

1972

The PROJECTOR

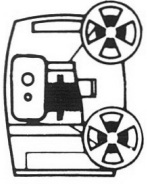
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The PROJECTOR

Dr. Dayton Hobbs, FOUNDED EDITOR

“Projecting the Light of the Word of God on the Issues of the Day”

The Audacity of the “Embrace the Culture of Change” Crowd

Nehemiah 13:1-9

by Pastor Tod Brainard

In 1969, in Pass Christian, Mississippi, a group of people were preparing to have a hurricane party in the face of a storm named *Camille*. Were they ignorant of the serious dangers? Was it audacity that empowered them to ignore warnings?

What we do know is that the wind was howling outside the posh Richelieu Apartments when Police Chief Jerry Peralta pulled up sometime after dark. Facing the beach less than 250 feet away from the surf, the apartments were directly in front of danger. A man with a drink in his hand came out to the second floor balcony and waved. The Police Chief warned that they all needed to leave quickly as the storm was bearing down. The man yelled back that the only way they would leave was to be arrested. The officer took the names of all those present in the building and then left. The group of twenty or so people laughed at the chief as he hurried to his car to continue to warn others down the stretch of beach in Pass Christian.

It was 10:15 PM when the front wall of the storm came ashore. Meteorologists clocked *Camille's* wind speed at more than 205 miles per hour, the strongest on record. Raindrops hit with the force of bullets, and waves off the Gulf Coast crested between 22 and 28 feet high. As a five year old boy two hours away from Pass Christian, I remember the howling winds of *Camille* on the western side of the storm here in Milton, Florida.

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The Spirit of Caleb

by Nathan Morales

Among the recorded accounts in Scripture where God's people encountered giants in the land, the story of Caleb, though perhaps not as renowned as that of David and Goliath, is certainly worth a closer look. Although seemingly inseparable from his contemporary Joshua, the other spy who likewise did not bring back an evil report from the land of Canaan, it was Caleb who first spoke up to still the faithless congregation. His encounter with the giants, we are told, occurred in the city of Hebron where the three sons of Anak dwelt and wherein was the burying place of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It was there, where upon his eyes meeting with the great sight of the Anakims, that Caleb chose faith instead of fear, and it was that very city of Hebron that the Lord promised him for an inheritance, thus serving us a reminder of the great truth found in He-

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EDITOR'S DESK

by Pastor Tod Brainard

Two Faithful Bible Preachers With the Lord

We wish to inform our faithful readers and supporters of the passing to two godly men into glory.

First of all, **Pastor John E. Ashbrook**, age 85, passed into the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ on Tuesday, December 20, 2011, at Hospice of the Western Reserve in Cleveland, following a brief illness.



Pastor Ashbrook was a contributing editor of *The Projector*, a true friend, and a stalwart of the Faith. He was born May 13, 1926, in Hubbard, Ohio. At the age of 12, Pastor Ashbrook was saved by the grace of God following a service at the church where his father was pastoring in Columbus, Ohio. He received his college education at Wheaton College and Northwestern University where he completed a degree in Chemical Engineering while also serving his time in the United States Navy during WWII. Realizing the call of God on his life, Pastor Ashbrook received additional ministerial training at Faith Theological Seminary in Wilmington, Delaware.

After a short time as an evangelist, Pastor Ashbrook came to Mentor, Ohio in the summer of 1952, where he served as pastor of Bible Community Church for 46 years. He was well known all over the world for his clear Bible teaching and writing on

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brews 11:6, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." The interesting thing is that the Lord had already promised the children of Israel the land of Canaan, yet what He saw in Caleb moved Him enough to make a personal promise. But what did the Lord specifically see in Caleb that merited such a response? The answer lies in Numbers 14:24, "But my servant Caleb, because he had **another spirit** with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it." We are told that Caleb had a different spirit about him that allowed him to face the giants of his day, and it is that same spirit that will allow us to face the giants of our day.

FAITH

First, we see that Caleb had a spirit of faith. II Corinthians 4:13 states "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak". Caleb spoke out at a time when his message was neither popular nor well received, yet his plea was simple; only believe. Today, Christians in all walks of life are having to face the giant of intellect. The very foundation of our faith is under attack under the guise of 'falsely so called' science that is nothing more than a refined version of one of Satan's devices whose roots date back to the garden of Eden wherein he questions God's Words by asking "Yea, hath God said...". In other words, "Did God really say that?" Still today, it is that very question that is being propagated in our public school systems and universities as it pertains to the Genesis creation and worldwide flood ac-

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The PROJECTOR

Dr. Dayton Hobbs, (1924-2006) Founding Publisher and Editor
 Pastor Tod Brainard — Publisher and Editor
 Mrs. Carolyn Hobbs, Mr. Ludwig Opager, Mrs. Doris Peppard
 Contributing Editors
 Layout-Mrs. Brenda Whitney
 Published Quarterly by Grace Bible Church

Please address all correspondence and requests to:
The Projector, 6331 Chestnut Street, Milton, FL 32570, or
 E-mail us at Issues@theprojector.org
 Visit us on the Web at www.theprojector.org
 Toll Free 1-877-626-7030

The Projector is a fundamentalist publication that seeks to "project the light of the Word of God on the issues of the day." It desires to honor Christ by articulating a clear testimony for Biblical separation from error in these last days as God's answer to the deepening apostasy of the visible church.



FOCUS ON RELIGION

Already Compromised

by Ken Ham and Greg Hall

A Book Review by Curtis Sluss Waterford, Michigan

Ken Ham (of Answers in Genesis fame) surveyed 312 presidents, vice presidents, science department heads and religion department heads from 196 different Christian colleges. He asked the same list of questions to all 312 people. Previously, in 1996 he concluded that the majority of Christian schools were compromising, thus undermining Biblical authority and the faith of their students. According to the results of this 2011 survey, he was right. He provides data showing all is not well in the Christian educational institutions when it comes to agreement among the leaders of these educational institutions on basic Christian issues. Some of his conclusions are: "...many schools have become the propagators of confusion." "...the majority of Christian schools seem to be just like the secular..." He also observed: "...Christian colleges strategically take students who believe the Bible and systematically destroy that belief..." From how the heads of the department of religion answered the questions, he concluded: "...the majority of those in the religion departments embraced evolution and undermine the authority of Scripture!"

Surprisingly, the survey was not limited to evangelical institutions but to a broader definition: "Christian" institutions. Included were Roman Catholic, Jesuit and liberal protestant institutions. I saw no fundamental institutions on the list of surveyed schools.

This inclusion of the more liberal and Catholic institutions makes the book heavily flawed in some of its conclusions; for example: "...the survey showed that the mess indeed exists. There is a strong movement in evangelicalism that is trying to make the facts of the Bible conform to the naturalistic worldview." I believe this statement is true, but since the survey was not of evangelical institutions only, this conclusion cannot be drawn from the data. The survey did not break the results down by Catholic, liberal Protestant or evangelical (conservative or otherwise). Unlike Ken Ham's previous book, "Already Gone" this book needs such a breakdown. Often in the book, the term "Conservative Evangelical" was used. The frequent use of this term implied to the reader (or at least to me) that this was the group surveyed, when in fact; it was not.

Had I gone through the list of 196 schools surveyed before reading the book I would have understood this book is not for Fundamentalists who avoid already compromised schools like Covenant, Calvin, Talbot, Wheaton, and Knox. Apparently, this is for the evangelical who due to a steady diet of *Christianity Today* and weak or no preaching on separation may be unaware of the danger in 'Christian' schools (even those who advertise in *Christianity Today*).

The very existence of this book by a noted evangelical warning of a denial of the Bible in 'Christian' colleges highlights a danger of the evangelical movement in particular. When error is embraced, tolerated, ignored, not exposed or not confronted (what evangelicals do,

often in the name of tolerance, unity or love), then spiritual corruption and a departure from truth become wide spread in an atmosphere where "...almost any belief is encouraged, not just tolerated."

Evangelicals usually view separation or exposure of error a hindrance to unity rather than an issue of obedience or a means of holiness, but in the appendix, the authors raise a clear warning against 12 educators and 11 institutions (some of which are conservative).

Already Compromised is to be commended for seeing and bringing to discussion the danger of Christian schools and the specific warnings in the appendix. Two glaring weaknesses are that first, only errors concerning Genesis 1-11 are considered (not the rest of the Bible) and second, the alarm is general and not specific (other than those in the appendix). The data is not listed by each school; therefore, schools where the Bible is denied and the unsuspecting are having their faith 'systematically destroyed' are allowed to continue the work of destruction unexposed. This book reveals the uneasy conscience of the new evangelical. Ω

Answers in Genesis! May 1996 Volume3, number 5, p. 1

Already Compromised by Ken Ham and Greg Hall, (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, May 2011) p. 91

Ibid., p. 139

Ibid., p. 43

Ibid., p. 49

Ibid., p. 61

Ibid., p. 9

Ibid., p. 43



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Biblical issues. In 1967, he was led of the Lord to found Mentor Christian School, a K-12 Christian day school operated by Bible Community Church.

Pastor Ashbrook, like his father William Ashbrook, was a prolific writer who set forth principles of Biblical Fundamentalism through his book ministry, "Here I Stand" books. He was editor for many years of the Ohio Bible Fellowship *Visitor*, and served the Ohio Bible Fellowship, Peniel Bible Camp and the Ohio Bible Mission in various leadership roles.

Pastor Ashbrook was preceded in death by his first wife, Virginia, in 1995; and second wife, June McKnight Ashbrook, in 2005. Funeral services were held at Bible Community Church on December 23, 2011 with Dr. Roger Bixler of Berne, Indiana officiating.

Pastor Ashbrook was an encourager of young men who desired to stand for the Lord Jesus Christ. He had no patience for compromisers of truth and preached with clarity against the apostasy of the hour. We pray that his ministry of the written word will continue to be of encouragement and blessing until the Lord returns.

We also wish to let our readers know of the home going of **Pastor Dennis W. Costella**. The Lord promoted Brother Costella to glory the evening of

October 24, 2011. Pastor Dennis was walking his dog through a crosswalk at night when he was struck by a truck. He was 63 years of age.

Pastor Costella was the son-in-law of the late Dr. M.H. Reynolds, who founded the Fundamental Evangelistic Association. Pastor Costella had carried on the work of FEA after the passing of Dr. Reynolds and was a faithful preacher of the Word of God and editor of *Foundation* magazine as well as contributing editor of the *Feature Daily Bible Study Guide* produced by FEA. He was a Fundamentalist separatist with a gracious heart for God's people. Pastor Costella's son, Pastor Matt Costella, is now charged with the continuance of FEA and remains pastor of Grace Bible Church of Fresno, California. Our prayers are with Matt, his mother, and his dear wife and family.

Though we mourn the loss of these two men of God, we mourn "not as those who have no hope" for we will see them again in heaven. May the Lord continue to be magnified and glorified "whether it be by life, or by death" (Phil. 1:20). Ω

"The Lord is my Shepherd"
The oriental shepherd was always ahead of his sheep. He was down in front. Any attack upon them had to take him into account. Now God is down in front. He is in the tomorrows. It is tomorrow that fills men with dread. God is there already. All the tomorrows of our life have to pass Him before they can get to us.

F.B. Meyer

(Continued from page 1 - The Audacity)

News reporters later showed that the worst damage came to the little settlement of motels, go-go bars, and gambling houses known as Pass Christian, Mississippi, where some twenty people were killed at the hurricane party in the Richelieu Apartments. Nothing was left of the three story structure but the foundation. The only survivor was a five year old boy found clinging to a mattress the following day.

That, dear reader, is **audacity**.

Now a word about change. Change is a part of life. Think about how much you have changed over your life. In the story, **Rip Van Winkle**, written by Washington Irving, Rip goes to sleep a loyal subject of King George III and is awakened a citizen of the United States of America with George Washington as his president. Talk about change! Washington Irving commenting on **change** wrote, "**change is simply to shift one's position and be bruised in a new place.**" Maybe that is why he allowed the character Rip to sleep for 20 years so the rapid changes in America would not bruise the poor old Dutchman too much.

A Warning About Change

Wise is the person who learns from the past, but foolish is the person who simply lives in the past. After all Solomon said in Ecclesiastes 7:10, "*Say not thou, What is cause that the former days were better than these? For thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this.*" That being said, "**change**" for the Christian that is trendy and temporary is dangerous because the Culture is then setting the agenda rather than God's Word. Change that mocks the past as irrelevant is dangerous for it gives no point of reference. Change

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Proverb Practicals

by Ludwig Opager

Proverbs 20:12, **The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them.**

Purpose

There are God given purposes for ears and eyes. God does not make ears and eyes only for decorative purposes. Ears for earrings and eyes for long and painted eyelashes are not the primary reason for ears and eyes, contrary to what many think. Today we live in an age where it seems the primary purposes of ears and eyes are to show off long dangling, sparkling earrings and long eyelashes designed to promote sensuality.

These are not God honoring uses of the ears and eyes for God has made ears for hearing and eyes for seeing. And yet throughout Scripture we are told of ears that do not hear and of eyes that do not see. We are told of ears and eyes that do not hear or see but are then made to hear and see. We are also told of ears that hear, but the kind of hearing that takes place does not result in what God expects.

“Lovely Song”

Ezekiel 33:31-32, reveals such a people who hear but their hearing indicates no hearing at all as far as God is concerned. These unhearing people did not please Him in spite of the fact that they would have said that they were hearing. To them the Word of God was sweet, poetic and musical to their ear. It was as a “lovely song” but it had no lasting effect on their heart.

The Word of God is attractive and can be comforting to a worried soul. It soothes for the moment as does the playing of a beautiful instrument. But when the Word of God is received by an ear that ushers it into the stony places of the heart, it brings joy for

but a moment, for it hath no root. It only dureth for a while but by and by offence comes and the joy does not endure. It does not produce the fruit of doing because the hearing was no hearing at all.

Hearing Produces Action

The kind of hearing for which God has produced hearing ears, is hearing that produces the fruit of doing for God. God is a husbandman and He expects fruit. If there are ears that do not hear, no fruit will come. Only ears that hear as God intends for them to hear will result in the production of fruit. And only God can produce hearing ears and seeing eyes. Only God can produce eyes and ears that convey the instruction of the Word of God to the heart.

Standard Equipment

Ears and eyes come as standard equipment on the natural man. They are gifts of God for receiving instruction in this world. But standard equipment of the natural man is not capable of hearing the Word of God and seeing the Kingdom of God. The natural man is deaf to God’s Word and blind to His kingdom. Natural ears and natural eyes are sensual and given to only sense the natural world. They are not given to sense the spiritual.

So the natural man is not equipped to hear or see! His very nature decrees that it is impossible for him to see through physical eyes and hear through physical ears. God has so ordered that faith does not come through the seeing of the physical eyes and the hearing of the physical ears.

The natural man did not create his ears nor his eyes. Neither can he create ears that hear God nor eyes that can see the things of God. In order for the natural man to hear as God intended him to hear and see as God intended, God must enter into that man. God must do a work of grace in that man.

New Eyes and Ears

This is what Jesus Christ told Nicodemus in John 3:3**Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.** Without the new birth God will not allow you to see the kingdom of God. The door is closed to you until you are born again. The kingdom of God here used means that which the physical eye cannot see. It must be seen through new eyes that come with the new birth, for Jesus Christ gives new vision to the one who is born again. This vision allows you to see the kingdom of God as described in Romans 14:17, **For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.** The natural man concentrates on meat and drink, but the one born of the Spirit concentrates on righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Only with the new birth comes life, the kind of life that opens your spiritual eyes and ears to the things of God. Man cannot cause himself to be born physically nor can he cause himself to be born spiritually. No man can create a physical ear or eye nor can he create a spiritual ear or eye.

For the LORD hath made even both of them. Ω



(Continued from page 2 - *The Spirit of Caleb*)

counts among other things. How then does the Christian attain the spirit of faith? The book of Romans tells us that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. We must be grounded firmly upon God's Word. Then and only then will we "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (I Pet. 3:15).

PATIENCE

Caleb also had a spirit of patience. Forty five years had lapsed from the time he was promised Hebron for an inheritance to the time that the land was divided among the tribes. Hebrews 10:36 tells us that "ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise." This verse is a far cry from the message of today's culture which boldly promotes instant gratification. More and more, society through its Hollywood influence and liberal digital media is pushing our children to both be exposed to and experience things they were never meant to at a younger and younger age. Our youth need to be taught the value and virtue of patience. Parents need to rear their children with the understanding that innocence is one of God's greatest gifts to our children. The giant of immortality knows no bounds, no age limits, and no pity. Our churches and youth groups are not immune. We must teach and proclaim both the sanctity of the body and the judgment of God that is promised for those who mire themselves

outside of the undefiled bed of marriage.

STEADFASTNESS

Finally, we see that Caleb had a spirit of steadfastness. Several times we are told that Caleb followed the Lord "fully". Caleb's patience during those forty five years did not culminate with the land being handed over to him, but rather it was at that time when he would go into Hebron with his army to overthrow the sons of Anak. In essence, his work had just begun, yet his resolve and his convictions were just as strong as they were the first time he laid eyes on the giants. I Corinthians 15:58 states "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." His stand for God separated him from the unbelieving crowd. He did not seek a middle ground nor did he seek to appease. As Christians, we have been left with a clear example of how to face the giant of compromise. Far too many professing Christians are compromising in the name of 'not offending anyone' while others simply choose to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season rather than to suffer affliction with the people of God. Their speech and music reeks with ungodliness. They share the same heroes of our worldly culture and do so while sitting under the sound of the gospel. The answer again lies in God's Word. II Corinthians 6:17 admonishes us to "come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord,

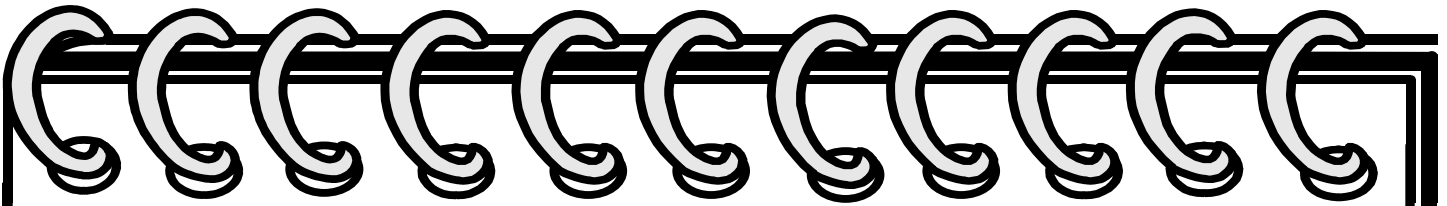
THE PROJECTOR 40 Years

Since first published in January 1972, *The Projector* has been "projecting the light of the Word of God on the issues of the day". The burden of the founding editor, Dr. Dayton Hobbs, was to warn Gods' people of the apostasy, compromise, and easy-believism of the day and to put forth the challenge to stand true to the Word of God in the battle for Truth. Our present desire is to continue to uphold that purpose and to carry on the cause of Jesus Christ without compromise. The emphasis is needed in today's climate as never before. We thank the Lord for our many readers who support this printed ministry through their prayers and giving and trust the Lord will continue to use *The Projector* for His glory until Jesus comes. Ω

and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." Unfortunately, the problem for most may lie in the possibility that they may not possess a genuine faith and are simply playing the part.

VICTORY

The story of Caleb is a story of victory. It is an inspiration to young and old alike to follow the Lord, believe His Word and trust in His Power. Joshua 1:15 reads, "And Caleb drove thence the three sons of Anak, Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmi, the children of Anak." Let us likewise fight the good fight of faith, let us run with patience the race that is set before us, and let us finish the course by holding fast to that which is good. May this be our testimony for the glory of God. Ω



Teaching Tips

by Doris Peppard

Keepin' the Blood Flowin'



In order to keep your students' blood flowing to their brains, physical exercise is a very important part of the equation. Much has been written about the sedentary habits of young people these days. Video games, internet use, television, etc., have all contributed to our students' lifestyles. As Christians we understand that we should present our bodies a "living sacrifice" to the Lord. We want to train our students to be healthy in body as well as in mind.

Physical education is an important aspect of Christian education. Mrs. Audrey Byars Mullen has written a manual, *A Kindergarten Guide to Perceptual Motor Skills Development*, which is helpful for both pre-school and elementary teachers. This guide teaches motor skills sequentially to develop children's perceptual skills along with their motor skills. The author presents the importance of both areas working together. Age appropriate activities and games to develop these skills are presented. The purpose and methods of teaching the necessary skills are of great value. A complete year's lesson plans for both Kindergarten 4 and Kindergarten 5 are included for physical education and play time activities. Elementary teachers can also utilize this manual and adapt it for students in Grades 1 through 5.

A significant finding, which led to the development of this P.E. program, was that developing each physical skill sequentially with the cognitive skills greatly benefits a child's success academically. Of course, outdoor activities are essential, but some of the major physical skills that can be developed inside the classroom are: jumping (in-place), hopping (over a book), balance (lunges, squats), and ball handling (soft, foam type balls or beanbags work well). Each of these skills can be quickly added to your classroom procedures and in turn, will "keep the students' blood flowing" to their brains. When your class has a subject change or you want a smooth transition from one place or location to another, try to implement a quick, 20-second physical skill into your routines.

It has been noted that both children with irregular or slow physical development as well as your high-energy students benefit from these 20-second exercise bursts during the school day. We desire to train the whole child, and physical development must not be omitted from our plan. The old saying, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," is true. Children learn much from what adults consider play. These short exercise bursts will benefit your students both physically and academically. "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52).

Ω



A SCENE OF COMPROMISE

by the late Pastor John Ashbrook

This is part of a continuing series on Biblical Separation from the booklet by Pastor John Ashbrook entitled Axioms of Separation. This booklet is available from www.childrensbibleclub.com for \$2.00. I know of no other treatise of Biblical Separation that hammers home in a practical way the necessity of practicing Biblical Separation. (Editor)

A SCENE OF COMPROMISE

The temptation to compromise comes from a new direction. Listen to verses 11 and 12:

"Now there dwelt an old prophet in Bethel; and his sons came and told him all the work that the man of God had done that day in Bethel: the words which he had spoken unto the king, them they told also to their father. And their father said unto them, What way went he? For his sons had seen what way the man of God went, which came from Judah."

I wish that we might draw back the curtains of time to get a glimpse of the ministry of this old man. I am sure that, at one time, he had stood in the front of the battle for God. But something happened. Persecution had come with Jeroboam. It was easy to lose your head if you opposed the idolatry of Jeroboam. This old man had decided that it was expedient to be quiet. So, retiring to his peaceful home, he ceased to speak for God. That had an effect on his home. We see his sons returning from an idol feast – a strange place for prophet's boys.

But, more than that, his decision had an effect on his heart. When he cut himself off from the opposition, he also cut himself off from the fellowship of strong men. His heart was starved for that fellowship. He longed to talk with a brother believer. Then, his boys came home from the feast and told their story. His heart leaped within him. He must talk to that prophet.

Right here we meet a new kind of temptation. In this second scene the temptation to compromise was the temptation which came from a friend. When we know we face an enemy our guard goes up. When we know we face a friend our guard goes down. So it was here.

The sons of the old prophet saddled the family ass for him and he set off to overtake the younger prophet as fast as the little donkey could go. He found him sitting under a tree taking a break from his journey and gave a simple invitation. "Come home with me, and eat bread." The younger prophet recognized a brother. This was no Jeroboam. However, he declined the invitation and explained his refusal by quoting the same orders he had quoted to Jeroboam. I am sure that God had given those orders to protect this prophet from the invitation of Jeroboam. But, those same orders protected him from the temptation of a friend.

The path of compromise is always down. The old man who had begun on the road of compromise

with his silence walked another mile with a lie as we read in 18:

"He said unto him, I am a prophet also as thou art; and an angel spoke unto me by the word of the Lord, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water. But he lied unto him."

Tragedy struck right here. Our nameless prophet believed the lie and went back to dinner in the old man's house. What caused this fearless prophet to disobey God's orders? He was blinded by the fact that the lie came from a friend.

The story of I Kings 13 would be very simple if it had only two men in it – the nameless prophet and Jeroboam, the apostate. However, that is not the picture. There is another man somewhere in between. That is also the picture of our own day. On the one hand, we have declared fundamentalism. On the other hand, we have declared liberalism or unbelief. But, tragedy of tragedies, we have a mighty camp somewhere in between. That is what new evangelicalism is. These are brethren who have decided to ignore, and thus disobey, the clear commands of the Word of God about separation. They would have us ignore those commands, too. The story of the nameless prophet is repeated. Ω

(To be continued next issue: "Would A Brother Lie?")



(Continued from page 4 - *The Audacity*)

for the sake of change is dangerous because then we act not according to principle but novelty. We must be wise and measure everything, change included, according to the Word of God.

There are many preachers, religious leaders, Bible college presidents and so forth who are calling for Christians to **“embrace the culture of change.”** It is fascinating to me that these leaders want us to embrace the **“culture of change.”** They want their constituency to accept the possibility of changing from what we currently embrace to something else. **They want us to entertain the concept or idea of changing.** Why? Because they know that if you entertain an idea or concept long enough, you eventually will tolerate and then capitulate to whatever change they deem acceptable. Interesting! What audacity!

It is in all of our natures to change from what we know to be right positions and standards. As my dear friend, Pastor John Ashbrook, now with the Lord used to say, **“It is impossible to maintain a conviction without crusading for it.”** In other words, to prevent changing a conviction, you must circle the wagons and crusade for it. You must be a cheerleader for the causes of the Scriptures or you will drift away from them. That is a fact of history!

In Nehemiah 13, Nehemiah returned to Babylon to King Artaxerxes after he completed the wall project in Jerusalem, authorized by Artaxerxes. As soon as he returned to Babylon, the **forces of change** among the religious leaders of Jerusalem went to work undermining the spiritual accomplishments of

Nehemiah. **They had been unsuccessful in stopping the building of the walls of Jerusalem, so they focused their energies on destroying the Biblical standards established by Nehemiah, based on the Word of God.**

When Nehemiah returned years later, he found Tobiah the Ammonite living in the Temple (a violation of God’s Separation Laws- Deuteronomy 23:3-5) as well as a whole host of changes from the authority of the Word of God. As Nehemiah investigated, he learned that Eliashib, the High Priest, had **allied** himself to Tobiah the Ammonite and Sanballat through unbiblical marriages. Nehemiah called what Eliashib did as **EVIL (vs. 7).**

This word **evil** is used four times in Chapter 13 (vs. 7, 17, 18, 27). The Hebrew word **’rah (evil)** indicates a special form of evil that takes what is good and renders it worthless. According to Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon, **’rah** means *to tread down, trample, to break in pieces, to be made worthless because of breakage.* Used intransitively (that is when the action or state is limited to the one doing the action) it means *to be bad in quality, to make good for nothing, unfit.* Eliashib committed **evil** by breaking up, making good for nothing the commands of God.

Observations of Eliashib's Embrace of the Culture of Change

It is common knowledge how corrupt Sanballat and Tobiah were, **but what we see here is how corrupt Eliashib the high priest was** in his campaign to radically change Israel. This whole chapter is about how evil changes corrupt God’s Holy

commandments.

I. Eliashib questioned the standards of God's Word as many do today. Why are we excluding these Ammonites and the Moabites from worshiping in the Temple? It has been a thousand years since Moses gave us the law, what relevance does it have now in our times? We don't understand why these people are such a big problem. Why does Nehemiah take the Bible so literally? These questions filled the mind of Eliashib. Surely, the distant past (Biblical principles) should have no bearing on the present hour? This is the argument of our culture! Surely we should be helping these people rather than excluding them. We can be a witness to these people if we let them participate. Surely it is time for a change. Eliashib was an advocate of the **“embrace the culture of change”** crowd of his day. He was audacious in that he was breaking up that which God established as good.

II. He asked a further question, What is the point of collecting tithes and offerings for the Levites when they should be out working in their own fields like everybody else? What makes the Levites so special that we have to support them? It is time to change things around here. The commandments concerning the Levites are archaic.

It is very instructive to me that when Nehemiah returned and found all of these changes that he did not try to defend or explain God's rules for the service of the Temple. He just put everything back to the way it was in the beginning. That's what you have to do to restore order, **put it back like it was.** That is a hard thing to

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do, especially in these days of apostasy!

III. Eliashib waited until Nehemiah was away to institute the changes.

He was cowardly, knowing that while Nehemiah was present, acceptance of the culture of change would not take place. Nehemiah was a bold man who stood for the authority of the Word of God. Whatever God's Word said, that is what Nehemiah followed. Let me ask you, Is the presence of strong, Biblical leadership a problem for you? Then something is very wrong in your heart. People who have problems with God's Word have a problem with God. Eliashib recognized the unchanging character of Nehemiah and waited for his opportunity to make "necessary changes" when Nehemiah was gone. With Nehemiah absent, it was the perfect opportunity to put in place the changes he wanted made and therefore plant the seeds of *"the culture of change"*. Another point is this, in Eliashib's mind, he thought if he could get the people used to the culture of change, their support would shift from Nehemiah to him. Eliashib, however, did not realize the strength of character in Nehemiah. Nehemiah was going to stand with God at all costs!

IV. Eliashib put his stamp of approval on what God called "evil."

What leadership allows or tolerates is what people will allow or tolerate in their lives. Read Hosea 4 to see God's indictment against the leaders of Israel who refused to uphold the commands of God before the people. God blamed them for not teaching the people and as a result the people turned to change to that which the Word of God called "evil." The Bible indicates that

people will always **go farther in what is allowed and tolerated** than what leadership initially sets as a new standard (read the Book of Judges).

V. When Nehemiah returned from Babylon, he did not take any time to **explain** to Eliashib, Tobiah, or the people **why** God excluded the Ammonites and the Moabites from the Temple. Rather he took what God's Word taught at face value and righted what had been done wrong in allowing Tobiah to live in the Temple. He did not hold a seminar on the pros and cons of allowing the Ammonites and Moabites in the Temple. He did not try to convince Eliashib of the reasons behind what God had said a thousand years before. He just took the Word at face value and exercised faith by throwing Tobiah's furniture out of the Temple. I think preachers today spend too much time trying to explain to this generation why God established certain doctrines, principles, and methods, **rather than emphasizing and exercising faith in what God has said! Faith does not need to know all the why's, it simply needs to know Christ, the living Word!**

VI. **What Eliashib had allowed in "change" had strong ramifications during those years that Nehemiah was away.** Notice what had changed:

- The people no longer brought tithes to the storehouse because Eliashib had discontinued the practice. As a result, the Levites stopped ministering in the Temple because they were now unprovided for and were now working in the fields to provide food for their families. (vs. 10 - 14)

- The Sabbath was no longer observed by the people, it was just another day of the week for them. (vs.

15 - 22) Nehemiah reminded the people that this change was unacceptable.

- Marriage standards of the Scriptures were lowered because the leadership had been silent concerning God's standard of marriage (who they could and could not marry) for the people of Israel. When leadership determines to stop preaching with clarity the whole counsel of God, and instead preaches to itching ears, there are serious consequences that follow. Nehemiah had to take some drastic actions. Notice vs. 23 - 31!

VII. **To embrace a culture of change from what God says to do in His Holy Word is EVIL!** I did not say it, God did! Four times in Chapter 13 it is called EVIL (vs. 7, 17, 18, 27). To compromise God's authoritative Word is to commit evil! Evil is no friend of God!

There is evil work afoot in our churches, Christian schools and Bible colleges. It is the evil work of *"embracing the culture of change."* As in Israel's past, it is our leaders who are pressing for "change." Why change? Because our culture hates the "old paths." Therefore our leaders have determined that we need "new paths" to reach this generation. Nothing could be further from the truth. The old paths were hated in Israel's past (Jeremiah 6:16) as they are today. And what did God say to them? He declared *"stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein"* (Jeremiah 6:16). **WE MUST DO THE SAME!** Ω



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Stars of the Morning

WHO WANTS TO BE A WIMP? by "Aunt Carolyn"



"Attention, Class! As we begin the New Year, I want some volunteers. Please don't be bashful! All right, young men, who wants to be a wimp?"

A stunning silence followed, but not a hand was raised.

"Well, then, who among you young ladies wants to be a wimp? We won't discriminate. A girl can be a wimp if she so desires. Do I see a hand?"

The teacher often asked for volunteers for various duties but never before had tried to recruit *wimps*! If this was a joke, it wasn't very funny.

"Why are you so hesitant?" the teacher asked. "It would be so easy to be a wimp. You could be an instant success! Now who wants to volunteer?" Still no hand went up, but a murmur hovered over the class. If this was the teacher's new approach, they might switch to another class!

Now, with a slight smile and warmer tone, the teacher commended his students. "Congratulations! I'm proud that being a first class wimp is not on your list of New Year's resolutions. Kudos to you! I have, however, witnessed a few times when some of you have seemed to be *wimpish* in certain circumstances. Maybe you have seen it in me, too. I hope not, but we all face the temptation to take the easy way out of a tough situation or keep silence when we ought to speak up. What is a wimp anyway? Is it just someone who is built small and weak and can't lift weights or plow over others like a football star?"

Foster raised his hand and slowly began. "Well, I don't think physical strength has anything to do with it at all. I've seen some big, strappin'

guys cave in to peer pressure when faced with a serious problem. I think being a wimp is when you know what is right but that to do right would be very unpopular or that you would have to stand alone, so you go along with the crowd and do what they're doing. There's really no excuse, but it's easy to make excuses."

"Good point! You know the kids in school. What kind of excuses have you heard?"

"Oh, wow! There are plenty of them! I guess one used most often is, **"Everyone is doing it."**

"You're right, Foster. But right is right and wrong is wrong. Daniel could have used that excuse. Other eunuchs were going along with the king's commandment and Daniel stood alone! It cost him dearly to stand true to the Lord, but because he took a stand, his three friends stood also. And look how God used Daniel throughout his life! -- Anyone else? -- Gretchen?"

"Well, sir, I think one mark of a wimp is that they always **blame somebody else**. They are never at fault themselves. It started in the Garden of Eden -- Adam blamed God, then he blamed Eve, and Eve blamed the serpent. They just "passed the buck" and wouldn't take responsibility. To them, it wasn't their fault they got in trouble. **'Somebody else made me do it.'** How many times have you heard that?"

The teacher replied, "More times than you want to know!"

Randy motioned to speak. "What about when Saul wouldn't fight Goliath? He was king and taller than anyone in the nation, but he was a wimp, big time! He even let young David take on the mighty

giant while Saul cowered in fear in his tent! What a shame! He wanted the glory of being king but not the responsibility! What about that?"

"Yes, what about that! What about Peter denying Christ? And who else in the Bible can you recall didn't have the courage to stand true to Christ?"

That conversation went on for awhile, and then Susan spoke up. "Those all failed. What about those who did right against all odds -- the ones who didn't make excuses?"

"Good point, Susie! That's the other side of the coin! Name some men or women, who stood alone and made a difference for God. First, what excuse could they have used to be a failure?"

"Everybody is doing it!" Tom answered. "You mentioned Daniel before, but he surely could have used that excuse another time, too. He didn't know how it would turn out when he disobeyed the king and continued to pray after the king's "cease and desist" order, but he was loyal to God in spite of the pressure. He went through some tough times, but God rewarded him.

"Somebody made me do it!" "It's not my fault! Somebody else made me do it!" Saul gave that excuse after sparing King Agag. He blamed his disobedience on '*the people*'. He stood head and shoulders above all his people but he had no backbone. Israel wanted a king so badly to 'be like' the other nations, but their first king was a *wimp*.

"But I'm from a single parent home. I'm disadvantaged!" as if to say, "I'm not responsible. It's my parent's fault. I don't have a Dad; or I don't have a Mother." Life may be

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 * (Continued from page 11 - Wimp)
 * tough, but we are responsible for our
 * own actions. "So then every one of
 * us shall give account of himself to
 * God" (Romans 14:12). Many people
 * have overcome big difficulties to do
 * right and serve the Lord. Remember
 * Hiram? His mother was a widow,
 * but Hiram didn't cry over what he
 * couldn't help. He practiced and
 * perfected his skills and became an
 * expert artificer in brass. His
 * reputation spread all the way to the
 * King! What an honor to be
 * recognized for his work by King
 * Solomon and appointed over all the
 * intricate, ornamental work of the
 * great temple in Jerusalem! What a
 * loss if he had made self-pity his
 * excuse!
 * **"What I do is not important.
 * Nobody pays any attention to me."**
 * David could have made the self-pity
 * excuse, too. All alone in the
 * wilderness with a flock of sheep, he
 * could never "get ahead" this way!
 *
 * But though he had no "field
 * supervisor", David used his time
 * wisely, practiced his harp to heavenly
 * perfection, practiced his sling shot to
 * perfect marksmanship, and mustered
 * his strength against wild beasts. Then
 * at the right time, God brought him
 * out of the humble, obscure place into
 * the light of leadership and authority,
 * a place for which he never would
 * have been prepared if he had made
 * excuses!
 * **"Well, my friend did it!" or
 * "They told me to."** You'd better
 * take inventory of your friends and see
 * where their actions lead. Rehoboam
 * listened to his friends (I Kgs. 12:8).
 * He was "one of the boys"; he was
 * going to be "tough". But look where
 * it left him – enemy of most of God's
 * people and the left-over ruler of only
 * two tribes of Israel when God had
 * him lined up for all twelve. His
 * "friends" and their advice made him
 * a real loser! What a wimp!
 *
 * The teacher continued, "There
 * are many examples of wimps in the
 * Bible and plenty more in our day.
 * Paul said, 'Mark them which cause
 * divisions and offences contrary to the
 * doctrine which ye have learned; and
 * avoid them' (Rom. 16:17).
 * 'Brethren, be followers of me, and
 * mark them which walk so as ye have
 * us for an ensample' (Phil. 3:17).
 * *Don't follow anybody blindly.* See if
 * they are following the standard of the
 * Word of God! 'For many walk, of
 * whom I have told you often, and now
 * tell you even weeping, that they are
 * the enemies of the cross of
 * Christ' (Phil 3:18). Don't listen to
 * what they say, but see if what they do
 * is right."
 * The bell rang. "Class
 * dismissed," the teacher announced,
 * "But remember, a *'friend'* is no
 * friend who does not draw you closer
 * to Christ. And don't be a wimp!" Ω
 *
 * *****