



"I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved." Hab. 2:1

September 9, 2011

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Feature Article – Modesty & MakeUp

by Pastor Bob Kirkland

“Acceptable Unto The Lord”

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” (Romans 12:1)

There was a time when it was common to hear messages concerning dress and makeup standards.

Today most pulpits are silent concerning this subject. Paul could honestly say, “I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.” (Acts 20:27) Many pastors who call themselves fundamentalists cannot honestly say that. As a result, their church membership includes immodestly dressed women and teenage girls.

The Bible has many illustrations of good and bad dress standards.

For example, the “...great harlot,” in the Book of Revelation symbolizes the end-time, apostate religious system. In contrast, “...the bride” of Christ represents the Christian. God’s contrast between the two women is portrayed by their outward appearance.

The harlot is “...arrayed in purple and scarlet.” Isaiah 1:18 refers to scarlet as the colour of sin. It says, “Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.” The harlot is said to have had a name on her forehead. Roman authors tell us that prostitutes wore a frontlet on their foreheads giving their names. One thing is sure. In Roman days or today, you can spot a prostitute by what she is wearing.

In contrast to the harlot, Revelation 19:8 says the bride of Christ is, “...arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.” Revelation 21:2 gives us the principle for a Christian woman’s dress code. It says, Christ’s bride was “...adorned for her husband.” Every Christian, man or woman is referred to in Scripture as the bride of Christ and should dress in a manner that would please Christ. John explains that the fine linen of the bridal dress represents the acts of faithful obedience of the saints to Christ.

Paul used the same Bible imagery to describe the appropriate dress for the Christian woman. First Timothy 2:9-10 says, “In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel...”

There can be no denying the Bible teaches the inner purity of character of a Christian woman is revealed outwardly by the way she dresses. God represents the character of these two women by their clothing. God, and even godless society, makes it plain that our clothes reveal who we are, or at least who we want the world to think we are. No sincere Christian would question which of the two women would serve as the role model for a Christian woman’s dress standard. If we choose to pattern our lives after the bride of Christ, it will be seen in the modesty of outward appearance.

Both the Apostle Paul and the Apostle Peter emphasized the contrast between worldly and Christian dress standards. In First Timothy 2:9-10 Paul mentions, “...In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel...which becometh women professing godliness...” Paul’s concern was how Christian women ought to dress in a depraved, pagan environment. The contrast in this passage is between the dress standards of Christian women and that of worldly women, whose main concern is to attract attention to

their bodies. Like the examples of the harlot and the bride, the dressing of the body expresses the real inner person.

Christians must show a consistency between the inward life and outward appearance. To pretend to come humbly before God on Sunday, while dressing throughout the week so as to show the world you are one of them, is hypocrisy.

God wants the apparel we wear to be a reflection of the real person in the body that is being dressed, no matter what day of the week it is, or where we are.

Romans 12:1 says, *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."*

The main goal in how we present our bodies should be to draw attention to the face.

To read the entire article on Modesty and Makeup, go to:

http://web.mac.com/lcm7/Site/Welcome_files/Modesty%20and%20Makeup.pdf

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Grace Notes - Strange Fire

Leviticus 10:1-3 "And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD. Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the LORD spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people will I be glorified. And Aaron held his peace."

In our churches today, there is a perverted mindset, that anything that is brought into God's house (from carnal at the least to completely and utterly inappropriate at the worst) automatically experiences some sort of pseudo-transformation that sanctifies and religifies the medium brought in. (I know "religifies" is not a word, but it is as close as I can get). I am thinking at the moment of musical items never intended to be sung in church. Written by the unsaved to be sung by them and to them, and yet we think that bringing them over into the house of God, automatically changes the carnal lyrics into lyrics that suddenly speak about God and our relationship with Him! The old switcheroo! You can bet your boots it doesn't work in the opposite direction, the world is not going to take one of the hymns we sing in praise to the Lord, and make it a carnal love song. If this isn't a case of strange fire, I will eat the sheet music!

In our worship of God there are a few things specified, one of which is the necessity of using things that are already set apart for God. In God's instructions regarding the temple, and all its accoutrements, God gives the particulars for the anointing oil/incense in Exodus 30:34-38. Following these detailed instructions is the interesting note that no one else

must ever make this for any other purpose than what was originally intended by God. It is holy, it is set apart for God's worship alone. Nobody else gets a look in here, nobody can go and market it as a 'Just Like You Smell At The Temple' perfume. Look at Nadab and Abihu - perhaps they were well-meaning. We are not told why they chose to use strange fire. God had told them specifically that the fire was to come from the altar, but I guess they just didn't take God seriously, Did they say, "What's the problem here? Fire is fire, right?" Well, it seems all fire is not God's fire! Maybe we are not taking God seriously either in the music we use. Are we just looking at the music, and saying, "The lyrics are good, and they sort of go with the theme today, it'll do." Isn't that what our two friends above did? "Here's some fire, it'll do." We need to start checking out the credentials of the music we sing. Follow the backtrail. The penalty for not taking it back to the source is pretty drastic. It cost Nadab and Abihu their lives.

God has given us, in the past and in the present, godly men and women who are walking with Him, and living life and learning lessons, and some of them are writing music about the lessons that God is teaching them. This is what I want to hear, and this is what I want to sing when I need lifting up. I do not want to hear what the world uses to give themselves a boost. What has the world got to offer in terms of help or encouragement? They are hollow men with shadowy dreams and hands that grasp at emptiness for hope. Their cries for help and strength are sent to some nebulous entity whose name is just a blank space to be filled by whatever or whoever floats their boat. I want to ponder the words of someone who is set apart for God, someone who has written words given to them in precious times with God. Words that are going to be balm to my soul, words that are going to pierce me through and through, and cause me to walk straighter, and live closer to my Saviour. I want songs that are going to be with me through the fire, and the floods. I want songs that the world doesn't want, doesn't like and would poke their finger in their eye rather than choke out the words. What I don't want is the world's sugar-coated bits of nothingness, they make me gag. I don't want their taste in my mouth. I don't want their words ringing in my ears. They know nothing about the Saviour who stands as the sacrifice in my place. They know nothing of the Father who loves me, who extends mercies that are new every morning. They know nothing of the indwelling Spirit who comforts and convicts me, and is a very real presence in my life. They know nothing about what we have in our Lord Jesus, and they never will, if we keep borrowing their fairy floss, instead of living like real Christians, and worshipping God with what He has set apart for Himself. Why would we want the shadow when we have the substance?

by Joye Binstead

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The Villains of Church History -

(Church History books are full of good men and bad, heroes and villains. Pastors of anaemic churches like to talk about their heroes, but almost never mention the villains of church history. Sadly, over the past century or two, many of the worst of men earned their reputations by mutilating the Holy Scriptures. Eugene Nida is one of the villains of church history. Would you believe that almost every Baptist college and seminary uses his books to teach their preacher boys how to treat the Word of God? - Ed.)

EUGENE NIDA, FATHER OF DYNAMIC EQUIVALENCY, DEAD AT 96 -

Eugene Nida, the father of the dynamic equivalency method of Bible translation, died on August 25 at age 96. Originally with Wycliffe Bible Translators, Nida was associated with the American Bible Society and the United Bible Societies from 1943 forward. Through his writings and consultations Nida wielded a vast influence in the field of Bible texts and translations. He traveled to 90 countries to confer with translators working in more than 200 different languages. Nida had an important role in the formation of the very liberal United Bible Societies (UBS) and “initiated, organized, and administered” the UBS Greek New Testament (Preface to the first edition, 1965). It was Nida who insisted upon the graded evaluations for each textual variant (Aland, *The Text of the New Testament*, p. 44). Under this scheme the variants are rated A, B, C, or D, depending upon the editors’ relative “certainty” of a reading. Nida’s greatest influence, though, was as the father of the dynamic equivalency theory of Bible translation, beginning in 1947 with the publication of *Bible Translating*. He promoted the “thought by thought” method of translation. Nida taught that the translator has the liberty to change the form of the Scripture and even to contextualize the Scripture into modern cultures, such as changing the word “snow” to “coconut” if snow is unknown in a particular culture. He could do this because he did not believe in the infallible inspiration of Scripture. Nida mocked the doctrine that the Bible is “written in a kind of Holy Ghost language” (*Language Structure and Translation*, 1975, p. 259). He wrote: “Biblical revelation is not absolute and all divine revelation is essentially incarnational. ... The words are in a sense nothing in and of themselves. ... The word is void unless related to experience” (Nida, *Message and Mission*, 1960, pp. 222-226). This is the heresy of Neo-orthodoxy. Throughout Scripture, it is the very words of the Bible that are said to be important, not just the meaning. Three times we are told that “man doth not live by bread only, but by EVERY WORD that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live” (Deut. 8:3; Mat. 4:4; Lk. 4:4). Nida held that the accounts of angels and miracles are not necessarily interpreted literally (*Message and Mission*, p. 41). And he denied the substitutionary blood atonement of Jesus Christ (*Theory and Practice*, 1969, p. 53), claiming that Christ’s blood in Romans 3:25 and other passages is symbolic of violent death (*A Translator’s Handbook on Paul’s Letter to the Romans*), whereas Romans 5:8-10 teaches us that salvation required BOTH the blood and death of Christ. Blood is required for the atonement (Lev. 17:11; Heb. 9:22). Over the past 100 years the field of Bible scholarship and translation has been deeply corrupted by end-time apostasy. We have documented this extensively in *The Modern Version Hall of Shame*, which is available in print and eBook formats from Way of Life Literature. (Friday Church News Notes, September 2, 2011, www.wayoflife.org, <mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org>, 866-295-4143)

To read more on Eugene Nida, go to: <http://www.wayoflife.org/database/dynamic.html>

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A Little Known Fact of History –

Did You Know That Preachers Used to Oppose the Theatre?

John Chrysostom, the “Golden Mouth,” was a preacher in Antioch and was called to be Bishop in Constantinople and preacher at the Church of St. Sophia, the flagship church of the empire. John took his preaching seriously and called it as the Bible teaches it. Will Durant reports that John “denounced the theatre as an exhibition of lewd women, and as a school of profanity, seduction, and intrigue....He scolded his clergy for their lazy and luxurious lives and their suspicious use of women to minister to them in their rectories, he deposed thirteen of the bishops under his jurisdiction for licentiousness or simony.” Sounds almost like conditions today!

One day, while John was preaching, the Empress Eudoxia was present and didn't like him preaching about luxurious living, and she interrupted his sermon. She demanded that her weakling husband call a synod and put him on trial. In 403, a council of Eastern Bishops met at Chalcedon; however, John refused to appear. He was condemned and sent into exile; however the common people protested and the weak Emperor recalled him to his pulpit. But John was a slow learner and a few months later, he was again giving the upper class a hard time. He was especially critical of the Empress again, and again she demanded her husband expel the brave preacher. He went into exile again followed by a “wild insurrection” in the city. John was moved to a remote desert but died en route at 62 years of age. Durant says that from that day to this “the Eastern Church has remained the servant of the state.”

Church Entertainment – *by C.H. Spurgeon*

An evil is in the 'professed' camp of the Lord, so gross in its impudence, that the most shortsighted Christian can hardly fail to notice it. During the past few years this evil has developed at an alarming rate. It has worked like leaven until the whole lump ferments!

The devil has seldom done a more clever thing, than hinting to the Church that part of their mission is to provide entertainment for the people, with a view to winning them. From speaking out the gospel, the Church has gradually toned down her testimony, then winked at and excused the frivolities of the day. Then she tolerated them in her borders. Now she has adopted them under the plea of reaching the masses!

My first contention is that providing amusement for the people is nowhere spoken of in the Scriptures as a function of the Church. If it is a Christian work why did not Christ speak of it? 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, and provide amusement for those who do not relish the gospel'.

No such words, however, are to be found. It did not seem to occur to Him. Where do entertainers come in? The Holy Spirit is silent concerning them. Were the prophets persecuted because they amused the people, or because they confronted them? The 'concert' has no martyr roll.

Again, providing amusement is in direct antagonism to the teaching and life of Christ and all His apostles. What was the attitude of the apostolic Church to the world? "You are the salt of the world", not the sugar candy; something the world will spit out, not swallow.

Had Jesus introduced more of the bright and pleasant elements into His teaching, He would have been more popular. When "many of His disciples turned back and no longer followed Him," I do not hear Him say, 'Run after these people, Peter, and tell them we will have a different style of service tomorrow; something short and attractive with little preaching. We will have a pleasant evening for the people. Tell them they will be sure to enjoy it! Be quick, Peter, we must get the people somehow!'

No! Jesus pitied sinners, sighed and wept over them, but never sought to amuse them!

In vain will the epistles be searched to find any trace of the 'gospel of amusement'. Their message is, "Therefore, come out from them and separate yourselves from them... Don't touch their filthy things..." Anything approaching amusement is conspicuous by its absence. They had boundless confidence in the gospel and employed no other weapon.

After Peter and John were locked up for preaching, the Church had a prayer meeting, but they did not pray, 'Lord, grant unto your servants that by a wise and discriminating use of innocent recreation we may show these people how happy we are'.

No! They did not cease from preaching Christ. They had no time for arranging entertainments. Scattered by persecution they went everywhere preaching the gospel. They turned the world upside down; that is the only difference from today's church.

Lastly, amusement fails to effect the end desired. Let the heavy laden who found peace through the concert not keep silent! Let the drunkard to whom the dramatic entertainment had been God's link in the chain of their conversion, stand up! There are none to answer! The mission of amusement produces no converts!

The need of the hour for today's ministry is earnest spirituality joined with Biblical doctrine, so understood and felt, that it sets men on fire.

Lord, clear the Church of all the rot and rubbish the devil has imposed on her, and bring us back to apostolic methods!

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What About National Days of Prayer or Repentance?

Dear Bro. Buddy

I have rec'd these documents regarding the Papua New Guinea "National Day of Repentance." Is it just me (Perhaps I am too cynical, but I feel that whilst something like this may appear at first to be a wonderful opportunity to preach the Word, that it will become just another 'Turkey Day' (like Thanksgiving Day has become in the USA.) I also feel, with all that is being proposed for the PNG occasion, that real, personal heartfelt repentance and salvation will be sacrificed on the altar of a grandiose corporate statement of "repentance". I confess to being cynical about this.

The danger with this outward 'show' of repentance people will be cajoled into a false sense of security, and the need for personal salvation will be overlooked. Why is it that Christians seem to be so willing to forget that Satan never loses an opportunity to take what is essentially a good thing and pervert it. After all, perversions are the devils playground. He is the first sinner, and the father of liars and murderers, and the prince of this world. Why, why, do we even consider giving the devil the benefit of the doubt, when the scripture states quite clearly that there is no doubt whatsoever?

God is Good, and by definition, that means that the devil isn't.

Who is on the Lords side? Praise God.

Regards,

Bro. T _____

Dear Bro. T _____,

Cynicism, I believe, is the result of observing religious (and political?) leaders as they profess righteousness and practice lawlessness. I read a good article the other day on fundamentalism. It was written about the fact that it was a flawed movement from the beginning. The author was right, and his conclusion was that God never intended for His children to invent movements, denominations, fellowships, etc, etc, etc. He intended for them to be members of local bodies of believers called churches. Anything larger than that quickly breeds massive political manoeuvring and posturing and all sorts of devious schemes of men, and has no biblical mandate or means of remedying its excesses.

I once had a leader of the local Keswick Easter convention ask how to get the charismatic influence out of their convention. I told him that he had a real problem on his hands since God only ever instituted three groupings of people, the family, the nation of Israel, and the local church. Keswick doesn't fit in any of those categories, and so God hasn't given him any biblical guidelines for parachurch organisations like Keswick. There just aren't any instructions in Scripture for exercising discipline over unruly members of parachurch organisations.

The usual responses of men, whenever they are faced with this unpalatable fact is, of course, never to dismantle the parachurch organisation, but to proceed to borrow the biblical guidelines God gave us for the family, for Israel, and for the local church and twist them into a pretzel and nail them to the sides of their parachurch monstrosity in hope that it doesn't fall over while they are standing too close to it.

And if they can't find a verse addressed to the family for their Keswickian difficulty, they will pinch one from texts written to a local church, or to Israel.

Now, it is also true that all families, the nation of Israel, and all local churches have their problems, but there are clear guidelines in Holy Scripture for dealing with them, every one. Sadly, even families, Israel, and local churches fall in a heap when they refuse to simply follow Scripture and decide to follow the "wisdom" of men instead.

The National Prayer Day in PNG is just another unbiblical parachurch movement, and I can't help being cynical. That's the problem with old age.

BroB

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Links In the Media Chain -

- WHAT DAD'S CAN'T DO - <http://youtu.be/liZBFdKXKIE>
- This link is very interesting. It exposes an aspect of globalism, in that law enforcement officers in the USA recently raided the Gibson Guitar Company for breaking a law, not an American law, but a law made in India!
<http://www.humanevents.com/article.php?id=45785>
- Go to the ant, thou sluggard : <http://www.dump.com/2011/08/30/worlds-biggest-ant-hill-video/>
- A baby kangaroo poking his head out of bed - <http://wimp.com/pokeshead/>
- An excellent video gospel tract re 9/11 -
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cLj4akmnCSA&feature=youtu.be>

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Cartoons for the Wise -

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Notable Quotes and Quotable Notes -

- The vigor of our Spiritual Life will be in exact proportion to the place held by the Bible in our life and thoughts. I solemnly state this from experience of fifty-four years. The first three years after conversion I neglected the Word of God. Since I began to search it diligently the blessing has been wonderful. I have read the Bible through one hundred times, and always with increasing delight. Each time it seems like a new book to me. Great has been the blessing from consecutive, diligent, daily study. I look upon it as a lost day when I have not had a good time over the Word of God. *George Müller*
- Every time I say the word 'exercise', I wash my mouth out with chocolate.

- “One hundred religious persons knit into a unity by careful organization do not constitute a church any more than eleven dead men make a football team.” *A.W. Tozer*
- I have been to a lot of places, but I've never been in Cahoots. Apparently you can't go alone. You have to be in Cahoots with someone. I've also never been in Cognito, either. I hear no one recognizes you there. I have, however, been in Sane. They don't have an airport; you have to be driven there. I have made several trips, thanks to my friends and family. I would like to go to Conclusions, but you have to jump and I'm not that much into physical activity. *(via Karyn Farmer)*
- Books say, "She did this because.." Life says, "She did this..." Books are where things are explained to you. Life is where things aren't. Books make sense of life. The only problem is that the lives they make sense of are other people's lives, never your own. *Julian Barnes, English novelist.* (Obviously, this author had not read the Bible. It is the one book that makes sense of the reader's life! - Ed)

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Pinnacles of Prophecy -

A dear brother in the Lord, John Ecob, has finished a commentary on the book of Zechariah and emailed it to me as a pdf file. If anyone would like to have an excellent study aid for the book of Zechariah, Bro. John has given me permission to send it out. It is not in print yet, but will be soon if you would like to have it in a hard copy format. Please write me and request the pdf file and I will email it to all who request it, or you can write to Bro. Ecob and ask to be put on the list to receive a hard copy when it is published. Write to Bro. John Ecob via <mailto:jrecob@sharpdsl.com> - Ed.

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Poems That Preach -

The Grass is Growing -

*From the converts in Uganda
Comes to us a story grander,
In the lesson that it teaches
Than a sermon often preaches.
For they tell what sore temptations
Come to them; what need of patience,
And a need, all else outweighing,
Of a place for private praying.
So each convert chose a corner
Far away from eye of scorner,
In the jungle, where he could*

*Pray to God in solitude.
And so often went he thither,
That the grass would fade and wither
Where he trod and you could trace
By the paths, each prayer place. If they hear the evil tiding
That a brother is backsliding,
And that some are even saying,
"He no longer cares for praying,"
Then they say to one another,
Very soft and gently, "Brother,
You'll forgive us now for showing,
On your path the grass is growing."
And the erring one, relenting,
Soon is bitterly repenting,
"Ah, how sad I am at knowing
On my path the grass is growing.
But it shall be so no longer;
Prayer I need to make me stronger;
On my path so oft I'm going,
Soon no grass will there be growing."*

Anon

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Deacon True Sez -

"...the best theology is learned between the hammer and the anvil."

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My Father's Fingerprints are Everywhere! -

WHAT'S INSIDE A MONARCH BUTTERFLY EGG? -

Within this tiny egg, only about an eighth of an inch long, is an entire world of genetic information. It contains the instructions for the construction of the caterpillar with the intelligence it needs to operate all of its organs (eyes, antennae, legs, etc.), to maneuver within its environment, to digest leaves, to avoid predators, to know when and how to molt, to pupate, etc. It contains the instructions for the incredibly complex process of the final molting and formation of the pupa, including the amazing cremaster mechanism. It contains the instructions for the death and dissolution of the caterpillar into a biological soup and the reformation of that soup into a beautiful butterfly. It contains the instructions not only to construct the butterfly in all of its mind-boggling complexity (e.g., its proboscis, its compound eyes, its intricately shingled wings, its sensory organs, its reproductive organs) but also the instructions to create the butterfly's brain and the intelligence needed to thrive

within its environment, to fly, to land, to avoid predators, to find the right plants and flowers, to drink and digest nectar, to keep its cold-blooded metabolism in balance, to reproduce. It contains the instructions for a bewildering multi-thousand mile migration to a place it has never been and in the absence of any earthly guide. It would seem, in fact, that the genetic code within that tiny monarch butterfly egg contains a map of a large part of the earth. And it contains the information for constructing hundreds of copies of itself. If the butterfly evolved, then evolution is miraculous and has the attributes of Almighty God! (Friday Church News Notes, August 26, 2011, www.wayoflife.org <mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org>, 866-295-4143)

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The Marks of a Cult - *by Anthony Hoekema*

(Many years ago I came across a magazine that had on its back cover a definition of a cult - It is one of the best definitions I've ever seen. You'd be surprised how many mainline denominations are cultic in their beliefs and practices. - Ed)

The Marks of a Cult

1. It follows an extra-scriptural source of authority, (i.e. usually the writings of their founder(s))
2. It denies justification by grace alone, adding works to faith.
3. It devalues the person and work of Christ, usually by a slight shift of emphasis (To God the Father, or to the Holy Spirit.)
4. It sees itself to be the exclusive community of the saved.
5. It sees itself to have the central role in eschatology (i.e. God's plan for the future is focused on them alone.)

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Therapy for the Funny Bone -

1. Johnny's mother had three children. The first child was named April. The second child was named May. What was the third child's name?
2. There is a clerk at the butcher shop, he is five feet ten inches tall and he wears size 13 sneakers. What does he weigh?
3. Before Mt. Everest was discovered, what was the highest mountain in the world?
4. How much dirt is there in a hole that measures two feet by three feet by four feet?
5. What word in the English Language is always spelled incorrectly?

6. Billy was born on December 28th, yet his birthday is always in the summer. How is this possible?
7. In California , you cannot take a picture of a man with a wooden leg. Why not?
8. What was the President's Name in 1975?
9. If you were running a race, and you passed the person in 2nd place, what place would you be in now?
10. Which is correct to say, "The yolk of the egg are white" or "The yolk of the egg is white"?
11. If a farmer has 5 haystacks in one field and 4 haystacks in the other field, how many haystacks would he have if he combined them all in another field?

(Answers next week -)

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Eddy-Torial –

The Wise Man's Folly

"For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as did David his father. Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods." I Kings 11:4-8

How could the wisest king in history go so terribly wrong? He began his reign so well, and ended it so poorly. Where did he go wrong?

An answer, you already know, is in our text. "...his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father."

Solomon reasoned that it would be politically astute for him to marry Pharaoh's daughter. Surely her father would be an ally if his daughter lived in Solomon's capital city, wouldn't he? Politically, he was correct, but biblically, he was in error.

There is a deep, foundational error in the wise man's strategy. He was violating his own maxim, "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." (Proverbs 3:5,6) Ahem, Solomon, old chap, who ARE you trusting? And have you looked in the mirror lately? You've acquired quite a lean there. And this part about "ALL thy ways", what about that? Have you forgotten the warnings God gave in Deuteronomy 7:3,4, where he commanded, "Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly." ?

So why did Solomon fall into this trap? Why did he allow reason to prevail over revelation? What basic philosophical premise was at the root of all this? Yes, we know he married Pharaoh's daughter, and then the daughters of all the kings of the nations around Israel, and then he took wives and concubines until he had 700 wives and 300 porcupines, oops, I mean concubines. (One commentator says that, in order to marry 1000 women in forty years, Solomon would have had to marry a new wife every two weeks. Talk about disaster!) But what was the basic error in his thinking? There is a taproot for every poisonous weed in the garden of the heart of man, you know. What is Solomon's taproot?

Some years ago, the Lord led me to I Chronicles 8:11, "And Solomon brought up the daughter of Pharaoh out of the city of David unto the house that he had built for her: for he said, My wife shall not dwell in the house of David king of Israel, because the places are holy, whereunto the ark of the LORD hath come." And this verse reveals the single basic error in the wise man's thinking.

Here is the taproot. Solomon divided his life into two parts, the sacred and the secular.

Read the verse again. Solomon said, "I build a house for my wife, separate from my house because it is holy and she can't live there. My house is holy, consecrated to God, but my wife isn't. There are parts of my life that belong to God and they are holy, and there are parts that belong to me and they aren't, and I will have to keep them apart."

This is the master key to the decline and fall of Solomon. Solomon reasoned out a basic fallacy that destroyed him, deluded his son after him and ultimately devastated his kingdom. Solomon made the mistake of dividing life into two compartments, the sacred and the secular.

Is this a serious matter? When I preach on this subject, I hear the hurried whispers of disturbed hearts, and see the saints squirm in their seats. I see the nervous glances between husbands and wives, and see the surprised eyebrows of children lifted. (Surely, pastor, you jest! You cannot possibly be saying that the Christian's life is to be entirely consecrated to God? I mean, we believe in holiness, but that's going a bit far, don't you think?) Well, let's just try on a few Bible verses for size. How about this one, does it fit? "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication" (1Thess. 4:3) Or this one, "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." (1Thess. 4:7) Or maybe this one, does it suit? "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1Thess. 5:23) These three simple

verses sum up the Bible truth about sanctification and make clear to us what we are to do about sacred and secular areas of our lives.

- 1) It is the will of God for each of us to be sanctified. You want the will of God for your life? Start here.
- 2) God has already called each of us to holiness. Don't wait around, hoping to hear from Heaven, He has already spoken!
- 3) God is at work in us to sanctify, to make holy our spirit, our soul, and our body! Every part of me, and every part of you is to be holy. Are we there yet? No, by no means! But we need to embrace these truths and take God's side against ourselves. We need to say, "There will be no toleration of sin in my life."

I once heard an old preacher say, "For the Christian, every piece of ground is holy ground, and every bush is a burning bush!" That is what Solomon, in all his wisdom, did not perceive. He permitted the grey matter above his eyebrows to overrule the Scriptures that spoke of the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, as He confronted Solomon with the Word of God. He permitted Reason to prevail over Revelation. His greatest error was in dividing life into sacred and secular compartments.

This is what is destroying the saints at this very moment, individually and collectively. Men, women, and children, pastors, evangelists, and missionaries, in fact, whole churches have divided all that life contains into that which belongs to God and that which belongs to ME!

Consider the results of Solomon's faulty logic. If a child of God is happy to divide life into two boxes (God's box and MY box), it is almost impossible to prevent that which is in God's box decreasing and that which is in MY box increasing. So it was for Solomon. One pagan, unsanctified wife led to two and two to a thousand. One wife worshipping her idol in HER house led to Solomon building high places for Ashtoreth, and then Milcom, and then Chemosh, and then Molech. Reason prevailing over revelation in private led to the practice of this faulty hermeneutic in public. Is it any surprise that his descendants added to his pantheon until it destroyed them?

Have you considered what this reasoning is doing to our homes and churches? In most homes there is a shelf for the Bible and a shelf for the vilest propaganda from Hell. Not in my house, you say. Well, would you be willing for the Lord Jesus Christ to sit down with you and watch the DVD's you feed on more than you feed on the Word of God? Would he approve the profanity and nudity, the drugs and drunkenness, the pornography and blasphemy of your favourite movies? And what would he think of the New Age errors your children feast their hearts on as they watch the Disney DVD's you buy them? It all started when you embraced Solomon's doctrine of dichotomy, "I am justified to have in my life Sacred things and secular things, and they are to be kept separate."

We are seeing it in our churches, more and more. Whether we keep the KJV in the pulpit, and the NIV in the pastor's study, or whether we keep hymns in the Sunday morning worship and the world's music in the youth department, it simply is not possible to keep the leaven of ungodliness from leavening the whole lump. It is the nature of that which is ssssssssecular and ssssssssssinful to grow and expand like leaven. (If you read that last sentence out loud you can even hear the Serpent's hiss.)

Oh, how much better it would have been if Solomon had prayed, "LORD, give me a godly wife that will live in the king's palace with me, and will worship You with me, and will help me to train our children to consecrate everything in our home to God!"

What is urgently needed in this hour is pastors who will say to God and to their people, "I am committed, so help me God, to strive to make every part of our church sacred. The pulpit, the baptistry, the study, the Sunday School, the missionary program, the choir, the special music, the musicians, the men we train to preach, the evangelists we have in to speak, the soul winning program, and even the pastor's marriage, all we do must be consecrated to God. We will not divide our church into sacred and secular. We will consecrate it all to God!"

Wise men can become fools.

All they have to do is divide life into two boxes, sacred and secular.

Bro. Buddy Smith.

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