

# *A Light in the Valley*

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*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)*

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## ***Do We Hate Sin or Play With It?***

*by: Phillip Owen*

Parents who truly love a newborn child hate and avoid anything which harms that child. Environments of disease and sickness are avoided. People who have contagious diseases are not welcomed guests. This is as it should be, and most understand this is for the good of the child.

That same hatred for anything that harms physically should also apply to anything that harms spiritually -- sin. David said, "Through Thy precepts I get understanding; Therefore I hate every false way" (Psa. 119:104). A similar statement later is, "Therefore I esteem all Thy precepts concerning all things to be right; And I hate every false way" (vs. 128).

Moses anticipated Israel's entrance into Canaan's idolatrous culture and warned, "The images of their gods you are to burn in the fire. Do not covet the silver and gold on them, and do not take it for yourselves, or you will be ensnared by it, for it is detestable to the

Lord your God. Do not bring a detestable thing into your house or you, like it, will be set apart for destruction. Utterly abhor and detest it, for it is set apart for destruction" (Deut. 7:25, 26). Abhor and detest are good synonyms for hate, and such was to be Israel's feelings toward the idolatrous trappings of Canaan.

However, Israel's toying (dealing with something lightly or without vigor or purpose) with idolatry later led Joshua to say that Israel could not "serve Jehovah" as long as these remained (Josh. 24:19). He was right. Following his death, Israel "forsook Jehovah, and served Baal and the Ashtaroath" (Jdgs. 2:13). This led to a downward spiral ending eventually in their destruction as a nation.

Lest anyone think that God has "softened" His Old Testament view of sin, Jesus Himself said, "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck,

and he were drowned in the depth of the sea” (Matt. 18:6). It is difficult to imagine how execution by drowning at sea is “better” than anything. However, Jesus said that such was “better” because one who leads another to sin has the ultimate destiny of hell that is much “worse”!

Paul told Ephesian Christians, “But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience”. (Eph. 5:3-6, NKJV). Clearly, Christians are to abhor and detest sins common to our society to the degree that there is not “even a hint” of them around us. Love for God and a desire to go to heaven should form a hatred for sin and avoidance of everything that would lead one to hell. Since this is true...

**1. Never Intentionally Sin Even Once:** -- One’s conscience can become “seared” (1 Tim. 4:2) and insensitive to the terribleness of it. Something by which one was “bothered” earlier becomes, as lying does, a little easier every time it’s done. Sin is “deceitful” (Heb. 3:13). It promises what it cannot fulfill, costs more than expected, and will keep one longer than intended. No wonder Paul said to “exhort one another daily... so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.” Once you deliberately violate your conscience and intentionally sin, the road to hell becomes easier.

**2. Hate Sin Enough That Even If Doing Right, Nothing Will Appear To Be Wrong:** -- The influence of sin is so terrible that we should not only do right, but also do nothing that looks wrong! Paul knew questions might arise concerning any misallocation of the monetary gift Gentile churches were collecting for Jerusalem saints. To avoid raising any questions of impropriety, Paul had several men accompany him and the gift. “We want to avoid any criticism of the way we administer this liberal gift. For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of men” (2 Cor. 8:20, 21). Perception of wrong even to the world should be a concern to Christians.

I have known faithful brethren who would never be alone in a house with another woman who was not his wife or relative. This illustrates the principle above. However, some have never been taught or have forgotten this principle. In last month’s

Truth Magazine, Connie Adams had this to say even about preachers misbehaving:

*“And what shall we say about purity toward the sisters? The cause of Christ suffers from those who preach the truth about purity while living immorally. Out of “counselling” sessions in the preacher’s study affairs have developed, flirtations have matured into inflamed passion, marriage vows have been violated, and then a trail of lies invented to cover such betrayals of trust. When these come to light, families are shattered, children bewildered, confidence is lost, the weak are made to stumble, and only the judgment will reveal the number of lost souls in the wake of such deeds.”*

***“Thy Word have I  
laid up in my heart,  
That I might not sin  
against Thee” (Psa.  
119:11)***

If I had a car problem, needed help, and a bar were close by, and other help a half-mile or so away, I would walk! Even if one didn’t drink in the bar, his appearance going into, time spent inside, and coming out would give anyone who saw him justifiable questions. Someone may say, “That’s judging!” Yes, but why do people go to bars? Not to make calls but to drink liquor. Your presence, even if you were doing right, leads to wrong assumptions. Influence is important, especially on the world (Matt. 5:13-16), and we are to live so as to influence everyone to live righteously, not ungodly lives. We are to “Have regard for good things in the sight of all men” (Rom. 12:17), and “give no occasion of stumbling, either to Jews, or to Greeks, or to the church of God” (1 Cor. 10:32). It’s sinful to drink (1 Pet. 4:3). It is likewise wrong to sit around socializing at a place where such is done. One should not only not drink, but also never give anyone a reason to believe that he does.

We are to “flee fornication” (1 Cor. 6:18), which means avoid putting ourselves in a position where fornication is easy, such as when an unmarried and eligible man and woman live together and alone in a house. Christians should live so as not only to avoid fornication, but also avoid appearing to others that such occurs.

Loving and hating anything generally comes by learning more about that thing; why it is lovable or detestable. The more we know of God’s character, His Word, the more we will view sin from His point of view, and the more we will grow to hate it, not flirt with it. God’s Will, found in His Word, defines what sin is (1 Jn. 3:4), and is our shield against it. “Thy Word have I laid up in my heart, That I might not sin against Thee” (Psa. 119:11). Let us hate sin and not play with it, and love righteousness and be serious about it.

# ***Where is Our Biblical Boldness?***

*by: Harold Carswell, Jr.*

I realize already that this article will be disagreeable to some and detestable to others. Nevertheless, I must ask, where is our Biblical boldness? This question really goes to the heart of our faith in God and the Bible as His word. There are many passages that speak of the assurance and hope that God's children had in His promises.

We have seemingly lost the ability, or better stated, willingness, to say truly what the Bible says, especially about condemnation. It is my experience (perhaps you have a different one) that we are more than willing to talk about salvation or what one must do to be saved, than we are at what one does to be lost. I have been told in the past to just preach the former and the latter will take care of itself. This was somewhat similar to another statement I was told in preaching about denominationalism, "just preach about the Church and people will see the fallacy of denominationalism." In other words, don't specifically preach denominational condemnation. Or in essence, don't be specific! These are statements based on human wisdom and are not according to Biblical preaching.

I do realize that we must exercise wisdom and discretion in how we speak; however, does that wisdom and discretion in how we speak automatically translate into what we speak?

## ***We must be wise...***

*"Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." (Matthew 10:16 KJV)*

*"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time." (Colossians 4:5 KJV)*

## ***We must be able to use discernment...***

*"And of some have compassion, making a difference:" (Jude 1:22 KJV)*

Do these verses, however, address method or content? It is my contention that many, if not most, Christians have come to believe verses such as these address the latter and not the former. I will also say, even in method, we have come to accept

certain styles of preaching over other styles. There is a difference in acceptance and preference.

What verse or verses of Scripture can be deemed inappropriate?

*“Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.” (2 Timothy 2:14–16 KJV)*

What did Paul preach? The Scriptures state Paul preached the gospel (1 Corinthians 15:1-3). What does it mean to preach the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Is it preaching just the fact or information about his death, burial, and resurrection (basically, just preaching His obituary), or does it entail preaching the facts and implications of those facts? Does it entail preaching just what it means to accept them or does it include also what it means to reject them? Paul preached it all...

*“Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.” (Acts 20:26–27 KJV)*

Biblical boldness is not confidence in one’s abilities, but more so, assurance in God’s faithfulness. We cannot and must not ever trust in ourselves, but only God (1 Timothy 4:10).

There are numerous examples of Biblical boldness recorded in Scripture. I would like to point out just a few of them for our purposes.

Moses had Biblical boldness (assurance of God’s faithfulness) when he confronted the sons of Korah (Numbers 16:1-50). About the sons of Korah, along with Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, because of their rebellion and rejection to God’s leadership, Moses said something which speaks to Biblical assurance:

## **Study Opportunities**

Sunday Bible Study: 10:00 AM  
Sunday Worship Assembly: 11:00 AM

## **Meeting At**

Homewood Suites of Bozeman  
1023 E Baxter Ln,  
Bozeman, MT 59715

***Everyone Welcome!***

*“And Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that the LORD hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of mine own mind. If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men; then the LORD hath not sent me. But if the LORD make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD. And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them:” (Numbers 16:28–31 KJV)*

The prophet Micaiah had Biblical boldness (assurance of God’s faithfulness) in regard to the judgment of king Ahab, when he told him of his fate. Ahab told Joash to afflict Micaiah until he came back safely and Micaiah replied by saying:

*And say, Thus saith the king, Put this fellow in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and with water of affliction, until I come in peace. And Micaiah said, If thou return at all in peace, the LORD hath not spoken by me. And he said, Harken, O people, every one of you.” (1 Kings 22:27–28 KJV)*

***“We have seemingly lost the ability, or better stated, willingness, to say truly what the Bible says, especially about condemnation.”***

The apostle Paul had Biblical boldness (assurance of God’s faithfulness) in regard to the rejection of Christ by the Jews in Antioch of Pisidia:

*“Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but*

*seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.” (Acts 13:46)*

If we trust God’s word for salvation, we must equally trust it regarding condemnation. The gospel brings forth the good news of salvation to all who obey it. However, it equally brings the bad news of condemnation to all who reject it!

Remember the words of the Lord Himself:

*“I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.” (John 12:46–48 KJV)*

# ***Truth and Feelings***

*by: Chadwick Brewer*

*“Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.” - John 17:17*

“If it’s true to you, then it’s true.” This has become an often touted statement in our modern society, and that’s a shame. We have become a society that on one hand praises scientific discovery and searches for deeper knowledge while on the other hand believe that truth is relative and feelings are more important than facts. We claim that education and the acquisition of information is our way forward, then praise someone who will not see the truth in front of them as “brave.”

The nice thing about truth is that it is not subject to my feelings. Whether I believe it or not, the sun rises in the east and sets in the west and will do so again tomorrow. The sky is not green just because I’m fervent in my proclamations for it to be so. Being angry and belligerent at gravity does not make me free from its pull. I am genetically a male no matter what I claim. Truth is not subject to my feelings or beliefs. Imagine how impossible life would be if truth was subjective.

God, the maker of all things, makes truth by His word. If you like it or dislike it, if you agree or disagree, His word is still truth. When we believe that His truth is outdated or that it doesn’t apply to our lives, we are just as foolish as the one who rails against sky, hoping that it turns green. See that the Lord makes the wise simple, will stop every mouth, and judge everyone according to his word.

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## ***Brief Exhortation***

*compiled by David Riggs*

*“The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God.” (Psalm 14:1) “Though you grind a fool in a mortar with a pestle along with crushed grain, yet his foolishness will not depart from him.” (Prov. 27:22)*

An atheist will try to make proselytes even to a system as fatherless, so forlorn, and so gloomy as his. And, he will try it on the same principle that causes children to cry at night for a bedfellow - he is afraid to be alone in the darkness. (From Encyclopedia of Sermon Illustrations, by David F. Burgess, p. 20)

# Daily Bible Reading

## May 2020

|        |                 |        |                    |
|--------|-----------------|--------|--------------------|
| May 1  | Hebrews 1       | May 18 | Hebrews 9:11-28    |
| May 4  | Hebrews 2       | May 19 | Hebrews 10:1-18    |
| May 5  | Hebrews 3:1-6   | May 20 | Hebrews 10:19-26   |
| May 6  | Hebrews 3:7-19  | May 21 | Hebrews 10:27-39   |
| May 7  | Hebrews 4       | May 22 | Hebrews 11:1-12    |
| May 8  | Hebrews 5       | May 25 | Hebrews 11:13-25   |
| May 11 | Hebrews 6       | May 26 | Hebrews 11:26-12:3 |
| May 12 | Hebrews 7:1-10  | May 27 | Hebrews 12:4-17    |
| May 13 | Hebrews 7:11-28 | May 28 | Hebrews 12:18-29   |
| May 14 | Hebrews 8       | May 29 | Hebrews 13         |
| May 15 | Hebrews 9:1-10  |        |                    |

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