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The

Carey Pulpit

SO THAT THE WORLD MAY KNOW

JOHN 14:31

William Carey University
Hattiesburg and Biloxi, Mississippi



Most of the sermon outlines in this issue of *The Carey Pulpit* come from 2 Corinthians in support of the topic of the Winter Bible Study. I pray that they help you in your Bible study and sermon preparation. *The Carey Pulpit* goes out to pastors across Mississippi and to alumni and friends across the country.

William Carey University is proud to carry the name of William Carey, who was born in Paulersbury, England in 1761. While apprenticing as a shoemaker, he encountered John War, a “dissenter,” who led him to accept Christ as his personal savior. William Carey became a bi-vocational pastor and demonstrated his talent for learning biblical languages. To help lay the theological foundations for the missionary movement, Carey wrote *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens*, and worked with other area pastors to establish the Baptist Missionary Society. In 1793 Carey and his family sailed for India, where they would spend the rest of their lives devoted to the Gospel. When Carey answered the call to become a missionary in India, God honored and enhanced all his gifts and talents by transforming the poor shoemaker from England into a linguist, scientist, professor, and social reformer. Carey and his associates evangelized, established Serampore College, and translated the Bible into 40 languages. The “Father of Modern Missions” died in 1834 after helping to start the modern missionary movement.

Past and current volumes of *The Carey Pulpit* are posted on the university website, so you will have access to an ever increasing number of sermon outlines. The web address is www.wmcarey.edu/pulpit. If you would like to receive sermon outlines by email, please send your email address to scott.hummel@wmcarey.edu.

I invite you to submit sermon outlines for *The Carey Pulpit* and to encourage others to submit outlines. The sermons can be focused on a single passage, topic, holiday, or event. Mail or email your sermon outlines to the address or email listed below.

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William Carey University

Education and Church Relations 2014-2015 Report

William Carey University had its earliest origins in Poplarville, Mississippi, when W.I. Thames opened Pearl River Boarding School in 1892. In 1905 the school was relocated to Hattiesburg and renamed South Mississippi College. In 1911 the college was offered to the Mississippi Baptist Convention as Mississippi Woman's College. In 1953 the college became co-educational, and the name was changed to William Carey College. After being approved as a Level 5 institution in 2006, the name became William Carey University. WCU now offers 41 undergraduate majors and 26 minors, as well as 18 graduate degrees, including one specialist and four doctorates.

CAREY IS GROWING

- Record enrollment for fall 2014 was 4,145 with 98 international students from 35 countries.
- Our student/faculty ratio is 13:1.
- Enrollment increased 1.5% over last year and 60% over the past seven years.
- The College of Osteopathic Medicine began its first year in 2010. Over 400 medical students are currently enrolled. The sixth class of 108 students was selected from over 2800 applications. The second class of medical students graduated in May 2015. Nearly 200 medical graduates are in residency programs around the country.
- The Department of Christian Ministries has been formed and has established new majors in cross-cultural global management and Christian ministries and new minors in pastoral ministry, and youth ministry.
- The School of Music and Ministry now offers a master's degree in church music.
- The board of trustees has approved the establishment of a School of Physical Therapy.

- Futral Hall, a new men's residence hall, was completed in summer 2015.
- Eight years ago, Carey had seven sports; now it has 16 sports.
- The 4th annual Scholarship Endowment Dinner with Chancellor Robert Kyhat raised nearly \$300,000 for scholarships. Over \$1.4 million has been raised over four years.
- The Hattiesburg campus has grown from 120 acres to 165 acres, and the Tradition campus has grown from 28 acres to 50 acres.

CAREY IS COMMITTED

- The BSU provided weekly and special activities which involved over 480 students and reached over 1150.
- More than 235 students served in community ministries and mission teams.
- Over 100 students participated in projects to provide tutoring and community service.
- Carey Scholars provided "College Preparation" sessions for 75 Hattiesburg High students.
- The BSU sent eight students as summer missionaries and 27 on other mission trips.
- WCU students participated in international mission trips to Brazil, Chile, China, Dominican Republic, Greece, Honduras, Lebanon, and Peru.
- The BSU raised \$12,600 for summer missions.
- BSU and FCA ministries saw 23 professions of faith.
- FCA students have spoken at numerous area schools about their faith.
- Global Opportunities Week featured Dr. William Wall and involved over 150 students.
- WCU had 120 church related vocation students.

CAREY IS EXCELLING

- The average ACT score for incoming freshmen is 24, which is six points higher than the Mississippi average and three points higher than the national average.
- Carey was ranked a "Top Tier Regional University," the 2014 #1 Best Value Regional University in the South, and one of five universities with "Least Debt of Graduates" among regional universities in the South by *U.S. News and World Report*.
- Carey was recognized as the "Hidden Gem" for the state of Mississippi for 2015.
- WCU was recognized as College of Distinction, a Best College Buy, and a Best Christian College Buy.
- For the seventh year in a row, Carey was selected as a "Military Friendly School."
- WCU received a perfect score by the U.S. Department of Education for "College Financial Responsibility."
- The speech and debate team has been the Tri-State Champion every year since 2009; 3rd Place in National Pi Kappa Delta Tournament; National Champion in Oral Interpretation and Interviewing.
- WCU had 25 NAIA Scholar-Athletes and 8 NAIA Scholar teams with a minimum 3.0 GPA.
- Five teams placed in the NAIA Top 25 in the nation.
- Geoffry Kipchumba was the NAIA national champion in the 10K race.
- Softball was ranked the top program academically in the nation in NAIA.
- Coach Steve Knight was named the NAIA Athletic Director of the Year and elected to the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame.
- Public School Teacher and Public School Administrator of the year are both Carey graduates.
- For the State of Mississippi, the Nursing School was recognized as the Nursing School of the Year, and Dr. Janet Williams was recognized as the Nursing Administrator of the Year.

CAREY IS GLOBAL

- WCU maintains its relationship with the Texas Tech University Center in Seville, Spain.
- A teacher/student exchange program with Linyi University brought Chinese professors and students to Hattiesburg, and Carey students and faculty to China.
- The Study, Travel, and Excavation Program took students to Greece, Jordan, and Israel.
- Students are studying in numerous countries for their internships in Intercultural Studies.

Promoting and supporting Christian education is vital to Mississippi Baptists. At William Carey University, we are unapologetic about our commitment to a biblical worldview and the blending of faith, learning, and living. Through a solid Christian education, our students are able to reach their highest potential in scholarship, leadership, and service. Our achievements were possible due to your prayers and continued giving to the Cooperative Program. You are directly responsible for enabling us to equip students to answer the calling God has placed upon their lives. Through our students, you are helping to fulfill the Great Commission. Thank you for your continued support of William Carey University and Christian higher education.

U.S. News & World Report
ranked
William Carey University
#1 BEST VALUE
among regional universities
in the South in 2016

KNOWING GOD'S WILL FOR YOUR LIFE

1 Thessalonians 4:3-4

Introduction:

"A holy life will make the deepest impression," according to D. L. Moody. We all want to make a good impression on others for Jesus Christ. This begins with us living a holy life as we live each day for Christ. So let's seek God's will for our lives so we can go out into the world and shine with holy living.

I. Knowing God's Will (1 Thess. 4:3)

- A. "This is God's will" means God has a will for us to follow.
- B. Christians must not concern themselves with only things that appeal to them.
- C. They must realize God is interested in all that they do.

II. Applying God's Will (1 Thess. 4:3)

- A. From the start, a Christian is set apart to God to be holy.
- B. A Christian is given over to God to do His will.
- C. The old ways of handling life are replaced by God's way of living.

III. Living God's Will (1 Thess. 4:4)

- A. "Possess his own vessel" means a mastery over one's body.
- B. Positively, each should keep himself "in sanctification and honor."
- C. "Sanctification" is repeated to show mastery of self.
- D. Christians are to be masters of their bodies, as they walk in holiness to God.
- E. The purity of the body is shown in 1 Cor. 6:19-20.

Conclusion:

Let's look at how we can have holy living. A little thing is a little thing, but faithfulness in little things is a very big thing. If we are faithful in doing the little things, then we will be successful in doing big things. Some of the little things that make a big difference in fulfilling God's will for our lives include daily prayer, daily Bible reading, and doing something special for someone every day (this includes a word of encouragement, a smile, a handshake, and a warm hug).

**The Department of Biblical Studies
will be partnering with the
Mississippi Baptist Convention
to host the**

Annual Preaching Conference

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

William Carey University

LIVING FOR JESUS

2 Corinthians 3:4-6

Introduction:

With the negative attitude toward Christianity today, the Christian, if not even more so the Christian minister, must be sure of his faith in Christ and his call to ministry from God. Our faith is being challenged by a new age mentality, popular anti-church sentiment, and outright mean-spiritedness.

In the hymn, "Living for Jesus" by Thomas O. Chisholm, we sing in the third verse, "...Willing to suffer affliction or loss, Deeming each trial a part of my cross...." Without a clear understanding of the cross we bear and the call we share, many will allow the trials and suffering of this life to lead them away from service to the Savior.

Paul gives three reasons why he could withstand the affliction and suffering he endured during his earthly ministry.

I. Confidence through Christ (2 Cor. 3:4)

- A. Confidence in people can be destructive (Psalm 118:8).
- B. Confidence in princes can be devastating. (Psalm 118:9)
- C. Confidence must be placed in Christ and Christ alone.
 - 1. Christ has the position. (Matt 3:17)
 - 2. Christ has the power. (Matt 28:18)
 - 3. Christ has the plan. (John 14:6)

II. Capability from God (2 Cor. 3:5)

- A. Our capabilities can sometimes be a snare for us. As Paul said, "Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall." (1 Cor. 10:12 NKJV)
- B. Our combat is real. (Eph 6:10-20)
- C. Our capabilities will bring victory as long as they are in Christ. (1 Cor. 15:57)

III. Covenant of Life from the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:6)

- A. We are adequate or capable only as we are servants.
- B. We are servants of a new covenant. (Jer. 31:31)
 - 1. Servants for life, new life in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17)
 - 2. Servants not of the "letter," which refers to the legalism of following the letter of the law.
- C. This new covenant comes by the Spirit. (Rom. 2:29)
- D. The Spirit gives life.
 - 1. The Spirit is the agent of revelation for the lost.
 - 2. The Spirit is the agent of regeneration for the new believer.
 - 3. The Spirit is the agent of revival for the Church.

IV. There is Praise in Heaven

- A. Christ's Birth (Luke 2:13-15)
- B. Our Spiritual Birth (Luke 15:10)
- C. What a holy convocation that will be (Rev 19:1-10)

Conclusion:

When people place their confidence in Christ alone, then God gives them the capability to fulfill His call for their lives. The call is first to salvation and then to service, which can only be accomplished in the power of the Holy Spirit. We will face discouraging decisions by leaders. As decisions against the church mount up, I see more and more leaving the faith or changing the image of the God they serve. God says of Himself in Malachi 3:6, "For I, the LORD, do not change..."

PRAYING BIG**James 5:17-18; Luke 11:9-10****Introduction:**

I have been under deep conviction recently that my prayers are most often very small in light of the incredible needs in the world, our nation and my own ministry. They are especially small in light of the awesome power of our BIG God. If He is indeed the creator of all things, it is silly not to trust Him for the big needs in your life.

There are some things God cannot do—lie, sin, see my sin beneath the blood of Jesus. In His infinite power, He can do anything that is right.

If He gave His Son, will He not freely give us all things (Romans 8:32)? Isaiah 59:1 tells us "The Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save nor His ear heavy that He cannot hear." As a father, I desired to give my children all they wanted but had limited resources. We have a Father who cares, and He is a King who is able.

I. God Expects Us to Pray Big

- A. Open your mouth WIDE and I will fill it (Ps. 81:10).
- B. He will give you great and mighty things (Jer. 33:3).
- C. Your faith may be small but your God is bigger than the mountains in your life (Mt. 17:20; Mark 9:23; Mt. 21:21-23; Mark 11:22-24; Luke 17:5-6).
- D. Do not be timid to pray BIG (Eph 3:20-21)!

II. God's Examples of Praying Big

- A. Joshua commanded the sun to stand still (Jos 10:12-14).
- B. Elisha prayed for a double portion of Elijah's power: Elijah had 8 notable miracles and Elisha had 16 (2 Kings 2:1-14).
- C. Hezekiah prayed for 15 more years of life (Isa 38:1-5).
- D. Remember there are no great men of God, only faithful and believing men of a great God (James 5:16-18).

III. God's Excitement about Praying BIG

- A. Why is it important to pray BIG?
 - 1. It glorifies God
 - 2. It prospers God's work
 - 3. It provides believers what they need
- B. What a sad statement we find in Ezekiel 22:30.

Conclusion:

In the midst of a day like ours, may we become an army of intercessors who pray BIG!

WCU Homecoming**Friday and Saturday,
April 8-9, 2016**

*For more information,
call 1.800.962.5991, ext. 6561
or email Pam Shearer at
pshearer@wmcarey.edu*

**THE SPIRIT IS WILLING
BUT THE BODY IS WEAK**

Matthew 26:36-46

Introduction:

I struggle with what I want to do, but really do not want. I want to exercise, but I really don't. I want to lose weight, but really don't want to diet. My excuse is "the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." I also struggle with what I do not want, but really do. I do not want to give in to temptation, but sometimes I really do. My excuse is "the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

While taking my youngest daughter to school, she said, "Jesus wanted to die for us." I was proud of her and affirmed her, agreeing that Jesus wanted to die for us. However, the more I thought about it, especially after rereading Matthew 26:36-46, the more I realized Jesus did not want to die for us. So, why did he die for us if he did not want to?

I. Suffering (Flesh is Weak)

- A. Jesus suffered intensely.
 - 1. "Sorrowful," "troubled," "overwhelmed," "sorrow to the point of death"
 - 2. Luke adds "anguish," "sweat like drops of blood"
- B. Jesus felt alone.
 - 1. Jesus wanted the disciples to be with Him.
 - 2. Luke adds that an angel strengthened Him.
- C. Jesus prayed three times for the cup to pass from Him.
 - 1. During the Lord's supper, the cup foreshadowed Jesus' suffering and bloodshed (Matt 26:27-28).
 - 2. During the Lord's supper, Peter and "all the other disciples" declared they would never forsake Jesus (Matt 26:31-35).
 - 3. In the garden Jesus prayed three times, demonstrating the depth of His emotion and intense desire not to suffer.

II. Sleeping (Flesh is Weak)

- A. In the garden the disciples could not keep watch one hour, but kept falling asleep.
- B. Jesus told the disciples to watch and pray.
 - 1. Jesus was probably even more exhausted than the disciples.
 - 2. The disciples slept while Jesus prayed.
- C. For both Jesus and His disciples, the Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak

III. Submitting (Spirit is Willing)

- A. Moment of Jesus' greatest temptation
 - 1. Jesus could have called angels to deliver Him.
 - 2. Jesus had the power to avoid the cross.
 - 3. Jesus could have fled.
 - 4. Jesus could have fought.
 - 5. Jesus submitted to His Father.
- B. Jesus wanted another way, but submitted to God and accepted the cup.
- C. Why did he do what he did not want to do?
 - 1. Obedient to the Father – Father's will
 - 2. No other way and yet fulfill scripture
 - 3. Mission to forgive
 - 4. Loved us
 - 5. Here he chose, decided – out of love

IV. Success

- A. Jesus accepted the Father's will.
- B. Jesus endured the cross.
- C. Jesus' Spirit was willing, and His flesh was weak, to the point of death.
- D. Submission, sacrifice and death are not the end of the story but resurrection, life, and victory are.

Conclusion:

The fact that the "spirit is willing but the flesh is weak" is not an excuse to sin, it is an inspiration to be obedient as Jesus was obedient, to do what must be done even when we don't want to, to watch and pray, and to resist temptation.

A COPERNICAN REVOLUTION

2 Corinthians 5:17

Introduction:

Nicholas Copernicus (1473-1543) challenged the *geocentric (earth centered) model* proposed by Ptolemy of Alexandria, with his *heliocentric (sun centered) model*. Copernicus' model was so revolutionary that whenever someone has a radical change of thought and belief, we refer to it as "a Copernican revolution."

The genuine believer in the Lord Jesus Christ has a Copernican revolution from holding an *ethnocentric (man-centered) worldview* to holding a *Theocentric (God-centered) worldview*. A worldview is our frame of reference or point of view. It is how we see the world and how we relate to it.

Paul the Apostle writes in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Note three thoughts related to the great salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ.

I. First, Note the *Evangel* of Salvation.

A. 2 Corinthians 5:17a begins with the word, "Therefore." Someone quipped, "When you come to the word, 'therefore,' in the Bible, find out what it is there for."

1. To interpret a verse of Scripture with accuracy, it is important to read it in context of the paragraph or unit of thought, or chapter and book.
2. Therefore, let's read 2 Corinthians 5:14-15, "For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again."

B. "Evangel" is another word for the Gospel. The Gospel is good news! Maybe you ask, "What is the Gospel?"

1. Paul the Apostle defines the Gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:3b-4, "... Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and

that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures."

2. I am indebted to Rev. Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-1892) for the next two points, which I adapt from his message based on our text, titled, "Christ the Maker of all Things New."

II. Second, Note the *Essence* of Salvation.

- A. In 2 Corinthians 5:17b we find the words, "in Christ." Paul the Apostle writes, "Therefore, if any man be in Christ. . ."
- B. You are either "in Adam" or "in Christ."
 1. Some like to think there is a third category. You will never find a third category in the Bible.
 2. When we are born we are "in Adam," but only when we are born again are we "in Christ."

III. Third, Note the *Extent* of Salvation.

- A. The words "all things" (2 Corinthians 5:17c) reveal the extent of salvation.
- B. Peter proclaimed to Cornelius, "Jesus Christ - He is Lord of all" (Acts 10:36).
 1. Dr. Samuel Marinus Zwemer (1867-1952) stated, "Unless Jesus is Lord of all, He is not Lord at all."
 2. In a message titled, "The Lordship of Jesus Christ," Dr. Roger Willmore comments, "This is a challenge to all Christians to bring every area of our lives under the sovereign rule of Jesus Christ. In our lives there should be no rivalry for His throne."

Conclusion:

Augustine of Hippo (354-430) observes, "If you believe what you like in the gospels, and reject what you don't like, it is not the gospel you believe, but yourself."

Have you experienced a Copernican revolution?

THE MARVELOUS MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

2 Co. 3:1-18 (focal verse: 8)

Introduction:

Throughout history, the emphasis on the Holy Spirit has ebbed and flowed. Sometimes there has seemed to be an undue emphasis on the third person of the triune God; other times He has been ignored. We should not go to either end of that spectrum. We should, however, believe and embrace everything Jesus said about the Holy Spirit. Paul has opened up this truth in 2 Corinthians 3. How does the Holy Spirit minister to us?

I. Before we can identify those marvelous ministries of the Holy Spirit, we should understand that the Holy Spirit's ministry is the more glorious ministry here on earth (v8).

- A. There are no less than three possible ministries that take place around us each day that goes by.
 1. The ministry of man
 2. The ministry of the Law of God
 3. The ministry of the Holy Spirit
- B. Of the three, the ministry of man may be the most difficult one to understand; but man often considers what he does to be glorious
 1. It is done in self-sufficiency – v5 (Laodicean church).
 2. Its root is self-centeredness (Luke 18 the Pharisee's prayer).
 3. Its glory is in self-success (1 Cor. 1:29).
 4. It is the work of the flesh.
- C. The ministry of the Law of God is glorious.
 1. But the Law's ministry has a demand: perfection.
 2. The Law's ministry is that of death (1 Cor. 3:6; Rom. 7:24).
 3. The Law's ministry demonstrates the insufficiency of man and the sufficiency of Christ (Gal. 3:24).
- D. The ministry of the Holy Spirit is much more glorious (1 Cor. 3:8-10).
 1. The flesh fights with God (Gal. 5:17).
 2. The Law forces us to see God as holy and perfect in righteousness (1 Cor. 3:13-15).
 3. The Holy Spirit's ministry, however, lets us find the face of God (1 Cor. 3:16-18).

II. With that in mind, we want to take a cursory look at the ministry of the Holy Spirit, from A to Z!

- A. He makes us able.
- B. He baptizes us into the body of Christ.
- C. He is the Comforter, as well as the one who convicts of sin, judgment, and righteousness.
- D. He is the one who directs our ministries.
- E. He exalts Christ Jesus.
- F. He "fathers us" into the kingdom (born of the Spirit).
- G. He gifts us for the work of the ministry.
- H. He holds us up.
- I. He intercedes for us.
- J. He gives us joy.
- K. He gives us kindness.
- L. He gives us love.
- M. He gives us mercy.
- N. He nudges us towards the righteousness and will of God.
- O. He opens doors no man can shut.
- P. He prompts us to obedience.
- Q. He quickens our spirit within us.
- R. He is the revealer of God's plan and regenerates the lost.
- S. He sanctifies us and gives us self-control.
- T. He teaches us.
- U. He gives us understanding and unction.
- V. He gives us victory over temptation.
- W. He warns us.
- X. He is our earnest "eXpectation."
- Y. He yokes us to Christ.
- Z. He gives us zeal for the ministry.

Conclusion:

The unasked question at this point is, "What is the Holy Spirit doing in your life?" If you are lost, it is so you can be born again. If you are saved, it is the ministry of transformation, preparing you for kingdom work and to be conformed to the image of Christ Jesus.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A BELIEVER DIES?

2 Cor. 5:1-10

Introduction:

The Bible is very clear about what happens to a person who dies. The Bible leaves no doubt as to where we go and what awaits us. So many times in moments like these we ask ourselves what really happens when we die. The Holy Spirit has given us a passage of Scripture that speaks volumes to us. Let me walk us through it, if I may.

I. When a believer dies, he moves from the destructible to the indestructible (2 Cor. 5:1).

- A. This body is a tent.
- B. This body wears out.
- C. It gets tears and rips in it.
- D. Every day that passes we learn just how fragile we can be.
- E. But when man dies, he moves out of this tent into a supernatural, super-deluxe, heavenly body suited for his needs.

II. We leave a world of groaning to claim a guarantee of victory (2 Cor. 5:2-5).

- A. We know this, but this world can be a tough place to live.
- B. It's tough, but that's not bad.
- C. If this world were so lovely as the bed of roses some want it to be, we would never want to leave here.
- D. For the one who has repented and believed on Jesus as Lord and Savior, that person has a guarantee of something better—the Holy Spirit.

III. When the believer dies, he goes from a walk by faith to a walk beside the Father (2 Cor. 5:6-8).

- A. Some believe we lose all sense of consciousness; that we enter an eternal coma.

- B. Others believe we sleep for a while, and then wake up on Judgment Day.
- C. For us who have placed our faith in Jesus alone, when we die we go immediately into his presence!

IV. We go from a distant whisper to a thunderous welcome (2 Cor. 5:9).

- A. I thank God we have the blessing of prayer.
- B. But prayer very often seems like a distant whisper.
- C. The Bible says in the presence of God we hear the thunderous praises of a multitude before the Almighty (Rev. 19:6)

V. We go from seed-sowing to reward reaping (2 Cor. 5:10).

- A. The day is coming that we will appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ and receive rewards for what we have done as believers.
- B. What we did as sinners was judged and paid for at Calvary.
- C. But at the Judgment Seat of Christ, the believer's life as a saved person is scrutinized.

Conclusion:

I have spoken about believers. If the dead could speak now, they would say that you want to be with believers, with the Lord, when you die; you don't want the eternity that awaits unbelievers. You should repent and believe the wonderful gospel of Christ Jesus today.

GRACEFUL GIVING

2 Cor. 8:1-9

Introduction:

The Corinthian church was likely one of the wealthier churches. The example Paul uses in this passage comes from one of the poorer churches in the area. I am often amazed when the poorer churches serve as an example to the richer ones. In this passage, the main thing God teaches us is how to give gracefully.

I. Why We Give

- A. Giving is an act of worship (Ps. 96:7-9).
- B. Giving is an act of faithfulness (1 Cor. 4:1-2).
- C. It's in God's nature to give, therefore in the DNA of your new nature (2 Cor. 8:9; 5:17).
- D. Giving is an act of faith (Luke 6:38; 2 Cor. 9:6).
- E. Giving is an act of submission and obedience (Mt. 23:23).
- F. Giving is an act of fellowship (2 Cor. 8:4).
- G. Giving is an act that blesses (Acts 20:35).

II. What to Give

- A. First fruits (Prov. 3:9, 10)
- B. Tithes
 - 1. Someone asked the other day what a tithe is.
 - 2. It is ten percent of something.
 - a. Whatever your income, a tithe is ten percent of that.
 - b. If you get an allowance, you should give ten percent of that.

Illustration: Some think that is too much: A man once came to Peter Marshall, former chaplain of the United States Senate, with a concern about tithing. "I have a problem," he said. "I have been tithing for some time. It wasn't too bad

when I was making \$20,000 a year; I could afford to give up \$2,000. But now that I am making \$500,000, there is no way I can afford to give away \$50,000 a year." Peter Marshall reflected on this wealthy man's dilemma but gave no advice. He simply said, "Yes, sir. I see that you have a problem. I think we ought to pray about it. Is that all right?" The man agreed, so Dr. Marshall bowed his head and prayed, "Dear Lord, this man has a problem, and I pray that you will help him. Please reduce his salary back to the place where he can afford to tithe."

C. Offerings

- 1. This is normally a monetary offering
- 2. You may offer your time in service as a volunteer
- 3. You may offer your possessions, such as your house or your cars

III. How to Give (2 Cor. 8:5)

- A. First you give yourself
- B. Then you give your service
- C. Following that, you give your substance
*[First three points from Warren Wiersbe]
- D. Give generously (2 Cor. 9:6)
- E. Give cheerfully (2 Cor. 9:7)
- F. Give proactively (2 Cor. 9:5)

Conclusion:

I read about a man who ran off with a new believer he was counseling, along with \$10,000 of his church's money. He said he knew God understood what he was doing. I know others who refuse to believe God will bless them if they tithe and they say the same thing: God understands it. I want you to know that God stands ready to bless you and the rest of this fellowship in ways we have yet to even imagine. But we must first be obedient in the simple things. We must learn to give gracefully.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE REAL REPENTANCE

2 Corinthians 7:5-11

Introduction:

I have seen it so many times: a man or a woman is caught in an affair, the spouse blows up, throws the "bum" out, and calls a lawyer. The guilty party is scared, fearful, begging, and runs to the church and the pastor. There are tears, remorse, and promises made. "Please take me back!" Or sometimes it is an addict that gets caught and promises that it will never happen again. On and on it goes. A lot of these folks get back into church begging for another chance. Some look at them and think they are seeing repentance, but that is not always the case! What we might think is repentance may actually be only a substitute for the real thing.

I. Mythical Repentance

- A. Some people believe that sorrow alone is repentance.
Sin and its consequences can lead to great sorrow and tears, yet it is possible to feel sorrow and not repent. Judas Iscariot wept and expressed remorse but did not repent.
- B. Expressing fear over possible consequences is not repentance.
Lots of people "straighten up" because they fear losing their families, jobs, or reputations, but it doesn't last. Both King Belshazzar and Governor Felix felt fear so that their knees knocked together, but it wasn't repentance.
- C. Acts of penance do not necessarily make for repentance.
Repeating stated prayers, lying on a bed of nails, walking on red-hot coals, and mistreating your body is not repentance. These are men's ideas and not God's.
- D. Turning over a new leaf is not repentance.
Everybody can "do a little better" and "sin a little less," but this is false repentance. Confronted by Elijah, King Ahab tore his clothes, put on sack cloth, fasted, and wept but still died an unchanged man.

II. Real Repentance

The church at Corinth needed to repent. Paul had sent a "severe letter" rebuking the sins of the church there. When Titus returned to Paul, he shared the good news of repentance and revival! Let's see how Paul recognized real repentance.

- A. There was grief over sin (2 Cor. 7:9-11).
Paul recognized that there was "godly grief" and diligence in the church. Diligent grief invites God to search our hearts and know us...to see if there be any wickedness in our hearts (Psalm 139).
- B. There was a desire to clean themselves (2 Cor. 9:11).
This is a cry for holiness with a strong desire to ban sin from their lives. They made a decision that sin could not "hang out" in their lives anymore.
- C. There was indignation (2 Cor. 9:11).
Real repentance says, "I hate my sin. I refuse to let it run my life anymore!"
- D. There was fear (2 Cor. 9:11).
Fear of the deceitfulness of sin, the fear of robbing God of His glory, the fear of cutting their life's work short, fear of embarrassing God and His church, and fear of causing someone else to stumble.
- E. There was a deep longing (2 Cor. 9:11).
A repentant person longs deeply to be Christ-like.
- F. There was zeal (2 Cor. 9:11).
Long sermons, fasting, praying, and uncomfortable surroundings did not faze them anymore.
- G. There was justice (2 Cor. 9:11).
This referred to restitution or setting things right. Zacchaeus did this, and Jesus recognized that salvation had come to his house.

Conclusion:

Don't let false repentance keep you from the kind of life Jesus wants you to have. Real repentance goes much further than skin-deep. It goes all the way to the heart.

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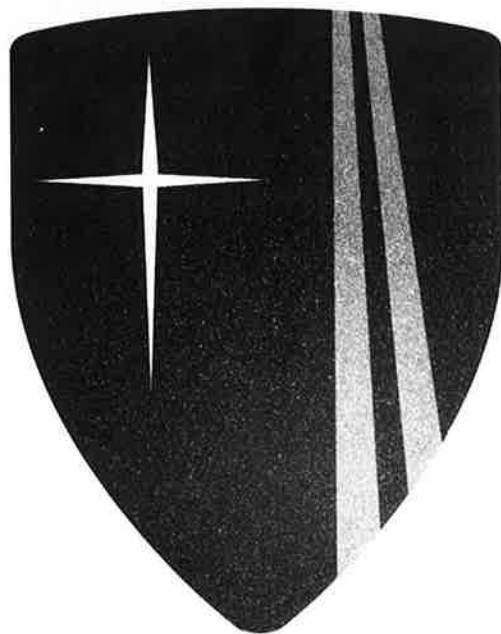
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