



THE CHALLENGER

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PROCLAIMING THE WORD TO THE WORLD

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Why? Here Is the Answer

BY THE EDITOR

If you are to benefit from this discourse, I must identify the subject matter which I am endeavoring to answer. There has been a continual increase in the lack of interest in the Bible. Why? Genuine Bible study is no longer a vital part of teaching in evangelical churches. Why? I well know the interest in biblical preaching and teaching has waned tremendously during the years of my ministry. Why? Doctrinal books no longer sell at our Bible bookstores. Why?

Actually these questions are easily answered in the very Book being ignored. A few readers might want to know the answer to this question, but most of you will sleep on, satisfied with the status quo. If everything God wants us to know is in His Book, then why do we not read and study it? The only logical answer one can come to is that people do not want to know. Why? Could it be because this Book is useful for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction? (II Timothy 3:16) In other words, a repetition of that reaction in the Garden of Eden: "Don't tell me what to do." God pity the person who wants to be in control; the heat of hell is not far from that individual.

Both to the sinner and the Christian come God's plain commands. Let's hear God's commands to the Christian: "For He which has called you is holy, so be you holy in all manner of conversation (behavior), because it is written, BE YOU HOLY FOR I AM HOLY" (I Peter 1:15,16). FEAR NOT is a command repeated often in the Bible. "Be not anxious. Love one another." You will automatically do so if you are a genuine Christian. (There is no other kind.) "He that says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no occasion of stumbling in him" (I John 2:9,10) The Bible reveals only love or hate in its terminology. Here is another command: "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice" (Philippians 4:4). The Bible is filled with commandments of God. Read them, know them, and walk in obedience of them. You can do so with the strength of Christ within: "I can do all things through Christ, which strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13).

Why so many professing Christians still living in sin? God tells them not to miss their gathering at the church. Why are they not present when the doors are open? "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another and so much the more, as you see the day approaching" (Hebrews 10:25). God commands them to pray always and study His Word and proclaim it to everyone, everywhere. No funds are invested by them for such projects. Why are they not doing it? These three verses identify this crowd of hypocrites. "And this is the condemnation that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone that does evil hates the light, neither comes to the light, lest his deeds should be reproof. But he that does truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be manifest that they are wrought in God" (John 3:19-21).

The Pattern

I have watched this crowd for many years. After their supposed conversion, they sit always in front, but after awhile they migrate to the back. They stop coming early to greet their friends. The first service they begin to miss is prayer meeting, the week-night service. Then comes the Sunday evening service, followed by Sunday school. The morning worship service is the last to go. If not living according to biblical instruction, who wants to face its reproof and correction? (II Timothy 3:16)

Lack of Biblical Instruction

Many fall by the wayside because they did not meet the Lord Jesus Christ. They were not ready to be saved, for the Holy Spirit had not done His work of conviction. The necessity of repentance was not presented them. All they had to do was raise their hand, parrot the prayer of another, and then just believe in Jesus, His earthly name. Because of their action, God was obligated to keep His promise; thus, they were saved by what they did. NEVER! People are saved by the grace of God, not through any human effort. (Ephesians 2:8,9) The following verse says we have been worked upon by Him. God does an eternal work within us in the gift of eternal life. By the way, how long will God's work last? "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23). Remember, He is our Lord, Master, and Ruler, not merely a human Jesus. Never have I forgotten a missionary speaker in Detroit, Michigan. He had been the chairman of the mission

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Why? Here's the Answer (continued from page 1)

board of the largest missionary ministry in China. He was a broken man. His national Chinese leaders capitulated with the Communist takeover, and this was a devastating blow to him. He determined to find the reason. He looked us preachers in the eyes, with tears dripping off his chin, and said, "When I checked our seminary teaching of these workers, I discovered to my dismay that we never taught the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Our entire emphasis was Jesus of Nazareth rather than the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God." He pleaded with us to never make this horrible mistake.

"That You May Know"

Here is one of the three reasons for the book of I John to be written: "These things have I written to you that believe on the name of the Son of God; THAT YOU MAY KNOW that you have eternal life, and that you may believe on the name of the Son of God" (I John 5:13). The other two reasons for this book are that your joy may be full (verse 4) and that you do not sin, but if you do, you have an advocate Who is God's Son (2:1). To possess this gift of eternal life, God's Word says we must repent and trust Christ's sacrifice on the cross to be acceptable to His Father. His resurrection is ample proof. We personally embrace these truths and claim the eternal benefits for ourselves. If eternal life is a gift then the requirements for this life also must be a gift. This we learn in Ephesians 2:8-10.

No question will ever linger about a person becoming a Christian. It is God's work within the heart of an individual. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things become new" (II Corinthians 5:17) He will have passed from death to life, darkness into light, Satan's family into God's. We are born again unto spiritual life in Christ Jesus. Look at our blessings listed in Ephesians, the first chapter. In I John we learn that obedience is automatic (1:3-9). We will love one another with God's love within us. (Romans 5:5, I John 2:9-11) We have overcome the devil. (2:13,14) We will not love this present world and the things in it. (2:15,16) We will not continue in sin. (3:5-10) I like those words "HE MIGHT DESTROY THE WORKS OF THE DEVIL." (3:8) As Christians, we will keep His commandments and directions. (3:22-24) There are additional actions of the saved listed in this book of I John. There are additional verses that add to these few principles mentioned here. We do not and cannot do these things in order to be saved, but because of His miracle within us, He has produced a new birth. (John 3) God here lists the behavior of the saved: "By their fruit you shall know them" (Matthew 7:20). We do not judge whether people are saved or not — WE KNOW.

Some Questions

Does God mean it when declaring the blood of His Son cleanses us from all sin? If cleansed, how dare we be satisfied to continue under the power of sin? Has God placed us into His family for our continual battle with sin, the flesh, and the devil? Has God left us with a question as to our course of action, once saved? How long will everlasting life last? With His grace and eternity involved, has He communicated confidence and assurance of the wonderful transaction that places us in his family? Do we believe the teachings of men or the clear declaration of the Word of God?

Who Is Responsible?

God instituted the local church. We read of its beginning and early days in the historical book of Acts. Its leaders had clear responsibility teaching the Scriptures and refuting false doctrine. The elders (plural in the Bible) in each church shared this responsibility with their pastor. (I Timothy 5:17) They were to assist in disciplining members of their fellowship. (Matthew 18:15-17, I Timothy 5:20) Church leadership

has a great responsibility for its church's spiritual welfare and being in the position of God's blessing. The toleration of sin within the church takes a dreadful toll in its God-given responsibility. In no way does its failure give an excuse for the individual. All Christians (one by one) must some day stand before our judge at the Judgment Seat of Christ. It will be our deeds that are measured. (II Corinthians 5:10)

Lay the Bible aside and watch the consequences. Refuse to meet Bible standards and watch the spiritual ministry of the individual or church fade and eventually pass away. For all who abide by biblical standards, you set my heart to singing. How thrilling to meet and associate with people who have been born of the Spirit, with the fruit of such association with Christ shining forth. What a day of rejoicing we will have in the presence of the Lord. Because of the grace of God we will give Him glory, not only now, but through all eternity. In the meantime, let's be faithful and loyal to the One Who died for us. Let's submit ourselves to God's absolute authority. What joy and delight to know and do the will of God. We know the reason for many of our friends and relatives not serving the Lord with their whole heart. Let's be an example of a genuine Christian before them. What a privilege and exciting consequence.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world; but be you transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove (demonstrate) what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:1,2).



**NO AUGUST
CHALLENGER!**

LACK OF FUNDS

**WE HOPE TO BE BACK
ON SCHEDULE WITH
THIS SEPTEMBER ISSUE.**

Personal Word



It was another normal day with no particular expectations. The phone broke the silence of my prayer time. A lady from Sebastian, the town in which I live, was on the phone. We first met when I was speaking at a local church a number of years ago. They kept contact with me by our monthly publication. She spent time in our phone conversation to thank God for all the biblical truth she and her husband received from our ministry. She expressed appreciation for my personal interest in their welfare.

Years ago I received many phone calls from my daily and weekend radio and television ministry. I was always surprised at their warmth as they talked as

though knowing me for a lifetime. They often mentioned my personal conversational-style of speaking. To many, I was more than a preacher and became their friend. This fact was confirmed in my ministry to the Jamaican sugar cane cutters near the south end of Okeechobee lake. They greeted me with such warmth and assured me of their prayers. They would stand in line to shake my hand. One night a truck driver told of delivering the men to the fields for their day's labor. Over the loudspeaker on his truck, these workers would hear my daily 15-minute radio message of the Word. This was what created such warmth for the messenger. Always they addressed me as Brother Porter. What joy was ours to minister biblical truth to men from the Islands.

In this issue, I am opening my heart about today's spiritual condition. We not only have a more deteriorating condition in our country, but the same situation has happened within Christian organizations. For years I have concluded that we are producing paper doll preachers and Christian leaders. Way back when I first attended a Christian college, now a university, I realized they were producing graduates who pleased the school. The preachers parroted the emphases of their school leaders.

Many are taught today and in the past a diluted, cheapened gospel that is easy to accept but powerless to save. They are sincere but deceived people who claim to be saved. After all, they walked an aisle, raised their hand, and repeated a prayer to secure their spot in heaven, all without the knowledge of the need of repentance or submission to Jesus Christ. They were not taught the demands of Christ upon those who come to Him. They met a Jesus who is not Lord and Master of their lives from that moment on. He was, is, and always will be THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Back in 1948, when I went into my first pastorate, I could tell you where the preacher attended Bible school by his method of preaching, his content and emphasis. One Sunday, traveling toward California, we decided to take a shortcut that put us on a two-lane gravel road over the mountains. We decided to worship in the first church we came across. It was a typical mountain church with about 40 people present. Five minutes into the sermon I told Marian he was either a Moody or a Nyack boy. He was so surprised to meet this pastor and wife headed for General Council in Long Beach. Yes, he was a Nyack graduate in Mountain Missionary work.

Where is the preacher today who stands in the pulpit and teaches and preaches the Bible? Some take a biblical text and then preach from it into their own personal opinion and conclusion, while their people are starved to hear what THE LORD SAYS. Once a person becomes accustomed to this kind of teaching, he has little interest in the Word of God. Many people pick up this publication and wonder immediately what Dwight Porter thinks. Who cares? I don't! When you read or hear my various messages, you will learn what God declares in His Word on these different themes. My response is much lower than years ago. Why? We have gotten further away from a passion to be

rid of our sin and live a holy life as God says we will when saved and in his family.

A Sinner's Condition

I am now going to give you scriptural facts that few are willing to face. We go to hell because of our sinful works. "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man ACCORDING TO THEIR WORKS" (Revelation 20:13).

The Bible has a great deal to say about the mind. Here is where the real control of the sinner resides. "In whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them" (II Corinthians 4:4). All of us, being dead in trespasses and sin (Ephesians 2:1), have been victimized by the sin inherited from our first parents, Adam and Eve. We have learned from the fall in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3) that all of us have become self-centered, unwilling to accept any personal blame for our condition. (In Genesis 3:10 count the "I" of personal consciousness. Note verses 12, 13.) The prophet Isaiah stated that we have turned to our own way. (Isaiah 53:6) Count the self-assertions of Satan at the time of being cast out of heaven. (Isaiah 14:12-14)

God's Declaration

"For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

"Without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

"Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God" (II Timothy 3:2-4).

"Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debater, deceit, malignity; whispers,

"Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

"Without understanding, covenant-breakers, with natural affection, implacable, unmerciful" (Romans 1:29-31).

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Personal Word (continued from page 3)

Never will we see ourselves as we actually are in the presence of God until the Holy Spirit reveals this truth to us personally through the Scriptures. Hear God's plain command for all of us: "Jesus said unto him, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.

"This is the first and great commandment.

"And the second is like unto it, You shall love your neighbour as yourself"

(Matthew 22:37-39)

The solution to counteract Satan's battle for the mind is a transformation of the mind through regeneration. How in the world does God change our mind? He does it in regeneration, which happens the moment we repent of our sin and believe in the finished work of Christ on the cross through an empty tomb. With no human effort (Galatians 2:8-10) God will give us a new heart and mind. What a difference that is to everybody around us. (II Corinthians 5:17)

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5).

"That you put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

"And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Ephesians 4:22-24).

Give No Place to the Devil

WARNING! The content of this message is contrary to tradition and the voice of many teachers and preachers of our day. If under scriptural authority, you will discover God's answers to these questions. Your response to this biblical TRUTH will determine victory or defeat in your Christian life.

What you have just read is the title page to my message "GIVE NO PLACE TO THE DEVIL." Interested? Have you read it? How many times? How many copies have you shared with others? (They are without cost to you.) Answers are given to the following questions:

1. Do Christians battle with the devil?
2. Should we be talking about the devil and demons?
3. Do demons dwell in Christians and their homes?
4. Is there a demon for every sickness and difficulty?
5. What about Job's sickness?
6. What about Paul's thorn?

This small pocket-size, 24-page booklet is loaded with scripture and is more than the mere opinion of a man. Absolute and complete victory over sin and Satan is proclaimed. His defeat is clear in the Bible. How thrilling to learn God's absolute control. In this booklet I give you pastoral advice as to seven things for the Christian to do and seven more he should not do. Read and share this message with others.

~ FREE MESSAGE IN BOOKLET FORMAT ~

Yes, please send ____ copies of "Give No Place to the Devil"
(No cost, obligation, or financial appeal is involved.)

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*"Be you steadfast, unmovable, always
abounding in the work of the Lord . . .
You know your labor is not in vain
in the Lord"* I Corinthians 15:58

☆ ☆ ☆

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