



Seek The Old Paths

“Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths. . . and walk therein”
(Jeremiah 6:16)

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PLANNED PARENTHOOD SELLS DEAD BABY BODY PARTS

Victor M. Eskew

Planned Parenthood was founded in 1916 by Margaret Sanger and Ethel Bryne. They opened Planned Parenthood in Brooklyn, New York, as a single office. Presently, Planned Parenthood has 700 Healthcare centers in the United States.

The words, “Planned Parenthood,” sound very positive. One would think that the organization focuses on teaching and training young couples who are interested in having children. This, however, is not their focus as all. The following is the Mission Statement of Planned Parenthood.

Mission Statement: A Reason for Being

www.plannedparenthood.org/about-us/who-we-are/mission

Planned Parenthood believes in the fundamental right of each individual, throughout the world, to manage his or her fertility, regardless of the individual’s income, marital status, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, national origin, or residence. We believe that respect and value for diversity in all aspects of our organization are essential to our well-being. We believe that reproductive self-determination must be voluntary and preserve the individual’s right to privacy. We further believe that such self-determination will contribute to an enhancement of the quality of life and strong family relationships.

Following the Mission Statement, Planned Parenthood lists the activities that flow from the statement. They write:

Based on these beliefs, and reflecting the diverse communities within which we operate, the mission of Planned Parenthood is to provide comprehensive reproductive and complementary health care services in settings which preserve and protect the essential privacy and rights of each individual to advocate public policies which guarantee these rights and ensure access to such services to provide educational programs which enhance understanding of individual and societal implications of human sexuality to promote research and the advancement of technology in reproductive health care and encourage understanding of their inherent bioethical, behavioral, and social implications.

One of the reproductive services of Planned Parenthood is **abortion**. There are two main methods that Planned Parenthood uses to carry about their abortions: *the abortion pill* and *in-house abortions*. In one year alone, Planned Parenthood distributed 1,461,816 abortion kits containing the abortion pill. The women who take the pill to abort their child do not report the abortion to the clinic after it has been conducted. Thus, these abortions are not part of the abortion statistics of Planned Parent-

hood. In 2012, Planned Parenthood reported having performed 329,445 in-house abortions. This means that Planned Parenthood is performing over 902 abortions per day in the United States. Of the clients that come to Planned Parenthood, 1 out of 10 will have an abortion.

Their abortion practice alone should concern all who call themselves Christians. Life is a gift that is given by God (Gen. 2:7). The deliberate taking of innocent human life is murder. In Exodus 20:13, God commanded, saying: *“Thou shalt not kill.”* Abortion is killing; it is murder. A human life comes to an end. A tiny infant is inhumanely destroyed and taken from the mother’s womb. In Ephesians 5:21, murder is included in the list of the works of the flesh. Those who practice it, including those who murder babies in the abortion clinics of Planned Parenthood and elsewhere, shall not enter in the kingdom of God (Eph. 5:21). Sadly, the abortion practices of Planned Parenthood have not upset the masses enough to take action against them. Planned Parenthood continues to exist. Their clinics continue to perform on average, over 902 abortions every single day of the year. The organization continues to be funded in great part by tax-payer dollars.

Of late, another practice of Planned Parenthood has surfaced through several videos. We now have proof that Planned Parenthood has

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Planned Parenthood...



Editorial...

EXTENDING THE GOSPEL INVITATION

Garland M. Robinson

These words sound all too familiar: “I attended a worship service of the church of Christ where, at the end of the sermon, there was no invitation song and no opportunity to respond to the Gospel invitation. The minister announced that such a practice wasn’t found in New Testament worship in either command, example, or necessary inference. He said it was simply not one of the acts of worship and he wouldn’t condone it.”

Our long standing practice of extending the Gospel invitation and singing an invitation song at the close of the preaching service is becoming less and less frequent in a lot of places.

Personally, I have never preached without offering the greatest invitation the world has ever known and telling people what they must do to “obey the Gospel.” I never plan on doing anything else. I always try to encourage preaching brethren to make sure they tell their audience what one must do to be saved. Why would any church, any preacher, not call for both sinners and wayward members to repent? It is a sad and tragic practice to leave off exhorting people to obey the Gospel; and, do it Now. Also, I hear more and more preachers saying, “if you have a need to come, come now;” but they don’t tell them what to do when they come.

It is true that we do not have an “example” of extending the invitation at the close of the sermon and standing while we sing an invitation song. However, the Bible authorizes also by “command” and by what is often called “necessary inference.” Regarding this latter point, the dictionary defines the noun “inference” as: “a conclusion reached on the basis of evidence and reasoning.” Its verb form “infer” is defined as: “deduce or

conclude (information) from evidence and reasoning rather than from explicit statements.” The point is this, though something may not be explicitly or specifically stated, the proper conclusion is drawn by the evidence provided in the Scriptures. For example: we teach the truth when we say that Lot went down into Egypt, even though the Bible does not say he did. What the Bible says is that Lot came up out of Egypt. According to the evidence of Genesis 12:6-13:1, the inference (deduction, conclusion) is correctly drawn that he went down into Egypt. Had he not gone down into Egypt, he could not have come up out of Egypt (Gen. 13:1).

The “authority principle” is alive and well. It is Biblical. It is heaven’s order. Colossians 3:17 says, “*And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, [do] all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.*” In “the name of” means by “the authority of.” Having “power of attorney” means you have the right to act in someone’s name — by their authority. The children’s game “Simon Says” is based upon this same principle.

The Bible authorizes in three ways.

No one can successfully deny that the Bible authorizes action(s) based upon **direct statements (and/or commands)**. (1) The Bible says, “*Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved...*” (Mark 16:15-16). By the Lord’s plain and simple statement, we have authority to go, teach and baptize. (2) “*Upon the first [day] of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as [God] hath prospered him...*” (1 Cor. 16:2). According to the command of this verse, we have authority to give a contribution every

first day of the week. (3) “*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord*” (Col. 3:16). This verse authorizes singing, but not playing.

No one can successfully deny that the Bible authorizes action(s) based upon **approved examples**. (1) The Bible says, “*upon the first [day] of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread*” (Acts 20:7). By this action (example), we have authority to observe the Lord’s supper on the first day of every week. (2) The church at Philippi received funds and disbursed funds in supporting Paul preaching the Gospel (Phil. 4:15). This approved example authorizes local congregations to receive funds and send funds in supporting works of the church.

No one can successfully deny that the Bible authorizes action(s) based upon **necessary inferences** drawn from the Scriptures. (1) The Bible says, “*Whosoever shall put away his wife, except [it be] for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery*” (Matt. 19:9). The Lord authorizes (teaches) by inference (implication) that those who divorce their mate because of their mate’s fornication and marry another, do not commit adultery. The conclusion (inference) is inescapable. Otherwise, the word fornication is meaningless. The Lord clearly says that if you divorce your mate for any cause other than fornication and marry another, you are living in adultery; but (by implication) if you divorce your mate because of their fornication and marry another, you’re not living in adultery. (2) In Matthew 22, the Sadducees (who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead) present to Jesus what they thought was an impossible question for him to answer. Jesus responds by saying, “*have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*” (Matt. 22:31-32; cf. Exod. 3:6). Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had been dead well more than 1,500 years, yet they are spoken of in the “present tense.” That is, God is presently their God; and, since He is

the God of the living, they are not dead. They are still alive, just not on this earth. The inference (implication) is clear. There is a resurrection of the dead (cf. John 5:28-29).

That which God implies is just as true and factual as if the point was explicitly and specifically stated. It carries just as much authority as a command or example. We do not imply, God does. We understand and act based upon the evidence of what God implies.

By the way, there is no command or example of asking people to stand for a song and remain standing for the prayer. There is no command or example to have a “church building” or padded pews, water fountains, bathrooms, carpet, song books, shaped notes for the songs, etc. etc. But, all these things are authorized in the command to assemble and worship (Heb. 10:25; 1 Cor. 14-16). These things are expedients. An expedient is something that expedites, helps, aids, assists us to do what God tells us to do. A song book aids us in carrying out the command to sing (Eph. 5:19). Lights help us to read the scriptures. A building helps in providing a “place” to assemble, etc. etc. Encouraging souls by giving them an opportunity to obey the Gospel, and do it NOW, is expedient.

What examples do we have? There is an example of people, during a sermon, asking what they needed to do to be saved (Acts 2:37). When they were told what to do, they did it (vs.38-41). There’s an example of a man from Ethiopia, while engaged in a Bible study, asking if he could be baptized (Acts 8:36). While Ananias was teaching Saul, he asked him to get up and be baptized (Acts 22:16). Simon, when rebuked by Peter, asked for prayers that he might be forgiven (Acts 8:24).

Is it okay (authorized) for someone to ask us if they can confess and be baptized, but not okay (authorized) for us to ask them to do so? The Bible does not tell us specifically “how” we are to obey the command to teach and baptize. Therefore, it is left up to us exactly HOW we obey this command. God commanded Noah to build an ark but left it up to him HOW he did it. God gave him specifics such as gopher wood, size, floors, door, window, etc. But it was up to Noah to get the job done. He

could use hammers, saws, a measuring instrument, etc. God tells us to preach the Gospel. It is up to us to use whatever lawful means is available to get the job done.

By extending the Gospel invitation at the close of our sermons we encourage people to obey God. We are obeying the command to teach, baptize, and teach (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16). This is the most fundamental principle in all the New Testament. It’s ALWAYS appropriate for people to obey. And, it’s ALWAYS appropriate for us to ask people to obey.

The END or OBJECT of preaching is to baptize. Shall we not invite, encourage, and give every opportunity for souls to obey? It is true that people can obey at any time, but does that mean we have to wait for them to tell us they are ready? Are we to believe it is a violation of scripture for us to make an effort, even during a church service, to encourage souls to obey the Gospel? We’ve taught them WHAT to do (at least faithful churches and preachers do). We’ve taught them the URGENCY of it. But, we can’t encourage them to obey the Lord NOW? That doesn’t make sense does it? If they were to stop us during a church service and ask to be baptized or for prayers of forgiveness, would that be acceptable (scriptural)? If so, do you mean to say it would not be acceptable (scriptural) for us to ask them to be baptized or to be restored? Strange indeed!

Though Christians today are not ambassadors of Christ as were the apostles, we still teach and preach for men to obey the Gospel. In 2 Corinthians 5:20 Paul wrote, “*Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech (beg) [you] by us: we pray [you] in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.*” He continues in 6:1-2, “*We then, [as] workers together [with him], beseech (beg) [you] also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.*” (For he saith, *I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now [is] the accepted time; behold, now [is] the day of salvation.*)”

The bottom line is this. We are to worship and serve God. We are to teach and baptize. Extending the invitation (whenever, wherever) for people to respond to the Gospel and

obey it is what we are to do. Paul wrote, “*knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men*” (2 Cor. 5:11). We are persuading men/women to obey; and, to obey NOW, don’t wait.

What we often call “an invitation song” is simply an expedient, an encouragement, a pleading, for men to obey the Gospel. It is authorized by necessary inference (implication). It is appropriate, expedient, helpful in obeying the command to teach and baptize.

For your further consideration: The idea of not offering the invitation and giving people a special opportunity to obey the Gospel often comes from schools of “higher learning” (so-called). Many such institutions are “hot beds” of digression. Some are teaching and convincing students that the Lord’s supper can be observed any day of the week, as often or not as often as the local church determines. It’s being taught that the Lord’s supper can be mixed with a common meal (which is forbidden in 1 Cor. 11:22). They are teaching that mechanical instruments of music can be used when we sing. They are being fed “liberal and digressive soup” that women ought to take leading roles in congregations as preachers, deacons, even elders. Our young people (often not “well grounded”) are easily persuaded to accept this digressive teaching. Some are being taught that “mom and dad” are ignorant and just don’t know these “new” things; and, that the congregation back home is tied to tradition. Often, these are the kinds of “preachers” that are being hired by congregations and are being sold a “bill of goods” to depart from the tried and true.

Winds of digressive change are blowing strongly in so many places. And sadly, “our” schools are often not helping the matter; they are the source of promoting it!

HEAR — John 6:44-45

BELIEVE — John 8:24; Heb. 11:6

REPENT — Luke 13:3,5;

Acts 17:30

CONFESS — Acts 8:37;

Rom. 10:9-10

BAPTIZED — Mark 16:16;

Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21

FAITHFUL — 1 Cor. 15:58;

Rev. 2:10

Elder's COLUMN

A LITTLE HUMILITY PLEASE A CALL TO PRAYER

Rusty Stark

Today we are calling for a little humility because it takes humility to approach the Lord in prayer.

Luke 18:10-14, “Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. ¹¹The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men [are], extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. ¹²I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. ¹³And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as [his] eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. ¹⁴I tell you, this man went down to his house justified [rather] than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”

In this great parable, Jesus deals with humility as expressed in prayer. Certainly this has a broader application than prayer, but it is just as certain about prayer. The conclusion of this is found in verse 14: If we exalt ourselves, we will be abased (brought low); if we humble ourselves we will be exalted.

Our public prayers should be **motivated by humility**, and they should also be expressions of our humility. Humility in prayer is as natural as breathing.

- Only the one who is humble enough to see his needs and his dependence upon God will desire to pray.
- Prayer is to a being greater than we are; otherwise, why would we ask him for help and for blessings?
- Every request made in prayer is an admission of need.
- Every plea for forgiveness is an acknowledgment of our guilt.

Regarding specifics, Jesus teaches us several things about prayer (Matt. 6:5-15).

- Prayer must not be done to be seen of men (v.5).
- We must not pray canned prayers; i.e. empty repetitions of

the same words over and over again (v.7).

- Our prayers must be addressed to the Father (v.9). Though there are three in the godhead, our prayers are directed to the Father.
- Our prayers must be reverent and respectful — “Hallowed be thy name” (v.9). In prayer, we bow before the greatness of our God.
- Our prayers must be concerned with God’s will being accomplished (v.10).
- As we pray, we should acknowledge our dependence on God and ask for his continued care and providence — “give us this day...” (v.11).
- We must have a forgiving attitude when we pray, realizing that we need God’s continued forgiveness (v.12).
- We pray for God to help us overcome evil and protect us from harm (v.13).

Paul and James give additional specifics about prayer:

- We are to let our requests be made known unto God (Phil. 4:6).
- Our prayers should be characterized by thankfulness (Phil. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:1-2; 1 Thess. 5:18; Eph. 5:20).
- We are to pray for leaders and for all men in authority (1 Tim. 2:1-2).
- When we pray in public we must not only think of ourselves, but others who are listening to the prayer. Will they be edified (1 Cor. 14:16-17)?
- We must not pray to simply fulfill our own desires (James 4:3).

Prayer should be an exercise in humility. We should not pray to exalt ourselves. Prayer is not a time to show off our vocabularies and our skill of oratory. Prayer is not a time to remind others of our spiritual attributes and accomplishments.

There are **things to remember** when we pray:

- It is by God’s grace and mercy

that he listens to our prayers. 1 Peter 3:12, “For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.” 1 Peter 5:7, “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.”

- We cannot come to God based on our own goodness, wisdom, or strength. Isaiah 64:6, “But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.”
- It is due to the work and righteousness of our High Priest that we can come boldly before the throne of God. Hebrews 4:14-16, “Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast [our] profession. ¹⁵For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as [we are, yet] without sin. ¹⁶Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

A Little Humility, Please.

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PRAYER

- Must be directed to God the Father. Matt. 6:9;
- Must be in the name of Christ. John 14:13,14; 16:23
- Must be offered in faith. Matt. 21:22
- Must be in the right spiritual condition. John 15:7; Psa. 66:18
- Must be with the right motive. James 4:3; Col. 3:17
- Must be according to God’s Will. 1 John 5:14; Prov. 28:9

Planned Parenthood...

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been harvesting body parts from aborted babies and selling them to research laboratories. Their little arms and legs are sold for \$75 each. The brain, kidneys, and heart sell for more money because they are more valuable. It was said in one of the videos that a baby aborted at 11.6 weeks could provide three samples. Some of these babies are torn apart in the womb and then collected on glass pie plates when the mother ejects them. Others are harvested after the little body has been removed from the womb. Yes, they are torn limb from limb and cut apart piece by piece.

Second Timothy 3:13, says: *“But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.”* Those who sell body parts from these dead babies are truly deceived. They see no harm in what they are doing. They talk about the sale and distribution of the body parts with no shame, guilt, or remorse at all. One of the ladies in a video talked about her need to get as much for the parts as she could so

she could purchase a Lamborghini. Planned Parenthood also tries to deceive the public and has for years. They have hidden the sale of body parts from the mothers who destroyed their babies and from the general public as well. Even when the videos began to surface, Planned Parenthood tried to deny what the videos showed.

It is high time for Christians to arise from their sleep and take appropriate action against these crimes against humanity and transgressions against the will of God.

First, we should demand that all those who are associated with the harvesting and sell of baby body parts are prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. Our laws state: “It shall be unlawful for any person to knowingly acquire, receive, or otherwise transfer any human fetal tissue for valuable consideration” (42U.S. Code289G-2).

Second, we should be doing all we can to cease funding this evil organization called “Planned Parenthood.” Our tax dollars pay for about a fourth of the expenses of this organization. We need to bombard our Congressmen and Senators with calls and letters and let them know we no

longer want our money going to this godless institution. This organization needs to be torn asunder, not by violence, but by teaching God's word and the laws of the land.

Third, we need to elect officials who hold to the idea of the sanctity of life. We need men and women in office who love the unborn child and who hate the practice of abortion. The holocaust that has transpired in our nation since Roe v. Wade needs to come to an end. Since the U.S. Supreme Court's infamous ruling in 1973 through 2014, well over 57.5 million babies have been put to death, slaughtered, in their mother's womb — averaging 1.37 million per year.

Fourth, we must become very vocal in our proclamation of the teachings of God's Word about life and murder. We can no longer remain silent. We can no longer sit idly by and do nothing. We must say that enough is enough. Those in the wrong need to know that those in the right are strong and will fight for the values and principles that are higher than any man-made laws or man-made decisions on earth.

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GOD'S WORD IN OUR HEART

“Try word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee” (Psalm 119:11). One should fill his heart and mind with the Word of God because...

1) It **SAVES** and keeps us **SAVED**. *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith”* (Rom. 1:16-17). *“Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls”* (James 1:21).

2) It **STRENGTHENS** us. *“And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified”* (Acts 20:32).

3) It **SUPPLIES** the Answers to the fundamental questions in life. Where did I come from (Gen. 1:26-27; Acts 17:26-29)? Why am I here (Eccl. 12:13; Phil. 1:21)? Where am I going (Matt. 7:21-23; 25:46; 2 Cor. 5:10)?

4) It **SUSTAINS and SETTLES** us in trying times:

- In times of despair and discouragement (Psalm 119:143),
- In times of doubt (Heb. 11B12),

- In times of disbelief (Psa. 119:81),
- In times of desperation (Psa. 119:105),
- In times of death of love ones (Rev. 14:13; Psa. 116:15),
- In times of dealing with Satan and sin (Psa. 119:11; Matt. 4:1-11).

Let us fill our hearts and minds with the precious Word of God so that we can:

- Teach it (Matt. 28:19-20; 1 Peter 3:15),
- Trust it and depend on it to guide us in this life (Prov. 3:5-6; Col. 3:17),
- Travel with it in this life (2 Peter 1:3; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Jer. 10:23),
- Triumph over the trials, troubles and temptations in this life (Psa. 119:11; James 1:1-5),
- Treasure it living in Hope of Eternal life (Matt. 6:19-21; 2 Tim. 4:6-8; Phil. 1:21).

What are we filling our hearts and minds with? If we don't fill it with God's Word, it will be filled with something else. That something else will disrupt our minds and destroy us spiritually. What we need is God's Word — the Bible.

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BE POSITIVE PREACHER

Tom Wacaster

“Be positive preacher!” Now there is a good suggestion. The person who dwells wholly on the negative and presents a message absent of joy and cheerfulness and optimism, should re-examine his Christianity. Certainly we preachers need to proclaim the “good news” of the Gospel and hold forth the promise of hope that can be found in Christ. A steady diet of the consequences of sin, horrors of hell, or the wrath of God, would be quite discouraging to those who have to listen to us preach week after week.

Faithful, dedicated, committed, and hard working brethren need to be reassured that they can obtain the crown of life, and that the battle against our adversary can be successfully fought and won (2 Tim. 4:7-8). Did not John tell us, *“These things have I written unto you, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, even unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God”* (1 John 5:13). So, let’s preach that message, and shout it from the roof tops. But at the same time, let us not abuse the call for positive preaching. Let us make sure that our definition of “positive preaching” is true to Biblical principles. The general attitude toward a “positive ministry” has come to mean toleration, avoidance of judgmental statements, and ministering to the felt-needs of those with whom we come in contact. The end result is a “market based” message that appeals to the wishes of the masses rather than the demands of the Almighty God.

The present emphasis upon those things noted above has produced a search for a church that is exciting, progressive, non-judgmental, and loving (to name only a few of the glowing “adjectives” which some think ought to characterize our preaching). Doubtless, most of us would say that our Lord conducted a “positive” ministry while upon this earth. Would any dare suggest that our Lord was “negative” and “hyper-critical?” Certainly not. But while Jesus held forth forgiveness and hope, He likewise dealt with sin in a most forceful manner (take a close look at Matthew 23).

I have even heard that our approach to those lost in sin should be some sort of “back-door” strategy. “Let’s be careful lest we offend.” “Preaching of that nature will drive people away.” “Too much scripture will make people angry.” Sound familiar? Now take a close look at God’s approach! When Israel was in decline, morality at an all time low, religion false and hypocritical from priest down to the people, it was then that God sent the fiery, outspoken prophets. Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Amos would not have lasted two weeks in some congregations now crying for positive, pleasing, and palatable preaching.

God, give us preachers like the prophets, men who are not afraid to convict us of our sins and point the way to heaven, rather than coddle us and leave us drowning in our sin and separated from the Almighty.

In what little bit of mission work that I have been privileged to do, it seems that the plain preaching that is so neglected in our country, is welcomed elsewhere. Souls in Russia, starving for the Living Word, want a plain spoken message. Like two ships passing in the night, those who have lived in the darkness of Communism welcome the light, while those of us who have enjoyed more than 200 years of freedom and easy access to the Bible, run from the light.

Is it not interesting that the Gospel is flourishing and the church growing in those areas where fundamental truth is forcefully preached, while “positive preaching” is filling our buildings with half-hearted, unconverted numbers? Let us listen to the words of Jesus: *“And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov’d. ²¹But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God”* (John 3:19-21).

Let us preach a positive message, but make sure it is positively Biblical.
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CAIN AND ABEL

Cain and Abel were sons of Adam and Eve (Gen. 4:1-2). Abel was a keeper of sheep while Cain was a tiller of the ground (Gen. 4:2). These two brothers offered a sacrifice to God. Cain offered of the “fruit of the ground” and Abel offered of his flock. God accepted Abel’s offering but rejected Cain’s. This rejection caused Cain to become angry and he vented his anger by killing his brother (Gen. 4:3-8).

In studying the whole Bible we learn Cain disobeyed God in the sacrifice he made. Abel offered by faith (Heb. 11:4). Paul writes, *“faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”* (Rom. 10:17). This verse proves that Cain and Abel were told what to sacrifice. Cain chose to sacrifice what he wanted and disobeyed God. God would have accepted his sacrifice if he had obeyed (Gen. 4:7). Instead of repenting and obeying God, he killed his brother. Abel was the only one right in his sacrifice (Heb. 11:4). Cain was in sin because he did not do what God told him to do (1 John 3:12). It is sad to see Cain turn from God just to have his own way (Jude 11).

Cain’s bad example is a great lesson for us today (cf. Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11). Many people are members of churches that men established. Instead of obeying God, they began their own church (Matt. 15:9; Mark 7:7-9). Instead of wearing the name of Christ they wear the names of men (1 Cor. 1:10-13). Men replace the plan God gave for man’s salvation with their own plan (Matt. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16). Some churches accept fornicators and adulterers into their worship but God says it is a sin to do so (Matt. 19:9; 1 Cor. 6:9-11). God gave command to sing in worship but man changed the worship by adding mechanical instruments of music. There is no authority to add instruments to singing (Col. 3:17). Many more things could be added to this list of changes but these are enough to show that the spirit of Cain is alive and well today (Jude 11).

Do you have the disobedient spirit of Cain or the obedient spirit of Abel? It’s not too late to change.

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WHAT WOULD LIFE BE LIKE WITHOUT THE LORD?

Roger D. Campbell

What a horrible thought! I cannot imagine trying to make it through life without having “the good Shepherd” (John 10:11). He is the “one mediator between God and men” (1 Tim. 2:5). He is the “King of kings and Lord of lords” (Rev. 19:16). But, what if? What if Jesus had never come into this world “to give his life as a ransom” (Mark 10:45)? What if I had refused to believe and obey the Gospel? Or, what if I became a follower of God’s Son but later decided “to turn from the holy commandment” (2 Peter 2:21)? Friend, what kind of life would it be if we had to live it without the Lord?

It would be A Life Without True Meaning. Jesus came that we might have life, and that we might have it more abundantly (John 10:10). Aren’t we thankful that He did! Jesus once told His apostles, “...without me ye can do nothing” (John 15:5). But on the other hand, as the apostle Paul said, we “can do all things” through Him (Phil. 4:13). The “whole” of man is to fear the Lord and keep His commandments. The Bible says so (Eccl. 12:13). Yes, without the Lord, our life would be a life without true meaning.

It would also be A Life Without A Totally Reliable Pattern Or Model To Imitate. There are a lot of really fine people in this world. Some of them are worthy of imitation because they demonstrate in their lives wonderful behavior, pure speech, and a respectful attitude. Such rare people are a good pattern to follow most of the time. If you have read the Bible, you know that no mere human is perfect. No mere human is a good example in every aspect of living all of the time. Each person makes mistakes. The Bible says that “all have sinned” (Rom. 3:23). But not Jesus. He “did no sin,” and that is why He, and He alone, is One about Whom we can say to ourselves and others, “...ye should follow his steps” (1 Peter 2:21-22). Take Jesus out of the picture and there is no completely reliable model to follow.

Life without the Lord would be A Life Without Direction. Where am I going in my life? Where should I be heading in life? Jesus said, “*I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life*” (John 8:12). Following Jesus is the path of light. Through His word, the Lord provides a lamp for our feet and a light for our path (Psalm 119:105). Jesus has “the words of eternal life” (John 6:68). Without Him we would have no clue about where and how we should walk.

Life without the Lord would be A Life Without Forgiveness / Salvation. The wages of sin is death because sin separates a person from God (Rom. 6:23; Isa. 59:1-2). We could never devise a plan by which we could save ourselves. Thank God that He loved us so much that He sent Jesus “into the world to save sinners” (1 Tim. 1:15). The Bible says that in Jesus “*we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace*” (Eph. 1:7). Because Jesus is the only Savior, His is the only “*name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved*” (Acts 4:12). Without Him we could never enjoy the forgiveness of sins. Without forgiveness, we would always carry the burden and guilt of sin in our heart. How horrible it would be to have to face life without the Lord and His marvelous salvation. We should continually express our gratitude for all the Lord has done to provide us with the remission of sins.

A life without the Lord would be a Life Without Hope. People that live without hope are miserable indeed. Jesus is the hope of the world (1 Tim. 1:1). Through Jesus we can live “in hope of eternal life” (Titus 1:2). Christians have been begotten by God to possess a lively hope. That hope is to obtain the inheritance that the Lord has prepared — “*an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven*” (1 Peter 1:3-4). That is the only hope that is really worthy of man’s interest and effort.

What would my life be like without the Lord? It would be a life without true meaning, a life without a totally reliable model to imitate, a life without direction, a life without forgiveness, and a life without hope. The great thing is that none of us has to live such an empty and vain life without the Lord and His blessings. The choice is ours: we can either live life with Him, or live life without Him. Let us choose wisely, for this choice will determine our eternal destiny. To live with Him, of course, means to live according to His will. Are you doing that?

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