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A COMPILATION OF VARIOUS ITEMS
By Duane V. Maxey

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Digital Edition 01/26/2004
By Holiness Data Ministry

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The following potpourri of items and articles were written and collected mostly during the time we were living in Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona. Most of the items deal with serious subjects, but the final two, at least, I will classify, respectively, as humorous and trivial. I seldom mix into one collection disparate items such as those which are serious with those which are humorous and trivial, but in this case I made an exception. I hope that this variety and diversity does not strike the reader as too inappropriate, and I hope also that the reader will find the contents of this file to be both edifying and interesting.

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01 -- I KILLED HER WITH MY TONGUE!

Below, are two of the most moving pieces of writing that I have ever found on the wounding, killing power of the tongue:-- THE FIRST, is from hdm2325, a work in progress, being a book by E. P. Ellyson; THE SECOND, being the entire poem, of which Ellyson quotes only a part -- a poem by Will M. Carleton titled: "The First Settler's Story," the whole of which I found online.

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The Excerpt From E. P. Ellyson's Book

Oh, what mean things, what unkind, what unjust things men and women can say of and to each other. And many of these harsh, cutting things are said in haste, And is it not strange that most of these things are said to those whom we love best or who are our best friends and are trying to help us most? I sometimes think we are the most unkind to those who are our best and dearest friends, a father, a mother, a brother or sister, a teacher or classmate. Many are the heartaches, the deep heart wounds we have all made by our hasty, thoughtless speeches. And are not these speeches all unnecessary; all unChristlike? They do the speaker no good and only wound the one spoken to. They are only injurious to all concerned. Why not quit all this unkind speech, these harsh, cutting words? It is evident that we can do it if we will, for we do not say them when strangers are around. We say "thank you," "please" and "excuse me," to the visitor, and we can be just as kind and polite to our own folks if we will. And if we don't do it the day is coming when we will rue it. Some day when you are sent for to come home in a hurry and when you arrive and enter the house and find everything so quiet and the folks talking in a whisper, and they lead to the little bed room and pull the white sheet back and remove the wet cloth and your eyes fall on the pale face of mother, cold in death. Then will you remember all the unkind speeches, and were you able to do so, would give a world if you could recall them. When some day you see your father lying cold and stiff in a black box, and that awful sense of loneliness sweeps over you, and you realize he will no longer put his hand down in his pocket and bring out the silver dollar or five dollar bill and hand or send it to you, no longer will you have his care and counsel, then you will remember and regret. You are even now, as you think of what may be, thinking of some of those hasty words. Oh, let us quit them. Now is the time to be kind. Kindness to the memory of the dead cannot heal the wounds that were made in the heart of the living.

Do you remember that poem of Will Carleton's, "The First Settler's Story," in which he so forcibly illustrates this lesson we are now trying to impress upon you? It is the story of a young married couple who went to the far west when the country was new. They lived happily together, she caring for the cabin and he the clearing and tilling the land. But one night he came home very tired and a little late. When he went out to milk he found the cows had wandered away from their usual feeding ground. Then came the hasty word to his wife:

"You ought to've kept the animals in view;
And drove 'em in; you'd nothing else to do.
The heft of all our life on me must fall;

You just lie round, and let me do it all."

Yes, how very unkind, and at once he knew it and at once confessed it to himself.

"That speech -- it hadn't been gone a half minute,
Before I saw the cold black poison in it;
And I'd have given all I had, and more,
To've only safely got it back in door."

But he said nothing of his confession to his wife, though he thought several times he ought to do it. But he passed it by and made the wound still deeper. The next day the cows wandered away again a little after noon and the wife went in search of them. All afternoon she hunted but found them not. Late in the afternoon she came back to the cabin and leaving this note, went back to the search:

"The cows have strayed away again, I fear;
I watched them pretty close; don't scold me dear.
I've hunted for them all the afternoon,
I'll try once more -- I think I'll find them soon.

Dear, if a burden I have been to you,
And haven't helped you as I ought to do,
Let old-time memories my forgiveness plead;
I've tried to do my best -- I have, indeed."

When the man came home from his work early, and determined to ask forgiveness, he found his cabin empty. He read the note. A thunder storm was gathering. He rushed out search of his wife. The storm broke and still she had not come. All night long he hunted, returning occasionally to the cabin to find it deserted. But just as the morning broke and he approached the home he heard the cow bells ringing near the barn. He rushed into the house expecting to find his wife. And she was there, but listen:

"Yes, she had come -- and gone again, -- she lay
With her young life crushed and wrenched away.
Lay -- the heart ruins of our home among--
Not far from where I killed her with my tongue."

What an awful harvest is this for a hasty word. Yet the harvest is sure. Oh, how true is the conclusion of this poem:

"Boys flying kites haul in their white winged birds;
You can't do that way when you are flying words.
Careful with fire is good advice we know;
Careful with words is ten times doubly so.
Thoughts unexpressed may sometimes fall back dead;
But God himself can't kill them when they're said!"

Let us learn the lesson. If the, harsh, cutting, censorious thought insists on coming to our mind let us at least stop it just inside our lips.

* * *

The First Settler's Story
By Will Carleton

It ain't the funniest thing a man can do
Existing in a country when it's new;
Nature, who moved in first a good long while--
Has things already somewhat her own style,
And she don't want her woodland splendors battered,
Her rustic furniture broke up and scattered,
Her paintings, which long years ago were done
By that old splendid artist-king, the sun,

Torn down and dragged in civilization's gutter,
Or sold to purchase settlers' bread and butter.
She don't want things exposed from porch to closet,
And so she kind o' nags the man who does it.
She carries in her pockets bags of seeds,
As general agent of the thriftiest weeds;
She sends her blackbirds, in the early morn,
To superintend his fields of planted corn;

She gives him rain past any duck's desire--
Then maybe several weeks of quiet fire;
She sails mosquitoes leeches perched on wings--
To poison him with blood-devouring stings;
She loves her ague-muscle to display,
And shake him up -- say every other day;
With thoughtful, conscientious care she makes
Those travelin' poison-bottles, rattle-snakes;

She finds time, 'mongst her other family cares,
To keep in stock good wild-cats, wolves, and bears.
Well, when I first infested this retreat,
Things to my view looked frightful incomplete;
But I had come with heart-thrift in my song,
And brought my wife and plunder right along;
I hadn't a round trip ticket to go back,
And if I had there wasn't no railroad track;
And drivin' East was what I couldn't endure:
I hadn't started on a circular tour.

My girl-wife was as brave as she was, good,
And helped me every blessed way she could;
She seemed to take to every rough old tree,
As sing'lar as when first she took to me.
She kep' our little-log-house neat as wax,
And once I caught her fooling with my axe.
She learned a hundred masculine things to do:
She aimed a shot-gun pretty middlin' true,
Although in spite of my express desire,
She always shut her eyes before she'd fire.

She hadn't the muscle (though she had the heart)
In out-door work to take an active part;
Though in our firm of Duty and Endeavor
She wasn't no silent partner whatsoever.
When I was logging, burning, choppin' wood,
She'd linger round and help me all she could,
And keep me fresh-ambitious all the while,
And lifted tons just with her voice and smile.
With no desire my glory for to rob,
She used to stan' around and boss the job;
And when first-class success my hands befell,
Would proudly say, "We did that pretty well!"
She was delicious, both to hear and see--
That pretty wife-girl that kep' house for me.

Well, neighborhoods meant counties in those days;
The roads didn't have accommodating ways;
And maybe weeks would pass before she'd see
And much less talk with anyone but me.
The Indians sometimes showed their sun-baked faces,
But they didn't teem with conversational graces;
Some ideas from the birds and trees she stole,
But 'twasn't like talking with a human soul;
And finally I thought that I could trace
A half heart-hunger peering from her face.
Then she would drive it back and shut the door;
Of course that only made me see it more.

'Twas hard to see her give her life to mine,
Making a steady effort not to pine;
'Twas hard to hear that laugh bloom out each minute,
And recognize the seeds of sorrow in it.
Now misery makes a close observer mourn
Like hopeless grief with hopeful courage borne;

There's nothing sets the sympathies to paining
Like a complaining woman uncomplaining.
It always draws my breath out into sighs
To see a brave look in a woman's eyes.

Well, she went on, as plucky as could be,
Fighting the foe she thought I did not see,
And using her heart-horticultural powers
To turn that forest to a bed of flowers.
You cannot check an unadmitted sigh,
And so I had to soothe her on the sly,
And secretly to help her draw her load;
And soon it came to be an up-hill road.

Hard work bears hard upon the average pulse,
Even with satisfactory results;
But when effects are scarce, the heavy strain
Falls dead and solid on the heart and brain.
And when we're bothered, it will oft occur
We seek blame-timber; and I lit on her;
And looked at her with daily lessening favor,
For what I knew she couldn't help, to save her.
And Discord, when he once had called and seen us,
Came round quite often, and edged in between us.

One night, when I came home unusual late,
Too hungry and too tired to feel first-rate,
Her supper struck me wrong (though I'll allow
She hadn't much to strike with, any' how);
And when I went to milk the cows, and found
They'd wandered from their usual feeding ground,
And, maybe'd left a few long miles behind 'em,
Which I must copy, if I meant to find 'em,
Flash-quick the stay-chains of my temper broke,
And in a trice these hot words I had spoke:
"You ought to've kept the animals in view,
And drove 'em in; you'd nothing else to do.
The heft of all our life on me must fall;
You just lie round and let me do it all."

That speech -- it hadn't been gone a half a minute
Before I saw the cold black poison in it;
And I'd have given all I had, and more,
To've only safely got it back in-door.
I'm now what most folks "well-to-do" would call:
I feel today as if I'd give it all,

Provided I through fifty years might reach
And kill and bury that half-minute speech.

She handed back no words, as I could hear;
She didn't frown; she didn't shed a tear;
Half proud, half crushed, she stood and looked me o'er,
Like some one she had never seen before!
But such a sudden anguish-lit surprise
I never viewed before in human eyes.
(I've seen it oft enough since in a dream;
It sometimes wakes me like a midnight scream.)

Next morning, when, stone-faced, but heavy-hearted,
With dinner pail and sharpened axe I started
Away for my day's work -- she watched the door,
And followed me half way to it or more;
And I was just a-turning round at this,
And asking for my usual good-by kiss;
But on her lip I saw a proudish curve,
And in her eye a shadow of reserve;

And she had shown perhaps half un-awares
Some little independent breakfast airs;
And so the usual parting didn't occur,
Although her eyes invited me to her;
Or rather half invited me, for she
Didn't advertise to furnish kisses free;
You always had -- that is, I had -- to pay
Full market price, and go more'n half the way.

So, with a short "Good-bye," I shut the door,
And left her as I never had before.
But when at noon my lunch I came to eat,
Put up by her so delicately neat
Choicer, somewhat, than yesterday's had been,
And some fresh, sweet-eyed pansies she'd put in--
"Tender and pleasant thoughts," I knew they meant
It seemed as if her kiss with me she'd sent;
Then I became once more her humble lover,
And said, "Tonight I'll ask forgiveness of her."

I went home over-early on that eve,
Having contrived to make myself believe,
By various signs I kind o' knew and
guessed, A thunder-storm was coming from the west.
('Tis strange, when one sly reason fills the heart,

How many honest ones will take its part:
A dozen first-class reasons said 'twas right
That I should strike home early on that night.)

Half out of breath, the cabin door I swung,
With tender heart-words trembling on my tongue;
But all within looked desolate and bare:
My house had lost its soul, -- she was not there!
A penciled note was on the table spread,
And these are something like the words it said;
"The cows have strayed away again, I fear;
I watched them pretty close; don't scold me, dear.
And where they are, I think I nearly know:
I heard the bell not very long ago...
I've hunted for them all the afternoon;
I'll try once more -- I think I'll find them soon.
Dear, if a burden I have been to you,
And haven't helped you as I ought to do,
Let old-time memories my forgiveness plead;
I've tried to do my best I have indeed.
Darling, piece out with love the strength I lack,
And have kind words for me when I get back."

Scarce did I give this letter sight and tongue--
Some swift-blown rain-drops to the window clung,
And from the clouds a rough, deep growl proceeded:
My thunder-storm had come, now 'twasn't needed.
I rushed out-door. The air was stained with black:
Night had come early, on the storm-cloud's back:
And everything kept dimming to the sight,
Save when the clouds threw their electric light;
When for a flash, so clean-cut was the view,
I'd think I saw her knowing 'twas not true.
Through my small clearing dashed wide sheets of spray,
As if the ocean waves had lost their Way;
Scarcely a pause the thunder-battle made,
In the bold clamor of its cannonade.
And she, while I was sheltered, dry, and warm,
Was somewhere in the clutches of this storm!
She who, when storm-frights found her at her best,
Had always hid her white face on my breast!

My dog, who'd skirmished round me all the day,
Now crouched and whimpering, in a corner lay;
I dragged him by the collar to the wall
I pressed his quivering muzzle to a shaw!--

"Track her, old boy!" I shouted; and he whined,
Matched eyes with me, as if to read my mind,
Then with a yell went tearing through the wood,
I followed him, as faithful as I could.
No pleasure-trip was that through flood and flame;
We raced with death: we hunted noble game.
All night we dragged the woods without avail;
The ground got drenched -- we could not keep the trail.
Three times again my cabin home I found,
Half hoping she might be there, safe and sound;
But each time 'twas an unavailing care:
My house had lost its soul; she was not there!

When, climbing the wet trees, next morning-sun
Laughed at the ruin that the night had done,
Bleeding and drenched, by toil and sorrow bent,
Back to what used to be my home I went.
But as I neared our little clearing-ground
Listen! -- I heard the cow-bell's tinkling sound.
The cabin door was just a bit ajar;
It gleamed upon my glad eyes like a star.
"Brave heart," I said, "for such a fragile form!
She made them guide her homeward through the storm!"
Such pangs of joy I never felt before.
"You've come!" I shouted and rushed through the door.

Yes, she had come -- and gone again. She lay
With all her young life crushed and wrenched away--
Lay, the heart-ruins of our home among,
Not far from where I killed her with my tongue.
The rain-drops glittered 'mid her hair's long strands,
The forest thorns had torn her feet and hands,
And 'midst the tears -- brave tears -- that one could trace
Upon the pale but sweetly resolute face,
I once again the mournful words could read,
"I have tried to do my best I have, indeed."

And now I'm mostly done; my story's o'er;
Part of it never breathed the air before.
"Tisn't over-usual, it must be allowed,
To volunteer heart-history to a crowd,
And scatter 'mongst them confidential tears,
But you'll protect an old man with his years;
And wheresoe'er this story's voice can reach,
This is the sermon I would have it preach:

Boys flying kites haul in their white-winged birds:
You can't do that way when you're flying words.
"Careful with fire," is good advice we know:
"Careful with words," is ten times doubly so.
Thoughts unexpressed may sometimes fall back dead,
But God himself can't kill them when they're said!
You have my life-grief: do not think a minute
'Twas told to take up time. There's business in it.
It sheds advice: whoe'er will take and live it,
Is welcome to the pain it cost to give it.

-- Will M. Carleton

* * * * *

02 -- ALIENATION OF AFFECTION

Used To Be Against The Law -- Still IS A Sin

"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience" (Col. 3:5-6).

If I gathered correctly, from research just done on the Internet, forty (40) of our fifty (50) states in the USA have now abolished a law protecting the sanctity of marriage: -- the law against "Alienation of Affection" by an interloper who steals the affection of one's spouse, thereby endangering, if not destroying, the marriage. This is no surprise, given the extremely permissive attitude of today's society. However, such "Alienation of Affection" IS STILL A SIN IN THE SIGHT OF GOD!

In Proverbs 6:34, the Bible declares concerning the deep-seated affections in a marital union: "Jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance." He, or she, who tries to steal the affections of the spouse of another is "playing with fire"!

Many years ago, I recall hearing how a young holiness preacher was so overcome with jealousy when another man began toying with his wife's affections that he set aside his sanctified experience, laid in wait for the interloper, and quite thoroughly "beat him up"! -- whereupon, being stricken with remorse, he pled with God for forgiveness, also sought the interloper's forgiveness for giving him the beating, and eventually regained the witness of his entire sanctification.

"Jealousy IS [INDEED] the rage of a man" or of a woman -- and so strong are those feelings that the legitimate outrage against one who toys with the affections of his or her spouse must be guarded, lest carnal anger displace that holy and legitimate anger and cause one to go too far in expressing their displeasure.

1 Thessalonians 4:6 warns thus against any who would "alienate the affection" of a married person: "That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the

avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified." THE LORD will avenge the sin against you of "alienating the affection" of your spouse. As a sanctified person, you must not mete out vengeance, even though you MAY strongly express your displeasure and take decisive action to remove that threat.

I have known of some "Interlopers" who have not been quick-enough "Antelopers" to escape the vengeance of a jealous spouse. Years ago, one day I visited the Rhode Island State Penitentiary, while I was pastoring in North Kingstown, R.I. Upon inquiry, I found that a young man I had just encountered was there for double-murder: -- He caught his wife with another man in the act of adultery and then promptly shot them both! "Jealousy is the RAGE of a man!" -- and often this rage is thus expressed -- even when a "boy-friend-girl-friend" relationship is violated.

When I was pastoring in Coeur d' Alene, Idaho, a man suspected that his girl-friend was "two-timing" him. He took a gun, chased her out of a business establishment across from Arby's on Apple-Way, then shot her after she crawled beneath an automobile. Finally, the distraught man shot and killed himself before shocked onlookers.

Such things happen frequently: -- "One-Night-Stands" sometimes become "Last Stands" when a jealous spouse or a "significant other" is pent-up with rage at the "alienation of affection" by an interloper and decides to "end it all"! It may seem like a carefree way to live -- until it is YOU who are robbed of the affections you cherish -- or until YOU are facing the blazing barrel of a gun in the hand of a jealous lover. THERE IS A PRICE TO PAY FOR "FREE LOVE" -- and sometimes that price is death.

When researching this subject a bit online, I found that one highminded, judicial figure in a midwestern state said that "alienation of affection lies in" an "antiquated concept". But, there is nothing "antiquated" about a bullet rapidly penetrating your skull fired from a gun held in the hand of a man or woman against whom you have sinned by stealing the affection of the one they love! And, there is nothing "antiquated" in God's Law! That lawyer and/or judge who made the above statement will discover this at the Judgment -- if not sooner. "Alienation of Affection" IS STILL A SIN!

But let me enlarge a bit upon the subject and then make a spiritual application.

FIRST, THE ENLARGEMENT UPON THE SUBJECT:

While stealing the affections of a spouse is indeed a sin, "Alienation of Affection" does not always occur as the result of an interloper from outside of a union meddling where he or she should not. Sometimes "Alienation of Affection" occurs because one of the partners in a union so ill-treats the other that the affection of the one being abused is totally alienated.

A husband, or wife, can be so abusive to their partner that all conjugal love is destroyed! "Alienation of Affection" has occurred, but nobody outside the union caused it. Frankly, I suspect that in perhaps many cases when an abused partner has committed adultery, and an overbearing spouse has obtained a divorce on those grounds, IT WAS NOT ONLY THE ONE COMMITTING ADULTERY WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR DESTROYING THE MARRIAGE -- THE

ABUSIVE SPOUSE WHO CRUELLY MISTREATED HIS OR HER PARTNER MUST ALSO SHARE THE BLAME!

NOW, THE SPIRITUAL APPLICATION:

When folks dissolve an Ecclesiastical Union -- when they leave a church to which they have been long and lovingly attached -- IT IS NOT ALWAYS AN OUTSIDE INTERLOPER WHO HAS CAUSED THE "ALIENATION OF AFFECTION" -- SOMETIMES IT IS AN ABUSIVE PARTNER IN THAT UNION!!!!

Just as an abused wife may commit adultery and leave her tyrannical husband after he has totally destroyed all of the conjugal love she has for him, even so, some folks who have been "lorded over" by legalistic controllers in a denomination may commit sin and go out into the world. Nevertheless, THE ONES WHO BEHAVED LIKE "LORDS OVER GOD'S FLOCK" MUST SHARE THE BLAME FOR THEIR PLUNGE INTO SIN.

Don't say this is not so! You know it is!

To make another spiritual application:-- not every abused spouse commits adultery -- some just leave. In like manner, NOT EVERY VICTIM OF LEGALISTIC TYRANNY IN A DENOMINATION GOES OUT INTO SIN -- MANY SUCH, JUST LEAVE THAT DENOMINATION -- ALL LOVE FOR IT HAVING BEEN TOTALLY DESTROYED!!

Let me get explicit: -- JUST WITHIN THE LAST SEVERAL DAYS, a dear child of God revealed to me that AFTER A SECOND, BLISTERING, TONGUE-LASHING, -- ALL OF THE KINDRED TIES HAD BEEN SEVERED from the group being left behind. "Blest be the tie that binds" -- but that tie was then totally destroyed.

Do you know what I call that?: -- "ALIENATION OF AFFECTION" -- CAUSED BY HEARTLESS LEGALISM, SO FOREIGN TO PERFECT LOVE THAT IT BOGGLES THE MIND TO GRASP HOW ONE PROFESSING THAT GRACE COULD ADMINISTER SUCH AN HATEFUL, VERBAL BLISTERING! Such ecclesiastical "Alienation of Affection" -- caused by the tyrannical behavior and caustic tongue-lashings of church officers, is ALSO, STILL A SIN.

Hearken to me, Church Official: -- "PERFECT LOYALTY" TO YOUR DENOMINATION IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR "PERFECT LOVE!" -- and, just as abusive husbands and wives will have to answer to God for having driven their spouses to the point of separation after all conjugal love has been destroyed -- EVEN SO, ABUSIVE AND TYRANNICAL "LORDS OVER GOD'S FLOCK" WILL HAVE TO GIVE AN ACCOUNT AT THE JUDGMENT -- for whatever ill results from their heartless, unloving, and unChristlike words and actions toward those that leave their organization. SELAH!

* * * * *

03 -- BALL FOUR -- YOU'RE OUT!

Isaiah 8:20 -- "If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

The words of my title above come from a comical story involving an ignorant umpire of a baseball game. The bases were loaded, and the pitcher had just thrown "ball four" to the batter at the plate.

"BALL FOUR! YOU'RE OUT!" shouted the umpire.

"WHADAYA MEAN? BALL FOUR, I'M OUT!?" asked the shocked batter, "According to the rules of the game, I should be allowed to go to first base!"

"NO," replied the ignorant, but adamant umpire, "THE BASES ARE FULL; THERE AIN'T NO PLACE TO PUT YA... YOU'RE OUT!"

We can chuckle at the insistence of the "Blind Umpire" in this story. His reasoning ran contrary to the baseball rule book, of which he was apparently ignorant, but -- no matter -- he was running the game, and it was "Ball Four! You're Out!"

However, it is no laughing matter when spiritual umpires in a denomination insist on ruling folks "Out"! based on nothing more than their own word -- and not truly based upon God's Word -- nor even based upon the Manual of their organization.

The ignorant umpire in the comical story, of course, should have allowed the man on third to score, the runners on first and second to advance, and the batter to go to first. This would have progressed the game, fairly and properly. But, his unruly ruling in effect stopped the legitimate contest and turned it into a fraud, regardless of what followed -- every claim to legitimacy by the team on the field having been forfeited.

One might even correctly suspect that an umpire who made such a ruling was "siding in" with the team on the field, and his "Ball Four, You're Out!" call was intended to bring victory to the side he wanted to have win -- regardless of the rules!

Does this call anything to mind?

Does this sound anything like something that recently took place?

Does this sound like, "WE AREN'T GOING TO LET YOU WIN, EVEN IF WE MUST RE-INTERPRET OR CHANGE THE RULES TO DEFEAT YOU!?"

Does this sound like, "IF YOU DON'T AGREE WITH US, THERE'S NO PLACE TO PUT YOU -- AND YOU'RE OUT!?" -- instead of allowing things to continue, progress, and advance as they should?

Does this sound like an illegitimate ruling that actually nullifies all claims to victory? -- an unjustified call made by a spiritual umpire determined to see to it that the side he favored won the contest?

God's Rule Book says in Lamentations 3:36 -- "To subvert a man in his cause, the Lord approveth not." The NIV states this in words more easily understood today: "to deprive a man of justice-- would not the Lord see such things?"

It is both a shame and a sham when spiritual umpires make calls that are both contrary to God's Word and contrary to the Manual of their own denomination! -- in order to push through what they insist is the right thing.

TO THUS "DEPRIVE A MAN OF JUSTICE" -- OR GROUP OF MEN, NO MATTER HOW MUCH IN THE MINORITY -- "THE LORD APPROVETH NOT" -- and furthermore, the Lord DOES "see such things"! -- and He cannot, will not, bless those guilty of so doing.

To those passing unfair judgment upon him, Job sarcastically said in Job 12:2 -- "No doubt but ye are THE people, and wisdom shall die with you!" -- and again in Job 15:8 -- "Dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself?" (NIV = "Do you limit wisdom to yourself?")

Too often, too many spiritual leaders feel that they are "THE people" who must rule and run things, and they "limit to themselves" the wisdom so to do. Thus, when fudging the rules to push through their agenda, they think to themselves: "WELL, WE ARE RIGHT! -- SO THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH BENDING THE RULES A LITTLE TO ACHIEVE OUR PURPOSE!"

But, WAIT A MINUTE! Cheating is cheating -- no matter how justified some folks may see it to be -- and -- when the apostle Paul was accused of saying, "Let us do evil, that good may come," (Rom. 3:8) he declared that accusation to be a false and slanderous report! -- a philosophy he did not, would not, advocate or practice. Furthermore, he said that the "damnation is just" of those who excuse themselves in "doing evil that good may come."

There is no such thing as "Robinhood Righteousness":-- i. e., stealing from the wealthy to give to the poor. And, it is "never right to do wrong" in order to effect what one considers to be "the right outcome" of a contest -- whether that contest be a game of soft-ball at a church picnic or a ruling in a Church Convention.

It is a sad day in Spiritual Israel when those who are "playing by the rules" are ruled "OUT" -- no matter how much they are doing within the legitimate bounds of God's Word and their denominational Manual to advance God's Cause!

Have they sacrificed and labored for years to advance God's Cause in the denomination? Have they organized numbers of churches and seen numbers saved and sanctified under their ministry? Have they lovingly nourished and edified the body of Christ across a number of decades?

Apparently this matters little to some who are, in effect, saying: IF YOU DON'T TOTALLY AGREE WITH US, ITS "BALL FOUR, YOU'RE OUT!" WE HAVE NO PLACE TO PUT YOU -- PLAY BY OUR RULES AS WE MAKE THEM, INTERPRET THEM, OR FUDGE THEM, OR -- YOU'RE OUT!" Selah.

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04 -- AN EXCELLENT SPIRIT WAS IN HIM

"Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because AN EXCELLENT SPIRIT WAS IN HIM; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm" (Daniel 6:3).

* * *

When "An Excellent Spirit Was In" William McKinley

A good story is told of the magnanimous William McKinley which shows his kindness to a political enemy. During one of his congressional campaigns, Major McKinley was followed from place to place by a reporter for a paper of the opposite political persuasion. The young reporter is described as being one of those shrewd, persistent fellows who are always at work, quick to see an opportunity and skilled in making the most of it. While Mr. McKinley was annoyed by the misrepresentations to which he was almost daily subjected, he could not help admiring the skill and persistency with which he was assailed. His admiration too was not unmixed with compassion, for the reporter was ill, poorly clad, and had an annoying cough.

One night, McKinley took a closed carriage for a nearby town at which he was billed to speak. The weather was wretchedly raw and cold. He had not gone far when he heard that cough, and knew that the reporter was riding with the driver in the exposed seat. McKinley called to the driver to stop and he alighted. "Get down off that seat, young man," he said. The reporter obeyed, thinking that the time for the major's vengeance had come. "Here," said McKinley, taking off his overcoat, "you put on this overcoat and get into that carriage." "But, Major McKinley," said the reporter, "I guess you don't know who I am. I have been with you through the whole campaign, giving it to you every time you spoke, and I am going over tonight to cut you to pieces if I can." "I know," said McKinley, "but you put on this coat, and get inside and get warm, so you can do a good job." -- S. S. Lesson Illustrator

"If God so clothe[d William McKinley's enemy], shall he not much more [require those who profess holiness to] clothe [their enemies] in like manner? (Matthew 6:30).

The following is a little take-off on "God Bless America," and it expresses sentiments that would make a good prayer for all who love Christ.

* * *

God Bless My Enemies

God bless my enemies,
For them I love.
Stand beside them, and guide them
Thru the night with the Light from above.
From the mountains, to the prairies,
To the oceans, white with foam,
God bless my enemies,
Where're they roam,
God bless my enemies,
From Maine to Nome!

* * * * *

05 -- SOME GOOD ADVICE

Some advice that I heard in a song -- way back in my boyhood -- is still pretty good advice today, and it can be applied regarding a Christian's Faith and Attitude in life. The words of the song give it the character of something like an old spiritual, though it really wasn't. I won't quote the whole song -- just the message contained in the first four lines:

You've gotta ac-centu-ate the positive, eli-min-nate the negative,
Latch on to the affirmative, don't mess with Mister In-between.
You gotta spread joy up to the maximum, bring gloom down to the minimum.
Have faith or pandemonium's li'ble to walk upon the scene.

FWIW -- F-or W-hat I-ts W-orth -- Duane

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06 -- GO OUT, OLD SHIP! GO OUT!

"... I say to this man, Go, and he goeth ..." (Matt. 8:9)

Using similar figures to those employed in the previous article, "Why Adam Clarke's Father Missed the Boat," I shall continue in this very brief treatise to emphasize the importance of grasping the providential opportunity to escape from present hindrances by riding the God-sent, but ebbing, high tide out and away from the morass and impending fate of motionless "movements".

However, before embarking upon a further elucidation of the subject, I would repeat a portion from Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar" which was quoted by Dr. Adam Clarke concerning his father's failure to follow through on his voyage away from Ireland to the prospects of a brighter, better future in America:

There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;

Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.

At the close of one of Sam Jones' meetings in Augusta, Georgia, a venerable old pastor came forward and related the following story:

"My brethren, this scene tonight reminds me of the scene in my boyhood days. My father's home was on the beach, and every morning when I came out on the porch to wash my face and hands my eyes swept the beach. One morning, as I looked up and down the beach, I saw that the storm of the night before had driven ashore an old ship that had been unloaded and deserted. I picked up my little cap and ran down to the beach and stood beside the old ship, as it lay careened on one side, high and dry on the sand. I looked upon it with boyish sympathy, and said: 'Poor old ship, I wonder if you will ever go out to sea again?'

"I waited anxiously for the spring tide. As the waters came out farther and farther, and higher and higher on the old ship, I ran down to the shore. When I saw the old ship moving under the pressure of the waves, I threw up my little cap and said: 'Go out, old ship; go out, old ship; this is the high tide. You better go out with this tide, or you will fall to pieces on the shore.' But the spring tide receded and the old ship was left again, high and dry. I said: 'Poor old ship, you ought to have gone out with that tide.'

"I waited anxiously for the full tide to come in. I ran down to the shore to watch the ship. I saw the high, full tide come out around the old ship. I watched the water get higher and higher, until the ship began to move under its tide. I waved my little cap again and said: 'Please old ship, go out. This is the highest tide you will ever see. Go out, old ship, go out with this tide.' But the waters receded, and the old ship was left again on the sand.

"I arose one morning after a stormy night. I stepped out on the porch and, as my eyes swept the shore, I saw that the old ship had crumbled into ten thousand pieces the night before. I ran down to the shore, and looking at the wreck said: 'Poor old ship. I told you so. You ought to have gone out with that tide.'"

It IS a pity, when a "Movement" becomes "Motionless" -- when the cargo of its burden for souls has been unloaded, and when it becomes beached and stuck in the sands of such an impractical "Heavenly-Mindedness" that it is rendered "No Earthy Good" for the fulfillment of its intended purpose! When this takes place, it will not be long before such a denominational vessel is broken to pieces by the very high-tides of providential opportunity that God intended to be the means of lifting it out of its motionless morass and back out onto the high-seas of spiritual usefulness.

A fate that was, in part, somewhat similar to the one of the ship in the above story befell the vessel upon which St. Paul was sailing to Rome: "And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmoveable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves" (Acts 27:41).

Earlier, God had revealed to Paul that "there shall be no loss of any man's life among [those on board], but of the ship" (Acts 27:22). And, in fulfillment of that prophetic revelation, when the ship was broken in two, the passengers all made it safely to land, "some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship" (Acts 27:44).

Again I say, GOD IS MORE INTERESTED IN SAVING SOULS THAN HE IS IN SAVING CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS. And when, through a stubborn and unwise resistance to all change and adaptation, a denomination remains "unmoveable" and useless to the Divine purpose, God will not hesitate to let "the violence of the waves" of providence shatter it into pieces.

At the same time, however, God will preserve ALL ONBOARD whose hearts are right (though their heads may be very wrong), seeing to it that they escape spiritual death and make it into heaven -- clinging still to the fragments of that shattered organization.

BUT GOD WANTS A SAILING SHIP, NOT A SHATTERED SHIP! -- If the leaders of Church Organizations want their denominational vessel to survive, they must not allow it to become beached and bogged down in the sands of an overly-rigid strictness in an isolated and supposed "safe haven" -- to the point that it is, in fact, a "Motionless Movement"!

It is those Church Organizations that take the providential "tide in the affairs of men" -- those Churches "that go down to the sea in ships, [and] that [continue to] do business in great waters" (Psalms 107:23) which survive and thrive in the true work of Christ's Kingdom!

Denominational Vessels that should move, could move -- if they would move. The following lines are from a poem titled, "The Ship That Sails," by an unknown author:

I'd rather be the ship that sails,
And rides the billows wild and free,
Than to be the ship that always fails
To leave its port and go to sea.

I'd rather feel the sting of strife
Where gales are born and tempests roar
Than to settle down to useless life,
And rot in dry-dock on the shore.

I'd rather fight some mighty wave
With honor in supreme command,
And fill at last a well-earned grave
Than die in ease upon the sand.

I'd rather drive where sea storms blow,
And be the ship that always failed
To make the port where it would go
Than be the ship that never sailed.

* * * * *

07 -- HALTING TOO LONG BETWEEN TWO OPINIONS

"And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions?"
(1 Kings 18:21)

My pastorate in North Kingstown, Rhode Island was over. I was driving west out of New York City on a busy turnpike that Spring of 1972. It was a stretch of road with which I was unfamiliar. Suddenly, as I topped the brow of a rise, I spied a fork in the road dead ahead! I had very little time to decide:-- Which Way!?! Left? or Right? I had to decide within seconds.

Fortunately, I chose quickly and correctly by taking the right leg of the fork -- but -- I noticed something as I passed that fork:-- perhaps only several days before that time, SOMEONE HAD "HALTED TOO LONG BETWEEN TWO OPINIONS" when faced with that sudden decision. The "V" point of the guard-rails dividing the road to the left and to the right was smashed through, and a vehicle had plunged straight ahead, having turned neither left nor right -- the driver apparently having been frozen with indecision.

Many are aware of the sage wit of one who once said, "When you come to a fork in the road, TAKE IT." Yes, indeed, when you come to a fork in the road TAKE IT -- ONE WAY OR THE OTHER -- for if you don't it could be fatal -- or it could result in something much worse than making a temporary mistake.

Someone else has said, "He who hesitates is not only lost, but miles from the next exit." Most of us who have traveled Interstate Freeways much know how frustrating it can be to hesitate, miss your exit, and end up traveling long miles and minutes before being able to exit, and get onto the right road.

I recall a politically-oriented radio program called "Beyond The Belt-Way" -- the title indicating a forum featuring political opinions outside of, i. e., from "Beyond" the Interstate "Belt-Way" which encircles Washington D.C. Going back a bit further in my life to about 1969, I recall the time when (then) BMC Gen. Moderator, J. E. Cook and his wife were to visit the church I was pastoring in Elkins, West Virginia. They apologized for arriving as late as they did for the scheduled meeting. They had been in Washington D.C., and in attempting to proceed therefrom to Elkins they got onto that circular "Belt-Way" around our nation's capital, but kept missing the exit for the Freeway leading into West Virginia. I don't know how many times they circled that "Merry-Go-Round" before they got off at the right point, but I do recall that it had been to them a frustrating delay -- and an unnecessary loss of time and energy before they got "Beyond The Belt-Way" out of D.C., out of Virginia, and over into West Virginia for the meeting that night.

I relate the above, not to indicate any blame on the part of the J. E. Cooks on that occasion, but rather to illustrate how hesitation at crucial times -- i. e., failure to make a needed exit -- can both frustrate the purpose of God's workmen and bring about a needless hindrance, delay, and exhaustion in the furtherance of their efforts for Christ.

Conversely, there ARE times when hesitation IS in divine order -- times when one should remain undecided until he or she is absolutely certain which decision to make -- and perhaps most often, "when it doubt, DON'T" is the wise counsel and conclusion. However, there ARE other times WHEN QUICK DECISIONS ARE IMPERATIVE in order to move in the divinely appointed path -- times when BEING FROZEN WITH INDECISION CAN BE FATAL -- or at least frustrating to the advancement of God's will and work in one's life.

When I topped that rise out of NYC that Spring day in 1972 headed from Rhode Island to Portland, Oregon, I did not have the luxury of thinking things over for a while:-- I HAD TO DECIDE WITHIN SECONDS, or suffer the same fate as the one who had crashed through the guard-rail "V" of that fork in the road. Fortunately, I had either studied the map and road-signs in advance of that sudden decision well enough to make the snap-decision quickly and correctly, or my "gut feeling" to "go to the right" proved to be correct -- I am not sure which. Of one thing I am sure: -- I knew that even the wrong decision could probably be undone and would not be as bad as freezing behind the wheel and making no decision at all!

Likewise, there are moments in life when one does not have the luxury of months, weeks, days, hours, or even minutes to decide -- the crisis demands IMMEDIATE DECISION AND ACTION! -- or the opportunity is forever forfeited, or perhaps needlessly and hurtfully delayed.

THERE ARE TIMES WHEN ONE MUST ABANDON THE SHIP IMMEDIATELY! -- "The steamship Central America on a voyage from New York to San Francisco sprung a leak in mid-ocean. A vessel seeing her signal of distress bore down toward her. Perceiving the danger to be imminent, the captain of the rescue ship spoke to the Central America, asking: 'What is amiss?' 'We are in bad repair and going down; lie by till Morning' was the answer. 'Let me take your passengers on board now.' But as it was night, and the commander of the Central America did not want to send his passengers away lest some might be lost, and thinking that they could keep afloat awhile longer replied: 'Lie by till morning.'

"Once again, the captain of the rescue ship called: 'You had better let me take them now!' 'Lie by till morning,' was sounded back through the trumpet. About an hour and a half later, her lights were missed and, though no sound was heard, the Central America had gone down and all on board perished because it was thought they could be saved better at another time." -- Pulpit Treasury

PLEASE NOTE:-- Because it was feared that SOME MIGHT BE LOST by abandoning the sinking vessel at a difficult time (in the darkness) -- ALL WERE LOST BY STAYING ON BOARD TOO LONG! Selah.

PLEASE NOTE ALSO: -- GOD IS MORE INTERESTED IN SAVING SOULS THAN HE IS IN SAVING CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS!

In my opinion, great men of God like Beverly Carradine and Milton Lorenzo Haney, who opposed and preached against "Come-Out-IsM" from the Methodist Church made a sincere, but sad mistake! Like a proud Titanic, Methodism had struck the ice-berg of cold and frozen formalism

and its vitals had been pierced through with hatred for true holiness -- it was going down spiritually -- and -- contrary to the advice of Carradine, Haney, and a number of other genuinely sanctified men in the Methodist Church -- it WAS time for most, if not all, of those to abandon that vessel who intended to keep the experience and spread the message of Scriptural Holiness throughout this land and around the globe.

But Formalism is not the only threat to Church Organizations: -- by unwise leadership, a denomination can drift out of the warm latitudes of Divine Love into the frozen waters of an Antarctic Liberalism or in the opposite direction into the equally frozen climes of an Arctic Legalism. In the latter case, while all of its forms and standards are kept intact, it too becomes a frozen vessel, void of the love of God, "having a form of godliness" but without the melting, moving, soul-quickenning "power thereof". "From such" also, the saints of God must "turn away" (2 Tim. 3:5) -- or suffer spiritually a fate like that in the following story:

"Some years ago, the captain of a Greenland whaling vessel found himself at night surrounded by icebergs and 'lay-to' till the morning... As the morning dawned, he sighted a ship at no great distance. Getting into a boat with some of his men, he carefully picked his way through the lanes of open ice towards the mysterious looking craft. Coming alongside, he hailed the vessel with a loud 'Ship ahoy!' But there was no response. He looked through the porthole and saw a man, evidently the captain, sitting at a table as if writing in a log-book. He again hailed the vessel, but the figure moved not. It was dead and frozen!

"On examination, the sailors were found, some frozen among the hammocks, others in the cabin. From the last entry in the log-book, it appeared the vessel had been drifting the Arctic seas for thirteen years -- a floating sepulcher, manned by a frozen crew..." -- Christian Journal

The extreme, sub-zero temperatures at both poles of our globe are life-threatening. Making the spiritual application, a denominational vessel can freeze its members into lifeless forms either by drifting into the Antarctic pole of Liberal Worldliness at the lowest extreme of professed Christianity, or by drifting into the Arctic pole of Legal Phariseeism at the highest extreme thereof.

It is no time to "halt between two opinions" when one perceives that those steering his or her denominational vessel has already drifted too far in either direction! **IT IS TIME TO ABANDON SHIP!** -- while the opportunity to do so still remains.

Another reason why some folks ought to quickly abandon their present denominational vessel is -- **IF THEY REMAIN UNDECIDED AND DO NOT LEAVE, OTHERS WILL MAKE THEIR DECISIONS FOR THEM** -- (caps mine):

"President Ronald Reagan learned the need for decision-making early in his life. A kindly aunt had taken him to a cobbler to have a pair of shoes custom-made for him. The shoemaker asked, 'Do you want a round toe or a square toe?' Young Ronald hemmed and hawed, so the cobbler said, 'Come back in a day or two and tell me what you want.' A few days later the cobbler saw young Reagan on the street and asked what he had decided about the shoes. 'I haven't made up my mind,' Reagan answered. 'Very well,' said the cobbler. 'Your shoes will be ready tomorrow.' When Reagan got the shoes, one had a round toe and the other a square toe. Says Reagan, 'Looking

at those shoes every day taught me a lesson. IF YOU DON'T MAKE YOUR OWN DECISIONS, SOMEBODY ELSE MAKES THEM FOR YOU." -- A. P. Standerman

I fear that some folks are too content to let others make their decisions for them -- and I also think that there are some Local, District, and General Officers in denominations who are all too willing to make decisions for everyone else in their group! **LOOK OUT CHURCH MEMBERS AND OFFICERS!** If you fall into either category -- that of being habitually directed by others, or that of habitually making decisions for others -- **YOU ARE**, (in the first case) **ROBBING GOD'S SPIRIT OF HIS SOLE AUTHORITY TO LEAD YOU INDIVIDUALLY, OR** (in the second case) **ROBBING THE HOLY SPIRIT OF HIS SOLE AUTHORITY TO LEAD OTHERS.**

Spiritually speaking, one reason why so many Holiness Folks today are trying to walk around wearing the "square-toed" shoe of their own convictions on their right foot and the "round-toed" shoe of their denominational officers' demands on the left foot is:-- like the indecisive, hem-hawing, young Reagan, they have not learned the lesson that **THEY MUST MAKE THEIR OWN DECISIONS SPIRITUALLY -- AND THAT THIS IS ABSOLUTELY IMPERATIVE IN ORDER FOR GOD TO PRODUCE BALANCE AND CORRECTNESS IN THEIR SPIRITUAL WALK.**

Again making a spiritual application, while God may want one person to wear square-toed shoes and the other person to wear round-toed shoes, I am quite certain that God doesn't want his saints wearing one square-toed shoe and one round-toed shoe -- in the vain attempt to follow one's own convictions on the one hand (foot) while placating the demands of denominational leaders on the other hand (foot)!

God wants **BALANCE** in the saints' walk and work:

Amos 3:3 -- "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"

Deut. 22:10 -- "Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together."

It is high time that some folks stopped "halting between two opinions," dared to decide for themselves, courageously chose for themselves what God desires, laced up their own boots and walked out of their bondage to others into their God-ordained liberty as "the Lord's freeman" (1 Cor. 7:22)!

Part of the advice of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, in his poem "The Psalm of Life," fits right here -- (caps mine):

"In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of life,
BE NOT LIKE DUMB, DRIVEN CATTLE!
Be a hero in the strife!

"Trust no future, howe'er pleasant!

Let the dead past bury its dead!
ACT! ACT IN THE LIVING PRESENT,
Heart within, and God o'erhead!"

The words of the hymn-writer present a similar challenge:

"Dare to be a Daniel,
Dare to stand alone,
Dare to have a purpose firm,
Dare to make it known!"

As a young man a ruling was once made against me at a District Conference in the BMC because I honestly stated my belief on a certain thing. After that ruling, I asked (then) Sen. Gen. Moderator, Elbert Dodd (who had not been present at the meeting which resulted in that ruling): "You don't want me to be a parrot, do you?" Instead of reprimanding me and forever shutting me out of the BMC ministry, Bro. Dodd said little or nothing. Shortly thereafter, one of the District Leaders approached me with some good advice, and offered to place me on his district. To this day, I suspect that Gen. Mod. Elbert Dodd did me that favor through that District Leader. He was not only a great man of God; he was also a wise leader -- wiser, I think, than some denominational leaders today.

Everyone knows that the leadership of Evil Men must be shunned or abandoned. Fewer people realize that the leadership of Good Men also must not be allowed to take the place of the leadership of God's Spirit in one's life -- and that the leadership of Good, but mistaken, Men must be abandoned when it takes you, and others with you, too far toward the frigid extremes of Antarctic Liberalism or Arctic Legalism, or usurps the authority of the Holy Spirit in folks' lives.

Sometimes, there is A LAST CHANCE to leave a perilous situation:

"He was a young cragsman away in the North; and one day, when gathering sea birds eggs, he let himself down by a rope over the brow of a precipice to a ledge far below. As he stood on that ledge the rope slipped and there it swung far out above the abyss. It swung towards him again. Suddenly he realized that when the rope returned in his direction the first time it would then be nearer to his reach than it ever would be again -- and that would not be very near. What was to be done? Yonder slowly the rope came back. If he lost this chance, the next would be worse. He braced himself for the spring: he leaped and laid hold of the rope; and he nigh fainted on the ledge as he bound himself again firmly to the rope to be swung up."

Sometimes, there is THE LAST CHANCE TO EMBRACE A FLEETING OPPORTUNITY. Not all crucial opportunities involve a watershed decision affecting one's eternal destiny. Some of them involve one's usefulness in the Kingdom of God -- opportunities which if taken will brighten and broaden one's impact for Christ on earth, and which if missed will both dim and narrow that influence. To those who are even now "halting between two opinions" involving such, I close with the following story -- (caps mine):

"A man was sitting at twilight dreaming in his easy chair. He thought he saw the figure of a beautiful being glide into the room and approach him with outstretched hands. He gazed upon the angelic creature and was filled with delight at her graceful movements and the radiance that shone about her. He wondered greatly what was the meaning of this apparition, but made no motion himself until he saw the figure begin to draw back and gradually to fade from his sight. Then he came suddenly to the consciousness that he was about to lose entirely the presence of this bright being and, springing from his chair, he sought to detain her. But the form vanished, and when he called out to her to return a voice replied sadly, 'YOU SHOULD HAVE HELD ME WHILE I WAS THERE. MY NAME IS 'LOST OPPORTUNITY' -- I CAN NEVER COME AGAIN.'" -- S. S. Lesson Illustrator

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08 -- HEARTLESS HOLINESS

"...Ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad..." (Ezek. 13:22).

"Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?" (Matthew 18:33).

The term "HEARTLESS HOLINESS" is an oxymoron -- in fact, "heartlessness" and "holiness" are two polar opposites and cannot possibly exist in the same heart: -- one cannot be "heartless" -- ("Devoid of compassion or feeling; pitiless") -- and at the same time possess true "holiness" of heart and life.

Yet, we are living in a day when all too many professing "Perfect Love" are more quick to express their "Perfect Hatred" for that which they judge to be worldly or wrong in the lives of their brethren than they are to manifest Divine Love toward them.

Yes, there is such a thing as "Perfect Hatred":-- Psa. 139:22 -- "I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies."

Perfect Love and Perfect Hatred -- as God perfectly loves and as God perfectly hates -- are not antithetical -- not polar opposites. God's Perfect Love is FOR ALL MEN, without including one ounce of pity toward ANY SIN. God's Perfect Hatred is FOR ALL SIN, without including one ounce of animosity toward ANY MAN.

James 1:5 says that God "giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not" -- and according to Strong's Concordance the word for "upbraideth" here in the Greek is "oneidizo" -- to defame, i.e. rail at, chide, taunt:--cast in teeth, reproach, revile, upbraid." The God Who IS LOVE is not one who is quick to defame a man, not anxious to rail at him, not waiting for the chance to chide him, not rushing to reproach him, and not fast to fling accusations in his teeth.

I like the NIV translation of this portion of James 1:5 -- "... God, who gives generously to all without finding fault..." Unlike many who profess holiness, God is not an habitual fault-finder.

It is probably true that God is the only Being who can, without ever erring, always manifest absolutely Perfect Love, and no doubt He is likewise the only Being who can, without ever making a mistake, manifest absolutely Perfect Hatred.

Therefore, one who has a genuine experience of Perfect Love may sometimes err in being too tolerant toward that which is, in fact, wrong. And, likewise, one who is inwardly possessed of God's Holy and Perfect Hatred for sin may sometimes err in being too hostile toward those who do that which he (or she) believes to be worldly and evil.

God does not demand absolute perfection in the manifestation of His Perfect Love and in the expression of His Perfect Hatred. But, it is certain that when there is too much variation from these perfections He is not pleased.

Probably quite often in the Conservative Holiness Movement the caution is voiced against allowing Perfect Love to degenerate into a wishy-washy, over-tolerant charity toward that which is evil. Perhaps less often than it should be voiced is the caution against allowing Perfect Hatred to degenerate into an intolerant hostility toward all persons who violate what one personally believes to be wrong, or worldly.

Holiness preachers, and perhaps more often Holiness Leaders, can unconsciously begin to allow their Perfect Hatred for SIN to become directed toward MEN and WOMEN -- especially toward those with whom they do not see "eye to eye" on what is, or is not, acceptable in the sanctified life.

He who vehemently says, "I hate them with perfect hatred" had best be careful that his Perfect Hatred is NOT a degeneration into a hatred of MEN, instead of being only a hatred of the sin in men. One can just as easily slide from God's Perfect Hatred of sin into a callused hatred and heartlessness toward men as another might slide from God's Perfect Love into an over-tolerant charity toward all things.

When pastors, district, and general leaders of church organization rail upon those who disagree with them; when they rake men and women over the coals, denouncing them and reprimanding them with harsh and cutting remarks -- SOMETHING IS BADDDDD WRONG in the spirit they manifest. It is neither the manifestation of Perfect Love, nor of Perfect Hatred. IT IS THE MANIFESTATION OF WHAT WE MIGHT TERM -- (AS OXYMORONIC AS IT IS) -- "HEARTLESS HOLINESS"!

Through the prophet Ezekiel, God told some leaders in Israel: "...Ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad..."

Denominational Loyalty is no substitute for Divine Love!!!!!! -- and it is not an acceptable excuse in God's eyes for Church Leaders to rake folks over the coals in defense of their church organization!!! -- It is a flagrant violation of Divine Love TO MAKE PEOPLE SAD WITH HARSH REPRIMANDS, ACCUSATIONS, AND DENUNCIATIONS -- WHOM "GOD HAS NOT MADE SAD"!!!!!! Those who administer withering, blistering, verbal assaults upon God's

dear children -- those who thus sadden the hearts of those to whom God still bears witness that they are His -- will have to give an account for those tirades and tongue-lashings at the Judgment Bar of Christ.

Church Leader, Pastor -- who gave you the authority to dispense such grillings? I assure you, IT WAS NOT GOD! The fact that you think someone has made a wrong decision or the fact that someone has embarked upon a course with which you do not agree, DOES NOT AUTHORIZE YOU TO ABUSE THEM VERBALLY, SADDEN THEM GRIEVOUSLY, ACCUSE THEM UNMERCIFULLY, CONDEMN THEM ROUNDLY, AND CONSIGN THEM ETERNALLY TO THE PIT!

"Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as [Christ] had pity on thee?" (Matthew 18:33).

Shouldest thou not entreat him kindly, admonish him lovingly, and speak to him gently, even as you desire men to deal with you if they think you err!

I fear that too many preachers feel that their ascendance into an ecclesiastical position carries with it the license to lecture and lay down the law upon all who disagree with them. When promotion in the Church leads a man into the experience of "Heartless Holiness" he has fallen from the true grace of God -- no matter how high he has risen in the Church.

I spoke today on the phone with one who has filled a quite high office in a certain denomination. On one occasion, he was called to where I was pastoring. He expressed an opinion about a matter with which Dorothea and I strongly disagreed.

Do you know what happened? -- No, he didn't rake us over the coals, even though I doubt that we convinced him that we were right in the matter. Since that time he has manifested more Perfect Love toward us than ever before! I told him, in our conversation today, "THAT IMPRESSED ME!"

And, you know what? I think it impressed God as well -- as being sweetly and genuinely different from the "Heartless Holiness" of which I write. Would it not be a better Church today, and a better world if all who profess the experience of entire sanctification manifested such a spirit -- even Christ's Spirit -- toward those with whom they strongly disagree? You know it would.

* * * * *

09 -- INVENTORS OF EVIL THINGS

"..inventors of evil things.." (KJV Rom. 1:30)

"..they invent ways of doing evil.." (NIV Rom. 1:30)

There is a flip-side to my article, "New Year's Day 4002 B.C. -- Another New Invention" -- there ARE indeed "inventors of evil THINGS" in the year 2004 -- as there have been since St. Paul mentioned them in his epistle to the Roman Church. Some "THINGS" that have been invented, and that are yet being "invented" ARE EVIL.

But, before mentioning more about "evil THINGS" being "invented" in our world, please permit me to digress a bit. Except for a bit of editing here, I have long published the following in our HDM Digital Library. It is taken from my "Articles Of Faith," hdm0123:

* * *

Would You Believe?

Television was invented in Rigby, Idaho in 1922 by a 16 year old Mormon farm boy. (See "The Strange Birth Of Television" Reader's Digest, February, 1953) Yes, this modern menace to morality around the world was indeed, in part, invented by Philo Farnsworth in Idaho, an obscure state, and in Rigby, an even more obscure town. How coincidental then, that some 34 years later an obscure denomination [The Bible Missionary Church] was born in that same obscure state which strongly opposes the evil influence of said invention. There is much more history involved in the invention of T.V. A mechanical contraption known as the Nipkow disk which rather crudely transmitted images was invented in 1894, and extensive experiments with this device were conducted in 1912, but it was the invention of the "dissector tube" by Philo Farnsworth, along with other electronic devices invented by one Vladimir Zworykin, which helped bring to the world modern "electronic" television. "In 1922 radio was in its infancy, with fewer than 30 licensed broadcasting stations in the entire country. Yet that year a boy of 16 in a small Idaho high school explained to his teacher that he had worked out the details of electronic television." (R.D., Feb. 1953) In 1927 Farnsworth applied for the patent on his invention which was granted 3 years later.

* * *

In truth, it cannot be said that Farnsworth's invention, in and of itself, is evil. However, the fact is, most TV broadcasting is so thoroughly saturated with evil that, in my opinion, it presents a huge threat to the morality, decency, and spirituality of any Christian individual or family viewing the tube. Unlike computer use while jumping from one's own screen immediately to a Christian site and seeing no evil, most TV viewing is done from a chair away from the screen, and wicked pictures and sounds burst into view so rapidly that probably most TV viewers (even with remote controls) cannot or do not avoid that evil. But again, TV in and of itself is not evil. It COULD be used for good, but it IS being used mostly for worldly and wicked broadcasting and advertising. Computer, Internet use involves one sitting at the controls, with the means of shutting out evil totally during clicks that take him or her to a Christian site.

It is not my intent here to convince all of the vast difference between most TV viewing and Internet connection to Christian sites -- I will just say this in conclusion concerning such: -- those who are REALLY informed know that THERE IS A VAST DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO. For example, the power to shut out all evil when going to W. L. King's site, or to the HDM site on the Internet is total. One is exposed to the possibility of unexpected, uninvited, and

unwanted evil MORE OVER THE RADIO than in such site visiting on the Internet -- "But if any man be ignorant" of this fact, "let him be ignorant" (1 Cor. 14:38) and deny it if he will. I shall not argue the point with those who strongly differ with me. "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind" (Rom. 14:5).

In and of themselves, many inventions are not evil, and COULD BE used for good, but -- on the other hand -- MANY INVENTIONS ARE PURELY EVIL, IN AND OF THEMSELVES.

Will I name some of them? -- NO! Many contrivances today are so vile that the mere mention of them stains one's mind! They are inventions that have no purpose or use besides that of promoting that which is totally filthy, immoral, and such evil inventions are without any "redeeming" quality that could even remotely classify them as fit to use. Other evil inventions could be named without smutting one's mind, but I shall not even mention them. However, no informed adult with any real knowledge of right and wrong is so naive as to think that purely evil inventions do not exist in this world. They do exist, and they have been being invented ever since the Fall. Just before the flood, "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5).

"Inventors of evil things" had their birth, if not precisely in the persons of the Fallen Adam and Eve, at least no later than during the life of Cain, who "invented" a way to slay his own brother. Again, the NIV translation of part of Romans 1:30 is: "..they invent ways of doing evil.."

Since the Fall, then, men and women have been "inventors of evil THINGS" and "inventors of WAYS to do evil. Throughout the centuries, "men of corrupt minds" (1 Tim. 6:2 & 2 Tim. 3:8) have invented both WAYS and THINGS by which they can commit sins of every type and description. This cannot be truthfully denied, and should be known by all who hope to enter the pure and Holy City -- of which it is written in Rev. 21:27 -- "there shall in no wise enter into it any THING that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination..."

Furthermore, while St. Paul taught that Christians have been liberated from the Old Testament commandments to "touch not; taste not; handle not" (Col. 2:21) certain things forbidden under the Law, the fact is that THERE ARE SOME THINGS WHICH CHRISTIANS MUST NOT "TOUCH, TASTE, OR HANDLE" IN THIS WORLD: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (2 Cor. 6:17).

In the work of soul-winning, Christians should "have compassion, making a difference" between inventions that can, or cannot, be used for God's glory, while they are "with fear, pulling [men and women] out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (Jude 1:22-23). "Happy [and holy] is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth" (Rom. 14:22) in the work of spreading the Good News of the Gospel.

Do you agree?

* * * * *

10 -- WHY ADAM CLARKE'S FATHER MISSED THE BOAT

"Finding disciples, we tarried there seven days: who said to Paul.. that he should not go... [but] when we had accomplished those days, we departed and went our way; and they all brought us on our way... and when we had taken our leave one of another, we took ship; and they returned home again" (Acts 21:4-6)

* * *

INTRODUCTION

Since my youth, I have known and used the expression "missing the boat" as descriptive of one who fails to take advantage of a timely opportunity. In this little article I shall endeavor to relate and briefly expound upon the four following points involving a crucial time in the life of the father of Dr. Adam Clarke:

- A -- The Fact That John Clarke "Missed The Boat"
- B -- The Reason John Clarke "Missed The Boat"
- C -- The Results Of John Clarke "Missing The Boat"
- D -- More About The Poetic Quotation In Conclusion

* * *

A -- The Fact That John Clarke "Missed The Boat"

Yes, a short time before Adam Clarke's birth, his father, John Clarke, "missed the boat"! -- and the particulars surrounding that event are found both in Adam Clarke's autobiography (hdm0074) and in James Everett's biography of Dr. Clarke (hdm1603). The following quotations of Adam Clarke are taken from both sources:

"My father, who was born in 1736, being the eldest son, had a liberal education, and was designed for the church. He spent a considerable time both in Edinburgh and Glasgow Universities, and gained a prize in the former as the best Irish scholar. He returned thence, having proceeded M. A., and entered Trinity College, Dublin. While there, he married my mother before he had graduated.

"Shortly after Mr. John Clarke's marriage, a circumstance occurred which had an embarrassing effect upon himself and family during his life. About the year 1758 or 1759*, the rage of emigration to America was very prevalent in Ireland. Heavy taxation, oppressive landlords, and the small encouragement held out either to genius or industry, rendered Ireland, though perhaps on the whole one of the finest islands in the universe, no eligible place for men of talents of any kind, howsoever directed and applied, to hope for an adequate provision or decent independence for a rising family.

(*Because no record thereof was made or preserved, Adam Clarke was uncertain of the exact date of his birth, but deduced that it had to have been in the time frame of 1760--1762, and thus he was born not long after his father would have resettled in America.)

"America, thin in her population and extensive in her territory, held out promises of easily acquired property, immense gains by commerce, and lures of every description, to induce the ill provided for, and dissatisfied inhabitants of the mother country to carry their persons and property thither, that by their activity and industry they might enrich this rising and even then ambitious state. Mr. Clarke was persuaded among many others to indulge these golden hopes, with the expectation, if not the promise, of a Professorship in one of the nascent, or about to be erected universities in the new world. In an evil hour he broke up his establishment, sold his property, and with his wife and an infant son, went to the port and city of Londonderry, and took their passage in one of these merchant transport vessels then so numerous, bound for the United States."

But young John Clarke never took that voyage -- and Dr. Clarke relates the reason why his father never set sail for America:

* * *

B -- The Reason John Clarke "Missed The Boat"

"They [John Clarke, his wife, and young son -- Adam's older brother] were actually on board in the port of Londonderry, when my grandfather Clarke hearing of it, went after them, and only by the most earnest entreaties prevailed upon my father to return."

In a different account Adam Clarke relates more precisely HOW HIS FATHER CHANGED HIS MIND ABOUT SAILING FOR AMERICA:

"Mr. [John] Clarke's father arrived from the country, went on board, expostulated with his son, and by the influence of tears and entreaties, ENFORCED BY NO SMALL DEGREE OF PARENTAL TENDERNESS, and DULY TEMPERED WITH AUTHORITY, prevailed on him to change his purpose, to forfeit his passage, and to return with him to the county."

IT IS HARD TO "CUT THE SHORELINE" -- to sever close ties and set sail on a venture that is opposed by those whom we love -- to go contrary to the wishes of family and friends. And, IT IS SOMETIMES PARTICULARLY HARD TO THROW OFF THE IMPOSED AUTHORITY OF THOSE WHO THINK THAT WE SHOULD OBEY THEM!

John Clarke was an adult -- a married man with a young son -- yet his father, beyond the persuasions of love, convinced him to abandon the voyage (in part) by wielding an imposed AUTHORITY over him!

The imposition of an improper and out-dated parental authority over their grown children is often very hard for an adult son or daughter to throw off -- even when he or she is both old enough to do so and should do so! Why? Partly because there WAS a time when it WAS one's

duty to obey father and mother -- and failure to comply with their demands by a young adult can sometimes seem to be wrong, when in fact it is not only right, but BEST AND NECESSARY!

BUT MANY HAVE ALSO "MISSED THE BOAT" BY OBEYING THE IMPOSED DEMANDS OF OTHER AUTHORITARIAN FIGURES AS WELL, such as: -- controlling church officers who are "smotherers" instead of "motherers" of their flock -- controlling brothers or sisters, controlling employers -- controlling friends -- and all of their ilk.

In such matters, perhaps the only sight more sickening to behold than that of a MANIPULATOR controlling another is the sight of ONE WHO CONTINUALLY ALLOWS HIMSELF (OR HERSELF) TO BE MANIPULATED -- like a puppet -- by others -- one who is always "dancing to the tune and time" of those whom they fear to cross! It is one thing to show due respect. It is quite another to be a fearful, fawning, bootlicking, kow-towing, and sycophantic coward -- always afraid to transgress the wishes of those who "lord it over" you!

I would not put the father of Adam Clarke into such a category -- nor would I put all who have yielded to pressure from those "over them" in that class. However, we probably all have the most admiration for those who "stand on their own two feet" and who courageously decide for themselves without yielding to such pressure. And, often it is only by taking such decisive action contrary to the arguments and demands of those who would be "lords over God's flock" that one can break from them and follow their own individual biddings and leadings of Christ.

* * *

C -- The Results Of John Clarke "Missing The Boat"

Had John Clarke made the voyage, we can postulate that Adam Clarke would then have been born in America, but what the fall-out from this would have been for better or for worse would constitute even more conjecture. Adam Clarke himself was uncertain about whether his father made the right or wrong choice by not sailing to America, but most of what the learned Commentator writes concerning it seems to suggest that he thought his father may have made a mistake in aborting that voyage. About that which followed his father's yielding to that imposed "parental authority," Adam Clarke says:

"Whether this, on the whole, was the best thing that could be done in such circumstances, is hard to say. What would have been the result had he gone to America, we cannot tell... The immediate effects were however, nearly ruinous to the family and its prospects.

"The money into which he had converted his property was spent; and he was finally under the necessity of establishing a school, which was his lot to the end of his days... My father and mother both died happy in God... [but] ... He appeared often to miss his providential way, and his errors seemed to fix the fortunes of the family for ever!"

Then Adam Clarke quoted the poetic passage below and made a concluding application:

"There is a tide in the affairs of men

Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Neglected, -- all the voyage of our life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.'

"Never was a truer saying in reference to my poor father and his family; the 'shallows and miseries' were ineffable..." (meaning: "were indescribable").

In his Adam Clarke biography, following the above poetic quotation, James Everett comments thus about John Clarke's "missing the boat":

"The 'Shallows and Miseries' in which Mr. Clarke was bound, almost through life, proved that he omitted to take the tide at flood."

* * *

D -- More About The Poetic Quotation In Conclusion

The poetic quotation used by Adam Clarke relative to his father's "missing the boat" was taken from "Julius Caesar, Act IV, Part III" by William Shakespeare (British Poet, 1564--1616)-- and to facilitate some concluding observations on this subject, I shall present below a few more bits of that poem.

In Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar" Brutus questions Cassius about whether they should march their armies "to Philippi presently" and there attack the enemy, to which Cassius replies: "I do not think it good." Cassius thought it best NOT to take the offensive:

"'Tis better that the enemy seek us:
So shall he waste his means, weary his soldiers,
Doing himself offence; whilst we, lying still,
Are full of rest, defense, and nimbleness."

Brutus disagreed. He believed that if they waited for the enemy to attack THEM, it would give their adversary time to increase his forces, and their foe would then

"Come on refresh'd, new-added, and encouraged;
From which advantage shall we cut him off,
If at Philippi we do face him there..."

In continuing his argument that they should TAKE THE OFFENSIVE AND "PRESENTLY" ATTACK THE ENEMY AT PHILIPPI, Brutus went on to say:

"Our legions are brim-full, our cause is ripe:
The enemy increaseth every day;
We, at the height, are ready to decline.
There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;

Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
On such a full sea are we now afloat;
And we must take the current when it serves,
Or lose our ventures."

There ARE moments when ONE MUST RIDE THE HIGH, BUT EBBING TIDE OUT
AND AWAY FROM THE SHORES OF SOME PEOPLE AND THINGS AS THEY NOW ARE --
or forever remain "BOUND IN THE SHALLOWS AND IN MISERIES" for having failed so to do.

There ARE times when one "MUST TAKE THE CURRENT WHEN IT SERVES, OR
LOSE THE VENTURES" that would bring him or her out of bondage into the victory and
brightness of greater success for Christ in His ordained will and work -- even though taking that
current means severing dear ties and crossing the will of those who insist that you stay, and even
though those seeking to dissuade you predict that you will "go down at sea" unless you stay on their
shore and under their dominion.

Yes,

"There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries."

And,

"On such a full sea are [some, even] now afloat
And [they] must take the current when it serves,
Or lose [their God-ordained] ventures."

* * * * *

11 -- THE WOLF DIDN'T DO IT! -- IT WAS THE SHEPHERD!

"... the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep" (John 10:12).

"Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed
the flocks?... but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them, and they were scattered, because
there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered"
(Ezek 34:2, 4-5).

The following is a sad picture -- a little allegory with allegations relative to the cause of
what has happened all too frequently to God's Flock:

The owner of a large flock of sheep decides one day to visit his flock, consult with his
hired shepherd and see how they are all doing. He takes with him his only son, and as they top a

rise they spy the hireling shepherd who is forcefully using his staff to beat a sheep back in close to the rest of the flock. The owner's heart is sickened at the sight of such cruelty, as next he notices that there remain in the flock only a tiny fraction of the number of sheep he placed under this hireling's care.

With his son, the owner approaches the shepherd and immediately asks him, "Where are the rest of my sheep?!"

"They ran off!" replies the hireling, in a gruff and surly tone.

"Why did they run off," asks the owner of the sheep.

"Well," replies the hireling, "I did my best to drive them in the right direction. When some of them would stray a bit from the rest of the flock I would scold them, yell at them, and if they still didn't line up I forcefully struck them with my rod and staff, driving them back with the others. However, when I was not looking, those rascals ran off, and I noticed that some of the rest of the flock went with them!"

"What!" replies the owner, "you used force and cruelty to bludgeon my sheep into obeying you! How many times did you do this!"

"As often as I spied any sheep straying a bit from the main group, I did this," replies the hireling.

"And where have they all gone?" inquires the owner.

"WHO CARES!" replies the surly and censorious hireling, "SHEEP THAT WON'T STAY IN REAL CLOSE WITH THE MAIN BODY OF THE FLOCK ARE A BAD INFLUENCE, AND WE ARE BETTER OFF WITHOUT THEM!"

"BUT DON'T YOU REALIZE THAT YOU HAVE NOW MADE MANY OF THEM A PREY TO EVERY WOLF IN THESE HILLS?!" replies the owner of the sheep with great indignation.

"It's not MY fault!" replies the hireling, "IT SERVES THEM RIGHT! I did my utmost to keep them in line. They should have known IF THEY PULLED OUT THEY WOULD GO DOWN UNDER THE TEETH OF THE WOLVES! I didn't make them leave. They stole away of their own free will and by their own choice."

Having heard more than enough to convince him of the utter disqualification of this hard-hearted hireling to look after his flock, the owner immediately makes this "hireling" a "fire-ling" -- removes him from the position of overseeing his greatly diminished flock, leaves the flock under his son's care and escorts the fired hireling into the city, remonstrating him all along the way concerning his abuse of the flock, his dereliction of duty, and his guilt of awful crimes against both the sheep and himself, their owner.

However, the callused hireling continues to deny any wrong-doing, admitting no guilt to the owner, and showing no remorse -- until, having no other alternative, the aggrieved owner of the sheep "delivers the impenitent hireling to the judge, the judge delivers him to an officer, and the officer casts him into prison!" (Matthew 5:25). There he remains forever -- never having been willing, when he could, to humbly admit and confess his guilt in abusing the flock placed under his stewardship, and thereby robbing their owner of his precious possessions.

"But what became of the scattered sheep?" you ask.

I reply, "THAT REMAINS TO BE SEEN. The story has not yet been completed."

Knowing that there are predatory wolves in the area, when the owner of a flock of sheep sees little bands of his sheep scattered widely, and the bloodied remains of others strewn here and there on the grazing range, the first thought that might jump into his mind is: **A WOLF DID ALL OF THIS! A WOLF HAS BOTH SCATTERED THEM AND THEN KILLED AND EATEN SOME OF THEM!**

We can imagine, then, how angry the owner of the sheep would be, if he discovered that **IT WAS THE MAN HE HAD HIRED TO SHEPHERD AND PROTECT HIS SHEEP WHO WAS PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR SCATTERING AND DESTRUCTION!**

Yes, it was the wolf who killed and ate some of the flock, but it was the shepherd who scattered them and made them a prey to the predator.

Who can doubt that if the scenario of my little allegory actually took place today, action would be taken to make the guilty shepherd pay for his crimes?

Even more so, who can doubt that, at the Judgment, God will NOT hold spiritual shepherds guiltless who have battered, shattered, and scattered His flock -- making them an easier prey for the devil -- instead of loving them, leading them, feeding them, and laying down their lives in their defense?

Twice in the New Testament, we find recorded these words of Christ: **"HE THAT GATHERETH NOT WITH ME SCATTERETH"** (Matt. 12:30; Lu. 11:23).

The first portion of Proverbs 11:24 tells us: "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth," but this truth relates to the generosity of giving, not to the atrocity of scattering God's Flock!

Some may imagine that their callused scattering of God's people by their attempts to beat them into line is "increasing" their heavenly reward for having held high and holy standards, when, in fact, their conduct is resulting in quite the opposite.

The remainder of Proverbs 11:24 can also have a bearing on this subject. It says: "and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty."

That pastor or overseer of God's Flock who withholds from them Divine Compassion and Love in the execution of a Demanded Compulsion and Law, withholds from them "more than is meet," and inevitably such behavior "tendeth to poverty" in the spiritual possessions of such an overseer, both in this world, and in the world to come. This is, and should be, a sobering thought.

He Who says in Proverbs 23:13, "Withhold not correction," is the same Who says in Romans 13:7-8, "Render therefore to all their dues... Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law." When Correction is meted out, Love must not be withheld -- or more is withheld than is meet!

When a wise overseer of God's Flock has meted out correction and direction that is saturated in the sweetness of Divine Love, so that his people feel the compulsions of that Love and are inspired both toward spiritual purity and brotherly unity -- THE WOLF DIDN'T DO IT -- IT WAS THE SHEPHERD! Such an one who has lovingly emulated the Spirit and conduct of The Good Shepherd, in so doing has "scattered the power" of the devil and at the same time has "increased" both God's Flock, and his own reward in heaven.

* * * * *

12 -- DOING EVIL THAT GOOD MAY COME

In Romans 3:8, St. Paul was being slandered by those who said, that HE said, "Let us do evil, that good may come." But there is no such thing as "Robinhood Righteousness" -- no such thing as a legitimate doing of the evil of robbery to facilitate the good of giving to the poor -- and no such thing as God-approved acts of wrong to promote good results. THE END NEVER JUSTIFIES THE MEANS, in God's sight.

I challenge you to read the following and to get your gray-matter to cogitating. Then, if you wish, send me your feedback on the subject.

* * *

IN THE POLITICAL REALM -- Let me mention just two areas where I feel that our President, in my view, is "doing evil that good may come":

(a) THE EVIL OF CALLING ISLAM A PEACE-LOVING RELIGION: -- The history and teachings of Islam are replete with evidence that it is NOT, by any stretch of the imagination, a peace-loving religion. Christ set the New Testament standard for Christian behavior when He commanded Peter in Matthew 26:52: -- "Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." Contrary to this, the teachings of the false-prophet, Mohammed, advocate the slaying of those who oppose and will not convert to Islam.

In his heart of hearts, I believe that President Bush KNOWS this -- he KNOWS that Islam is both a false and a war-like religion -- all claims of Islamic imams to the contrary notwithstanding.

Why? then, does President Bush repeatedly state in public that Islam is a peace-loving religion -- placing it on the same plane with Christianity, and practically endorsing it as just as true and beneficial as the teachings of Christ? I assure you, it is NOT because he believes what he is saying! It is, rather, because he thinks that the doing of the evil of making such totally false statements will bring about the good of convincing the Arab world that the US is not out to get them because of their religion, and it is, rather, because by making such false statements he hopes to prevent retaliation against, and persecution of, Muslims in our land.

In this case, I would say: -- The END is good, but the MEANS are evil -- and GOD DOES NOT APPROVE OF THOSE MEANS.

(b) THE EVIL OF LEGALIZING MILLIONS OF LAW-BREAKING, ILLEGAL ALIENS WHO HAVE BEEN, AND STILL ARE, FLOODING ACROSS OUR SOUTHERN BORDERS -- an evil that I think President Bush probably justifies with reasoning such as the following: -- It is better that I be reelected President than that some ultra-liberal Democrat be elected. Thus, while I know that the opening up of our southern borders to millions of illegals is wrong, and while I know that this endangers our national security and places a huge drag on US taxpayers, IF I DON'T PANDER TO THESE ILLEGALS IN ORDER TO GET THE HISPANIC VOTE, A DEMOCRAT WILL BE ELECTED AND THE FLOOD OF ILLEGALS WILL BE EVEN WORSE THAN IT WOULD BE UNDER MY ADMINISTRATION.

This, my friends, is nothing more than an attempt to "do evil that good may come."

One might recite thousands (if not millions) of other instances in which politicians have justified the means they use as what they consider the only means of bringing about that which they brand as good. Many times "the good" itself that they seek to promote is actually evil -- such as "the good" of gaining political office and power for themselves for very selfish reasons, or "the good" of pandering to lazy dead-beats who feel the government owes them a living.

In the case of President Bush, I would credit him with the desire to bring about an actual good by doing the two evils stated above. However, wrong is wrong, even if done in the vain effort to promote some good.

* * *

IN THE SPIRITUAL REALM -- God is the moral Governor of this Universe, and He has ordained that evil never can, in the end, result in good for those who do it. No matter how delusively the opposite of this fact may persuade a person, doing wrong NEVER finally results in promoting good. It is true that sometimes the immediate result of "doing evil that good may come" seems to be successful, but in the end -- in the final analysis -- DOING EVIL NEVER RESULTS IN GOOD.

Do I hear someone ask: -- "Well, what about the crucifixion of Christ? Was not that the Ultimate doing of evil, and did it not result in the Ultimate Good?"

Sounds pretty convincing doesn't it? However, the argument does not hold true.

First of all: -- God did not do the evil of slaying His Son, nor did he inspire any man or devil to commit this evil of all evils.

God foresaw that it would occur, and for His All-wise purpose He allowed it to occur, but He did not inspire men nor devils to commit this act -- for if He had, the God who can do no sin would have been guilty of "doing evil that good may come" -- and He did no such thing!

NO GOOD shall come to Satan for having been the primary doer of this evil, and no good ever came to any human being responsible for Christ's crucifixion -- although, in this one, unique instance, the good of pardon was made available to all men as a result of the evil done at Calvary.

Still, I maintain, that even including the case of Calvary, God Himself never has done evil that good may come, nor has he ever justified others for doing such.

The treachery and murder being perpetrated by Islamic terrorists who are trying to put Mohammed's teachings into action are wrong, and shall result in nothing but evil consequences both now and in eternity.

On a lesser scale within the professed Church, merciless ecclesiastics who insist that all in their organization bow to their demands or suffer ostracism and excommunication may justify their harsh deeds as the legitimate means of maintaining purity in the Church, but they do greatly err in such beliefs and practices.

There are some rather striking similarities between the dress standards and the separation-from-the-world standards of Islamic terrorists and those of the Conservative Holiness movement. Unfortunately, I fear, there are some similarities as well in the spirit by which those moral codes are enforced. Too often, it is a merciless spirit much like that of pre-Pentecostal James and John who wished fire to be called down from heaven upon the Samaritans.

I recall a humorous story about why one man would not go up in an airplane: -- He wanted to keep his feet planted on solid "terra firma" -- and the more "firma" the ground upon which he stood, the less "terra" he felt!

I would make this application: -- The "more firmer" one is standing upon the Rock of Ages, the "less terror" he will feel when assaulted by his foes, and -- the "more firmer" one is planted upon the Solid Rock, the "less terror" he will use to threaten others to bow to his demands! In fact, those truly and firmly planted on Christ will never employ evil means of any sort in the vain effort to bring about the good of the Church. Selah.

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13 -- NEW YEAR'S DAY 4002 B.C. -- ANOTHER EVIL INVENTION!

To begin this little article -- written on New Year's Day 2004, let's reverse the "2" and the "4" in the date and turn the clock backwards 5,998 years. Please bear with me, if you will, in this

little, imaginary scenario, written as having been authored by someone on New Year's Day, 4002 B.C. Please do not take the remarks as actual, factual, or historic. In fact, the scenario is written in a somewhat "tongue-in-cheek" manner, but please DO read between the lines to catch my serious thoughts in writing it.

* * *

Well, here are, January 1, 4002 B.C. -- another year has come. It has now been 4,002 years since the earth was formed -- and here we go again. Some wise-guy has trotted out a new invention -- something that he is calling a "wheel" of all things!

They tell me this invention is circular in shape, and the first thing you know, if we are not extremely careful, someone will get the crazy notion that the earth itself is round! -- and everyone with any good sense can see that it is flat, except for the mountains and valleys.

I predict that no good will come of this wicked invention, and I think we should gather a counsel together and make a rule out-lawing the use of this threatening novelty as a potential curse on all mankind!

For some years now, I have been convinced that the root-source of human woe is these new inventions they keep trotting out:-- the discovery of flint-rocks to start fires has made our young men lazy since they no longer have to work hard spinning the point of a stick into a wooden surface to start a fire! What is more, the invention of these flint-rocks gave somebody else the idea of using a sharp point that was broken off of one of them as the point on the end of his arrow.

It was bad enough that the bow and arrow had already been invented -- now this young punk invented flint-stone arrow-heads -- and just look at the evils that have resulted since these horrendous inventions hit the scene! -- men can now kill huge, wild game from great distances with deadly accuracy, carry that prey home, strike a flint, light a fire, and have a delicious, home-cooked meal within just a short amount of time! And all of this is contributing to the laziness of both our men and women! Furthermore, since the invention of flint-rock fire-ignition and flint-rock arrow heads there is more and more killing among men on earth -- all caused by these evil inventions!

After the invention of the flint-rock arrow-head, it wasn't long until some smart-aleck created a sharp, flint-stone ax-head, enabling him to cut down trees up to ten inches in diameter in less than a day! This, in turn, contributed to the indolence and injury of all mankind -- no longer was it necessary to build homes out of mud and clay bricks or out of stone -- wooden structures were built more rapidly and with less labor, giving lazy folks more time to lounge in their homes -- but, the curse of it all soon befell them! -- these new-fangled, wooden homes became fire-traps! -- when their indolent occupants are not very careful they catch fire from the cooking and heating fires and burn down, destroying both the structures and their dwellers!

I could list even more of these wicked inventions, but before I close I would like to predict a few more evils that are bound to come from the invention of the "wheel":

(1) Beyond getting the insane notion that the earth is round, some folks will begin to think that the earth also turns on an axle, like the "wheel" -- something that is totally insane, because if the earth turned like a wheel it would soon roll away from the sun and we would all perish in the cold!

(2) Then again, beyond believing that the earth is round, some folks might get the crazy idea that the earth is rolling in circles around the sun, when everyone knows that the sun makes circles around the earth -- from east to west every day.

(3) Also, while entertaining these other crazy notions, I predict that many egotistical individuals will begin to think that all things revolve around themselves! Why, the pompous young man who invented the "wheel" probably considers himself to be "a big wheel" -- with the whole world orbiting around him! Egocentricity is bound to develop even more rapidly now that his rotating disc has hit the scene! It will be the "Gates-way" through which immense pride will come into our world.

(4) But the damaging effect of this new thing called a "wheel" is bound to have more than an evil impact on men's thinking -- it will also hasten travel and increase the transporting of goods to villages 8 or 10 miles away! This will encourage laziness, love of ease, and the intermingling of our families with those of distant peoples who do not hold to our customs -- and everyone knows that OUR customs are the best on earth, absolutely perfect, and they will only be corrupted by contact with others in the world!

(5) The invention of the "wheel" will also encourage theft at night. Men will be able to put these things on an axle at the right and left sides of a box, put poles out from the box, hook an ox to the poles, and load up huge amounts of stolen articles from neighboring villages and sneak away 3 miles or more before anyone ever awakens!

I could go on and on about the evils that will come from this new invention, called the "wheel" -- and I could recite much more about the wicked influence of all other inventions that have been trotted out since the earth was formed 4,002 years ago today, but here I shall forbear with this concluding observation:-- THESE INVENTIONS ARE THE SOURCE OF ALL EVIL, AND UNLESS WE BEGIN OUTLAWING THE "WHEEL" IMMEDIATELY IT WILL ROLL MANKIND EVEN FURTHER INTO THE FILTHY QUAGMIRE AND QUICKSANDS OF DEBAUCHERY AND DEGRADATION, AS SURE AS THE WORLD IS FLAT!

* * *

And now for a few serious and genuine observations:-- Ecclesiastes 7:29 tells us that ".. God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."

(1) While one might mistake this verse to mean the opposite, the fact is: -- IT IS NOT INVENTIONS THAT HAVE MADE MAN EVIL; IT IS, RATHER, THE EVIL NATURE IN MAN THAT CAUSES HIM TO USE INVENTIONS IN AN EVIL WAY. The NIV translation of this verse reads: -- ".. God made mankind upright, but men have gone in search of many schemes." Since the Fall of Adam and Eve, people have "schemed" -- part of this scheming bringing forth

devices that are perfectly good inventions, but much of this scheming devising the wrong use of those inventions. Nevertheless -- while it is true that there have been, and are, some inventions which are in themselves evil -- **THE ROOT SOURCE OF SIN IS MAN'S EVIL HEART, AND THE WICKEDNESS IN THIS WORLD IS NOT PRIMARILY THE RESULT OF MAN'S INVENTIVE, GOD-GIVEN MIND!**

Furthermore, God knew that "Good and Useful Inventions" would be necessary. When God told Man in Genesis 1:28 to "have dominion over.. every living thing that moveth upon the earth," He knew that, after the Fall, Man would need to invent tools and weapons in order to "have dominion over" huge behemoths and ferocious beasts which were much stronger than Man and very able to slay him without those good and necessary inventions. Man's dominion over all earthly creatures was passed on to Noah after the flood, and it is through the invention and implementation of tools and weapons that God's prophecy of Genesis 9:2 is fulfilled: "the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth."

(2) Of course, the source of all evil was, first of all, Satan -- and then secondly Satan's nature implanted in Adam and Eve. With this in mind, please note: -- Romans 5:12 tells us that "BY ONE MAN sin entered into the world," NOT: -- "BY ONE (OR MANY) INVENTIONS SIN ENTERED INTO THE WORLD"!

(3) Further, according to Romans 5:15, SALVATION "IS BY ONE MAN, JESUS CHRIST," AND NOT BY MANY RULES! If Man's Salvation and Preservation from sin came by the Law, "what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?" (Hebrews 7:11). Under the Aaronic Priesthood, the Divine requirements were graven upon tables of stone that could be shattered and crumbled and written with ink upon parchments subject to decay and disintegration -- and, multitudinous as these Commandments and Laws were, they were powerless to save Man from the real source of sin -- his sinful heart. Under Christ's Priesthood, God's Law is "written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart." (2 Corinthians 3:3). And -- that inwardly written Law has power to keep any man, and every man, woman, boy or girl from sinning while using modern inventions in their daily lives and in their labors for Christ.

(4) **THE ONLY SOLUTION FOR THE EVIL USE OF THE PROLIFERATING INVENTIONS OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY IS OLD-FASHIONED, FULL SALVATION WHICH CLEANSSES AND FILLS MAN'S HEART WITH CHRIST'S SPIRIT.** Jesus declared in John 14:30: ".. the prince of this world.. hath nothing in me." Jesus never sinned in the use of any of the inventions that He employed as a Carpenter, nor with any other invention He used during His earthly life. Why? Not because He was being kept from sin by the written Law, but because His Father's Law was written in His heart of hearts! There was nothing within Him that would cause Him to sinfully abuse any invention He employed! And it is that same, inward, holy Law that keeps the sanctified from using modern inventions sinfully.

We can see from 2 Corinthians 3:6 that Christ's ministers should, and must, be "able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth, but the Spirit

giveth life." Why is it then, that some of today's most zealous preachers of heart holiness are relying more and more upon written rules to keep their followers from sin? Will some of today's Conservative Holiness Church leaders EVER learn that they must primarily focus upon leading their flocks into that experience which writes God's Law in the hearts of their people? -- and that the antidote for the sinful use of modern technology is NOT more and more rules and the increasingly rigid enforcement of the same? If they ever grasp these facts, "when shall it once be?" (Jeremiah 13:27). Would not the year 2004 be A MUCH HAPPIER (AND EVEN HOLIER) NEW YEAR for many in the Church if it became the year when these facts were both learned and applied by God's Spirit to their hearts?

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HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Duane V. Maxey,
Tucson, Arizona,
January 1, 2004

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14 -- WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR EAR?

In about 1973 when I was pastoring in Portland, Oregon -- one day when the barber was cutting my hair he told me a funny little story -- not one that was off-color -- and I have never forgotten the gist of it. What's more, I have told the little story (in my own words) around nearly (if not all) New Year's Days since that time. I will share my version of it with you below:

* * *

An old farmer who lived quite a distance out in the country had a mean horse -- and one day (along about in November) that obstreperous animal bit the farmer's right ear -- so badly that the ear was almost completely severed.

Rushing as fast as he could, the old farmer hooked up another horse to a buggy and raced into town. When he reached the doctor's office, he ran inside holding a handkerchief over his nearly severed ear.

"DOCTOR, DOCTOR!" he cried, as he ran inside, "CAN YOU SAVE MY EAR!? CAN YOU SAVE MY EAR!!?"

Upon examining the wound, the doctor shook his head and said, "I'm sorry, it's just dangling by a thread of tissue now; I'll have to cut it on off." -- and, so he did.

After the old farmer's ear was clipped on off and the wound treated and bandaged, he returned to his farm -- very disappointed -- for not only would his appearance be disfigured -- HE JUST KNEW THAT FOLKS WOULD NOTICE THAT HE HAD ONE EAR MISSING AND ASK HIM WHAT HAPPENED TO IT.

So, the old man stayed in or near his house for weeks and weeks -- never even venturing out near the lane past his home -- never allowing anyone but his family to see his embarrassing disfigurement.

Finally, on New Year's Day, the old man decided to sally out by the fence near the lane for a little walk. As he did so, one of his neighbors drove by in a wagon, and seeing the old farmer he greeted him with: "HAPPY NEW YEAR!"

"A HORSE BIT IT OFF!" replied the old farmer, as he quickly covered the void with his hand once occupied by his right ear. :-)

* * *

And -- HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU TOO! -- even if you don't catch on to the story. --
Duane :-)

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15 -- ALL IN FUN -- SOME-DOUBLE-NAMED LOCATIONS

Reader, do you know any more double-named locations? Not "things" now, but "locations" -- so, that would eliminate bon-bon chocolates, tom-tom drums, choo-choo trains, ha-ha jokes, bye-bye departures, ooga-ooga Model-A horns, boom-boom thunder, bang-bang rifles, pow-pow, shots, bee-bee guns, pop-pop firecrackers, tick-tick clocks, yum-yum goodies, dumb-dumb dunces, Moo-Moo feasts in New Guinea, Muu-Muu dresses for women, Oh-Oh accidents, pooh-pooh teasing, Yo-Yo toys, -- and such like. But -- places, do you know any more geographical locations with same-double-names?

SAME-DOUBLE-NAMED LOCATIONS

Aden, Aden (the city and the country)
Baden Baden, Germany
Baw Baw, Mountain in Australia
Bella Bella, British Columbia, Canada
Bli Bli, Queensland, Australia
Bora Bora, Island in French Polynesia
Caw Caw, Swamp in South Carolina
Chi Chi, Taiwan (epicenter of a great earthquake)
Gin Gin, Queensland, Australia
KaKa, Arizona
Keri Keri, New Zealand
Kin Kin, Queensland, Australia
Kurri Kurri, Australia
Ling Ling, China
LoLo Pass (Idaho-Montana Border)

LoLo, Montana
New York, New York
Obi Obi, Queensland, Australia
Okinawa, Okinawa
Pago Pago, American Samoa (pronounced Pahng-Oh Pahng-Oh)
Panga Panga, Africa
Paw Paw, Michigan
Sing Sing, New York
Tum Tum, Washington
WaWa, Ontario, Canada
Wagga Wagga, Australia
Walla Walla, New South Wales, Australia
Walla Walla, Washington
Wool, Wool, Victor, Australia
Woy Woy, Australia

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THE END