

Rom. 14:19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.



John 8:32 And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.

**September
6
2015**

A REVIVAL OF THE TRUTH

Jim Stauffer

GOSPEL MEETING

September 13-16

**Sunday 9:30 AM - "The Rock of our Refuge:
Navigating Faith in Adversity"**

**Sunday 10:20 AM - The Hidden Wounds of the
Faithful**

**Sunday 5:00 PM - The Journey of Faith in the
Life of Abraham**

**Monday 7:00 PM - Radical Repentance:
Overcoming the Suffering of Our Own Sin**

**Tuesday 7:00 PM - Why Does God Allow
Suffering?**

**Wednesday 7:00 PM - The Resurrection
Morning: The Victory Over Sin and Death**

These lessons will be Bible based. They will be messages Christ has delivered to all men by way of men who were inspired by the Holy Spirit. (2 Pet. 1:20,21; 1 Cor. 2:10-13) That means they will be the truth. Jesus claimed ownership of the truth for Himself and God, the Father. (John 17:17; 18:37)

Truth is what honest men have always sought when they turn to the Bible. Meetings like this one were called "revivals" a few years back. Generally that term meant a restoration of a lively interest in spiritual matters. Nothing can revive our spiritual interest more than an examination or re-examination of God's word, the truth.

There are two primary reactions when people neglect or avoid the truth on any subject. It provokes anger when someone deliberately distorts or even openly denies the truth. We see this far too often in politicians seeking higher office with expressed authority. The other reaction is sadness when someone ignorantly violates truth on an issue. We realize both that person and those with whom they have influence are destined to be deluded as they seek the result truth would offer.

Avoiding the truth in government and politics will lead a city, state or nation to economic or civil turmoil. While avoiding the truth provided by God in His word will lead to eternal destruction. A much greater level of suffering. (2 Thess. 1:8)

Why do you suppose citizens tolerate dishonesty (avoidance of the truth) in governing officials? While I cannot answer for everyone there does seem to be a general malaise about selecting the officials who lead our communities and our country. A very small percentage of eligible voters actually vote in the free elections our nation provides. It seems the attitude that says they are all dishonest prevails among the majority of the citizens. Combined with that is the attitude it will be the same no matter who we elect. It will all work out in the end. As a result we often find ourselves led by men who are self seeking and use the office for their own wealth rather than for the good of the community.

Why do you suppose people who are generally religious tolerate ignorance or dishonesty in religious leaders? One primary reason is they depend upon these men for their leadership and do not compare what they say to God's word. They trust them. Another reason is such folks subconsciously doubt the return of Jesus in judgment to grant eternal life to the faithful and condemnation to those who are not. (John 5:28,29) Peter dealt with this attitude in his second epistle. He tells of those who said, *Where is the promise of his coming?* (2 Pet. 3:4) He reminded them that Noah preached for 120 years to men who turned a deaf ear only to be consumed by the flood of Gen. 6-8. He then proclaimed to them the second coming of the Lord. **2 Pet. 3:8** *But forget not this one thing, beloved, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is longsuffering to you-ward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. 10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up.*

It is therefore imperative each and everyone of us concern himself with the truth of God's word.

This series of lessons is presented with the idea of allowing God's word to take precedence over the ideas of men as the apostles said in the beginning of the church. **Acts 5:29** *But Peter and the apostles answered and said, We must obey God rather than men.*

CHRISTIANS IN ANTIOCH

“So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch” (Acts 11:26). Even though the matter of Gentiles being accepted into the kingdom without circumcision was not yet settled completely (at least in the minds of many Jews) the gospel preached by men such as Barnabas and Paul continued to produce good results. Peter opened the door for the Gentiles; now they are hearing and accepting God’s word (Acts 11:20). Repercussions from the stoning of Stephen were still being felt (Acts 11:19); but these dedicated saints continued to reach out to all who would listen. The fact that preachers from Cyprus and Cyrene came to Antioch to work indicates the further expansion of the kingdom. *“And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord” (Acts 11:21).* These early saints were doing what Jesus said to do: *“You shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8).* The Apostles may have led the way; many others joined in. Geographical and cultural expansion was taking place.

Acts 11:22 says: *“Then news of these things came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch.”* Indicating approval of the conversion of the Gentiles, the church in Jerusalem (presumably the elders), wanted Barnabas to travel to Antioch in order to teach and encourage these new Christians. The same thing happened earlier in Luke’s narrative (Acts 8:14). Barnabas, the “Son of Encouragement” (Acts 4:36), has been called “the man with the biggest heart in the church” (Barclay as quoted in Acts, Stott, 203).

When Barnabas got to Antioch (estimated population of 500,000 in the 1st c.) what did he find? He found people who had been exposed to and continued to benefit from the *“grace of God” (Acts 11:23).* You can see the grace of God in lives that have been changed by the gospel. The *encourager encouraged* the new Christians to continue in wholehearted service to the Lord. Soon, many others joined the number of saints. Saul (not Paul until Acts 13:13) joined Barnabas in the work of preaching. We are not surprised to hear that Barnabas was willing to share the “limelight” with Saul. Together, along with the church, they met together, worshiped, studied, and grew.

Who were these people? Acts 6:1 says they were *“disciples.”* Acts 9:2 says they were people of *“the Way.”* Acts 9:13 says they were *“saints.”* Acts 9:30 says they were *“brethren.”* Acts 10:45 says they were *“believers.”* Acts 11:26 says they were *“Christians.”*

They were marked, identified, and recognized as people of Jesus Christ, the Messiah. The designation *Christian* is a powerful one. *Christian* provokes ire, anger, persecution, and derision. *Christian*, in the minds and hearts and lives of true believers, evokes joy, happiness, and thankfulness. It identifies who and what the people of God are—people who hear and obey the gospel. All that we are and ever hope to be is because

of Jesus Christ. Let us wear His name.

Randy Harshbarger

IMMORALITY RAGES

From 1920 until 1933 it was against the law in the United States to manufacture, sell or transport alcohol. This time was known as Prohibition, and it was a wildly unsuccessful experiment, as laws were continually broken, especially in urban areas. People wanted to drink alcohol, and rather than making a large segment of the population criminals, Prohibition was repealed.

Today, not only is the manufacture, sale and transportation of alcohol legal, it is big business. Only the most radical of religious conservatives hold to abstinence as a moral conviction. In fact, the manufacture and consumption of marijuana is also legal in Colorado, and nationally 53% of all Americans support its legalization. Among 18-34 year olds that number rises to 68%.

When broadcast television exploded in the 1950's, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulated broadcasts, prohibiting "obscene or indecent" programming. These terms were defined relative to contemporary community standards. As a result, sexual activity was not depicted, and was alluded to only in the most indirect ways. Married couples, when seen in their bedroom, slept in separate beds.

Today, while "obscene or indecent" programming is still prohibited, community standards have declined precipitously. Sexual themes are common, the depiction of sexual activity is overt, and some programs have sexual relationships, humor and drama as the central aspect of their stories.

In 1973, the legality of abortion was a matter left to the states. Thirty states in the Union had laws prohibiting abortion, and in the other twenty there were severe restrictions on abortion (only in instances of rape, or to save the life of the mother). That year the Roe V Wade decision by the United States Supreme Court invalidated all those laws, and made abortion legal in the entire United States. Today, popular opinion is rather evenly divided depending upon how pollsters frame questions about abortion. Regardless of the polls, since 1973 an estimated 58 million abortions have been performed in the United States.

Until 1973, homosexuality was listed by the American Psychiatric Association in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. At that time, the act of homosexual sex was actually illegal in most states. In fact, until 1962 sodomy was a felony in all fifty states. Pressure from changing social norms and an increasingly politically active homosexual community led to its removal from the manual.

In 2003 federal justices struck down all remaining sodomy laws. In the last twelve years homosexual activists have changed the minds of sufficient numbers to where a majority of Americans consider homosexuality normal and moral, and support homosexual marriage. Some states have legalized homosexual marriage. The gay agenda has been rebranded as the LGBT agenda, (lesbian, gay, bisexual

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& transgender). The term cisgender has been coined, as a complement to transgender. If you are a cisgender individual, your sex agrees with your gender. If you are transgender, your sex is different from your gender. Many trumpet the rights of a transgender individual to live as the gender with which they identify. Some have surgeries to superficially conform their "sex" to their perceived gender. Many are demanding that the federal government mandate such procedures to be covered by medical insurance.

Example after example could be given of the changes to societal mores in the last few decades in America. It is obvious to those who accept God's standard of morality as revealed in the Bible, that today immorality is raging in our country. One must only look to the antediluvian world (cf. **Genesis 6:5-7**), the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (cf. **Genesis 18:17-33**), or the rebellion of Judah (cf. **Isaiah 59:1-15**), to see that God repays ungodliness with judgment.

Our nation is destined to fall if it does not turn from such ungodliness. We must take care to not be sullied by the evil that surrounds us. The prophet proclaimed, *"According to their deeds, accordingly He will repay, fury to His adversaries, recompense to His enemies; the coastlands He will fully repay. So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun; when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him"* (**Isaiah 53:18-19**).

By Stan Cox

The Importance of Thoughts

If you are concerned about your character, your conduct, your life and your destiny, THEN BE CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR THOUGHTS. *"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life"* (**Prov. 4:23**). The heart is the mind, and the mind is the center of thoughts. *"For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he"* (**Prov. 23:7**). A man may not be what he appears to be, but he is what he thinks.

What goes into your mind, then, is extremely important. Be careful about the interests you acquire, the tastes you cultivate, the desires you develop. They shape what goes into your mind. The conversations you listen to, the scenes you observe, the movies you view, the TV programs you tune into, the newspapers, magazines and books you read, the songs by which you are entertained, the jokes you laugh at, the things you are taught all have a part in feeding information into your mind.

You evaluate and monitor all that you hear and see. Your standard for evaluation and your conscience are vital and play their roles. You may seek out or receive what is vulgar or distorted, or you may reject and refuse it. You may pursue and embrace what is wholesome and true, or you may have no interest in it and neglect it. Be cautious, particular and selective about what goes into your mind. If you allow garbage to go in, then garbage will come out in the form of words and deeds.

What goes on in your mind is also extremely

important. Be careful about your thoughts, meditations, desires, ambitions, daydreams and fantasies. You determine what goes on in your mind. You are the master of it because you have control over it. It is your own little secret world -- except that God knows all about it, and will one day bring it to light when you have to answer for it in the judgment (**Eccl. 12:14; Acts 17:30-31; Rom. 2:16; 2 Cor. 5:10**). And sooner or later it will find expression in your life and make itself known.

We cannot be like God without thinking the thoughts of God. We cannot know the thoughts of God apart from the revelation of the things of God in the word of God (**1 Cor. 2:11-13**). We cannot have the thoughts of God in our hearts apart from reverent study of and meditation upon the word of God, coupled with a sincere desire to do the will of God (**Jn. 7:17**).

by Bill Crews

STOP Means STOP

by Jamie DeLong

Perhaps you heard about the man who was traveling down a country road and saw an intersection and STOP sign ahead. As he approached the sign he looked both ways on the crossing road and, not seeing any traffic, drove through the intersection without stopping.

A highway patrolman saw the man and stopped him in order to give him a ticket. The driver argued that he did not deserve a ticket since he slowed down, looked both ways and went through the intersection safely. Although he did not stop, he accomplished the same goal.

The officer asked the man to step out of the car. When the man was out the officer began to beat him with his night stick. The man yelled for the officer to STOP. The officer replied, "Do you want me to STOP or just slow down?"

The officer made his point, and the driver accepted the ticket.

The driver's argument is very much like the one made by man in the religious world. That is, as long as one achieves the goal of God's commands, the specifics of how they are carried out is unimportant. This has been described as keeping the "spirit of the law" rather than the "word of the law". This concept is the mainstay of the protestant world and those teaching the "new hermeneutics" among the churches of Christ.

Can we obey the "spirit of the law" without adhering to the "letter of the law"? Jesus asked, *"But why do you call Me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"* (**Lk. 6:46**). Can one rightly claim allegiance to Christ without "doing the things" He commands? Jesus said, *"If you love Me, keep My commandments"* (**John 14:15**).

Obedience involves doing what is said in the way we are told to do it. One who claims to follow the "spirit of the law" (serving Christ through work and worship) without following the letter of the law (working and worshipping in the manner described in the New Testament) is actually following neither. When the Lord says "STOP", we must stop.

Eph. 2:19 So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, 20 being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; 21 in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord;

1Pet. 2:9 But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Psa. 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.

HOURS OF WORSHIP

Sunday A.M. 9:30 Bible Study

Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship

Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

Visitors welcome

We conduct in home Bible Studies

We offer Correspondence Courses

Evangelist and Editor Jim Stauffer

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NEWS AND NOTES:

J.R. DANIEL, GRANT CLOTHIER,
AND JAN PATRICK CONTINUE ON
THE PRAYER LIST. JESSIE
GIBSON IS IN REHAB AT
NOTTINGHAM HEALTH AND REHAB

STEVE WIMP IS AT MID-
AMERICA REHABILITATION
CENTER, ROOM 203

BIBLE CLASSES: SUNDAY:
GOSPEL OF JOHN - RON PECK

WEDNESDAY: SCHEME OF
REDEMPTION - JIM STAUFFER

SUNDAY AM SERMON: SAVED BY
FAITH OR SAVED BY WORKS



What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

Repent of sins - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10