

2002 Proclaimer

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, .. to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord!" - Isa. 61:1-2

A teaching and exhortation medium by members of the Carmichael Church of Christ, meeting at 6044 Sutter Ave. Carmichael, CA 95608

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PEACE AT THE CENTER

by David A. Sargent

A reporter asked the late President Herbert Hoover, "Mr. President, **how do you handle criticism? Do you ever get agitated or tense?**"

"**No,**" President Hoover replied, seemingly surprised at the question, "**of course not.**"

"But," the reporter went on, "when I was a boy you were one of the most popular men in the world. Then, for a while you became one of the most unpopular, with nearly everyone against you. Didn't any of this meanness and criticism ever get under your skin?"

"No, I knew when I went into politics what I might expect, so when it came I wasn't disappointed or upset," he said. He lowered his familiar bushy eyebrows and looked directly into the reporter's eyes. "Besides," he added, "**I have peace at the center, you know.**"

This "**peace at the center**" is one of the greatest blessings of the Christian life. The Apostle Paul wrote of this peace; he called it: "*the peace of God which surpasses all understanding.*" (**Philippians 4:7**).

Because of sin, we are enemies of God, who is pure, righteous and holy. James stated: "*Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world [i.e., with the worldly, sinful things of the world] is enmity with God? Whoever therefore*

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wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God" (**James 4:4**). The most wonderful news of all, however, is that because of His love for us, "while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (**Romans 5:8**). Through Jesus' death on the cross, we may be reconciled to God (**Romans 5:10**). **On the cross, Jesus paid the price for our sin, making available the means to be reconciled to God.**

We are reconciled to God through Christ when by faith (Hebrews 11:6**), we repent of our sins (**Acts 17:30-31**), confess Christ before men (**Romans 10:9-10**) and are baptized into Christ for the remission of our sins (**Acts 2:38**).**

Having accepted the terms of peace, we may rejoice in our reconciliation with God through Christ! "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (**Romans 5:1**). **Once we have made peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ, **THEN** we are able to have **peace with others** and **peace within ourselves**, even in the most difficult circumstances. Jesus said, "These things I have spoken to you, that **IN ME** you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" (**John 16:33**).

Edward H. Bickersteth summarized beautifully the wonderful peace that is found in Christ with these words:

Peace, perfect peace, in this dark world of sin:

The blood of Jesus whispers peace within.

Do you have that "**peace at the center**" that comes through Christ? May God continue to bless us all with that inner peace that comes from a right relationship with Him!

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A BRIEF EXHORTATION – by David Riggs

"If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (**1 Jn 1:10-2:1**)

In 1986, Bob Brenley was playing third base for the San Francisco Giants. In the fourth inning of a game against the Atlanta Braves, Brenley made an error on a routine ground ball. Four batters later he kicked away another grounder. And then while he was scrambling after the ball, he threw wildly past home plate, trying to get the runner there. Two errors on the same play. A few minutes later he muffed yet another play to become the first player in the twentieth century to make four errors in one inning.

Now, those of us who have made very public errors in one situation or another can easily imagine how he felt during that long walk off the field at the end of that inning. But then, in the bottom of the fifth, Brenley hit a home run. Then, in the seventh, he hit a bases-loaded single, driving in two runs and tying the game. Then, in the bottom of the ninth, Brenley came up to bat again, with two outs. He ran the count to three and two and then hit a massive home run into the left field seats to win the game for the Giants. Brenley's score card for that day came to three hits and five at bats, two home runs, four errors, four runs allowed, four runs driven in, including the game-winning run. (From "A Theology of Baseball," Preaching Today, Tape No. 115)

Life is much like that mentioned above regarding Bob Brenley. When we sin, we should never give up or lose heart, but should repent, pick ourselves up, and strive to do better.

All "Brief Exhortations" are being posted at: <http://www.public.usit.net/driggs/brief.htm>

"FOLLOWING THE FISHERMAN OF MEN"

(HEARING THE CALL OF THE FISHERMAN OF MEN)

Mark 1:16-20

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Jesus' call to Simon, Andrew, James and John is the same call He extends to you and me.
 - 1. It is, *"Follow Me and I will make you become fishers of men."*
 - 2. Are we as apt to follow the "Fisherman of Men?"
- B. I fear our incapacity to suggest poignant questions that will touch and convict satisfied and complacent hearts in the church today.

I. THE CALLING OF JESUS IS A COMMAND . . . "Follow Me"

- A. Follow me . . . is a command
- B. To follow the command means to "call people to Christ" and thus become fishers of men.
- C. To be a fisher of men says we will go to where people are for the distinct purpose of telling them about Jesus. **And if we're not going to the people, we're not following Jesus!**

II. THE CALLING OF JESUS IS PERSONAL . . . "I will make YOU become"

- A. We ALL understand that the more time we spend with Jesus, reading about Him and learning His purposes, the better we know Jesus.
- B. When we're not telling others about Jesus it's because we're not excited about His story anymore.
- C. Have you noticed how sometimes we quote the essence of scripture but not quote the scripture exactly?
- D. The whole work of perceiving and revealing God's truths to others is not placed upon me and some technique I might use!

III. AND THE CALLING OF JESUS COMES DOWN TO THIS: "IF YOU AREN'T FOLLOWING, YOU AREN'T FISHING."

- A. Considering results, there doesn't seem to be a lot of **following OR fishing!**
- B. **WE'LL CLOSE THIS LESSON WITH AN ILLUSTRATION.**
 - 1. It came to pass that a group existed who called themselves fishermen.
 - 2. They declared that there should always be a first-priority opportunity for all men to become fishermen – ***BUT THESE GUYS NEVER FISHED!***
 - 3. They built a large, beautiful building for a local fisherman's club headquarters, spent lots of money encouraging fishing, defending fishermen's rights, and recommending good fishing spots.

CONCLUSION:

- A. Is a person really a fisherman, year after year, even if he never goes fishing?
 - 1. ***Is one following Jesus if he isn't fishing for men to serve the Lord?***
 - 2. Are YOU a fisherman for Jesus?
- B. **Will you follow that Fisherman called Jesus – for a success story that'll lead you into the realms of the glory of God?**