

2008 Proclaimer

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

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Don't Cast Your Pearls Before Swine

by Mike Riley

After condemning those who would find fault in judging others, not seeing their own faults (**Matt 7:1-5**), our Lord said: *"Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces"* (**Matt 7:6**).

Evaluating some folks as "dogs" or "hogs," necessarily requires making a judgment about a person's character and heart. Some kinds of judgment are entirely necessary (**John 7:24**).

The terms, "give" and "cast" in **Matt 7:6**, are consistent with the respective figures of "dogs" and "swine." Dogs could not tell the differences in meats offered on the altar (**Exod 29:31-37**) and meats that were not offered. If the Jews had taken a part of the sacrifice that was holy and given it to a dog, he would have had no appreciation for its holiness. If you give a piece of meat to an old hound dog, he'll swallow it with one gulp without any discrimination regarding sacredness. Furthermore, it is neither proper nor reasonable to cast pearls before swine, because they cannot differentiate value or appreciate beauty. Exquisite white pearls would simply be trampled into the filth of the pigpen, while the pigs would look for what satisfied their bellies. Then, being disappointed because their physical appetite was not fulfilled, they would turn against the one who offered something of far greater (*Cont'd. on Page 2*)

value than food. There is danger in giving people what is holy, when all they want is the sensual (**Jude 1:18-19**). Jesus' charge to His disciples simply means that we should not waste the precious words of Christ on those who are unfit and unworthy of priceless spiritual treasures. Not only are they unappreciative of eternal valuables, you will suffer the consequences of their resentment and abuse (**Acts 7:51-60**; **Acts 13:44-45**; cf. **1 Pet 4:4**; **Jude 1:10**).

Evaluating a person as a "dog" or a "hog," can be an excuse for our indifference to necessary instruction. We should never look down on others as though we are "holier than thou" (cf. **Matt 9:11**; **Luke 18:11**; **Jude 1:19**). It is only after great patience has been exercised, and a hardened heart evidenced, that we should conclude a person to be unworthy of our efforts (cf. **Matt 10:14**; **Acts 13:46**; **Acts 13:51**). We should always remember that our judgments are not always God's judgments (cf. **Matt 7:1**; **Rom 14:3**; **1 Cor 4:3-4**; **Jas 4:11**). However, since time is a valuable commodity (**Eph 5:15-16**; **Col 4:5**; **Jas 4:14**), we need to be discriminating in our teaching. Some make it evident that they care not about holy things at all (**Acts 7:57**). They think that spiritual presentations are foolish (**1 Cor 1:18**). Lovers of sin resent the reproving of their behavior (**Matt 14:1-11**; **Acts 7:51-60**). While it is true that we should exercise the greatest degree of patience in dealing with the weak and ignorant (**1 Cor 9:22**; **Rom 15:1**; **Heb 5:1-2**), when the weak prefer weakness and will not apply their minds to acquire critical knowledge, a time comes for dealing with them more

firmly. If they are treating holy things as common, Jesus basically says, "Don't waste the Word on them" (**Matt 10:14**; **Acts 13:51**). Your effort would be better spent with souls that are thirsting for the "water of life" (**Rev 22:17**).

The Proverb writer tells us, "*Do not correct a scoffer, lest he hate you; Rebuke a wise man, and he will love you. Give instruction to a wise man and he will be still wiser. Teach a just man, and he will increase in learning*" (**Prov 9:8-9**)

(Penned by **Mike Riley**, 2-21-06 in "**Judging**")
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CONFESSING SIN

By Alan Smith

I heard a story about a husband who came home drunk late one night and snuck up the stairs quietly to avoid waking his wife. He looked in the bathroom mirror and bandaged the bumps and bruises he'd received in a fight earlier that night. He then proceeded to climb into bed, smiling at the thought that he'd pulled one over on his wife.

When morning came, he opened his eyes and there stood his wife. "You were drunk last night, weren't you!"

"No, honey."

"Well, if you weren't, then who put all the band-aids on the bathroom mirror?"

Despite our many failed attempts, we continue to try to **hide our sins** from others around us. King Saul was commanded by God to kill all of the Amalekites and their animals (**1 Sam 15:3**). But Saul spared the Amalekite king and the best of the herds and flocks. There was no question he had disobeyed God. But notice the first thing he said to Samuel upon his return

-- "I have performed the commandment of the LORD." (**I Sam. 15:13**).

Saul knew good and well he hadn't done everything that God told him to do. So why did he tell Samuel he had kept the word of the Lord? Because one of our first reactions to sin is to pretend that everything's OK. If we ignore the fact that we have sinned, maybe no one will notice.

And we've all done this before, haven't we? Remember when you were a kid and your parents were out of the house and maybe you got to roughhousing with your brothers and sisters and in the process the lamp in the living room got knocked over and a piece broke off? You stuck it back together hoping no one would ever notice and then you went back to your room to get away from the scene of the crime.

But Mom comes home and it doesn't her long at all to notice. She comes back to your room and says, "Did you break my lamp?" And you say, as innocently as you possibly can, "What lamp?" Because the hardest thing in the world is to admit that we have done something wrong.

The one thing that God desires most when it comes to our sins is the one thing we have the most trouble with -- honesty and openness.

"He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy." (**Prov 28:13**)

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (**I John 1:9**).

May you be honest enough to be able to share with God what He already knows. Only then can the healing begin. =====

THOSE NEEDING PRAYERS

Jason & Marie & Cayna Anderson
Edith Ayers
Frank & Tina Ayers
Jack & Dorothy Bailey
Margie Buchanan
Ed Brouillette
Bill Cain
Karen Daly
Robert Erickson
Min Fox
Helen Gray
Chris Heffelfinger
Margaret Holcomb
Chuck House
Donna Lee & Amber
Jean McCarty
Martha McCurdy
Kiley Pace
R.B. & June Rankin
Wendell & Irma Rapier
Berniece Raven & Sharon Collamore
Rosie Reagan
LaurieAnn Reagan
Eli & the Roadman family
Caleb & Jacob Robertson
Taylor Romine
Carol and Ray Rude
Bill & Rena Schultz
Troy Shadman
The Brad Shuck Family
Ola Thornburg
Nancy Valine
Shirley Watkins
Clair & Ellie Williams
Kathy Wilson (**Folsom**)
Gordon Wilson

TRAVELING IN THEIR WORK

Karen Daly
Aaron Robertson
Gordon Wilson

IN THE MILITARY

Jason Anderson
David Lovett
Aaron Robertson
Trent Walsh

What can you do besides praying

**For these loved ones who are
ailing?**

THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD

Acts 20:26-27

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Acts 20 records a meeting that Paul had with the elders of the Ephesian church.
 - 1. Paul was making his way to Jerusalem after completing his third evangelistic and edifying missionary journey.
 - 2. This meeting was held in the port city of Miletus directly south of Ephesus.
- B. In this meeting, Paul addressed the Ephesian elders, Acts 20:26-27.
 - 1. Paul recalled to the elders how he had spent three years laboring with them and the church to teach them the full word of God.
 - 2. Now, he was giving them his final admonition to cling to that same word of God, for he knew that they would have trouble and that he would see them no more.
- C. We want to consider this preacher's mandate to declare the whole counsel of God.

I. DECLARING THE WHOLE COUNSEL (PURPOSE) OF GOD

- A. The whole counsel of God is the entirety of God's message to man.
 - 1. "Purpose" (NAS), or "counsel" (KJV), means advice given according to a determined purpose.
 - 2. God's purpose is revealed through His word. Paul preached the whole of God's message to man.
 - 3. (compare verses in Acts 20:20, 21, 24, 25, 27, and 32).
- B. Those who know the COUNSEL OF GOD have the responsibility to tell it to others.
 - 1. Now, consider Paul's understanding of his own responsibility to preach the gospel.
 - 2. God's people know the purpose of God's word, so have the responsibility of declaring it!
 - 3. Throughout history, those who were entrusted with the warnings of God's word had the responsibility of telling them to others.

II. THE PURPOSE OF GOD DECLARES THAT HIS PEOPLE ARE TO BE HIS WATCHMEN

- A. Ezek 33:1-9 says the prophet was like a watchman who warned the people!
 - 1. If he sounded the warning, and the people did not listen, then he was INNOCENT of their blood.
 - 2. If he failed to sound the warning, then he was guilty for the loss of those who perished.
- B. Preaching only a part of the purpose of God will have disastrous consequences.
 - 1. Some preachers are persuaded (for various reasons) to preach only part of the purpose of God.
 - 2. The RESULTS of such half-truths and corrupt preaching is that people will be LOST!
- C. Preaching a false counsel will also lead to disaster. Psa 1:1-2
 - 1. If we're blessed for not walking in the counsel of the wicked, then if we do we're cursed!
 - 2. Wrong advice leads to a wrong belief, & leads to wrong practice, that lead to wrong destiny.
 - 3. The N.T. warns against false teachers, for such influence leads down a path of ruin. 2 Jno 9-11.

IN SUMMARY:

- A. SO, WE MUST PREACH the whole purpose of God without addition or subtraction.
 - 1. Once again, let's consider an example of the Apostle Paul.
 - 2. The way of Paul's preaching, the same as Christ's, was to make known His DIVINE PURPOSE.
- B. Finally, let's observe the warning with application to the whole purpose of God. 2 Jno 9-11
 - 1. The writer states in Rev 22:18-19
 - 2. One final warning I want to mention is 2 Jno 9-11.
 - 3. The "SAVING POWER" of the gospel of Christ includes obeying the command to:
BELIEVE + REPENT + CONFESS + BE BAPTIZED + LIVE A FAITHFUL LIFE