

(A presentation by email)

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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

On Father’s Day, this year, I was privileged to hear my son-in-law preach on Sunday evening. We had driven up to Murfreesboro, TN to take our grandson, Ryan, back home after a week in football camp at the school where I teach. Shane has become an outstanding young minister. One of his

texts included the following taken from Judges 2:7-9.

And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD, that he did for Israel. [8] And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being an hundred and ten years old. [9][10] And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: *and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.* [11] And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim:

I was reminded that it only takes one generation to fail to teach their children and the entire generation will be lost. I want to stress two points in this editorial. **The first is we must be sure we have a thorough understanding of God's word.** Before we can become teachers, we must be students. In fact, the best way to think about this is to remember that God and his Word is always the "teacher". We are always the "students". Some students are further along in their studies, and can help others to progress. Certainly, as parents and grandparents, we are in a unique position to teach the generations coming along. We always have the command to study before us. Paul wrote to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:15 to "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." We are also encouraged to "...sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:" (1 Peter 3:15).

Being both a parent and a grandparent, I know how much love we have for those of our own families coming along in the following generations. We never want them to hurt or suffer in any way. We spend

much time and money to see that they can take care of themselves once they reach adulthood. While that is important, how much more important is it for us to see that they can stand before God in Judgment firm in the knowledge of Christ?

Secondly, we have a direct instruction from God to teach our children. The passage in Judges referred to the Jewish nation. Notice what God had told them shortly after leaving Egypt.

Deuteronomy 6:1 Now these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it: [2] That thou mightest fear the LORD thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged. [3] Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey. [4] Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: [5] And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. [6] And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: [7] *And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children*, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. [8] And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. [9] And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

It was essential for the Jewish nation to understand just who God was, and the relationship they had with him. They failed from time to time, and it brought terrible ruin and destruction on their nation. We have little time to prepare our children to understand who God is, and their relationship to Him. If we fail to do this, we will force them to face God unprepared. We see this

in practice in 1 Timothy 1:5 which reads, “When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.”

We need to make sure our children have an abiding love for God and his word. We do this by helping them develop habits that will last a lifetime. We should encourage them to memorize passages from God’s word. We can see that they always have their Bible school lessons. We should never “send” them to church services, but rather “take” them. Above all, we should always set the example that teaches by our actions that God is the center of our lives.

Feature 2: An article by R. C. Oliver

This is the third of a series that I will share with you this year. Following in this series of articles from “Light” by my father, R. C. Oliver, will be: Why I believe in the Church.

I BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST

What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?" Matthew 27:22. Though this is the question that was asked by Pilate almost two thousand years ago, yet I consider it the supreme religious question of our own age.

Shall we believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God? Or shall we, like those of -his own day, cry out with violence: "Let him be crucified!" To fail to answer, is but to answer.

If I were assigned the task of finding out about any other man, there are two classes of people whom I would like to interview: his enemies and

his friends; their testimony would give me both sides. Neither do I believe Jesus should be made an exception to this rule. What, then, did his enemies, those who lived when he lived, say about him?

Testimony of His Enemies

Among His bitterest enemies were the Pharisees and scribes, and they said: "This man received sinners, and eateth with them." Luke 15:2. But, oh how glad I am for that! For were Jesus to have had nothing to do with sinful men, we would all be lost! Therefore, what they intended to be testimony against Him was testimony favoring Him.

Pilate, the Roman governor, said: "I find no fault in him." Luke 23:4. The governor's wife said: "Have thou nothing to do with that just man." Matt. 27:19. And Judas, the traitor, said: "I have betrayed the innocent blood." Matt. 27:4. The testimony of His enemies would almost convince one, but let us next consider the testimony of His friends.

Testimony of His Friends

All of His friends, without an exception, acknowledged Him to be the Son of God. Even God said: "This is My Beloved Son." Matt. 3-17. Over five hundred testified that they saw Him after He arose from the dead. 1 Corinthians 15:1-8. Even that sober, scientific investigator Thomas, who refused to be swept away with the sensational report of His resurrection, after seeing Him, cried out. "My Lord and my God." John 20:28.

Those who testified that they saw Him following His resurrection had forty days to ascertain the integrity of their testimony. They therefore could not have been deceived!

They gained neither money, property, popularity nor influence by their testimony; rather, they suffered the loss of all these things because of it; nevertheless, "they could not but speak the things which they had seen and heard." Acts 4:20. No one who has studied psychology could possibly believe that these were deceitful men; the evidence will not allow such an interpretation.

We must conclude therefore that they were competent and true witnesses, and that all that they have said about Jesus, including His marvelous life, His vicarious death, and His glorious resurrection and ascension is true.

I Therefore Believe

I therefore believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, because of what both God and men, both His enemies and His friends, have said about Him.

I also believe Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God, because of the unquestionable impact His life has had upon human history. His earthly parentage was poor and mediocre; His travels were limited to no great portion of Palestine; He never went to school; He never personally wrote a book; He only lived about thirty-three years, and yet His life has had such an impact upon human history that it has split world history wide open!

Who but the Son of God could do such as He did? I, therefore, believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God.

Feature 3: Our Communication ---

Are you friendly? I am convinced that almost everyone wants to be friendly, and needs friends. Some, however, find it difficult to be “friendly” and don’t know why. They look at what they say to others and they are saying the right words. The problem is that they don’t understand that most of the messages we send are coming from the way they hold their body, or facial expressions they might make. Consider some of the “nonverbal” messages we send when we are with others. Some “yes” gestures are smiling, nodding of the head, leaning forward and open palms. “No” gestures might be tapping a foot, folded arms, hands on your knees, squinting, increased fidgeting, and your hand holding up your chin.

While there are many others, when we are talking to someone, if we constantly give negative non-verbal cues, we will be perceived as negative or “stand-offish”.

Feature 4: Bible Questions

Will good people that are of other faiths such as the Jewish or Muslim religions be acceptable to God?

At one time most religious bodies claiming to be Christian would quickly affirm that they would not. There is a “political correctness” movement today, however, that has changed that for many denominations. The litmus test is now “are they sincere”? Do they sincerely follow their religion?

This is obviously another move away from what God's word teaches. All of mankind was lost until Jesus came and made a way of escape from the fires of hell. We find Jesus saying in John 14:6 "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

As we can see, there is no other way to the Father. The only way is through Jesus and his teaching. While I would not want to see any lost, we need to remember that it is sin that separates us from God. In 1 John 3:8 the text teaches: "He that committeth sin is of the devil..." It further teaches that "all have sinned" in Romans 3:23. It takes the blood of Jesus to cleanse us from our sins, for 1 John 1:7 teaches us that "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Humor:

A Sunday school teacher said to her children, 'We have been Learning how powerful kings and queens were in Bible times. But, there is a Higher Power. Can anybody tell me what it is?'

One child blurted out, 'Aces!'

In Closing:

It has been a joy to once again come into your home by this medium. Always feel free to send names to me of those that might enjoy this quarterly journal. Also, I value your questions. May God bless you until we can meet

again by this medium.

In the Master's service,

Bob Oliver