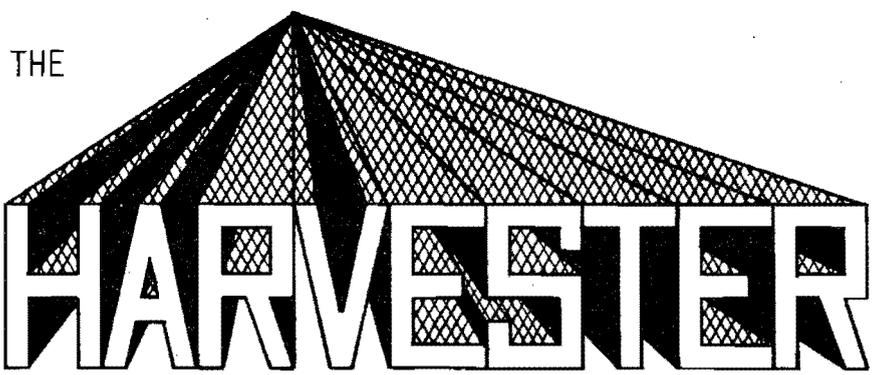


THE



HARVESTER

"Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." (Luke 10:2)

October 1990

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EXPOSING ERROR

The apostle Paul had some kind of courage. As he waited for his friends in Athens, he *"saw the city wholly given to idolatry"* (Acts 17:16-34). His spirit was stirred. Could he let the people continue their false worship or should he tell them the truth? Surely they would attack him if he spoke evil of their ways. Nevertheless, Paul was compelled to expose their fallacy. In the midst of those heathens he boldly pointed them toward the One True God as he gave his famous sermon on Mars' Hill. It took "guts" to do that. I wonder if I could have done the same.

It takes a great deal of courage to expose error like Paul did. To tell someone the truth

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instead of misleading him with a lie or to show someone the "error of his ways" is a difficult task, especially if that someone is bigger than us or they outnumber us. However, that did not stop a person like John the Baptist from declaring to the mighty Herod, "*It is not lawful for thee to have her*" (Matt. 14:4). Even if everyone else knew about it, John was willing to "expose the culprit". Though it cost John his life to say that, I really admire his conviction and courage.

We do no one any favors by overlooking error or by ignoring it. If we really want to help someone we love, we will show them ways in which they can improve. This may require a stern lecture from time to time but, like constructive criticism, it is intended to build up a person's character. As Solomon put it: "*It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools.*" (Eccl. 7:5) People who love you will not criticize you for the sake of putting you down. They just want to point out a flaw that may have gone unnoticed and to give you a chance to correct it. But the motive behind exposing error is to be 'constructive', not 'destructive'.

Unfortunately most people will not be pleased when their sins are exposed. In fact, usually they will hate you. But it was for this same reason that the world hated Jesus. "*The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.*" (John 7:7) Because He exposed its evil, Jesus was not very popular with the world.

Christ definitely was not a favorite among the religious leaders of the Jewish Temple. Did He not expose the sin of the moneychangers and say, "*It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den*

of thieves" (Matt. 21:13)? These officials were allowed to operate their con games right there in the house of God! They had corrupted the temple and all the people inside it. Perhaps this should be a warning to all in the Lord's house today. Are we letting certain men corrupt the church because we are ignoring their errors?

Sometimes we let false teachers occupy our pulpits because we are afraid to confront them with the Truth on a particular issue. Or sometimes we let crooked elders dominate the congregation because we are afraid to expose their sins. We would rather look the other way. Now I am not saying that these men must be "perfect" and sinless. But if we know of men whose lives and examples would not be a good influence on others or who hold onto false doctrines, they certainly should not be allowed to be a leader among God's people. Nor should we help them hide their sins.

Instead, we must point out their errors and help them to get back on the pathway to salvation. *"Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."* (Jas. 5:19-20) This applies to all members of the church and of course, should be done in a kind and loving manner. If the sin is of a private nature, then it is not necessary to expose it before the whole world. Resolve it in the quietest manner possible, remembering the principle set forth in Matthew 18:15-17.

Failure to expose spiritual errors will only make things worse (2 Tim. 3:13). Paul also pointed out that others will not fear God as they should if we overlook sin because then we

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have shown a lack of respect for God's law. *"Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear."* (1 Tim. 5:20) And if we do not expose error, other disciples are likely to be influenced to follow the pattern set forth by the trespasser. A perfect example of this is found in Galatians 2:11-14. Peter was guilty of acting hypocritical. Some of the other Jewish Christians followed Peter's example; even Barnabas was influenced wrongly. Since Peter was to blame, Paul had to point this out before all who were involved. Paul exposed error and so should we!

Therefore let us be like the watchman of Ezek. 33:2-9. If we warn the wicked, we will have delivered our soul. If we fail to warn him, his blood will be required at our hands. As Jesus and Paul exposed error in their days, we must do likewise. *"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."* (Eph. 5:11)

RAY McMANUS

NOT SO FUNNY!

Once upon a time a fellow got real mad at something that was done in the church. So he said, "I'll never go to church again -- I'll die and go to hell first!"

So he did.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES!

1. In Biblical times, how long was one isolated until it was certain whether or not he or she had leprosy?
2. How did Jesus tell the two disciples to identify the man who would lead them to the upper room?
3. How many souls were added to the number of believers after Peter's message at Pentecost?
4. After hearing that all his possessions and children were gone, Job fell to the ground and did what?
5. In the time of Samuel, what did the people want in order to be like other nations?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH ...

and remember last month's questions?

1. According to the book of Esther, what was the name of the queen who displeased King Ahasuerus? VASHTI (Esther 1:12)
2. When men gave false testimony about Jesus before the Sanhedrin, what answer did He give? NONE (Mark 14:61)
3. In the book of Revelation, after the fourth angel sounded his trumpet how much of the sun and moon and stars were smitten? ONE THIRD (Rev. 8:12)
4. What book was written to Christians in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia? FIRST PETER (1 Pet. 1:1)
5. Which two tribes jointly asked Joshua for more land because they were numerous? MANASSEH AND EPHRAIM (Josh. 17:16-18)

THE BLOOD OF CHRIST WILL ...

Wash away your past sins, in loving
forgetfulness. (Rom. 3:25)

Purge and cleanse your present, by adequate
circulation. (1 Jn. 1:7)

Redeem your soul, by precious purchase price.
(1 Pet. 1:18-19)

Sanctify your life by heavenly dedication.
(Eph. 5:26)

Feed your spirit, by gospel abundance.
(2 Cor. 4:15)

Protect you from contamination, by its
cleansing power. (Rev. 1:5)

Lead you finally home to heaven, by the blood
stained trail. (Heb. 10:20)

You Contact the Blood

Not in disobedience.
This is rebellion.

Not in denominationalism.
This is division.

Not in innovations.
This is digression.

Not in "faith only."
This is perversion.

Not in repentance only.
This is insufficient.

Not in baptism only.
This is hypocrisy.

Not in morals only.
This is human glory.

Not before hearing.

This would save the untaught.

Not before believing.

This would save infidels.

Not before repenting.

This would save the unreformed.

Not before confession.

This would save the unacknowledging,
creedless man.

Not before baptism.

This would save the uncrucified,
unburied, unresurrected man.

Instead, You Contact the Blood

In obedience, where we are made whole.

(Rom. 6:8)

In the body (church), where we are reconciled.

(Eph. 2:16)

In the truth, where we are made free. (Jn. 8:32)

In faith and works, which combine to save.

(Jas. 2:24)

In repentance, preceded by faith to induce it
and followed by obedience to prove it.

(Acts 2:38)

In baptism, preceded by crucifixion of sin,
followed by a life of righteousness.

(Rom. 6:4)

In morals, coupled with obedience to positive
divine law, which honors Christ's authority.

(Matt. 28:18-20)

In life, by walking in the light as He is in
the light. (1 Jn. 1:7)

--Copied--

GOSPEL MEETINGS

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Place & Time</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
Oct. 4-7	Marrowbone, KY	Wilbur Bass (Auburn, AL)
Oct. 4-7 (Th-Su)	Napolean Church Woodland, AL 7:00 evenings	V.W. Boland (Gadsden, AL)
Oct. 15-19	Lamar, CO	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
Oct. 19-21 (F-Su)	West Gadsden Church Gadsden, AL 7:00 pm	V.W. Boland (Gadsden, AL)
Nov. 2-4 (F-Su)	Brushy Creek Church Lucedale, MS 7:30 pm	Wilbur Bass (Auburn, AL)

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WHERE THE LORD IS

- The Lord is *before* His people --
Micah 2:13; John 10:4
- The Lord is *behind* His people --
Psalm 139:5
- The Lord is *above* His people --
Deuteronomy 33:12; Psalm 63:7; 91:1
- The Lord is *beneath* His people --
Deuteronomy 32:11;
Isaiah 40:11; 46:4
- The Lord is *around* His people --
Psalm 125:2; 139:3
- The Lord is *with* His people --
Numbers 23:21; Matthew 1:23; 28:20
- The Lord is in the *midst* of His people --
Isaiah 12:6; Zephaniah 3:17

--Selected--