

2001 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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September 16th, 2001

PREPARING THE YOUNG TO SERVE GOD

By Gordon Wilson

It is not news, much less good news, when I mention that the church of God is losing large numbers of its young people to the influence of the world. It is obvious to any observer that many who are reared by Christian parents, taken regularly to Bible classes and assemblies, never become obedient to the gospel. And even more who are baptized --whether from the heart or only in form one cannot say-- quickly fall away.

Everyone deplors the situation. There is lots of talk about the problem. Suggestions are floated, advice is given; all in the interest of finding a practical solution to the problem. May I suggest that one can never solve a problem until he has identified the cause of the problem? Once we truly understand the problem facing our youth, the solution likely will be apparent. Such understanding can come only in part from looking at contemporary conditions. What we really need is the wisdom of the ages, imparted by the word of God.

The first Psalm says, *"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers."* No special attention will be paid just here to the progressive parallelism or other structural peculiarities of this Psalm. But we had better pay attention to the three classes who exert influence that will keep any person from being blessed.

The Counsel of the Wicked. The word "wicked" is translated from "rashaim." If you know as little about Hebrew as I do, you might want to look up this word in a good Old

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Testament lexicon. What you will find is that its root meaning is "stirring up unrest." Your lexicon will probably cite passages like Job 3:17 and Isaiah 57:20-21 to give the full flavor of the word. Now, are there not plenty of wicked counsellors stirring up unrest in today's youth? Some of their vehicles are television, movies, novels, music, and social philosophies. They repeatedly tell our young to rebel against authority --as though that were not natural enough to youngsters anyway! They counsel the rejection of old and timeless standards of morality --as though youthful passions were not already sizzling at full flame! They even urge upon the church a new form of rock 'n roll religion to chase away boredom; which boredom they have themselves created by their constant stirring up unrest and discontent.

The Way of Sinners. I am told, and believe it, that the word "sinners" is intensive. It does not refer to those of us who sometimes commit a sin, but to habitual, determined transgressors. We know people like that. Their main interest in life, their recreation and preoccupation, is in doing that which is unlawful. They seem to like being bad, and want to influence their friends to be like them (Cf. Romans 1:32). Certainly our young people cannot live in this world and avoid association with people who commit sin. I mean, who else is there to associate with? But they can avoid being bosom buddies with those whose main tendencies are evil. "Be not deceived; evil companionships corrupt good morals" (1 Cor. 15:33). I am aware that Paul is addressing a specific protagonist problem in Corinth, but he addresses it by stating a general principle of truth --undoubtedly quoted from some unauthorized source. One imperils his morals when he hangs around with the wrong kind of people.

The Seat of the Scoffer. Today's scoffer is the one who flaunts his sophistication, his human wisdom, his great learning. He mocks the idea that we are the creation of God, and insists that we are just the anthropoid product of evolution: slightly improved animals. He jibes at the Bible, explaining it away as a collection of myths borrowed by the Hebrews from their pagan neighbors. He ridicules Christianity, says pooh on all religion; oh, he goes on and on. It is difficult for young people not to be affected by the modern scoffer, for his seat is often the seat of the school teacher, the professor, the scholar, or the scientist. We exalt education, and our kids exalt the educators. We partake freely of what science has given, and our offspring swallow whatever the scientist offers.

All right, we have with the Psalmist's help identified the cause of the problem. Shall we continue and let him help us see the solution? *"But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night."* The writers of Hebrew literature were not mystics; they were rock-solid realists. So the preacher who explains this verse as meaning that we should first read the word of God, then spend some time pondering it misses the point --though what he says may be true enough. The word "meditate" here does not mean to ponder or mull over in one's mind. It carries the practical sense of using God's law at the point of decision-making. The business man who decides not to pull a shady deal because it is against God's law, is meditating on the law. There is the working man who sacrifices a part of his meager earnings to help the poor because it is pleasing to the Lord; he is meditating. The student who decides in light of the law of the Lord not to cheat on an exam is meditating. If our youth can be taught to apply the law of the Lord at every turning of life's road, this will fully counteract the influence of the wicked, the sinner, and the scoffer.

Another Psalmist in this same inspired collection wrote, "Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy Word" (119:9). I am afraid there is no magic key to saving our young people. If we can get enough of the word of God into them, and do it early enough, they will stand. We may as well make up our minds to quit looking for other solutions, and get serious --as parents and teachers-- about working the only solution there is. Then, when our children come to greater maturity, they "shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither." ###

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**SERMON TONIGHT AT 6:00**  
*[final lesson in series on]*  
**FALSE TEACHERS**

|                                                                                     |         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| <b>CARMICHAEL CHURCH OF CHRIST</b>                                                  |         |
| <i>Times Of Services</i>                                                            |         |
| <b><u>SUNDAY:</u></b>                                                               |         |
| Classes                                                                             | 9:00 AM |
| Worship                                                                             | 9:55 AM |
| Eve Worship                                                                         | 6:00 PM |
| <b><u>WEDNESDAY:</u></b>                                                            |         |
| Classes                                                                             | 7:00 PM |
| The elders urgently request every member to attend every service of the Church –    |         |
| 1. For the good you can get from the studies and your association with godly people |         |
| 2. But especially, for the encouragement you can give to the other members.         |         |

**THOSE WHO ARE SICK:**

Truman and Sue Claiborne Willa Lockett

**“A MONUMENTAL STRUGGLE OF GOOD VS. EVIL”**

Clifford Marshall Kaye Pennant  
Norma Romine Evie Westphal  
Helen Gray Gordon & Glenda Wilson

**THOSE WHO ARE TRAVELING:**

**I don't have info that anyone is traveling!**  
 In fact, we “should” be able to welcome the Sasse’s back into our midst today. We’ve missed their talents, their joyful disposition and their participation in our continuing growth and development here!

PLEASE PRAY for these, and others you may be aware of, especially for those affected by the tragedy of the **ATTACK ON AMERICA!** PRAYERS DO AVAIL!

=====  
 It is OK to let your mind go blank, but please turn off the sound.

"The best way to get back on your feet -- miss a car payment."

It was all so different before everything changed.

"Courage is just fear that has said it's prayers" via Diane Sawyer

Many people lose their tempers merely by seeing you keep yours.

Sign at the electric company, "We would be delighted if you send in your bill. However, if you don't, you will be."

Sign in a cafeteria, "Shoes are required to eat in the cafeteria. Socks can eat any place they want."

1 John 2:12-17

**INTRODUCTION:**

- A. The title for our lesson comes from a statement by our president, Geo. W. Bush, as he was referring to what has come to be known as **THE ATTACK ON AMERICA**
1. But in such times as these, the “brotherhood of Americans” pulls us together!
  2. And that’s what we must do to defend ourselves with strength and integrity!
  3. We need to continue to pray for others, to support and help in whatever ways we can, and to do all we can to prevent such from ever happening again – anywhere!
- B. Today, I want to talk to you about that **EVIL ONE** who tries to keep many of us **from the commitment** that’ll convey us *into heaven eternally!*
1. We all remember, don’t we, the quiet, hidden little hamlet of Lockerbie, Scotland?
  2. And we remember the bombing attack by those **EVIL ONES** on the World Trade Center in 1993.
  3. Will we also be able to put behind us the terrible suicide mission of Tuesday?
- C. **SATAN, the evil one**, has always ungodly, evil servants to try to undermine and destroy the works and workers of God.

**I. WE CAN’T HIDE BECAUSE HE HAS INVADED OUR HOMES!**

- A. HOW SAD that the **EVIL ONE** has been so influential in this realm!
1. ***The Evil One Is Seen*** in the home where parents are so busy working, or socializing, or playing. **Luke 12:15; Titus 2:4**
  2. ***The Evil One Is Seen*** in children who rebel against authority. **Col 3:20**
  3. ***The Evil One Is Seen*** in the wife who disdains subjection and in the husband whose tyrannical rule feeds that disdain.
- B. What a far cry all this is from that which God sets forth through Paul in **Eph.**

**II. WE CAN’T HIDE BECAUSE HE HAS INFLUENCED OUR THINKING!**

- A. ***We ought to be able to find peace in our thoughts***, yet even here he battles.
1. He surrounds us with encouragements to feed our minds with HIS standards.
  2. He entices us with every thought of lust or deceit or revenge.
  3. And Satan is delighted when we become spiritual pacifists in serving God!
- B. It is to our MINDS that God appeals with His gospel and THAT’S WHY the evil one is trying so hard to influence our thinking! **Mk16:15-16; 1 Cor 1:18, 21**

**III. WE CAN’T HIDE BECAUSE HE’S INVADED OUR CONGREGATIONS**

- A. This is the one place that should be our bastion of security.
- B. It’s extremely clear that **HIS PRESENCE IS NOT WITHOUT INVITATION!**
- C. His most effective terrorist activity is for us to **COMPROMISE OUR CONVICTIONS!**
1. The **EVIL ONE** says it’s O.K. for us to KNOW, as long as we don’t DO!
  2. The **EVIL ONE** would have us ignore **Christ** is to be the **focus** of our lives.
  3. He would have us attach no import to WHO we are! – **1 Pet 2:9.**

**CONCLUSION:**

- A. Lets be completely honest: **the EVIL ONE WANTS US!**
- B. Can you begin to see that **YOU CANNOT HIDE FROM THE EVIL ONE?**
1. Can you begin to comprehend that ***we don’t have to hide from him?***
  2. Hear the calming ASSURANCE of God to His people: – **James 4:7-8**