

2007 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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A Voice from the Past

Suffering from Malnutrition

by Reuel Lemmons (via Jim Sasser)

This week I saw a young lady whose body bore the frightful marks of malnutrition in early childhood. Someone had discovered the pitiful little waif neglected and starving, and had saved her life but her body fifteen years later still shows the ordeal through which she went. These weaknesses and deformities she will carry to her grave. A lack of proper diet and proper exercise will produce these effects as surely as God is. To some extent they may be mitigated by correctional measur-es, and care but they are there, like scars, bearing terrible testimony.

Christians and churches are like that. A weak diet will never produce a strong church. A lack of exercise will never build strong spiritual statures. Many are the evidences that we have been feeding on a weak diet. The continued increase of space given in the church bulletins to pink and blue showers, fellowship meetings, young people's parties and other things not necessarily connected with the increase of spirituality alarms us.

Church bulletins generally reflect the diet the church is receiving. It is the mission of the church that it contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. It should be concerned with preaching the gospel, converting the lost, and teaching the saved how to stay saved.

This takes both strong diet and regular exercise.

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It will never be possible to convert the world, nor to build strong churches, on baby showers or parties or other gatherings that are only for "feel-goody" purposes. While social events are necessary in broadening our horizons for spreading the gospel, it seems that if brethren gave more emphasis to things more meaty and be a little more "pointed" in our purposes, the church would have greater benefit.

The Word of God alone will build strong churches. It does not need crutches upon which to walk. (Note **Acts 20:32** JWS) It may be necessary to bolster sagging sectarian interests with doughnuts and coffee, but not the church of the Lord. This is not the foundation upon which it is built.

The church exists for saving souls. To a reasonable extent we must become all things to all men that perchance we may win some. But to try to build the church of Christ on fun, fellowship and foolishness is certainly not the way the Lord prescribed. Many of these things could well be de-emphasized and the gospel as the power of God to save given pre-eminence.

We are to convert men to Christ, not to each other. The fellowship of saints is a thing to be enjoyed by them because of their common redemption from a common ruin, rather than a society to be promoted by trivialities. It is a fellowship built around doctrine, rather than dishes. The space given to trivialities is evidence of where the emphasis is being placed. Such a flimsy diet will never produce strong Christians nor strong churches.

Paul once wrote Timothy, *"Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery Meditate upon these things; give thyself*

wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed to thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." **1 Tim. 4:13-16**. Here is both diet and exercise -- the kind that builds strong men and strong churches.

Let us put the emphasis where the Lord put it and where the apostles put it -- upon the gospel. Preach it! Preach it! Let it cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Teach it to the sinner and feed it to the saint. Let us keep our hearts centered upon the consuming task of "knowing nothing among you save Jesus and Him crucified." And let's keep the diet of the church strong.

--Reuel Lemmons, via **Roanoke Bulletin**.

"With God All Things Are Possible"

Don Alexander

This quotation from Matthew 19:26, spoken by Jesus Christ, was the motto of the State of Ohio. But today the 6th U.S. Court of Appeals ruled that the motto "violated the Constitution because it was a Christian saying..." according to an Associated Press story published today, April 25, 2000. The American Civil Liberties Union argued against this civil liberty and brought the suit in the first place. The ACLU had argued that the words had no "secular purpose" and appeared to be a government endorsement of the Christian religion, according to AP story.

Notice the phrase "secular purpose". We are not a "Christian nation", but a secular one. Setting aside for a moment the discussion of the Christian's citizenship really being in Heaven (Philippians 3:20) and that we are to be subject to the government, but loyal to Christ always, it is not a good thing for the climate of a nation when the spiritual is supplanted by the "secular."

To be consistent, the ACLU must fight to continue the supplanting of the spiritual with the secular by removing references to God from the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, the National Anthem ("...let this be our motto: 'In God is our trust..."), national songs such as : God Bless America, America the Beautiful, America. All these mention God. Coins, currency, historical documents, even the Preamble to the Constitution of the State of California (1984): "We, the People of the State of California, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom..." Well, THAT'S gotta go! "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools..."(Romans 1:22). Put THAT on the ACLU office door. The truth is that such mottos do not "establish religion" by the government. And those involved in the lawsuit know it. Actions like these just continue the dismantling of a culture based on the acknowledgement of a "Creator" who, by "Divine Providence", gives to all "life, breath and all things" as a "secular culture" is being built."

Without a religious influence and solely with a secular one, what motto can we choose to reflect our newfound "liberty from the bondage of religion"? Something that will more accurately reflect our culture without the tired, old, religious-God influence. Well, I've thought of a few: "WasSUP?", "It's the economy, stupid", "Question Authority," "If it feels good, do it", "You have to love yourself first", "If you can dream it, you can achieve it". Or maybe, "I am GREAT!", "Ohm, ohm, ohm", "Hello", ".dot.com", "www.seeourwebsite.com," "It's Miller time", "Bud...weiser", "He came to play", "Where's the Beef?" Oh, enough of that nonsense! But, really, what would it be that would so inspire a people that the thought of it moves us higher?

"With God all things are possible." With man , without God, I'm not so sure.

=30=

THOSE NEEDING PRAYERS

Jason & Marie Anderson
 Frank & Tina Ayers
 Edith Ayers
 Jamie Ayers
 Jack & Dorothy Bailey
 Margie Buchanan
 Julie Bruce
 Bill Cain
 Larry Cain
 Karen Daly
 Robert (Bob) Erickson
 Helen Gray
 Margaret Holcomb
 Chuck House
 Vivian Jones
 Jean McCarty
 Jeffry & Kaye Pennant
 Berniece Raven
 Wendell and Irma Rapier
 Rosie Reagan
 Glenn & LaurieAnn Reagan
 Eli Roadman (& family)
 Caleb & Jacob Robertson
 The Romine family
 Ray & Carol Rude
 Brad Rusk family
 Bill & Rena Schultz
 The Brad Shuck Family
 Vernon Smith
 Ola Thornburg
 Nancy Valine
 Shirley Watkins
 Glen & Brittany Wayne
 Ellie Williams
 Gordon & Glenda Wilson

TRAVELING IN THEIR WORK

Karen Daly
 Aaron Robertson
 David Lovett
 Gordon Wilson

IN THE MILITARY

Jason Anderson
 David Lovett
 Aaron Robertson
 Trent Walsh

AT THE FORKS IN THE ROAD

Hebrews 11:24-26

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Choices are very important if we are to serve the Lord!
 - 1. For those who are older, the subject of choice may not be as significant now.
 - 2. This study is to assure us that the choices we have made are, in fact, the right ones!
- B. The Scriptures reveal many who have made right choices, even in the midst of adversity.
 - 1. But no Bible example stands out more vividly than Moses'.
 - 2. Text: **Heb 11:24-26**

I. MOSES AT THE FORKS IN THE ROAD.

- A. At the fork in the road in Moses' journey, he revealed his strength and his humility!
- B. There comes in each life where decisions must be made that determine our destiny!
 - 1. We draw closer to God when we make wise, god-fearing decisions.
 - 2. No matter what other success you've known, you still must please God! **Matt 12:30**

II. LET US NOTE SOME THINGS THAT DETERMINE CHOICE

- A. There are always two elements in every decision; the negative and the positive.
 - 1. The negative element. Moses said "No" to something, and he seriously meant it!
 - 2. The positive element. Moses said "Yes," and identified himself with the people of God.
- B. When we remove that which doesn't please God, we need to add something that does!
 - 1. ELSE the devil will try to fill that void. **Luke 11:24-26**
 - 2. We don't just stop serving sin, **we start serving God.** **Rom 6:11-13, 19**

III. GREAT DECISIONS ARE ALWAYS COSTLY.

- A. In the case of Moses, there was much to give up.
 - 1. He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.
 - 2. He gave up the highest social position in Egypt.
- B. Moses' turned away from all who'd given him training, position & opportunities.
 - 1. He did not choose the *temporary pleasures* of sin.
- C. The cost of his choice isn't only sacrifice, but the suffering he endured.

IV. HOW DID MOSES COME TO MAKE THIS CHOICE?

- A. His faith was the factor that motivated him. "By faith Moses..."
 - 1. His faith helped him look to the heavenly treasures rather than the earthly ones.
 - 2. The gospel is God's statement of our blessings when we make right choices. **1 Pet 1:3f**
- B. In considering Moses' case more carefully, we note that:
 - 1. He had a clear eye for distinguishing right from wrong. **Heb 5:14**
 - 2. He set his heart on *things above* rather than things on this earth. **1 Pet 1:13**

V. WHAT WAS THE OUTCOME OF HIS DECISION?

- A. His decisions developed him into one of the greatest of the Biblical God-servant characters revealed on its pages. **Exod 34:29-30**
- B. Moses's decision enabled him to reach heaven.
 - 1. Standing by Moses in Egypt, his choice may seem to have been foolish.
 - 2. But standing by Jesus on Mt of Transfiguration showed the wisdom.

IN SUMMARY:

- A. Thus, what is your decision in life today? Which road will you take?
- B. Our choice is essentially the same one Moses had to make.
- C. What will your decision be?