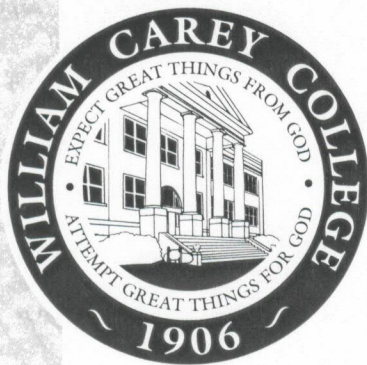


The CAREY PULPIT

*In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus...
I give you this charge: Preach the word
(2 Timothy 4:1-2a).*



A Ministry of the Cooper School
of Missions and Biblical Studies
William Carey College
Hattiesburg, Mississippi
Vol. 17 ● Fall 2001

For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

Romans 10: 13-15

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A DAY OF OPPORTUNITY

Luke 19:28-44

Introduction:

The people who watched Jesus enter Jerusalem missed a great opportunity. Jesus clearly announced by His actions that He is the Messiah—God’s Anointed Prince of Peace. The signs of this announcement are:

1. Only an animal that had never been used as a beast of burden was considered suitable for religious purposes (19:30).
2. Jesus entered Jerusalem the same way Solomon had entered Jerusalem, riding a mule (1 Kings 1:33).
3. Jesus entered Jerusalem in a manner that fulfilled the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9-10.

However, no one present that day fully realized the opportunity that was presented to them. Like the people in the crowd, we also miss the opportunity of seeing Jesus.

I. We Miss the Opportunity to See Jesus Because We Only See the Immediate Circumstances.

- A. The disciples obediently followed Jesus’ instructions regarding the colt (19:32-35).
- B. Their behavior later in the week indicates that they did not fully comprehend who Jesus was or the purpose of his mission.

II. We Miss the Opportunity to See Jesus Because We Have a Preconceived Concept of Him.

- A. The crowd saw Jesus as a miracle worker (19:37).
- B. The crowd wanted to make Jesus a King and restore the Davidic Kingdom (19:38).

III. We Miss the Opportunity to See Jesus Because We Refuse to See Jesus.

- A. The Pharisees refused to see Jesus as anyone other than an uneducated lawbreaker who spoke blasphemy.

- B. The Pharisees had the knowledge and understanding to see Jesus as the Messiah, but they chose to remain blind.

1. A person once asked Helen Keller, "Is blindness the worst handicap a person can have?" She responded, "No, it is far worse to have eyes and not to see."
2. Jesus warned his disciples against such blindness (Mark 8:18).
3. Jesus implied that God would rather use stones than use the spiritually blinded Pharisees (19:40).

IV. We Miss the Opportunity to See Jesus Because We are Committed to Our Own Selfish Goals.

- A. Jesus had a special place in his heart for the city of Jerusalem (Luke 13:34).
- B. By riding a colt, Jesus was demonstrating that He was coming in peace. In the ancient Near East, a king’s messenger riding a horse meant war, but a king’s messenger riding a colt meant peace.
- C. Jerusalem wanted peace, but was convinced that peace would come as a result of the re-establishment of the Davidic kingdom.
- D. The rejection of Jesus was due in part to their blind nationalism that eventually led to the destruction of Jerusalem (19:43-44). Jerusalem failed to see that in Jesus, God had visited his people and offered them peace and salvation (19:42, 44).

Conclusion:

Have you missed opportunities to see Jesus? Will you continue to be blinded to Him or will you set aside your preoccupation and preconceived ideas and open your eyes and see Jesus as the only one who can give you everlasting peace? Will you allow Jesus to enter your life today?

A SECRET WORTH SHARING

Philippians (4:10-13)

Introduction:

Secrets are not intended to be shared with others. They are usually whispered between confidants. All of us know how difficult it is to keep a secret. However, Paul had a secret that he wanted to share with the Philippians—the secret of contentment.

Contentment is one of the most difficult qualities to live out. We merely have to ask a college student in their last year of studies, a teenager longing to become an adult, the individual battling a debilitating disease, or the low-income family who longs for better days. Paul wrote to the Philippians that contentment was something that had to be learned.

Paul sets forth three things the Philippians can do to learn the secret of contentment.

I. A Mind-set of Appreciation for the Kindness of Others (4:10).

- A. Paul makes a reference to rejoicing. He did not look to some future day when he would be released from prison to rejoice in the Lord, but he lived life to its fullest wherever he found himself. We must not keep putting off living to some future day. God wants us to live life to its fullest now!
- B. In this verse Paul communicated his appreciation for the gift from Philippi. He understood that the gift was from God but he also knew that God uses others. So Paul encouraged the Philippians that they were instruments of God to minister to him.
- C. Paul expressed appreciation for what was done for him. We should be people of gratitude, thankful for what is given to us or done for us, even if it is not all that we need.

II. An Outlook of Adaptability in the Circumstances of Life (4:11-12).

- A. Adaptability is a mark of contentment. Paul elaborates in these verses on the

circumstances mentioned in the preceding verse. The word translated "secret" is a term that was used in the mystery religions. The thought translated "learned the secret" is an idea that meant to apprehend secret knowledge and pass it on to other adherents. Paul's thought is that the secret to contentment is learned through the circumstances of life.

- B. The word translated "content" carries the thought of self-sufficient. The Stoics regarded it as virtue to be detached from outward circumstances and to have the resources within one's self to meet every situation. Paul uses the word in the sense of being independent of circumstances, but his all-sufficient resources were "through him who gives me strength."
- C. Paul had detached himself from the nonessentials of life. He concentrated more on the eternal than the temporal. Often our desires for more or better possessions are really a longing to fill an empty place inside. How can you find contentment? The answer is in your perspective, your priorities, and your source of power.

III. An Attitude of Confidence in the Power of God (4:13).

- A. This verse is often quoted out of context. It has a wider application than merely this context, but we need to think of it first within the context of this passage.
- B. What is Paul really getting at in this verse? His thought is that God will empower us to be content, whatever the circumstances, through the strength that comes from union with Christ.

Conclusion:

Contentment is a mark of spiritual maturity. It does not come naturally, but is developed as we live joyfully and gratefully in the various life settings we find ourselves.

**JOHN THE BAPTIST –
THE MAN WITH BIG FEET**

Luke 3:1-18

Introduction:

One of my favorite activities growing up on the coast of Florida was going to the beach. Often I would walk down the beach looking at the size of the footprints left in the sand by other walkers. I noticed that the bigger the feet the deeper the imprint into the sand and the longer it took for the imprint to be washed away by the incoming waves.

John the Baptist was a man with big feet. Long after his death his impact on the lives of others could still be seen. On Paul's third missionary journey he encountered followers of John the Baptist in Ephesus revealing the extent of John's influence. In Luke chapter three, we discover four characteristics in the life of John the Baptist that depict a person who can leave a deep impression on the lives of others.

I. Those Who Make An Impact Can Do So in the Worst of Times (3:1-2).

- A. John served in a day of political darkness. The political leaders Luke mentions in verse one were men who were unfriendly to the people of God. In fact, Herod Antipas would later behead John the Baptist.
- B. John preached in a time of spiritual darkness. The spiritual leaders Luke refers to in verse two were the men most responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus.
- C. Our day is not that different from John's day. Just as John ministered in a dark time, we serve in a day of political and spiritual darkness. We cannot afford to wait for the climate to change before we make a kingdom impact.

II. Those Who Make an Impact Have a Sense of Mission (3:4-6).

- A. When John was asked who he was he answered by quoting Isaiah 40:3. John knew what God had called him to do.

This calling was reflected in his "mission statement."

- B. For a person to be successful, he or she must know what it is that God has called them to do. They should be able to articulate it and have, if possible, a Bible verse that summarizes their mission.

III. Those Who Make an Impact Have A Message that Relates to People (3:7-18).

John's message focused on three crucial issues.

- A. Eschatological Judgment – John makes reference to a coming judgment (3:7-9). If we are to make an impact we should not shy away from speaking of a day of judgment.
- B. Practical Ethics – John emphasized such basic principles of godly living as: sharing, honesty, and contentment with pay (3:10-14).
- C. Coming Messiah – John pointed people to one greater than himself (3:15-17). Just as John pointed people to one greater than himself, we must point people to Jesus Christ.

IV. Those Who Make An Impact Will Not Spare The Status-Quo (3:7).

- A. John spoke out boldly against those who failed to live a godly life and who based their eternal destiny on their religious heritage.
- B. If we are to make an impact in the sands of our community we must lovingly and biblically confront the churches' and societies' tendencies to merely perpetuate the status quo.

Conclusion:

How big are your spiritual feet? Will you leave a deep impression that the waves of time will not quickly wash away? If you desire to make an impact for Christ with your life, look at the life of John the Baptist and follow the path that he has laid out for us.

THE CIVIL WAR INSIDE YOU

Romans 7:14-25

Introduction:

Living in the South, you can't go far without finding an old battlefield, or a museum, or something that points you back to the Civil War. That war was a major event in the history of our country and especially in the lives of Southerners. But did you know that a civil war is still raging? It is happening within you.

How many times have you said that you would start living for God and then find yourself following your own path? How many times have you told yourself that you wouldn't do something only to find yourself doing it again? It happens to all of us because there is a battle raging between your new nature in Christ and your old, sinful nature. We can win this war, but there are several things we must realize.

I. Self-determination Is Not Enough (7:14-20).

- A. We consider Paul to be one of the greatest Christians to have lived. Because he was a champion of Christians, words like these seem odd coming from him. Yet, we need to understand that Paul struggled with sin, and that fact helps us realize that we are not alone.
- B. Our basic human nature is depraved; it is evil.
 1. You cannot overcome it on your own because you are fighting against yourself.
 2. You must overcome the urge to be independent and realize that this fight is beyond your ability.
- C. Your sinful nature pulls you to do the opposite of what you know you should do (Galatians 5:7).

II. Becoming a Christian Does Not Stamp Out Sin (7:21-23, 25b).

- A. Salvation from the penalty of sin does not include an automatic release from the urge to or the ability to sin.
- B. God could have designed humanity to be unable to sin. We could have been designed to naturally love Him without any choice at all. However, he gave us the ability to choose. With this ability, we have the opportunity to choose Him.
- C. The Christian life may not be devoid of sin, but it should be. It can be an experience of growing in faith and of victory over sin (2 Corinthians 4:16; Colossians 3:10).

III. You and God Have to Work Together (7:24-25a).

- A. Paul knew he needed help. After realizing his condition, Paul cries out, "Who can rescue me?" He found his answer in God!
- B. When you become a Christian, God recreates your nature; you have a new nature.
 1. The only way for that new nature to take hold is for you to let it take hold.
 2. You must submit your will to God daily. We do this by studying His word, by spending time in prayer with Him and by ministering in His name.
- C. The civil war within us is a spiritual battle. The only hope for winning the war is through Jesus Christ (Ephesians 6:11-12; Hebrews 2:18).

Conclusion:

Do you want freedom? Do you want to be able to win the civil war inside you? You can have freedom and win the war when you begin to live under the power of God rather than under your own control.

BLESSINGS FROM THE LION'S DEN

Daniel 1:8; 6:1-24

Introduction:

As a child, few stories in the Bible thrilled me more than the account of Daniel in the lion's den. I was amazed and my heart was thrilled as Daniel did what was right even though others would do him wrong. Before I even started to school, I began to understand that life is not always fair.

Through the years as I have sought to follow the Lord, I have found that Daniel is not the only person who ended up in a cave filled with wild animals. More than likely, each of us has experienced trips to the lion's den. Even in reading the story and understanding what Daniel went through, it is easy for us to overlook the blessings that can be discovered from the lion's den. While none of us would probably raise our hand to volunteer to be thrown there, we can begin to see blessings that come from the den.

One of the significant blessings that we can discover from the lion's den is how to be prepared for whatever life may bring our way. Daniel demonstrated how to get ready for life's worst moments.

I. He Had a Consistent, Deep Devotional Life (6:13).

- A. Daily, just as regular as clockwork, three times (morning, noon, and night) Daniel stayed in touch with God. You might say that before he met the lion, he had met with God. What a wonderful, life-transforming truth.
- B. We need to meet with God as regular as clockwork.

II. He Had Solid, Unshakable Principles of Right and Wrong (1:8).

- A. Long before the testing time ever came, Daniel had made up his mind as to what he believed, who he was, and what he would do. Daniel was not guided by the principles of Persia, but by the truth of God.

- B. There is always some new wave of thought seeking to shape us and reshape the truth of God's Word. Situation ethics and secular humanism and post-modern thinking all want to paint the world in shades of gray and allow us to determine what is right and wrong.
- C. Daniel knew God and knew that what God had determined for his life would be the principles and practices of his life.

III. He Lived With an Inner Courage That Displayed a Gracious Spirit (6:3).

- A. Daniel did not live in fear or frustration, but he lived in what might best be described as sweet spirited faith. Even as he dealt with adversity, he did so graciously—not in a spirit of bitterness or vengeance, not to retaliate, and not to even the score.
- B. Too many of us live out our relationships like the two older gentlemen who were neighbors. One of them saw the other one and said, "I'm sorry 'Ole fella', that my hen got loose last night and scratched up your garden." The other man said, "That's alright. I'm just sorry that my dog got hold of your hen and ate it." The other fellow came back with, "Well, don't feel too bad about it, I just ran over your dog and killed him."
- C. Daniel chose to live out his life in confident courage. Before life takes a wrong turn, or the bottom falls out, or you get thrown into the lion's den, it is wise indeed to find the blessings of genuine spiritual preparation.

Conclusion:

God has blessings for us out of the most destitute of situations. He will prosper His people, even in a lion's den!

THE CLUTTERED LIFE

Ecclesiastes 2:1-17

Introduction:

Bill possessed all the trappings of success. His gracious antique-filled home was mortgage-free. The new import cars were an envy to everyone, not to mention the boat and the lake home. His was a "rags-to-riches" story. Friends often remarked, "Bill has it all." But something was missing. He visited his pastor one night and asked coldly, "Is this all there is? Have I bought a lie?"

Bill typifies many people today. Their wealth and accumulation fail to bring lasting contentment. The media promises that if we have everything in our external world, we will experience happiness in our internal world. Contentment, joy, and peace will flourish. Is that true? Or have we, too, bought a lie? Acceptance of the lie results in a cluttered life.

I. The Characteristics of a Cluttered Life (2:4, 9, 10).

- A. Busyness—This results in neglected relationships with spouse, family, friends, and God.
- B. Gaining more—The cluttered life is often in constant pursuit of gaining more (attention, power, wealth).
- C. Lacking discipline—The lives of cluttered people are out of control because they lack discipline.

II. The Consequences of the Cluttered Life (2:11).

- A. The consequences of such a pursuit leads to destruction. It may take years, and it may go undetected by others, but the demise is certain.
- B. A disease festers because of this lifestyle. It resembles alcoholism or being a workaholic. It could be called consumerholism. The problem involves the undisciplined craving that results in addiction. The demise begins not with possessions, but when possessions control us.

III. The Cause of the Cluttered Life (2:1-17).

- A. An examination of the heart reveals the reason for the calamity. The author in this passage uses the pronouns "I" 28 times and "me," "mine," and "myself" 25 times. Self controls the cluttered life.
- B. Listen to cluttered people talk. Their redundant vocabulary ("I" and "me") reveals the controlling factor in their lives. The heart is filled with selfishness. God is pushed out of His rightful place. The cluttered life leaves little or no room for God.

IV. The Cure for the Cluttered Life.

- A. Bill's pastor told him that to overcome the cluttered life he must guard his heart. Guard your heart by observing solitude. Richard Foster has observed: "In contemporary society, our adversary majors in three things: noise, hurry, and crowds. If he can keep us engaged in 'muchness' and 'manyness,' he will rest satisfied."
- B. Guard your heart by understanding stewardship. The world wants us to believe that we own everything, or at least we can own everything. The truth is that God owns it all. We are his managers. A steward manages the assets for the owner until the owner wants it back. We may possess much, but we own nothing.
- C. Guard your heart by practicing service. We are not to service ourselves with the possessions we store up. The major purpose for life is not to accumulate wealth. We are to use our resources to glorify God and reach others for him.

Conclusion:

Clutter in our lives is a result of a heart problem. Unless you solve the heart problem, the clutter will follow you. We must let Christ reorder our priorities and values so that He may remove the clutter from our lives.

BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE

2 Timothy 4:9-13

Introduction:

Paul, imprisoned in a cold Roman jail and awaiting his impending death, writes to his dearly beloved son in the ministry. In wanting to see Timothy one more time before his departure, Paul cries for Timothy to do all in his power to come soon, before it is too late (4:9, 21).

In reality, everyone that you know is one day closer to death. Much like Timothy, we need to be reminded that we must respond to their cries of need and come quickly, before it is too late.

I. Cries of Human Loneliness (4:10).

- A. Paul found himself with little company as he approached death. Demas had obviously broken Paul's heart at his desertion because he "loved this present world." Paul is lonely. He is especially missing his son in the ministry, Timothy.
- B. How many times have you and I been prompted by the Spirit to write a letter of encouragement, make a visit, and so forth only to procrastinate and miss this window of opportunity?
- C. Lonely people are crying for us to come to them before it is too late.

II. Cries of Physical Need (4:13).

- A. Paul, feeling the cold from the prison in Rome, asked Timothy to bring his cloak. This outer garment was needed to meet his physical need.
- B. Much of the world is experiencing unprecedented poverty and starvation. It is reported that 40,000 children die from starvation daily.
- C. If we listen closely, we can hear the cries of Kallelo Nugusu in famine-stricken Ethiopia. He sold his oxen to buy food for his five hungry children. When asked what he would do when this food supply was exhausted he stated, "I do not know." Then dropping his face into

his hands he began to cry, "It is so hard to be a good daddy when your children are crying for food." We must come before it is too late.

III. Cries of Spiritual Need (4:13).

- A. Paul asks Timothy to bring his books (probably containing early Christian writings) and his parchments (his copies of the Hebrew Scriptures). Much like Paul, this world needs the Word of God.
- B. There are more people who want to hear about Jesus than there are Christians that are willing to share the Gospel. In fact, 92% of professing Christians will die without ever sharing their faith.
- C. We need to respond to the cries of those persons in spiritual need before it is too late.

IV. Cries of Beginning Again (4:11).

- A. Paul asks for Mark who is useful to him. Mark traveled with Paul and Barnabas (Acts 12:25), but he returned before the mission was complete (Acts 13:13). Because of this desertion, Paul refused to take Mark with him on his second missionary journey (Acts 15:30-40). In his final days, however, Paul sees the value of Mark to his ministry.
- B. God wipes every "slate clean." He is in the business of giving people second chances. We, too, must be able to reach out to the people around us with the powerful message of beginning again.
- C. Furthermore, we need to be reminded that we too can begin again. God is always waiting for us to come home to Him. Today, you can begin again in Christ. Won't you come before it is too late!

Conclusion:

If you listen carefully, you can hear the urgent cries all around you. Today you are being asked to respond to these cries before it is too late.

ARE THE BELLS STILL RINGING?

Matthew 1:18-25

Introduction:

In the midst of a terrible civil war, Henry W. Longfellow wrote, "I heard the bells on Christmas Day, their old familiar carols play." War ravished our nation but the bells were still heard. What will it take for you to hear the bells this Christmas? Perhaps this acrostic can help us.

I. B – The Birth is Believed (1:18).

- A. Mary was espoused to Joseph. The bride and groom were married in terms of the technicalities of the dowry and the engagement. An unexpected pregnancy could change all of that.
- B. Mary was expecting. The gospel account assures us of the miraculous nature of the birth. The test was in the belief systems of Joseph.
- C. The birth was exclusive. They were told of His name and nature. His task was to "save the people from their sins" (v. 21). What a miraculous birth for people to believe.

II. E – The Excitement is Enjoyed (1:20).

- A. The argument was settled. He did not have to be afraid or ashamed.
- B. The agreement was seen. Other gospel accounts record Mary's visit to Elizabeth and the baby leaping in Elizabeth's womb. The "prophet" was in agreement.
- C. The awe was shared.
 - 1. How Mary kept things and "pondered them in her heart."
 - 2. How inspiring are her words as she responds as "the handmaiden of the Lord."

III. L – The Love was Liberating.

- A. Joseph operated on a new and different level than ever before. When the angel shared the message, Joseph willingly shaped up and proclaimed Mary as his wife.
- B. Joseph's obedience was on a different level than ever before. When the angel shared the message Joseph willingly obeyed and proclaimed Mary as his wife.
- C. Joseph's outcome was on a different level. Oh, the liberation one must sense as he is directed by the angels throughout this process. Freedom is in sensing that peace in following the leadership of the Spirit.

IV. L – The Lessons were Learned.

- A. Truth from God always overrides man's sense of direction.
- B. Trust in God always keeps man listening for God's next command.
- C. Triumph only comes in the plans and purposes of God being fully obeyed.

Conclusion:

How do you hear the bells of Christmas? It takes a listening ear and a loving heart ready to obey God's commands. Do you need to win over worry? Defeat depression? This Christmas, listen for the bells.

GOD'S GRACE CAN BE CHALLENGING**1 Peter 1:10-2:3****Introduction:**

When we think about the grace of God, we generally focus attention on the blessings it has brought to us. That's one reason we enjoy "Amazing Grace." The song allows us to celebrate the wonderful blessings that have been ours to enjoy because of God's grace.

Peter adds a troublesome twist to our appreciation of God's grace. God in His grace not only blesses us, but He challenges us. Peter persuades us to think about how fortunate we are to receive Christ through the proclamation of the good news (1:10-11). In light of that great gift, the Lord expects us to accept some of the challenges that go along with the blessings of God's grace.

I. God's grace calls us to action (1:13-16).

- A. Action begins in our minds. Sometimes the most difficult challenge of Christian living can be controlling what goes on in our heads. We cannot underestimate the discipline of setting our minds on the hope we have in Jesus Christ (1:13).
- B. Action includes a change in our behavior. Instead of behaving like pagans, we live according to the standard of a holy God (1:14-16). Living this way does not imply we are perfect. It means we are different from people who don't know God personally. Our behavior reflects His authority in our lives.

II. God's grace calls us to accountability (1:17-21).

- A. Because we are accountable to God for our action, we do well to nurture a healthy fear of Him (1:17). Fear does not mean that we live in dread or terror in our relationship with God. Rather we respect Him because of His authority over us. We nurture that keen sense of healthy fear when we know we answer to Him for the way we think and behave.

- B. Because God has done so much for us, He has the right to hold us accountable. After all, He alone redeemed us by the precious blood of His Son and our Savior, Jesus Christ (1:18-21). Ponder the price He paid for us to set us free. We owe Him so much, and we have no choice but to acknowledge that we are accountable to Him.

III. God's grace calls us to acceptance (1:22-2:3).

- A. God's grace has created in us a new relationship with one another characterized by love. Loving each other cannot be seen as an individual option, but a divine mandate (1:22). When we love each other, we accept each other in Christ as a brother or sister.
- B. God's Word opens our hearts to nurture a climate of acceptance and love. Through God's Word we have encountered His grace. In turn, we have no choice but to put aside attitudes and behaviors toward others that are not becoming of a disciple of Christ. What else can a Christian do when he or she has experienced the kindness of God (1:23-2:3)?

Conclusion:

Peter laid out the truth clearly and persuasively. God in His grace blesses us, but He also challenges us. He expects us to live out the blessings of His grace in responsible ways. When we think about what has been given to us through Christ, we must consider the demands on us as we live for Christ in our world.

How have you appropriated the grace of God in your life? Have you centered on the blessings alone? Do you think it's time to accept the challenges of His grace as well?

IT'S MORE THAN A TEXTBOOK

Hebrews 4:12-13

Introduction:

At seminary we had a class called, "Intro to New Testament." One of the requirements was an expensive five-volume dictionary set to supplement our reading of the daily Bible reading. At the evaluation time we had to critique the textbook. Most of the class hated that set and on the evaluation indicated their displeasure. They wrote that it was difficult to understand, boring, and expensive. One person even said it was a waste of time because it was not relevant to their needs. One day the professor came in and said that there was a problem with the evaluation. After a few minutes of dialogue he started laughing. He said, "Gentlemen, the dictionary set was your supplemental reading. Your textbook was the Bible! You indicated that the Bible was boring, not relevant, and hard to understand. And the president was very concerned."

In life the Bible is our textbook too. In our text we find an image to describe the Word of God—a sword. Notice the qualities of the sword of God.

I. The Sword of God is Living (4:12).

- A. The Bible is living because it has life. It has the life of the spirit. The first word in the Greek text in this phrase is "living." Literally it is "Living is the word of God." In the Greek language the word the writer wanted to emphasize would come first. The writer wanted us to know that the Bible is alive—that it is vibrant and vital today. Jesus said, "The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life" (John 6:33).
- B. The Bible is the living Word because it gives life. Throughout the centuries people have been transformed through the Word of God. "For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God" (I Peter 1:23).

II. The Sword of God is Dividing (4:13).

- A. The Bible divides right from wrong. The writer says that the book is sharper than a two edged sword. Why say that? The sharpest weapon imaginable of that day was the Roman short sword—18 inches and sharpened on both sides.
- B. The Bible divides good from evil. The Bible will cut through to your heart and mind like a surgeon's scalpel to show evil from good.

III. The Sword of God is Discerning (4:13).

- A. The Bible will judge our motives. The word of God sifts and scrutinizes the emotional and the rational thoughts of our lives. It discerns our hearts.
- B. The Bible will expose us to the Master. "Nothing is hidden and it is laid bare." That was a phrase that meant a wrestler pulling the opponent's head back so that the face would be exposed to everyone. The phrase also described in court when the defendant had a sword or dagger under his chin in order that he could not avoid the gaze of the judge. It was the image of being vulnerable to your Master.

Conclusion:

Because the Bible is living, cutting and discerning, what should we do when we read it? First, determine what it means. Second, digest it in your life. How does this apply to me? My family? My job? Third, do it. We must understand that the question is not, "How many times have I gone through the Bible?" The question should be "How many times has the Bible gone through me?"

William Carey College Alumni Fellowship

Tuesday, October 30

Following the evening session of the
Mississippi Baptist Convention

Chapel Room of the Baptist Building



Scholarships for Church-Related Vocations Students William Carey College 2001-2002

In order to be eligible to receive a church-related vocations scholarship, a student must:

1. Have an acceptable ACT composite score and high school transcript.
2. Be a current member of a church affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.
3. Have made a public commitment to a church-related vocation (ministry or missions) in a church affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.
4. Have a letter from the pastor stating that a public commitment to a church-related vocation was made or a copy of a license/ordination certificate.
5. Have a pastor's nomination on the scholarship form.
6. Make application to the college and application for scholarships and grants.
7. Meet all admission requirements to the college.

The church-related vocations scholarship could provide up to 70% of the cost of tuition on 30 hours per year for eligible on-campus residents. Commuting students could be eligible for up to 50% of the cost of tuition on 30 hours per year.

Twelfth Annual
Winter Bible Study Preview
Sponsored by The Cooper School of Biblical Studies

Thursday, October 25, 2001

9:30 – 3:00

Kresge Room, Thomas Business Building
William Carey College

Led by Dr. Waylon Bailey
First Baptist Church, Covington, LA

For more information or to register, call (601)582-6115.

William Carey College

Sixth Annual Minister's Golf Tournament

- Location:** Canebrake Golf Course, Hattiesburg, Mississippi.
- Date:** May 20 and 21, 2002. (Tournament will begin 12:00 pm Monday and 8:00 am Tuesday.)
- Cost:** \$95 per person.
- Format:** Two man scramble.
- Lodging:** The college will provide free lodging on the campus. (You will need to bring linens and towels.)
- Director:** Jeff Smith (head golf pro at Canebrake) and his staff will direct the tournament.
- Dress:** Golf collared shirt with slacks or shorts.
- Food:** Snacks and soft drinks will be provided by the college. Bring a small cooler for your drinks.

Space is limited to 100 golfers.

For reservations or more information, call (601) 582-6115.