

Voice of Baptists

"The Voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." **Isaiah 40:3**

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LITTLE IS MUCH, IF GOD IS IN IT

By J. H. Smith
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The title of this article isn't a text from the Bible, but the thought does run throughout the Scriptures, both in the Old and New Testaments, and if you would search the Holy Book I believe you would agree. God does take up little, weak things of this world and works in them and through them to bring much out of them; and this is to the end that no flesh should glory in His presence, as we find in the following: "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are: That no flesh should glory in His presence." We see then that God does things this way so that no body should glory, or boast in His presence. So, **"Who hath despised the day of small things."** **Zechariah 4:10.**

GIDEON AND HIS LITTLE ARMY

God called Gideon to save Israel from the Midianites, (Judges 6:14), but he felt, first of all, that he was too poor and too small for such a task; and of course this is just what God wanted. He wanted somebody who felt poor and needy. God isn't looking for somebody who thinks he can do big things within himself, and He found what He wanted in Gideon: Gideon the poor, little man who fit right into God's plans at the time. Even though the man Gideon realized and acknowledged his own weakness and poverty he didn't trust God enough,

he wanted to take an army that was too big. God said, in so many words, the army is too big. "And the Lord said unto Gideon. The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying mine own hand hath saved me."

God always knows what to do when His people are trying to put in too much so that He would be pushed out. He knows how to dress us down and reduce us down to the point where we would be used of Him, and not for self glory; there is always that possibility that we might just get too big for our pants. Anyway, God began a process to reduce Gideon's army, because the army was too big for Him to bring much out of a little. God told him to get rid of all the ones that were afraid. He didn't want any cowards. "Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from Mount Gilead. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand." Judges 7:3. Ten thousand were still too many, and God had a plan to get rid of most of them. So he had Gideon to bring the men to the water and test them there, and He wanted only those that dipped up the water, and lapping it like a dog to be in the army. Only three hundred men did this, lapping water like a dog (Judges 7:5) Why did God want these men who lapped like a dog? Because they showed by that that they were watchful, they could lap water from their hands and look forward and see what was coming, they would be on

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A GOOD AND HONEST HEART



By Jerry A. Reynolds
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Perhaps it has been a question in the minds of every wise person at some time why it seems that God saves some who at first have little desire for salvation while others who seem eager to have part with God are ever seeking but never saved. Where Jesus said, "many...will seek to enter in and shall not be able," a fearful thought is conveyed to the reader of scripture regarding the carefulness with which man must approach the Almighty God. Many fools rush presumptuously in where wise men hesitate for fear of being wrong. By entering into that which is wrong they fear that they may become confused and obscure to themselves the directives of God; therefore, the wise hesitate. Although some great theologians have concluded that nothing in the creature affected the choice of God in electing certain men unto eternal salvation, I cannot agree that the Bible teaches such. Certainly nothing holy or righteous in the creature affected God's choice because we are taught that man in his natural state is corrupt in spirit, soul, and body. This does not make it impossible that God would regard the creature's response to his goodness and let that response affect the extent of his mercy in changing the wicked man into a good one. Jesus is the light that "lighteth every man that cometh into the world." If Jesus had not come, man would have had no light with which to come to God for salvation. Some men come to the light. Others will not come to the light and let it expose their wicked-

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READER SHARES BURDEN

Dear Sirs:

I am a member of a Missionary Baptist Church and enjoy reading your publication. I am submitting these "thoughts" that I have been impressed to write, in hopes that God would use them to help people better help each other. I pray that God would lead you in the decision of whether or not to print this article.

Like many of the readers of this publication, I have been blessed with a Christian family. Not all of my family has been saved, but by the Grace of God, all have had the chance to hear the Gospel preached in spirit and in truth at one time or another, and for this I thank God.

But what of the thousands of Christians all over the land, who are all alone in respect to their families? What of they that have forsaken mother and father, sister or brother or even husbands or wives? My heart often takes a deep look at my own church, where this is the case of many of my dear friends.

How do you tell a mother whom you love and respect of so great a salvation and the love Jesus has, when the greatest love she has ever known is that of her children? How can you look into her tired eyes and know that there is no rest in store for her in the place where she is going? And how can you share your deepest moments with mom, when she has never seen the depths of your own heart?

Oh how thankful we should be for a

SEASONS GREETINGS

From Staff and Editor

"....., behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is CHRIST THE LORD."

Luke 2:10, 11



James H. Smith



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Kenneth W. Massey

Christian home! How sweet to look back to that mother or father that read the words of Jesus to us, and prayed those prayers that brought conviction to our hearts!

People, let's try to take a better look at others - a look from the heart at those with these sad circumstances. Truly they are "pilgrims" for Jesus. And how, after seeing these things with our own hearts can we go along on our way, satisfied with our own families' condition, and not cry out in humble pleas unto God for the salvation of others.

I pray unto God - we cannot.

Anonymous

A GOOD HEART (Continued from Page 1)

ness that they might be saved. Those who are saved have the light within them from that point on. He who runs away from the light and continues to do so will become one of those upon which Jesus' saying will be fulfilled, "from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath! His one talent shall be taken from him because he did not put it to work that it might increase to two. It should be noted here that the nature of the talent (a quantity of gold) is such that it will increase its self by usury (interest) if it be properly placed. Thus it is not the works of the man which here gives the increase but the expanding potential of the gift of God when properly placed.

In the parable of the sower found in three of the gospels there are pictured four types of people who hear the word of God. Each is very different in their reaction to the word. Some may be surprised to find that two of the three which produced no good fruit had conditions of heart that were such that the word of

God germinated and grew for a while. If we believe John's preaching that "every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire" and likewise Jesus' parable of the barren fig tree and his example of cursing the barren fig tree we must conclude that the fourth type of person into whose heart the seed was sown was the only one who was really saved. We do not believe that any tree bearing good fruit can subsequently become a bad tree and bear bad fruit, for Jesus said "a good tree cannot bring forth bad fruit". Men cannot be lost after they are truly saved. The characteristic of the shallow heart upon receiving the gospel is revealed to be that of germinating the seed more quickly than the good soil. Such disciples are characterized by fervent zeal and much activity, but they cannot stand the first trials of faith (which they do not have) when they must wait upon the Lord with patience. Considering these unfruitful plants saved, many people have confused themselves thereby.

Quoting Jesus from Luke 8:15, we find "But that on the good ground are they, which is an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience." We do not think that any heart when it first hears the word is an honest and good heart in the sense of being holy or righteous. Jeremiah tells us that the human heart is "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." It is in another sense that the hearts of some men are honest and good. The Jews of Berea were "more noble" than those of Thessalonica. They diligently searched the scriptures to see if the gospel of Paul and his companions was confirmed. Consequently their "readiness of mind" resulted in many more of them being saved. In this sense

they of Berea had better hearts than the others.

Some men upon hearing the gospel are overjoyed to embrace it even before that they have understood its requirements. The word has instant results in their lives because they are shallow. These are deceived, cannot produce good fruit, and will in time fail and fall away. Others cautiously and honestly begin to weigh the message and to "count the cost." They want to be sure that they "have sufficient to finish" before they begin building. Thus they do not profess discipleship until after they have understood, surrendered to, and believed in the will of God and have received from him that which they are sure is sufficient to finish their course, that is, a regenerated soul.

I believe that any mentally sound human being who is of accountable age in God's sight who will listen to the word of God rightly divided, let it settle into his heart, and consider it honestly and in continuance will find that it has power to regenerate his soul. He will be saved. Article 6 of the New Hampshire Confession of faith states "...nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth, but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the Gospel..." Of these two obstacles to the salvation of the earth's greatest sinner the first is involuntary and the sinner is helpless to change it. The second, rejection of the gospel, is his choice to make. As we can see from the parable of the sower there is more than one way to reject the Gospel, but only one way to receive it for salvation, that is, "in an honest and good heart." The word of God is "quick (alive), and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit..." It is "like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces." It can be rejected by avoiding its sound in the ears, by keeping it from sinking below the neck into the heart, by twisting it into a lie and deceiving ones self, by failing to face up to the truth revealed with an honest heart until the acceptable time of ones salvation is past, perhaps there are other ways of rejecting the gospel, as well.

No person who hears the gospel and understands what it says finds the message pleasant, for it condemns all flesh and exalts only God (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost). Those who embrace it eagerly have not understood it. Those who close their minds to it will never feel the full power of it. Only those who diligently consider it in an "honest and good heart" will find that it has saved their souls.

THE BIBLE

By F. W. Lambert
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There are four personal histories of His life recorded in the New Testament. One is by Matthew, the redeemed publican, and signifies His lineage; one is by Mark, the unknown servant, which magnifies His service; one is by Luke, "the beloved physician," and tells of His humanity; and one is by John, "whom Jesus loved," and it tells of His deity. He is Christ the King in Matthew, the Servant in Mark, the Man in Luke and the Incarnate Word in John.

Concerning His royal lineage, we learn that He was born in Bethlehem, the seed of Abraham, the son of David, the son of Mary, the Son of God; and was acknowledged as "King of the Jews," "Christ the Lord," "God's Son," "The Saviour of men," by angels, demons, shepherds and wise men; and that He received tribute of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Concerning His service, we learn that He labored as a carpenter, opened eyes of the blind, unstopped deaf ears, loosed dumb tongues, cleansed lepers, healed the sick, restored withered hands, fed the hungry, sympathized with the sad, washed the disciples' feet, wept with Mary and Martha, preached the gospel to the poor, went about doing good, and gave His life as a ransom for many.

Concerning His humanity, we learn that he was born of a woman, as a little baby was wrapped in swaddling clothes, grew up and developed as a child in wisdom, stature, and in favor with God and men. He worked with His hands, He grew weary, He hungered, He thirsted, He slept, He felt the surge of anger; He knew what it was to be sad, shed tears, sweat as drops of blood; was betrayed, went through the mockery of a criminal trial, was scourged, had His hands and feet pierced; wore a crown of thorns, was spit upon, was crucified, wrapped in a winding sheet and was buried in a borrowed tomb, behind a sealed stone and was guarded by Roman soldiers in His death.

Concerning His deity, we read that He was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, spoke matchless words, stilled storms, calmed waves, rebuked winds, multiplied loaves, turned water to wine, raised the dead, foretold the future, gave hearing to the deaf, sight to the blind, speech to the dumb, cast out demons,

healed diseases, forgave sins, claimed equality with God, arose from the dead, possessed all authority both in heaven and in earth.

Do you wonder that I love the BIBLE? With it, I have passed over high mountains and through dark valleys. With it, I have led hundreds to Christ and to baptism and to church relationship. With it, I have comforted the distressed and lifted burdens from the oppressed. With it, I have administered consolation to the dying and have conducted services of hope for over 2,000 funerals. With it, I have fed my soul as I have tried to feed others. And when I look back to the sweet long ago and ask where are the loved ones with whom I mixed and mingled, and the answer comes, "gone." Then I look through my Book and read "absent from the body, present with the Lord," and press on with the knowledge, that when I am absent from the body, I will be present with the Lord and find them there. Friends, I weep over these things, but thank God the BIBLE tells me of an unclouded day. Brethren, we owe it to God, one another and a lost world to send the message of this Book to the uttermost parts of the world. The world needs it! The world must have it or perish! Today, we may be like a ship, tossed hither and thither on life's tempestuous sea, but, thank God, this blessed Book tells us we will soon sail into the heavenly port fanned by celestial gales.

With the most of my footsteps behind me, I face the future with an unflinching faith in the truths of God's BOOK which dear Philip Dyer gave me in the sweet long ago. When you read in the Macon County Times, that I'm dead, don't believe it. I WILL BE MORE ALIVE THAN I AM NOW!!

MODEL PREACHER

The young preacher was flattered when someone described him as a "model" preacher.

His pride, however, soon vanished when he turned to his dictionary and found the definition of Model: "A small imitation of the real thing."

He was a little more cautious the next time. On being described as a "warm" preacher, he turned to his pocket dictionary, which read, "Warm...not so hot."

LITTLE IS MUCH (Continued from page 1)

the alert, but those men who laid down on their faces to drink couldn't see the enemy coming. So God chose the three thousand men to save Israel (Judges 7:7), and He did just that without firing a shot. Why did the little army save Israel? God was in it, and little is much when God is in it.

DAVID AND HIS LITTLE SLING

When Saul was king of Israel, he and his army was fighting the Philistines, and a giant, named Goliath, came out to challenge and to defy the armies of Israel, and he scared the daylight out of all the army. But a little shepherd boy came out to see the battle and to see how his brothers were doing, and to bring them some food, and while he was there Goliath came out to make his threats again. David, the little shepherd boy, heard the giant defying the army of the living God, and he decided to do something about it. David said to the king, "Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with the Philistine." I Samuel 17:32. King Saul couldn't believe that this young lad without experience in warfare could meet this great warrior who was armed to the teeth. "And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him, for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth." I Samuel 17:33. But David let the king know that he had done some fighting in his lifetime, even with a lion and a bear, and he had slain both of them, and he would do the same to the uncircumcised Philistine. (I Sam. 17:34-36).

Saul finally gave David license to go and fight the giant, but he wanted him to wear his armour, and he put it on the lad; but he refused to go with this, because he had not tried it. (I Samuel 17:39) He had tried the Lord, however, and knew he could rely on Him, for it was He that delivered him from the paw of the lion and the bear, and he intended to go in the name of the God of Israel. David had his little sling, his shepherd's bag, and all he thought was needed now was some little stones to use in the sling. So he went to the brook and took up five smooth stones and came and drew near to the giant. (I Samuel 17:40-41) The giant made fun of the youth, Oh! how he must have laughed as he saw this youth coming without any sword, without any helmet, or without any shield; but David had on a shield that the giant didn't know, the Lord God. It was David who said in later years, "But Thou, O Lord, art a shield

for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head." Psalm 3:3. As David drew near to Goliath, he uttered some words that surely gave glory to the God of Israel. Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of host, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine hand from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's, and He will give you into our hands." I Samuel 17:45-47.

David hastened and ran to meet his enemy, a very courageous young man, with his faith in the Lord God Almighty; and then, "And David put his hand in his bag, took thence a stone, slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, and the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth." I Samuel 17:49. What a victory! Little David with his faith in God, with a little sling, and a little smooth stone slew a great giant. Little is much if God is in it! "Better is little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble therewith." Proverbs 15:16.

THE LITTLE BOY'S LUNCH

All Bible readers know about Jesus feeding the five thousand with the five barley loaves and two fishes, but John only records where the loaves and fishes came from. A little boy had these with him (John 6:9); maybe for himself and others with him. Anyway, Jesus had compassion on the multitude and wanted to feed them, but the disciples didn't know how they were going to feed so many, and at this point Andrew said, "there is a lad here which hath five barley loaves and two fishes; but what are they among so many?" (John 6:9)

At this point Jesus had them to make the people sit down on the grass, and from there He took everything into His own hands, "And Jesus took the loaves; and when He had given thanks, He distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were sitting down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. When they were filled, He said unto His disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the frag-

ments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten." John 6:10-13.

Five barley loaves and two fishes seemed to be such a little to feed five thousand people, but the Lord was there, and His touch changed everything. He fed everybody that was there and still had more left over than they started with. This was one of the Lord's miracles, of course, and it was one of His marvelous, infallible demonstrations of His power, to show that He was the Son of God, and that He had power to forgive sins. He didn't do miracles just to gratify spectators, or to satisfy their curiosity; or even to fill their stomachs; but He was proving to his skeptics and to the world that His power knew no bounds; that He, though in a human form, was none other than the Lord of glory. The way that Jesus often did this was through something small and insignificant; the small things of the world, and things that the intellectuals of this world would scarcely notice; these He would take up and by His almighty power would magnify them so that men would stand in awe of Him, and some would conclude, like the Roman centurion and those that were with him at the time of His crucifixion, who said, "Truly this was the Son of God." Matthew 27:54.

SERMONS WE SEE

I'D RATHER SEE A SERMON THAN
HEAR ONE ANY DAY,
I'D RATHER ONE SHOULD WALK
WITH ME THAN MERELY SHOW THE
WAY.

THE EYE'S A BETTER PUPIL AND
MORE WILLING THAN THE EAR;
FINE COUNSEL IS CONFUSING, BUT
EXAMPLE'S ALWAYS CLEAR;
AND THE BEST OF ALL THE
PREACHERS ARE THE MEN WHO
LIVE THEIR CREEDS,
FOR TO SEE THE GOOD IN ACTION IS
WHAT EVERYBODY NEEDS.

I CAN SOON LEARN HOW TO DO IT IF
YOU'LL LET ME SEE IT DONE.
I CAN WATCH YOUR HANDS IN
ACTION, BUT YOUR TONGUE TOO
FAST MAY RUN.
AND THE LECTURES YOU DELIVER
MAY BE VERY WISE AND TRUE;
BUT I'D RATHER GET MY LESSON
BY OBSERVING WHAT YOU DO.
FOR I MAY MISUNDERSTAND YOU
AND THE HIGH ADVICE YOU GIVE,
BUT THERE'S NO MISUNDERSTAND-
ING HOW YOU ACT AND HOW YOU
LIVE.