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A Word About Worldliness

- by Glenn D. Black

Dr. Myron F. Boyd says, "Worldliness is in the realm of attitudes, desires, motives. These govern our outward appearance, etc." Dr. Leslie D. Wilcox once said, "Worldliness is seeking the approval of man rather than the approval of God." The direction of our "seeking" is directly governed by our "attitudes, desires, and motives." If we desire the worldly fashions, styles, and trinkets of the times, our spiritual reason eventually totters, judgment is distorted and modesty is abandoned.

What I'm saying is that unless our people really possess holiness of heart, purity of practice will not be evident. It is not enough just to lose interest in the world. We can do this and be nothing more than a grouch. It is the perfect love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit that cures from the love of the world.

Fighting the world in one's own strength is a losing battle. Running away from the world like monks is a vain effort to escape. We need the correcting, sanctifying presence of the mind of Christ within us.

- a) Worldliness destroys our capacity to have faith: "How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (John 5:44).
- b) Worldliness drains the love of God out of our heart:

"...If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2:15).

- c) Worldliness exposes the soul to the wrath of God:

"...that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God" (Luke 16:15).

d) Worldliness creates between us and God the possibility of being enemies: "...know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4).

Being in tune with God means that you are out of tune with the world.

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Syncretism: Religious Insanity

- by Kent R. Olney

Two relatively unnoticed incidents early last year reflect important shifts in religious life and raise significant questions about our understanding of faith. First, back in March, the Pew Research Center surveyed more than 2,000 Americans and discovered that an amazing 75 percent believe that many religions can lead to eternal life. Perhaps even more amazing, almost half (48 percent) of highly committed Evangelicals share this same belief. Apparently the majority of Americans today think one religion is as good as another.

Then this past May, on the season finale of *7th Heaven*, a TV program widely hailed for its Christian values, a conflict arose when the Camden family's eldest son wanted to convert to Judaism and marry a Jewish woman. When the son's father, a Protestant minister, initially balked at his son's decision, his own father asked, "Does it really make a difference if he's a Christian or a Jew?" The penetrating question led Rev. Camden to reconsider his position, and eventually he wholeheartedly supported his son's decision to leave the Christian faith and embrace Judaism. Near the end of the show, Rev. Camden asked his wife to forgive him for being so narrow-minded about Christianity, confessing that "religious insanity" had temporarily overcome him. The message was clear: anyone who dares think that one religion is superior to another is suffering from *religious insanity*.

What's going on here? How does one explain the kind of thinking that ignores religious distinctions or at least considers them trivial and insignificant?

The idea that conflicting or divergent religious views can be merged into one belief system is called *syncretism*. One of the prerequisites of syncretism is the willingness to compromise, as noted in the illustrations above. Such compromise is troublesome for the Christian who reads the bold words of Jesus: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6). Peter made a similarly bold statement when he said, "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Christianity makes exclusive claims about being the only way to heaven. Syncretism, on the other hand, is inclusive; it fuses diverse religious ideas together and leads to a smorgasbord of options. The result is that people are free to select elements from various religious systems to suit their personal needs. Religion thus becomes highly individualized.

Syncretism itself is not new. However, contemporary social influences have created a climate that currently promotes

both the fusion and confusion of religious teaching. At the turn of the 21st century, the postmodern emphasis on diversity (i.e., all variety is good and should be celebrated) and relativity (i.e., there is also variety in what we consider to be basic truth) has led us to embrace tolerance as one of our highest ideals. One might easily argue that tolerance has been elevated to the noblest of human characteristics. Conversely, to be labeled intolerant is the equivalent of being branded an uncivilized barbarian. This understanding – which is both unfortunate and unbiblical – has created a new wave of syncretistic religious expressions. In our desire to be tolerant of opinions and lifestyles different from our own, we have sadly pledged ourselves to nonjudgmental thinking regarding critical and eternal issues that do indeed require sound judgment.

What then should be the Christian response in an increasingly syncretistic religious environment? God's Word instructs us by pointing not to tolerance but to love. Many people try to act as if tolerance and love are synonymous, but they are not. Tolerance is lazy. It implies that your ideas and behaviors are not my business, so I will leave you alone and not worry about you. Love is active. It communicates that I will give careful thought to your ideas and behaviors because I value you. Tolerance is based on indifference. It says that I don't really care what you think or do; I'll still accept you. Love is based on compassion. It says that I do care what you think or do, and because I care, I am compelled to confront you with the truth when I see error.

Scripture commands us over and over again to demonstrate love, not tolerance. In fact, Jesus commended the church at Ephesus for *not* tolerating wicked men (Revelation 2:2). Later in that same chapter, Jesus reprimanded the church at Thyatira because its people tolerated a wicked woman who passed herself off as a prophetess (v. 20). Jesus, then, did not endorse tolerance toward any and all religious teachings or lifestyles. Syncretism was not an option; it was to be avoided.

Voices from today's culture keep telling us that we need to be more tolerant of diverse beliefs. I disagree. What we need is not more tolerance that leads to syncretism but more Christian love that leads to Jesus Christ.

Hollywood's Rev. Camden had it backward. Standing firm in one's Christian beliefs is not religious insanity; syncretistic religion is.

-taken from *Holiness Today*, October 2002.
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Carnal Evangelism

- by James A. Stewart

Frivolous Christianity

There is a real danger of preaching a “popular Jesus.” In order to reach the unsaved, we have falsely, even if sincerely, presented only one side of the Christian life: the joy of salvation.

“We dwell upon the attraction of Christianity, but rarely stop to think that it may have its repulsions which are vitally necessary to its purity and permanence. Its purity and its power depend, first of all, upon its unity. So that if perchance the Church shall attract men without at the same time transform them; if she shall attach them to her life – she has only weakened herself by her increase and diminished herself by her addition.”

Is it a hard and ungracious saying, then, to declare that the Church of God in the world may be able to repel as well as to attract? Nature is an austere teacher in this point. She has given to the rose its exquisite fragrance; but she has also armed it with thorns, so that while these delicious odors allure, these little sentinels stand guard with their drawn bayonets to defend the flower, which is endangered by its very beauty and sweetness.

No attraction can be too powerful, no charm can be too alluring, that acts for the single end of drawing believers to Christ, and identifying them with His Body. But the appeals which win men without transforming them, which win them to the Christ without bringing them into fellowship with Christ, are fatal to a pure Christianity, and in the end must put the very existence of the Church in jeopardy.

In our earnest anxiety to catch the worldlings, we have given the impression that the Gospel is almost a humorous, frivolous message. There is too much laughing in meetings and not enough weeping. In our eagerness to tell the world that Christ satisfies, we have gone to the extreme of presenting a popular Christianity. When we laugh and joke and act the clown at the beginning of a meeting, and at the close become serious and warn the unsaved of their impending doom, it is difficult for them to realize that we are sincere. We are not saved to have a jolly good time. We are saved to sacrifice, to suffer, and to serve. “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.” “Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath no where to lay his head.”

Crowds or Conviction?

What is revival? Are we having a genuine revival in America today? In one of the foremost evangelical magazines it was recently stated that “no longer do we need to pray for God to send revival to good old U.S.A. because God has already sent the revival: what we see today happening in America is nothing else but a mighty spiritual revival.”

I submit that it is to be feared the writer of those words mistakes crowds for revivals. He gave instance after instance of the thousands of people at so many revival services. But crowds have nothing to do with revivals. The mightiest work the Holy Spirit did through D.L. Moody in Great Britain was in

small groups. One may well be afraid of crowds. It is sadly possible to think more of numbers than of the Christ, who in the days of His earthly ministry went, not only to the cities but to inconspicuous places proclaiming the Word.

Dealing in Glamour

Part of the Hollywood “technique” employed in evangelism today has to do with methods of advertising. Gospel preachers who used to be more humble servants of God, exalting a great and mighty Lord Jesus, are now glamorized into celebrities. They are advertised as “colossal” and “famous,” and “terrific,” and “charming.” Preachers and singers are so glamorized that Christ is not the center of attraction.

When I was a boy, and that was not very long ago, evangelists were humble and modest. This is the way we advertised our meetings: “Dearly beloved friends in the neighborhood, we are starting a series of evangelistic services in our church. We have a wonderful Saviour to proclaim to you.” Then the leaflet went on to tell you about the glories and the beauties that are to be found in the Lord Jesus. Because Christ was everything to that church, the members wanted Him to become everything to the neighborhood. Then we added that Brother So-and-So from Such-and-Such a place would preach about this wonderful, majestic Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, it was Jesus who was the center of attraction; the One who was magnified.

Today all the advertising is centered around the preachers and the singers, and they are so glamorized that their own families would never know them. The obvious result is that people come to hear or see a preacher or a singer and not to hear or see the Saviour. They leave the meetings saying, “What a wonderful singer! What a wonderful man!” instead of “What a wonderful Saviour.” In preaching you cannot produce at the same time, the impression that you are clever and that Christ is wonderful.

Entertaining or Thundering

Furthermore, I believe that because the motive of these meetings is wrong, the atmosphere is wrong. Sometimes they are advertised as “bright Gospel meetings.” I hope that my meetings are never merely bright; full of joy? Yes, the joy of salvation, but never merely bright. Sometimes meetings are advertised as “entertaining and instructive.”

For my part, I absolutely refuse to entertain either older believers, who are often cold and carnal or young believers who have no depth and no desire to go on to the deep things of God. Above all I refuse to entertain sinners on their way to hell. I preach as Richard Baxter did, as a dying man to dying men and women. I want to preach every time as though it were my last chance. I do not want souls to curse my name in the lake of fire and say, “Yes, I went to such-and-such a Gospel meeting, but that preacher Stewart only entertained and joked.”

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It's Always Too Soon to Quit

-by Warren W. Wiersbe

As we minister to God's people, we rarely see all the good God is doing through us, and we're too close to our own ministry to evaluate it accurately. This is especially true when it comes to preaching.

Have you ever gone home after a service convinced that the sermon was a disaster? You had studied hard and prayed, and you felt sure the message was right; yet instead of soaring through the clouds like an eagle, you felt as though you were paddling through a swamp like a duck.

It Happens to Others

If it's any encouragement to you, others in ministry have felt the same way. It's even true of preachers some of us have admired from a distance.

Listen to Charles Spurgeon, "the Prince of Preachers": "It's a long time since I preached a sermon that I was satisfied with. I scarcely recollect ever having done so. You do not know, for you cannot hear my groanings when I go home, Sunday after Sunday, and wish I could learn to preach somehow or other" (*The Metropolitan Pulpit*, vol. 14, 176).

One of the contemporary church's best-loved expositors, John R. W. Stott, writes this in his excellent book *Between Two Worlds*: "And seldom if ever do I leave the pulpit without a sense of partial failure, a mood of penitence, a cry to God for forgiveness, and a resolve to look to Him for grace to do better in the future" (9).

History Speaks

As you read your Bible, you meet servants of God who felt as though they had failed in their work, and yet today we hold them up as models of dedicated ministry.

Moses had just begun his work of delivering Israel from Egypt when he cried out, "Why is it You have sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done evil to this people; neither have You delivered Your people at all" (Exodus 5:22-23). Later when Israel was in the wilderness, this same Moses said to God, "If You treat me like this, please kill me here and now" (Numbers 11:15). Discouraged enough to die.

One bleak day, the great general Joshua exclaimed, "Alas, Lord God, why have You brought this people over the Jordan at all – to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? Oh, that we had been content, and dwelt on the other side of the Jordan!" (Joshua 7:7). Discouraged enough to settle for less than God's best.

David, the man after God's own heart, said to himself,

"Now I shall perish someday by the hand of Saul" (1 Samuel 27:1), so he fled to the land of the Philistines. Discouraged enough to turn to the enemy for help.

The Shield of Faith

Discouragement is certainly one of the enemy's chief weapons, and we make it even more effective when we start to walk by sight instead of by faith. Like Elijah, we look around and conclude that we're the only faithful servant left in the land, so we flee our place of ministry and sulk in a cave of self-pity.

God never promised that ministry would be easy, but he did promise never to leave us or to forsake us; and he gave us the shield of faith to quench Satan's fiery darts of discouragement. At a time when his world had fallen apart and his men were about to stone him, "David strengthened himself in the Lord his God" (1 Sam. 30:6). "And this is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith" (1 John 5:4).

During the Boxer Rebellion of 1900, the China Inland Mission was suffering great losses, and every telegram brought the tragic news of Christians massacred, property confiscated, and the workers scattered. The founder, James Hudson Taylor, was in Switzerland and under orders to rest because of his ill health. His heart bled for his co-laborers in China. When things were at their worst, he said, "I cannot read; I cannot think; I cannot even pray; but I can trust." He used the shield of faith.

Try the Uplook

When the outlook is grim, try the uplook: "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith..." (Heb. 12:2). "But now we do not yet see all things put under him. But we see Jesus..." (Heb. 2:8-9). Discouraged enough to look away from ourselves and our circumstances and focus by faith on Christ.

And what do we see Him doing? Sympathizing with our weaknesses, interceding for our needs, hearing our prayers, equipping us for our service (Heb. 13:20-21), and giving us the grace and mercy we need to keep going when we feel like giving up.

A few months or years from now, we'll look back at this discouraging situation, see it from a different perspective, and understand better what the Lord had in mind. Meanwhile, let's trust the Father's will. He loves us too much to harm us, and he's too wise to make a mistake.

-taken from *Prokopé*, vol. 2, no. 3, July-September 1998

Another Gospel

-by Arthur W. Pink

Satan is not an initiator but an imitator. God has an only begotten Son – the Lord Jesus, and so has Satan – “the son of Perdition” (2 Thess. 2:3). There is a Holy Trinity, and there is likewise a Trinity of Evil (Rev. 20:10). Do we read of the “children of God,” so also we read of “the children of the wicked one” (Matt. 13:38). Does God *work* in the former both to will and to do of His good pleasure, then we are told that Satan is “the spirit that now *worketh* in the children of disobedience” (Eph. 2:2). Is there a “mystery of godliness” (1 Tim. 3:16), so also is there a “mystery of iniquity” (2 Thess. 2:7). Are we told that God by His angels “seals” His servants in their foreheads (Rev. 7:3), so also, we learn that Satan by his agents sets a mark on the foreheads of his devotees (Rev. 13:16). Are we told that “the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, *the deep things* of God” (1 Cor. 2:10), then Satan also provides his “deep things” (see Greek of Rev. 2:24). Did Christ perform miracles, so also can Satan (2 Thess. 2:9). Is Christ seated upon a throne, so is Satan (Rev. 2:13 – Gr.). Has Christ a Church, then Satan has his “synagogue” (Rev. 2:9). Is Christ the Light of the world, then so is Satan himself “transformed into an angel of light” (2 Cor. 11:14). Did Christ appoint “apostles,” then Satan has his apostles, too (2 Cor. 11:13). And this leads us to consider “The Gospel of Satan.”

Satan is the arch-counterfeiter. The Devil is now busy at work in the same field in which the Lord sowed the good seed. He is seeking to prevent the growth of the wheat by another plant, the tares, which closely resembles the wheat in appearance. In a word, by a process of *imitation* he is aiming to neutralize the Work of Christ. Therefore, as Christ has a Gospel, Satan has a gospel too; the latter being a clever counterfeit of the former. So closely does the gospel of Satan resemble that which it parodies, multitudes of the unsaved are deceived by it.

It is to this gospel of Satan the apostle refers when he says to the Galatians, “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto *another gospel*” which is not another, but there be some that trouble you, and would *pervert* the Gospel of Christ” (1:6,7). This false gospel was being heralded even in the days of the apostle, and a most awful curse was called down upon those who preached it. The apostle continues, “But though we, or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.” By the help of God we shall now endeavor to expound, or rather, expose this false gospel.

The gospel of Satan is not a system of revolutionary principles, nor yet a program of anarchy. It does not promote strife and war, but aims at peace and unity. It seeks not to set the mother against her daughter nor the father against his son, but fosters the fraternal spirit whereby the human race is regarded as one great “brotherhood.” It does not seek to drag down the natural man, but to improve and uplift him. It advocates education and cultivation and appeals to “the best that is within us.” It aims to make this world such a comfortable

and congenial habitat that Christ’s absence from it will not be felt and God will not be needed. It endeavors to occupy man so much with *this* world that he has no time or inclination to think of *the world to come*. It propagates the principles of self-sacrifice, charity and benevolence, and teaches us to live for the good of others, and to be kind to all. It appeals strongly to the carnal mind and is popular with the masses, because it ignores the solemn facts that by nature man is a fallen creature, alienated from the life of God, and dead in trespasses and sins, and that his only hope lies in being born again.

In contradistinction to the Gospel of Christ, the gospel of Satan teaches salvation by works. It inculcates justification before God on the ground of human merits. Its sacramental phrase is “Be good and do good”; but it fails to recognize that in the flesh there dwelleth *no good* thing. It announces salvation by character, which reverses the order of God’s Word – character by, as the fruit of, salvation. Its various ramifications and organizations are manifold. Temperance, Reform Movements, “Christian Socialist Leagues,” Ethical Culture Societies, “Peace Congresses” are all employed (perhaps unconsciously) in proclaiming this gospel of Satan – salvation by *works*. The pledge-card is substituted for Christ; social purity for individual regeneration, and politics and philosophy, for doctrine and godliness. The cultivation of the old man is considered more “practical” than the creation of a new man in Christ Jesus; whilst universal peace is looked for apart from the interposition and return of the Prince of Peace.

The *apostles of Satan* are not saloon-keepers and white-slave traffickers, but are for the most part ordained ministers. Thousands of those who occupy our modern pulpits are no longer engaged in presenting the fundamentals of the Christian Faith, but have turned aside from the Truth and have given heed unto fables. Instead of magnifying the enormity of sin and setting forth its eternal consequences, they minimize it by declaring that sin is merely ignorance or the absence of good. Instead of warning their hearers to “flee from the wrath to come” they make God a liar by declaring that He is too loving and merciful to send any of His own creatures to eternal torment. Instead of declaring that “without shedding of blood is *no remission*,” they merely hold up Christ as the great Exemplar and exhort their hearers to “follow in His steps.” Of them it must be said, “For they *being ignorant* of God’s righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God” (Rom. 10:3). Their message may sound very plausible and their aim appear very praiseworthy, yet we read of them – “for such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves [imitating] into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore, it is no great thing [not to be wondered at] if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works” (2 Cor. 11:13-15).

In addition to the fact that today hundreds of churches are

without a leader who faithfully declares the whole counsel of God and presents *His way* of salvation, we also have to face the additional fact that the majority of people in these churches are very unlikely to learn the Truth for themselves. The family altar, where a portion of God's Word was wont to be read daily is now, even in the homes of nominal Christians, largely a thing of the past. The Bible is not expounded in the pulpit and it is not read in the pew. The demands of this rushing age are so numerous, that the multitudes have little time and still less inclination to make preparation for the meeting with God. Hence the majority who are too indolent to search for themselves, are left at the mercy of those whom they pay to search for them; many of whom betray their trust by studying and expounding economic and social problems rather than the Oracles of God.

In Proverbs 14:12 we read, "There is a way *which seemeth right* unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death." This "way" which ends in "death" is the Devil's Delusion – the Gospel of Satan – a way of salvation by human attainment. It is a way which "seemeth right," that is to say, it is presented in such plausible language that it appeals to the natural man: it is set forth in such a subtle and attractive manner, that it commends itself to the intelligence of its hearers. By virtue of the fact that it appropriates to itself religious terminology, sometimes appeals to the Bible for its support (whenever this suits its purpose), holds up before men lofty ideals, and is proclaimed by those who have graduated from our theological institutions, countless multitudes are decoyed and deceived by it.

The success of an illegitimate coiner depends largely upon how closely the counterfeit resembles the genuine article. Heresy is not so much the total denial of the truth as a perversion of it. That is why half a lie is always more dangerous than a complete repudiation. Hence when the Father of Lies enters the pulpit it is not his custom to flatly deny the fundamental truths of Christianity, rather does he tacitly acknowledge them, and then proceed to give an erroneous interpretation and a false application. For example: he would not be so foolish as to boldly announce his disbelief in a personal God; he takes His existence for granted and then gives a false description of His character. He announces that God is the spiritual Father of all men, when the Scriptures plainly tell us that we are "the children of God *by faith in Christ Jesus*" (Gal. 3:26), and that "as many as received Him, *to them* gave He power to *become* the sons of God" (John 1:12). Further, he declares that God is far too merciful to ever send any member of the human race to Hell, when God Himself has said, "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the Lake of Fire" (Rev. 20:15). Again; Satan would not be so foolish as to ignore the central figure of human history – the Lord Jesus Christ; on the contrary, his gospel acknowledges Him to be the best man that ever lived. Attention is drawn to His deeds of compassion and works of mercy, the beauty of His character and the sublimity of His teaching. His life is eulogized, but *His vicarious Death* is ignored; the all-important *atonement* work of the cross is never mentioned, whilst His triumphant and bodily resurrection from the grave is regarded as one of the credulities of a superstitious age. It is a bloodless gospel, and presents a crossless Christ, who is received not as God manifest in the flesh, but merely as the Ideal Man.

In 2 Cor. 4:3,4 we have a scripture which sheds much light upon our present theme. There we are told, "if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world (Satan) hath *blinded the minds of them which believe not*, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God should shine unto them." He blinds the minds of unbelievers through hiding the light of the Gospel of Christ. And he does this by substituting his own gospel. Appropriately is he designated "The Devil and Satan *which deceiveth the whole world*" (Rev. 12:9). In merely appealing to "the best that is within man," and in simply exhorting him to "lead a nobler life" there is afforded a general platform upon which those of every shade of opinion can unite and proclaim this common message.

Again we quote Prov. 14:12 – "There is a way *which seemeth right unto men*, but the end thereof are the ways of death." It has been said with considerable truth that the way to Hell is paved with good intentions. There will be many in the Lake of Fire who commenced life with good intentions, honest resolutions and exalted ideals – those who were just in their dealings, fair in their transactions and charitable in all their ways; men who prided themselves in their integrity but who sought to justify themselves before God by their own righteousness; men who were moral, merciful and magnanimous, but who never saw themselves as guilty, lost, hell-deserving sinners *needing a Saviour*. Such is the way which "*seemeth right*." Such is the way that commends itself to the carnal mind and recommends itself to multitudes of deluded ones today. The Devil's Delusion is that we can be saved by our *own* works, and justified before God by our *own* deeds; whereas, God tells us in His Word – "By grace are ye saved through faith...*not of works* lest any man should boast." And again, "*Not* by works of righteousness *which we have done*, but according to His mercy He saved us."

A few years ago the writer became acquainted with one who was a lay preacher and an enthusiastic "Christian worker." For over seven years this friend had been engaged in public preaching and religious activities, but from certain expressions and phrases he used, the writer doubted whether his friend was a "born again" man. When we began to question him, it was found that he was very imperfectly acquainted with the Scriptures and had only the vaguest conception of Christ's Work for sinners. For a time we sought to present the way of salvation in a simple and impersonal manner and to encourage our friend to study the Word for himself, in the hope that if he were still unsaved God would be pleased to reveal the Saviour he needed. One night to our joy, the one who had been preaching the Gospel (?) for seven years, confessed that he had found Christ only the previous night. He acknowledged (to use his own words) that he had been presenting "the Christ ideal" but not the Christ of the Cross. The writer believes there are thousands like this preacher who, perhaps, have been brought up in Sunday School, taught about the birth, life, and teachings of Jesus Christ, who believe in the historicity of His person, who spasmodically endeavor to practice His precepts, and who think that *that* is all that is necessary for their salvation. Frequently, this class when they reach manhood go out into the world, encounter the attacks of atheists and infidels and are told that such a person as Jesus of Nazareth never lived. But the impressions of early days cannot be easily erased, and

they remain steadfast in their declaration that they “believe in Jesus Christ.” Yet, when their faith is examined, only too often it is found that though they believe many things *about* Jesus Christ they do *not* really believe *in* Him. They believe with the *head* that such a person lived (and, because they believe *this* imagine that therefore they are saved), but they have never thrown down the weapons of their warfare against Him, yielded themselves to Him, nor truly believed with their *heart* in Him. The bare acceptance of an orthodox doctrine about the person of Christ *without* the heart being won by Him and the life devoted to him, is another phase of that way “which seemeth right unto man” but the end thereof are “the ways of death.” A mere intellectual assent to the reality of Christ’s person, *and which goes no further*, is another phase of the way which “seemeth right unto a man” but of which the end thereof “are the ways of death,” or, in other words, is another aspect of the gospel of Satan.

And now, where do *you* stand? Are you in the way which “seemth right,” but which ends in death; or, are you in the Narrow Way which leadeth unto life? Have you truly *forsaken* the Broad Road which leadeth to death? Has the love of Christ created in your heart a hatred and horror of all that is *displeasing* to Him? Are you desirous that He should “reign over” you? (Luke 19:14). Are you relying wholly on *His* righteousness and blood for your acceptance with God?

Those who are trusting to an outward form of godliness, such as baptism or “confirmation;” those who are religious because it is considered a mark of responsibility; those who attend some Church or Chapel because it is the fashion to do so; and, those who unite with some Denomination because they suppose that such a step will enable them to *become* Christians, are in the way which “ends in death” – death spiritual and eternal. However pure our motives, however noble our intentions, however well-meaning our purposes, however sincere our endeavors, God will not accept us as His sons, until we accept His Son.

A yet more specious form of Satan’s gospel is to move preachers to present the atoning sacrifice of Christ and then tell their hearers that *all* God requires from them is to “believe” in His Son. Thereby thousands of *impenitent* souls are deluded into thinking they have been saved. But Christ said, “*Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish*” (Luke 13:3). To “repent” is to hate sin, to sorrow over, to turn from it. It is the result of the Spirit’s making the heart contrite before God. None except a *broken* heart can savingly believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Again; thousands are deceived into supposing that they have “accepted Christ” as their “personal Saviour,” who have not first received Him as their LORD. The Son of God did not come here to save His people *in* their sin, but “*from* their sins” (Matt 1:21). To be saved *from* sins, is to be saved from ignoring and despising the authority of God, it is to abandon the course of self-will and self-pleasing, it is to “forsake our way” (Isa. 55:7). It is to surrender to *God’s* authority, to yield to His dominion, to give ourselves over to be ruled *by Him*. The one who has never taken Christ’s “yoke” upon him, who is not truly and diligently seeking to *please* Him in *all* the details of his life, and yet supposes that he is “resting on the Finished Work of Christ” is deluded by the Devil.

In the seventh chapter of Matthew there are two scriptures

which give us approximate results of Christ’s Gospel and Satan’s counterfeit. First, in verses 13 and 14, “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and *many* there be which go in thereat. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and *few* there be that find it.” Second; in verses 22 and 23, “*Many* will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied (preached) in Thy name? And in Thy name have cast out demons, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, *I never knew you*; depart from Me, ye that work iniquity.” Yes, my reader, it is possible to work in the name of Christ, and even to *preach* in His name, and though the world knows us, and the Church knows us, yet to be *unknown* to the Lord! How necessary it is then to find out where we really are; to examine ourselves and see whether we be in the faith; to measure ourselves by the Word of God and see if we are being deceived by our subtle Enemy; to find out whether we are building our house upon the sand, or whether it is erected on the Rock which is Christ Jesus. May the Holy Spirit search our hearts, break our wills, slay our enmity against God, work in us a deep and true repentance, and direct our gaze to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.

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Continued from page 3

The old-fashioned method of evangelism was to make people weep, but the modern way is to make people laugh. “Everybody happy? Well, say ‘Amen.’” And so our hymns and choruses must have jazzy tunes or we cannot enjoy ourselves. We must have plenty of jokes or it would not be a good meeting. That is why there is such a woeful lack of conviction of sin in modern evangelism. The Spirit cannot work in a frivolous atmosphere. I believe that what we need is Finney’s method in plowing the soil of the human heart until it was broken up. Nowadays we soft-pedal the truth because we dislike to hurt people’s feelings and because we may lose the crowds. It is high time that some people’s feelings should be hurt. We call them butterflies today; John the Baptist in his day called them vipers: “A generation of vipers!” We must thunder forth God’s message.

Here is a solemn truth that very few of God’s people seem to see. Much depends upon the atmosphere of the meeting. If the atmosphere you are saved in is light, the preacher using fleshly efforts, the singing jazzy, rather than sacred, you are likely to be a Christian with no depth to your spiritual life. You will have no appetite and no real appreciation for the things of God. But if you were saved in an atmosphere of real conviction of sin; if the song leader was in earnest, and the preacher was a man of God who relied, not on worldly methods, but only on the Holy Spirit and the Word of God to produce results; if he had a burden for the lost souls while he preached in the demonstration and power of the Holy Spirit; then you were saved in that atmosphere and under that preaching and singing; you will be deep and real and sincere. You will have a strong desire for the deeper things of God.

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Utilizing Effective Punishment

- by J. Stanley Bauman

Effective punishment for the child is like the Lord's "chastening" for His children – unpleasant at the time, but, oh, such a blessing later!

Punishment is needed for willful misbehavior. It is effective when it clears the air and conforms the behavior. Sporadic punishment by angry parents leads to anger, fear, and insecurity in the child. Consistent punishment by wise and caring parents gives a child trust, respect, and security.

God's Word makes clear the need for punishment. "Withhold not correction from the child" (Proverbs 23:13). "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes" (Proverbs 13:24). If we do not effectively punish our children, we not only fail to help them as we should but also harm them.

When punishment is given because of a love for God and His Word, it will be much more effective. A proper love for God helps develop a relationship of love and understanding between parent and child, which then minimizes the need for punishment. A tap on the shoulder or a look in the eye sometimes is the only reminder a child needs.

All forms of punishment become more effective when children are taught a healthy "fear of the rod." Punishment must begin in the mother's arms. When a child is old enough to squirm or make himself stiff to show his displeasure, holding him firmly is a good way to begin to teach him to keep his feelings under control. When he shows clear signs of anger, it is time for some judicious spanking.

Before punishing, the parent should briefly make clear what the offense is. Long explanations are not usually necessary and may prolong the correction process.

To be effective, punishment should be prompt. Mother should not normally wait for Father to come home to "settle accounts" with the children.

Effective punishment should be brief. One father sent his child to his room, and then forgot he was there. The point of punishment is to teach a needed lesson, not to provoke the child to wrath.

Effective punishment is humane. The Biblical use of the rod produces pain, not lasting injury. Its pain produces

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healing, not hatred. Frightening a child by sending him to a dark room, shaming him by punishing in public, and shouting at him in anger are unacceptable.

After punishment, the child should no longer feel guilty. He should sense no resentment on the part of his parents. The sooner a normal atmosphere is restored, the better. As the child senses his parents' forgiveness and acceptance, he will be better prepared to choose right in the days to come.

-reprinted from the *Eastern Mennonite Testimony*

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