

AND THE PEOPLE CAME...

- Week of February 12, 2023 -

Sunday Morning Service -----	36
Sunday Evening Service -----	28
Wednesday Eve., 02/15/23 Service -----	24

AND THE PEOPLE GAVE...

- Week of February 12, 2023 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings -----	\$ 1,227.00
Foundation Piering Fund -----	\$ 2,000.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 02/12/23:	\$ 3,227.00

- Week of February 5, 2023 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings -----	\$ 2,701.93
Foundation Piering Fund -----	\$ 130.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 02/05/23:	\$ 2,831.93

- Week of January 29, 2023 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings -----	\$ 998.00
Foundation Piering Fund -----	\$ 120.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 01/29/23:	\$ 1,118.00

- Week of January 22, 2023 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings -----	\$ 1,469.35
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 01/22/23:	\$ 1,469.35

- Week of January 15, 2023 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings -----	\$ 1,643.02
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 01/15/23:	\$ 1,643.02

- Week of January 8, 2023 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings -----	\$ 2,713.06
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 01/08/23:	\$ 2,713.06

Average amount of Undesignated Offerings needed for church operating expenses EACH WEEK, as a minimum = \$ **1,600.00**



FOUNDATION PIERING FUND -

Amount Received, Week of 02/12/23:	\$ 2,000.00
Amount For Entire Project -----	\$13,600.00
50% Deposit Needed by 04/03/23 -----	\$ 6,800.00
Amount currently on hand for Deposit -----	\$ 6,250.00
Amount Still Needed For Deposit:	\$ 550.00
Total Still Needed To Pay Off Entire Repair:	\$ 7,350.00

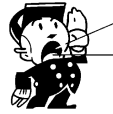
LISTEN TO -



ABIDINGRADIO.COM

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED

1. Admit that you are a sinner.
2. Admit that God says all sins must be paid for.
3. Accept the fact that Christ took upon Himself the suffering necessary to pay for all your sins.
4. You must change your mind about sin and sinning (God calls this repentance).
5. By an act of your will, accept by faith the Lord Jesus Christ, Who can save you from the penalty of sin. Then, tell God about this in a simple prayer. Believe that God keeps His promise to save you, and thank Him for His salvation.



THANK YOU For Your Continued Faithfulness In Giving!

During the early part this pandemic, we were unable to meet in the church-house. But - that did not mean that the expenses of having a church-house were suspended. We still had bills to pay - electricity, gas, water, trash pickup, phone, internet, facility insurance, copier lease, office supplies, etc., and, praise the Lord, His people kept praying, watching online, & supporting their church with their giving.

Sadly, some people only give when they are in attendance at church - sort of like paying for "services rendered" - but the truth is that they are robbing **THEMSELVES** of God's blessings when they withhold their tithes and offerings and only give when they are here (see Malachi 3:10). Thankfully, most of our people have remained faithful, in so many ways, during this crisis, including financially.

WE HAVE 3 WAYS YOU CAN GIVE:

1. By mail - 23 East Wells Blvd., Sapulpa, OK 74066
2. Drop it off - call the Church Office to arrange it. 224-1924
3. Online - Go to the link below and give electronically:

<https://tithe.ly/give?c=433047>

**WE ARE GLAD WE CAN NOW GATHER TOGETHER TO PRAISE GOD & STUDY HIS WORD TOGETHER IN THE CHURCH-HOUSE!
YOUR FAITHFUL AND GENEROUS GIFTS WILL HELP US KEEP UP WITH THE BILLS AND CONTINUE OUR RENEWED OUTREACH EFFORTS!**

Church Directory

Todd W. White -----	Pastor
Lois Mae Floyd, Mickie Shatwell, Debra Carlton -----	Pianists
Derek Quinnelly -----	Greeter
Larry & Mary Byars -----	Outreach
LeAnna White -----	Custodian
GinaMarie Shufelt -----	Flowers
Seth White -----	Sound/Video
Larry Byars, David Smith, Derek Quinnelly -----	Trustees

SOUTH HEIGHTS BAPTIST'S WEEKLY
REMINDER

Volume XXIX

February 19, 2023

Number 7



Dr. Robert L. Sumner
1922 - 2016

A Good Word For A Maligned Man

(The Lost Axe Head)
Evangelist Robert L. Sumner

"And the sons of the prophets said unto Elisha, Behold now, the place where we dwell with thee is too strait for us. Let us go, we pray thee, unto Jordan, and take thence every man a beam, and let us make us a place there, where we may dwell. And he answered, Go ye. And one said, Be content, I pray thee, and go with thy servants. And he answered, I will go. So he went with them. And when they came to Jordan, they cut down wood. But as one was felling a beam, the ax head fell into the water: and he cried, and said, Alas, master! for it was borrowed. And the man of God said, Where fell it? And he showed him the place. And he cut down a stick, and cast it in thither; and the iron did swim. Therefore said he, Take it up to thee. And he put out his hand, and took it (II Kings 6:1-7).



We have either listened to or read many sermons on this text during the past six decades of our ministry for Christ. Somehow, in almost all of them, this young prophet has seemed to come out looking bad. Especially is he criticized for borrowing an axe and

losing the head in the water. Perhaps he does deserve some criticism for this; then again, perhaps not!

The young man has our support and sympathy at the very outset because he had "forsaken all" to serve God. Jesus said, in Luke 14:26,27, *"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple."*

This young man had! He meant business for God!

Like Sau1 of Tarsus, who followed him in service by nearly a thousand years, he had responded to the divine appeal by saying in essence, *"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:16)*, and like Isaiah, whom he preceded by less than 200 years, with an enthusiastic *"Here am I; send me" (Isaiah 6:8)*.

The setting of this story is interesting. Although Paul's command to Timothy was not given until some 950 years later, Elisha was following the philosophy *"the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (II Timothy 2:2)*. Call what he had established the forerunner of a Bible institute, a Bible college, a seminary, or anything you please, but Elisha was in the business of training young men to do a job for God.

Bible schools, struggling to get started, have always experienced rough times. We think of the school we attended, as a new Christian, only starting its seventh year at the time we enrolled. It met in a borrowed building (a local church), had no dormitories, offered no cafeteria or meal service of any kind, and supported a very meager faculty. Some other schools with which we have been associated over the years have been cut from the same cloth. Even Cedarville University, with over 3,000 students, was very small when we first went on the board of trustees.

Elisha's school was no different, and it had special problems relating to room and board for its students. The problem regarding board is recorded in II Kings 4:38-41. Probably the most common complaint on Christian college campuses relates to meals served in the dining hall. Since it is impossible to mass produce food in the same tasty style as Mother's home-cooked offerings, the students are never satisfied. Complaints abound that the food is too starchy, that there is not enough variety, often it is too meager a

(continued inside)

fare – and these are just starters. Yet none had the problem the students at Elisha’s school faced with “death in the pot” (Vs. 40). The entire student body developed an acute case of food poisoning. In fact, it took a miracle from the hand of the man of God to remedy the situation.

Now, the following year, the problem related to the room phase of “room and board.” The opening verse of II Kings 6 tells us the students came to Elisha with their complaint, “Behold now, the place where we dwell with thee is too strait for us.” The dorms were overcrowded, and the young men did not have sufficient space to study; perhaps there was not even enough room to sleep comfortably. Jammed in with three, four, five or more to a room, they come to the school president (this was before everyone wanted to be called “chancellor”) and pleaded for something to be done.

The maligned young man of our text was one of the petitioners and, because he has received so much criticism, we would like to call attention to several of his good characteristics. In the first place,

I. HE WAS “FAITHFUL” -

He had responded to the appeal for help in the emergency. There was a very definite and a very real need to be met, and he was neither oblivious to the situation nor indifferent to the crisis. He was faithfully responding to his own personal responsibility to help with the solution.

A sense of responsibility is a noble characteristic. How unusual it is in our day to find someone to whom you can turn over a job and not have to worry about it, never giving it a second thought. There is a definite shortage of people like that, individuals who will face a task and stay with it until it is done. If someone were to ask us to sum up the characteristic of our age, we would be tempted to reply: “a loss of the sense of personal responsibility!” It is safe to say that this young man was doing the job he was supposed to do.

We read one time of a grocer who placed a sign above his fruit display: “Apples you can eat in the dark!” He was saying his fruit was of a trustworthy nature and one could eat it with absolute confidence, never fearing worms or other flaws. If it is important to have trust in apples, how much more in individuals! This young man was a trustworthy young man, one who could be counted upon to do the job he was assigned.

That is not always easy. Ever present is a temptation to do something else. Just as the grass seems to always look greener on the other side of the fence, other duties often look more appetizing, and appealing. The pastor thinks it would be great to be an evangelist, and the evangelist thinks it would be ideal if he could only be a pastor. It is hard to stay on the job, to plug away, to ignore all enticements to leave the task unfinished and substitute a more glamorous service.

Did you ever notice that the percentage of those who stay in school and graduate is far, far **lower** than the number who enrolled as freshmen? Up to 50 percent – and sometimes more – drop out along the way of a four-year tenure. The studies are too

difficult, the finances are too limited, an opportunity comes along to make big money doing something else, or perhaps the love-bug has bitten and the student feels he cannot continue his studies because of the pull in his heart toward the marriage altar. The late Bob Jones called these drop-outs “rabbit-chasers,” those who got off the main trail of treeing the possum.

The young prophet of our text was not a rabbit-chaser and he was not going to let a major obstacle like a lost axe head stop him. ***I like that!*** His philosophy was of the kind Jesus described in ***Luke 9:62, “No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”*** He was not looking back.

One who is faithful in his ordinary tasks will be rewarded by God with greater responsibilities. We cannot help but wonder if this young man were not the prophet Elisha selected to anoint Jehu as king over Israel to succeed the wicked Jehoram (II Kings 9:1-10). Or perhaps he was the Jahaziel upon whom the Spirit of the Lord came to assure Jehoshaphat and Judah of victory over the children of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir in II Chronicles 20. That, you may recall, was the famous battle won by singing praise to Jehovah! Or he may have been the Jehu who faced Jehoshaphat with the stinging rebuke for his alliance with the wicked Ahab.

A German youth, Ulrich Henn, was confined to an American prisoner-of-war stockade in Italy. He spent his spare time carving items out of scrap ammunition boxes. A third of a century later he was selected to prepare four full-sized models from which the huge bronze doors of the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. would be cast. Great feats evolve from faithfulness to small beginnings.

Another thing which commends this young prophet to us is,

II. HE WAS “RESPONSIBLE!” -

He was concerned about the axe. We fear that many, standing along the water’s edge and watching the axe head disappear beneath the surface, might have exulted inwardly, “Thank God, that wasn’t my axe head!”

Not this young man! He was concerned even though it was not his, since it was in his care. No doubt he recalled what the Law said about such an incident. The Lord God Jehovah had told Moses to write in ***Exodus 22:14, “if a man borrow aught of his neighbour, and it be hurt, or die, the owner thereof being not with it, he shall surely make it good.”***

It is interesting that the young prophet took full responsibility for the loss. He did not offer any alibi or excuse such as others might today. He didn’t say, “The axe was no good when I got it,” “The head was loose to begin with,” “I didn’t want to cut down a tree that close to the water, but my foreman ordered me to do it,” etc., etc. No, he accepted full responsibility.

This is not usual in our day. Employers, supervisors, foremen and others over workers will tell you how hard it is to get people to acknowledge responsibility. “I didn’t do it,” “It wasn’t me,” “I don’t know anything about it,” are the most

common, most popular phrases in our places of business in 2006. Any intelligent boss will realize he has a jewel on his hands when a worker says frankly, “That was my mistake. I am to blame.”

Not only did the student accept full responsibility, he determined to do something about the loss. He immediately launched an effort to get the axe head restored, although the situation must have looked absolutely hopeless to him at the time. He had an attitude to make it right, no matter what it took. Looking back, we are compelled to salute him for his spirit.

Another commendable characteristic lies in the fact,

III. HE WAS “THOROUGH!” -

Reread the account in II Kings 6, and you will note that he followed Elisha’s instructions to the minutest detail. He did everything Elisha told him to do.

When Elisha inquired, “Where fell it?” the inspired writer says, (“he showed him the place” (Vs. 6).

When Elisha commanded, “Take it up to thee,” we are told that the young man instantly “put out his hand, and took it” (Vs.7).

In thinking about it, doesn’t it seem reasonable that he might have questioned Elisha’s instructions, observing, “This sounds pretty silly to me”? Yet if he had any doubt at all about what Elisha ordered, the record does not even hint it. He was completely obedient.

The young seminarian’s dedication is also seen in verse 3, immediately after Elisha had given permission to construct the new dormitory. It tells us, ***“And one said, Be content, I pray thee, and go with thy servants. And he answered, I will go.”*** Whether our hero is the one who actually made the request of Elisha is immaterial. All of them wanted Elisha to go with them!

Like these young prophets, we had better want our Master with us in our work for Him. Our insistence ought to be the same as that of Moses to Jehovah, ***“If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence” (Exodus 33:15).*** How foolish to go without God!

As the Saviour told His disciples: ***“Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing” (John 15:4, 5).***

Nothing! That is what we can do without Him.

Conversely, there is nothing we cannot do with Him.

David Livingstone caught that truth and, in the heart of the dark continent of Africa, he wrote in his Journal the positive conviction: “If He be with me, I can do anything, anything, anything!”

The next nice thing we wish to observe about our young prophet is,

IV. HE WAS “INTELLIGENT!” -

There is a wisdom that comes with “the fear of the Lord”

(Proverbs 1:7). One who has been born into the family of God has a secret source of intelligence not available to the unconverted. Paul told the Corinthian believers ***“we have the mind of Christ” (I Corinthians 2:16)***, and he explained to young Timothy, ***“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind” (II Timothy 1:7).***

Part of the young man’s intelligence was seen in the fact that he stopped trying to cut the beam without the head on his axe. He did not flail away at the partly felled tree with the axe handle.

Do you suggest no one would be foolish? Then remember that, spiritually speaking, the axe head is a symbol of the power of the Holy Spirit for service in a believer’s life. Yet many a child of God continues to try to do a job for God without the power of the Spirit of God upon him. In a manner of speaking, he continues to flail away with his axe handle, with the cutting edge of the axe head missing.

Another evidence of the young prophet’s intelligence is seen in the fact that he knew where to go for help in trouble. He did not turn to a fellow student or an immediate supervisor. No, no! He went immediately to Elisha and requested his help.

Note also that he was not of the “Oh, what will I do now?” crowd. He knew what to do, and he knew where to go.

Do you know where to go when you lose your cutting edge in service? Or do you think that attending a service seminar conducted by some popular speaker will unveil to you some new secret of success, some short-cut to triumph in your ministry?

While we do not object to conferences, seminars and “how-to-do-it” workshops, the proper answer to failure in service lies in a new endowment of Holy Spirit power in the life.

A final compliment we wish to pay this young man lies in the fact,

V. HE WAS “DEVOTED!” -

There is no question about it; he was sold out to God! In the language of Galatians 2:20, he had been crucified, and the life he now lived was not his own.

The late Arno C. Gaebelein told of seeing a sign in a cleaning shop which said:

***“I live to dye, I dye to live
The more I dye, the more I live
The more I live, the more I dye.”***

While it is “die” and not “dye” with the child of God, the thought sums up an important truth in the Christian worker’s life and ministry.

The captain on whose ship James Calvert sailed to the Fiji Islands to begin a missionary ministry, knowing of the cannibalism practiced there, sought to dissuade him by saying, “You will risk your life and the lives of those with you if you attempt a ministry among such savages.”

But Calvert simply responded, “We died before we came here.”

Ah, that is it! One who is going to be a success in the service of Jesus Christ will have to die before he begins his work.

The young prophet had that kind of philosophy, that type of attitude. One thing often overlooked by his critics is that he borrowed the axe to be able to help in the Lord’s work. How easy it would have been for him to have excused himself, saying, “I’d really like to help you fellows, but I don’t have an axe!” Can’t you just hear today’s crowd jumping at the chance to use such an ideal excuse?

Not this fellow! He wanted to be right in the thick of the service of the Lord, doing his part to further the work and program of his God.

His devotion is also seen in the fact that he was obviously a man of faith. He expected Elisha could and would do something. There does not seem to have been the slightest question in his mind but what he would have immediate help from Elisha.

In this sense, he was like the centurion who sent the appeal to Jesus at Capernaum regarding his beloved servant, about to die with a terminal illness. Through friends he confessed he was not worthy for Jesus to enter his house – in fact, his sense of unworthiness was the reason he did not approach Jesus personally – but his declaration of faith was tremendous. He acknowledged it was not even necessary for Jesus to be present in order for the servant to be healed, suggesting that He merely “say in a word,” and it would take place. Then he said, ***“For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it” (Luke 7:8).***

Our young prophet approached Elisha in exactly the same spirit. And this is the spirit in which all of us should approach our Master when things go wrong in our service for Him. He is the One who can help, and He is the One who is willing!

Conclusion -

The question with which we wish to sum up this study will have more meaning, perhaps, if you are one of those who have criticized the young man of our text in days gone by, but it should carry weight even if you have not. The question is this: ***Are you as sold out to God and His work as this young man was?*** Now that you have seen him in a new light, such a question should carry a stronger impact.

Total commitment! This is what the young prophet had, and it is what you and I need as well. The late Robert G. Lee told of Napoleon’s march on Moscow when the Russians set fire to their own city to keep “the little general” and his troops from capturing it. Finding it necessary to go back to France, he instructed his trusted general, Marshall Ney, to command a rear guard. It was the duty of Ney and his men to keep the Russians from Napoleon’s main army until he could get those men safely back to Paris.

His men were totally dedicated to Ney, and they courageously battled the Russians, holding them back as they too retreated. While the Russians were undoubtedly conditioned to the cold nights of that country, they were especially hard on Ney and his men.

So dedicated were his troops to him, that one morning following an unusually cold night, the general awakened to discover he had been covered with two overcoats. When he left his tent, he found, at the door, two soldiers standing stiff and erect, frozen dead .They were the ones who had donated their overcoats to keep their leader warm.

Lee said, “And when they made improvised bridges, some of the men plunged into the icy cold waters and held up the parapets while the rear guard went over. As Marshall Ney went over, he pinned the cross of the Legion of Honor of France on the breasts of the dead men as they stood frozen in the icy water.”

Months later in Paris, a worn, bent and aged officer walked into Napoleon’s headquarters. Some of the officers looked up from their card game, and one jumped to his feet shouting, “It’s Marshall Ney!”

he others immediately rose and saluted, questioning, “Where is the rear guard?”

Ney squared his shoulders, Lee said, and firmly announced, “Sirs, I am the rear guard.”

He alone was left! All the others had given their lives in protecting Napoleon and the main part of the army, allowing them to get safely back to France. Yet the men in Ney’s rear guard did not consider themselves heroic. No, they were simply doing their duty and manifesting allegiance to their earthly leader.

Should we offer any less to our heavenly Leader? We ought to be as sold out to the Lord Jesus Christ as the rear guard was to Napoleon and the young prophet was to Elisha. In fact, our commitment should be even greater!February 17, 2023

Perhaps we should ask one other question in the light of our text: Have you lost ***YOUR*** axe head”? Are you trying to serve God with the cutting edge of your ministry missing?

If so, what are you going to do about it?

NEWS OF INTEREST TO CHRISTIANS

□ ***THE ‘HE GETS US’ WOKE JESUS WASN’T WOKE ENOUGH AND NEVER WILL BE*** - It’s amazing how many liberals saved their outrage for the ***He Gets Us*** commercials which aired during the Super Bowl. Last week, it was revealed that ***He Gets Us*** includ David Green of Hobby Lobby and Signatry. Ironic as it may seem, David Green would partner with a pro-abortion firm to market Jesus. What was the ROI for investing tens of millions of dollars in Super Bowl ads? As it would seem, the exact people the ads were marketed to hated them.

He Gets Us has spent millions of dollars to market Jesus as a refugee/illegal immigrant, a rebel with a cause, and someone who bridges political divides. The problem is that the Jesus depicted in Scripture is none of those things. Fleeing Egypt briefly would have made the holy family refugees, it actually made them fugitives of an evil king. Jesus was never a rebel. We are the rebels while Jesus rules at the right hand of the Father. And Jesus creates political divides, a divide between good and evil, a division between those who pronounce Christ as king versus

those who serve their father, the devil. ***He Gets Us*** wants us to believe that Jesus loved everybody we hate. And while Jesus condemns private revenge and personal grudges, to say that Jesus loved everybody, never used violence, and accepted everyone isn’t biblically supported. You need look no further than Judas.

An unfortunately high percentage of the population thinks like this and is unpersuadable by pandering. Christianity leads with the offensive parts first, so as not to bait and switch people. This stands in contrast to Scientology who also had a Super Bowl commercial, who wait until the user is years deep to teach them what the church actually believes. Our call is to preach the gospel, and ***He Gets Us*** is an absolute waste of money and potential to this end. The ***He Gets Us*** Jesus is woke, and it will never be woke enough to satisfy them.

A simple ad reading ***John 14:6, “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”*** would have been a far more potent use of the time and money. They would have received the same backlash from the same people, but at least they would have presented the real Jesus and started a national conversation.

□ ***SEBTS LECTURER SAYS ENVIRONMENTALISM IS A NON-OPTIONAL PART OF THE GOSPEL*** - “Creation Care” has become a buzzword in the religious politically left, particularly among those who have abandoned the gospel in favor of the progressive Woke Church movement. This movement really took off when former SBC Ethics and Religious Liberty head, Russell Moore in conjunction with the now-Southeastern Seminary professor, Karen Swallow Prior, began pushing animal rights activism in the Southern Baptist Convention.

According to Moore, certain progressive political and social issues have spiritual or religious significance. He believes that animal rights are a “gospel issue.” Interestingly enough, he also believes that defending illegal aliens from prosecution is also a “gospel issue.” So it should come as no surprise that he also considers environmentalism, or “creation care” to be a “gospel issue.”

His cohort, Karen Swallow Prior told the Wall Street Journal in a now-removed article that for the sake of the environment, factory farming must be stopped, “the economy be *****.”

But now that Moore is gone, his legacy continues to live on faithfully in Southern Baptist institutions. At Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary last year—where Karen Swallow Prior now works—Jonathan Moo, an Associate Professor of New Testament and Environmental Studies at Whitworth University was invited to give a lecture on “creation care” where he told the students that in order to be faithful to the gospel, one must take up the cause of “creation care”—or, environmentalism.

After plugging and asking people to give money to his own environmentalist organization, Climate Stewards USA, where he sits on the board, and then urging students to buy “climate credits” if they take any flights, he then told the students that “creation care” is not an option.

“I have an argument this evening, which is pretty obvious I

guess from my somewhat perhaps controversial title,” he said during the lecture, “that is, that in order to be faithful to the gospel, we must care well for God’s creation. It’s not an option.”

“It’s not just something we might add on to lots of other programs we might do,” he added. “It’s not even just a clever strategy for evangelism, although I do consider it one of the ways in which faithful Christian witness must be lived out in our time, and one that many people around us, many of my students are longing to see the church do more fully.”

He continued, “And the reasons why this is absolutely vital and to be woven into all that we do and proclaim, is first and foremost because it is part of the Gospel. It is part of what it is to love God and neighbor. If we love God we will care for the world that God created and declared good. If we love our neighbor, we cannot help but care for the world of which they are part. So, to love God and neighbor is to care well for the creation.”

Moo argues that it is partly our responsibility to restore the creation as spoken of in Romans 8 and those who don’t practice “creation care” do not have the full gospel. What does that make Moo? According to Scripture, a heretic. Paul makes clear in 1st Corinthians 15 that the gospel is that Christ died, was buried, and rose on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures and tells us in Galatians that those false teachers who add works to the gospel should be assigned to Hell.

□ ***DOCTORS REVEAL CENSORSHIP OF THOSE WHO OPPOSE “TRANS CHAOS”*** - The following is excerpted from “Bold doctors stand up,” Christian Post, Oct. 30, 2022:

“As the debate heats up over the impact of the transgender movement on children, two bold doctors are speaking up about what they see as bullying tactics aimed at silencing critics--and the truth. Dr. Quentin Van Meter, a pediatric endocrinologist and president of the American College of Pediatricians, and Dr. Andre Van Mol, a family doctor, are just two of the subjects in ‘Generation Indoctrination,’ a new podcast from Christian Post reporter Brandon Showalter.

“Both have unique insight into this arena. In an interview, Van Meter passionately expressed his concern over the handling of those who choose to question the current affirmation-only approach for kids who identify as transgender, revealing a mass silencing. ... Van Meter shared his belief that medical societies and institutions have so swiftly signed on board the affirmation-only bandwagon because of fear. Those who choose to speak out--or want to tell the truth--often fear retribution. ‘Their division heads will say, I’m sorry ... you’re not speaking for this university. This is your personal opinion, and this is bigoted and hateful, and we’ll have none of it. And if you don’t retract what you wrote, we’re going to have to reconsider whether or not you’ll ... achieve tenure and whether or not you can publish in journals because you’re representing us,’ he explained.

“... Meanwhile, he said, parents are being indoctrinated into the fold as well, and are being given few options outside of the affirmation-only paradigm. ‘The kind of intimidation that’s thrown at parents--Do you want a live son or a dead daughter? Do

you want to be planning a transition or a funeral?” Van Meter said. “It’s incredible that people are hearing this from their healthcare and mental health professionals.”

“... He also highlighted the monies purportedly being made from surgeries and treatments--something particularly disturbing in light of the fact many young people reportedly outgrow transgender identity.”

☐ **PRIEST CHARGED IN BRITAIN FOR HAVING “UNBORN LIVES MATTER” BUMPER STICKER ON HIS CAR NEAR AN ABORTION CLINIC** - Father Sean Gough, a Catholic priest, is facing a legal battle after he was charged for breaching a censorship zone by silently praying, in addition to holding a sign with the words “praying for free speech,” near a closed abortion facility in Birmingham.

Police also charged him for parking his car in the censorship zone which, for many months before the censorship zone was imposed, had a small bumper sticker on it reading “unborn lives matter”. The area surrounding the facility has been covered by a local Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO), in force since November, which prohibits prayer, distributing information about pregnancy help services, and other activities considered to constitute “protest”.

SOW NOW, REAP LATER -

“And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not” (Galatians 6:9).

We are fully aware of the laws of sowing and reaping. For example, you sow first, then you reap. The reaping always comes later than the sowing. You cannot reap unless you sow. You always reap more than you sow. You can expect to reap whatever it is that you sow. We know these basic laws. Many times we have seen them function just as God designed them.

The verse I’ve noted above brings some additional light to the matter. So let’s apply what we see here.

1. You do have sowing options (vs. 8). Just as the farmer will choose which crops to plant, each of us must decide what we sow and where we sow in both life and ministry. If you run with a worldly crowd or with a company of compromisers, you will consequently be sowing negatively.

2. Both sowing and reaping are definitely work. You can dream (and you should). You can spend time in your office (and you should). You can fellowship with your fellow Christians (and you should). But you must not let even such good things deter you from “the work” of sowing and reaping.

The secret to your success in ministry is not your computer or other technological gadgets. As important as it is for us to have the power of God, it is still necessary for us to “work.”

3. We may get tired, but we must not become “weary.” The person who is weary is about to be a quitter. He is no doubt giving discouragement a place to lodge. He may be sidetracked by the grunts and groans of the people around him.

“Weary” may be somewhat physical, but it is primarily mental and spiritual. If you see it coming your way, deal with it

and correct the situation.

4. The “weary” complex always attacks the best things. It is the “well doing” where most of us cave in. I’m talking about the solid Christian life, the separated lifestyle, the spiritual disciplines, our church attendance, our soul winning, our giving and our service (preaching, teaching, bus routes, etc.).

5. The key is “faint not.” That simply means don’t wilt under pres-sure. Don’t let up because you are unappreciated. Don’t let your critics back you off. Stay at the task. Don’t lose heart. Stay excited about the Lord and what you are doing for Him.

In other words, let it never be said, “*Well, I used to...*”

6. There is a “due season.” If you sow some every day, you have a good chance of having a year-round harvest, but you must not be impatient. The reaping often comes weeks, months and even years after the sowing. You must give it time.

7. The Lord’s sure promise is “we shall reap.” As I review Matthew 13 in Jesus’ parable of the sower, I am informed that a lot can go wrong in the sowing and reaping process. As a result of living in this old world, where the Devil roams about and things are spinning wildly out of control, you will sow some seed that will be destroyed.

Jesus made it clear that some would not produce, but He also assured us that if we sowed generously some of our efforts would produce in full measure. Yes, His promise is “we shall reap.”

Just this morning a pastor friend called and was rejoicing over the Lord’s blessings in his church. He said to me, “Don’t tell anybody; but having church Sunday morning, Sunday night and Wednesday night still works. Preaching the Bible still works. Knocking on doors and winning souls still works. Running buses still works. Singing out of the hymnal still works.”

He was kidding, of course, when he said not to tell anybody, but we rejoiced together. His Sunday school is up, the auditorium is full, giving is up, people are joining, con-verts are being baptized and a lot of other good things are happening.

Remember this:

1. The world may be headed wrong, but the way of the Lord is always right.

2. While others are wasting their time whining, you and I can be busy at the task.

3. The Lord’s orders are the same today as they were a decade ago or a century ago.

4. The darkness may be gathering, but the light of the Lord still shines through it all.

5. The toughest of times create the greatest of opportunities for us.

6. The servants of God can still be Spirit-filled, Heaven-blessed and abundantly fruitful.

7. The Lord’s presence, His prom-ises and His power are all available to us every single day.

Let’s keep living the Christian life. Let’s keep praying. Let’s keep training soul winners. Let’s keep preaching. Let’s keep going after the lost. Let’s keep running buses. Let’s keep giving.

Let’s stay in church. Let’s do it. Now is the time.

Amen! Amen! Amen!

- *Sword of the Lord*



ATTENDING THE WORD

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (Psalm 119:105).

In our twenty-first-century world, something has gone missing. Even in some Christian circles the Bible has been relegated to a museum or to gathering dust on a library shelf. There is little doubt that as the Bible has been set aside, our society has taken a downward turn.

This past Sunday, I stood in the pulpit at Harvest Baptist Tabernacle in Jonesboro, Georgia. With a microphone pinned to my chest and the volume turned loud enough everybody could hear, I held my Bible up before them. I told them that the Bible is God’s Word, inspired of God, therefore inerrant (without error), and consequently infallible. I further stated that since God Himself preserved it for us, it is pure and it is powerful. Since the text is accurate, I declared its authenticity and made the case that it should be treated as authoritative for all of us.

None of us would know the truth of the Gospel and none of us would be saved, but for the Word of God.

“And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (II Timothy 3:15).

I cannot overstate how important I believe the Bible is for a Christian, but here are some things I hope you will understand about its significance.

1. You cannot ascertain the will of God without the Word of God.

“We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts” (II Peter 1:19).

“Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word” (Psalm 119:9).

2. You cannot access the wis-dom of God without the Word of God.

“So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom” (Psalm 90:12).

“For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us” (II Cor. 1:20).

3. You cannot appreciate the ways of God without the Word of God.

“As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the Lord is tried: he is a buckler to all them that trust in him” (II Sam. 22:31).

“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them” (Isaiah 8:20).

4. You cannot accomplish the work of God without the Word of God.

“This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do ac-cording to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success” (Joshua 1:8).

“For the word of the Lord is right; and all his works are done in truth” (Psalm 33:4).

5. You cannot attend the warnings of God without the Word of God.

“Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law” (Deut. 31:12).

6. You cannot attain the walk of God without the Word of God.

“If thou put the brethren in re-membrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained” (I Timothy 4:6).

“Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein” (Jeremiah 6:16).

7. You cannot amass the wealth of God without the Word of God.

“But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4).

“Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward” (Psalm 19:11).

“He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him” (Psalm 126:6).

So, dear fellow Christian and co-laborer in the harvest fields of our Lord, let’s take the Word of God to heart. Let’s live by its precepts. Let’s be blessed by its doctrines. Let’s labor by its orders. Let’s stay in the Word daily. Let’s herald it boldly, fervently and fearlessly.

So much depends on our faith-fulness to the task. Let’s keep on—giving the Lord our best and surrendering afresh every day.

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