

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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April 7th, 2002

The Power is in FOCUS

by Vern Wilson

The grace of God has lent itself to our acceptability through the revelation of His divine plan that brings and keeps us in a desirable relationship with Him. The Lord has recorded for us in **Titus 2:11-12**- *"For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, 12 instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age."* By His power of divinely guiding the New Testament authors we can know how to walk uprightly in the sight of our Lord. It is written in words we can understand, and the urgency of compliance is expressed in terms we cannot deny. If everything is so clear and precise, why aren't more of us in tune with Him and with each other in our pursuit of His righteousness?

A most embarrassing reason many aren't more faithful to God is that we lose our focus so easily on what should be our primary goal in life. The affairs of lives seem to outweigh the desires of our hearts. Although Jesus warned to, *"Do not let your heart be troubled;"* we're very often deterred from those actions God has said would honor Him, and produce fruit by leading the lost to salvation, and would assure that we lay hold on eternal life! Many accidents on highways are caused by inattention to driving skills. Many have wrecked their journey of godly service by not being attentive (focused) in the driving skills necessary for a life-trip of righteousness.

ACCUSATIONS

Any accusation necessarily imposes some scriptural and inescapable duties --on everyone concerned. Notice.

DUTIES OF ACCUSERS

Accusers have an unavoidable duty to justice. A witness to an evil act cannot simply ignore the wrong. "And if a soul sin, ..And is a witness, whether he hath seen or known of it; if he do not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity" (**Lev 5:1**). Like it or not, a witness to sin is already involved. His only choice is 1) to sin himself by ignoring it or, 2) to become an accuser.

Every accuser has a basic duty to prove his charge. *"In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established"* (**2 Cor 13:1**). *"One witness shall not rise against a man for any iniquity .. At the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established"* (**Deut 19:15**). Such "eye witness testimony" or other sure proof demonstrates that an accusation is fact. Without such proof - full proof, no accusation can be treated as fact!

Three possibilities follow an accusation - and obligates the accuser in each case.

First, an accuser proves his accusation. Testimony, facts, or conclusive evidence must substantiate his charge. But proving a charge is not all his duty; he is not yet finished. He must diligently seek to restore the accused (**Gal 6:1; Mt.18:15-18**).

Secondly, the accusation may be absolutely true - and still be unprovable. It is possible for the accuser to see a sin committed, and yet be unable to prove it

-- no other witnesses -- no conclusive evidence (**Deut 19:15**) - thus, no "guilty verdict." Nevertheless, the accuser is still duty bound to attempt to restore his sinful brother. Love for him allows no less; duty forbids ignoring it. If the man rightfully accused refuses to heed correction and further denies his sin, others cannot be expected to consider him guilty without sufficient proof. It is a stalemate; justice awaits God's judgment.

Thirdly, the accusation may not be true at all. Whether deliberately or in all good conscience, the accuser may have given incorrect testimony - as in the case of Naboth (**1Kings 21:9-10, 13**) - and Jesus (**Mt 26:60-**) -and Stephen (**Act 6:11-13**). These false witnesses testified to what they knew was a lie. In such cases, an accuser sins against the accused. To be right with God, he must apologize and try his best to correct the effects of his false accusation.

DUTIES OF THE ACCUSED

In any case, the accused also has necessary duties. There are only two possibilities: 1) the accusation is true, or it is 2) untrue. If true, the accused man-regardless of the evidence - must repent humbly and do what is right. To continue in sin is a barrier to self-respect, to fellowship of good men, and to acceptable worship of God (**Mt 5:23**). On the other hand, if the accusation is untrue, the accused must confront the accuser and

demand proof. If possible, he must clear himself and expose the untrue allegation. ***Anyway, the accusation should not be ignored.*** An unjustly accused person has a second duty to his unjust accuser. The accused himself becomes the accuser. He charges the false accuser of his slanderous charge - his sin. He is then obligated to try to restore him (**Mt 18:15-28**). Sometimes, a false accuser is not a Christian or is unconcerned with justice. In such cases, a good life is the only defense against slander (**1 Pet 3:16**) - and God's reward then is the ultimate vindication and blessing.

DUTIES OF THE HEARERS

Often ignored are requirements imposed on any person who listens to an accusation. The hearer of accusations has inescapable duties. He cannot listen - and just do nothing. An accusation itself declares that someone has sinned - either 1) the accused is guilty as declared or 2) the accuser is guilty of slander. First, a hearer must demand proof. "*Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses*" (**1Tim 5:19**). "*Receive*" means to treat as true. Such fair and just treatment is not peculiar to elders. Elders are simply to be accorded the same honorable treatment that justice demands for all. If an accusation is proven, every hearer is obligated to join the accuser in seeking to reprove and restore a justly accused man. If an accusation is unproved and untrue, then the hearer is has an inescapable obligation in regard to the slanderer - to rebuke him and seek to restore him.

As a hearer of the accusation, remember that without ample proof: **1)** you absolutely must not consider the

charge as true, **2)** You absolutely must not act against the accused as if it were true, and **3)** You absolutely must not repeat those unfounded charges as if they were true.

Accusations are very demanding. Be sure you handle them as justice demands and as God plainly instructs.

--Joe Fitch in *Bible Comment*

GOSPEL **MEETING TIME**

DON BASSETT
from Memphis, TN
in a

GOSPEL MEETING
at the
Carmichael Church of Christ

APRIL 14-17

Sunday Sermons at
9:00 AM
9:55 AM
6:00 PM

Weekday Sermons
[Mon - Tues - Wed]
at 7:00 PM

HI, TOM

When I preached for the Alamo church in Alamo, Tenn., there was a person who attended every service of the Alamo church and always brought a smile to the faces of dozens of people. What he did was something very simple. He would speak to people and call them by their first name. When I took my seat on the first pew before services began, I could always, without exception, expect to hear, "Hi, Tom." I would continue to hear my name called until I acknowledged him. What is so unusual about that? The speaking and calling people by their names came from Peter Snell, who was almost 2 years old. I have never seen a child that knows so many names, is so friendly, speaks so clearly and calls people by their names.

Peter does something all of us should get in the habit of doing.

1. **He speaks.**
2. **He speaks first.**
3. **He speaks clearly.**
4. **He calls people by name.**

I am sure this child knew the names of more people than some of the older members. This 18 month-old child probably spoke to more people than several of our teenagers and adults did.

Jesus said, "*Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?*" (**Matt 21:16**). Jesus declared that we should be like little children. "*At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little*

child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." (**Matt 18:1-4**).

Watch this child. Listen to him. Follow his example. **I challenge you to speak to every person you meet at service, call them by name and say their name clearly and distinctly.** If a little child can do it, surely we can, too.

- Tom L. Childers

PRAYERS REQUESTED FOR:

(cards and calls also appreciated)

THE SICK AND RECOVERING

Addie Alden – broken leg improving, **call her**

Peggy Alexander – cancer surgery 4/12

Bill Buie - nagging ailments

Sue Claiborne – back problems continue

Helen Gray – hip causing lots of pain interfering with her benevolent nature

Annie Holland – some things are better

Willa Lockett – **appreciates your prayers/cards**

Clifford Marshall – needs your prayers

Ruby & Ted Nicholson – outlook poor, Rhonda constantly needed, pray for all

Irma Rapiet – health testing and reactions

Norma Romine – cancer-attendant problems

Tom Royston – cancer and other problems

Rena Schultz – exhausted care-giver

Nancy Valine – needs liver transplant to live

Evie Westphal – good news from some tests

Gordon Wilson – health continues deterioration

Maxine Wilson – knee improving with more care

AWAY FROM HOME:

Aaron Robertson – in/out of Camp Pendleton

Gordon Wilson: gospel meeting near Fresno

ONGOING "BUSINESS" TRAVELERS:

Carol Alexander, Rick Rittenhouse, Carl Romine, Dan Singleton, Gordon Wilson

JOB SEEKERS:

Steve Bryant – Jeffry Pennant

A PRAISE WORSHIP AT 6:00

Songs, Prayers, Scripture Readings