

A lesson in remembering to be ourselves: For instance, a preacher stood before the congregation and said, "The best years of my life were spent in the arms of a woman that wasn't my wife!" The crowd was shocked until he said, "That woman was my mother." Laughter followed and his lesson was then well received.

Another preacher heard this joke and decided to use it. He was usually not good with jokes. He stood before the congregation and said, "The best years of my life were spent in the arms of a woman that wasn't my wife!" The crowd made an audible gasping sound. His mind went blank on the punch line and he simply said, "and I can't remember who she was." Needless to say his lesson was not remembered at all.



April 17, 2011

Respecting Our Adversary Jim Stauffer

The best way to overcome an adversary is to prepare oneself by learning all he can about him.

We all know this. We see this in almost every aspect of life. Advertisers are experts at overcoming the objections and answering the questions of the buying public. Coaches of athletic teams prepare their team to exploit certain weaknesses of the opponent. Political adversaries attempt to expose the weaknesses of the position of each other on aspects of governance. It is the wise thing to do in a competitive situation.

We have such an "adversary." Peter warned us, "Be sober, be watchful, your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." The truth is, if we knew there was a lion in the neighborhood we would not go outside or allow anyone we loved to venture into the danger zone. This begs the question, "Why do we take risks in spiritual areas of life since there is a lion waiting for us there?"

Paul tells the Corinthians he forgave a penitent brother to preclude any advantage Satan would try to gain in the matter. He said, "we are not ignorant of his devices." (2 Cor. 2:11) Later he explained rejection of the gospel is because, "the god of this world (Satan) hath blinded the minds of the unbelieving that the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not dawn upon them." (2 Cor 4:4) He also warns them of being deceived by false teachers by reminding them of how Satan deceived Eve in the garden. (2 Cor. 11:3)

Brethren it appears we are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of our adversary, the devil. Sometimes we just do not fear him enough for whatever reasons.

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Send a Copy to a Friend

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MEETING TIMES
 Sunday - Bible Classes: 9:30AM
 Worship Services 10:20AM & 6:00PM
 Wednesday - Bible Classes 7:00PM

Lenexa church of Christ

All the warning in the world will not help one who doubts his need for it. The one who thinks Paul was being too extreme when he said to “abstain from every appearance of evil” is flirting with danger.

I grew up in a small rural community in western Illinois. My parents like all good parents taught me several principles to guide me in doing both the right thing, but also the safe thing. In the 1940’s many people did not own automobiles and therefore some would occasionally hitch a ride or on the other hand offer a ride to someone walking. We were always taught not to hitch a ride or to ride with anyone we did not know.

Two friends of mine walked with me approximately one mile to the Western Illinois Fair in our hometown. On the way home we decided to hitch a ride to avoid the mile long walk home. I threw out my hand, thumb up, at an oncoming vehicle and he pulled over to pick us up.

We jumped into the car, thankful for the ride and he headed toward town. He asked us where we were going and we told him to let us off in the middle of the town square. He then began to wonder out loud just what he should do with three little boys. He mentioned various things such as taking us down to the Illinois river and throwing us in. He did all this in a very serious tone. He was not joking and we all began to get very nervous. Each time he would suggest some evil thing we would counter with a request to be let out once we reached town.

Now a 9 year old already possesses a vivid imagination and by this time mine was running wild. Even at that age, I immediately recognized my situation was due to my disobedience of my parents instructions.

Just as he reached the town square, he turned into a parking spot. As he turned off the engine to the car, he turned to me and said, “Aren’t you Loyd Stauffer’s son?” I quickly answered affirmatively. He then explained he knew this all along because he worked with my father in the grocery business. He further said he was certain my father would not approve of me hitchhiking on the highway and that this should be a lesson to me in the future to heed his advice. With that he allowed us to exit the car. What a relief!

This story illustrates a naivete found in youth that can allow an evil person to harm or destroy the innocent. How do we overcome? We teach, educate, enlighten. We can never expect events to work out well as in the story. I learned from experience a lesson my parents tried to teach me the painless way.

So, what is the lesson to be learned. First, experience is not always the best teacher. Many claim that is true but in many cases permanent damage is done in an experience such as this.

The same holds true spiritually. If we make choices that violate the instruction we have received from our Father in heaven, we may suffer irreparable damage. If we

continually make choices in our entertainment or the conduct of our personal lives that are either sinful or dangerously close to the line, we will risk being overtaken in a fault. We are not invincible. Yes, God has promised not to allow us to be tempted beyond our ability to resist, but He has also demanded we resist. James said, “resist the devil and he will flee from you.” He followed that with the promise, “Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you.” (Jas. 4:7,8)

The question we need to ask ourselves is whether we indeed are drawing nigh to God with our choices. When we disobey God, evil awaits. The choice is ours.

For The Lack of Wood

by Bob Dickey

“For lack of wood the fire goeth out; And where there is no whisperer, contention ceaseth. As coals are to hot embers, and wood to fire, so is a contentious man to inflame strife...” (Proverbs 26:20-21).

Slander and gossip are said to be like a fire; they heat up the spirit and cause us to speak inflammatory things. This kind of speech burns up all that is good. It will inflame and embroil families, friends, work associates, and brethren -- as well as enemies. All of our society bears the marks of fires that have raged out of control, destroying what is good and precious. And where does the fire start? It is the whispering gossip or slanderer, according to Solomon, that is often the one who fuels the fires of contention.

In the New Testament, James writes about the evils of the tongue and says: *“Behold, how much wood is kindled by how small a fire! And the tongue is a fire: the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defileth the whole body and setteth on fire the wheel of nature, and is set on fire by hell...” (James 3:5-6).*

Brethren what we must all do is put an end to the fueling of these fires! We must stop the talking that hurts and destroys others. When the whispering and gossiping stop, the fire will go out. When the rumors, evil reports, and tale-bearings cease, the contention will cease.