

“SON OF A HARLOT”

Jephthah was one of the judges of Israel. His family life got off to a bad start. He was the son of a harlot. When he and his brothers grew in age, they wanted him to be thrown out of the house. They did not want any of their father's inheritance to go to him (Judges 11:1-2). The events of this man's life led him to be chosen by God to judge His people. He is listed as one of the great examples of faith by the Hebrew writer (Hebrews 11:32). It raises an interesting point. Since he was the son of a harlot, he should have been a bad man all of his life. That is the way the world thinks, is it not?

If the parents or parent is evil then the child must turn out the same way. We can spend time discussing the power of influence. Jesus taught us that as His followers we are to be the “salt of the earth” (Matthew 5:13). Righteous conduct can influence the lives of those around us. Peter instructed the Christian wife to live the right kind of life in front of her husband that he might be influenced by her living the Word in front of him (I Peter 3:1). It stands to reason then that the influence of evil or of good can certainly affect those who come into contact with it.

Paul did not want Christians to be deceived about the power of influence. Forming friendships with those who are evil will corrupt good conduct (I Corinthians 15:33). The word for communication here refers to companionships. The Christian then who forms friendships with those of the world needs to be aware of the warning that Paul gives. We would have a hard time trying to lead people to Christ if we chose not to be of a friendly spirit. The warning here then is not about having friends in the world rather the warning is to now allow those friendships to be in a position of control over the Christian.

James gives a warning to faltering Christians who were beginning to be unfaithful to the Lord. In plain language James argues that if one is a friend of the world, they are an enemy of God (James 4:4). A friend of the world is one who chooses to not walk in the light of God's revealed truth (I John 1:7). Forming a close friendship with such an individual always has the potential of taking the Christian away from God. Paul then commands the Christian to come out from among them and be separate (II Corinthians 6:17). Again there is no thought here that we have nothing to do with the evil people of the world. Because as Paul shows then we would have to go out of the world (I Corinthians 5:10).

A person may have bad things in their past such as Jephthah being the son of a harlot. It does not follow that one “must” turn out the same way. Children who grow to become adults must make choices in their lives to accept or reject the influence with which they were raised. Some children have had bad parenting skills taught to them by their parents. Yet they grow to adulthood and chose to raise their children differently. What makes the difference? The power of influence of good people over the influence of those who are not good.

A prime example is Timothy. His father was a Greek. However his mother and grandmother had come to faith in Jesus. Paul describes such faith as being unfeigned (II Timothy 1:5). The word unfeigned means sincere. Lois and Eunice practiced their faith in front of Timothy. Their godly influence was enough to offset the wisdom of the Greeks manifested by his own father. Timothy became a soldier of the cross of Christ and served in the capacity of helping the apostle Paul in much of his labors.

Have you made mistakes in life? Do not allow those mistakes to be the final chapter of the book you are writing by the life you live. One thing for certain is that we do not spend time trying to blame our past for what we are today. That is a futile journey that never leads to responsibility. We are what we are today as a result of all the lessons we have learned along life's journey. Be thankful for what we have learned and have courage to discard the bad and hold on to the good. The son of the harlot became a judge in Israel and his name is listed as an example of faith in God.

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BELVEDERE BEACON

“Ye are the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14)

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PURITY (Matthew 5:8)

Jesus pronounced a blessing on “the pure in heart.” he said they would see God! “Pure” translates the Greek word “katharos.” It is an adjective meaning “pure, as being cleansed.” The implication is that where a state of uncleanness or filthiness existed, now a process has worked to bring about the opposite state: that of cleanliness, i.e. purity.

What is the process that God has chosen to create a pure or clean heart in man? This is the most important question we could ever ask. Why? Because only “the pure in heart” shall see God!

In answering our question, we must first understand what this heart is that has been cleansed or made pure. Originally “kardi,” the Greek word translated “heart” in most places meant the muscle that pumped the blood through the human body. It came to symbolize the inner man (I Pet. 3:4); or the intellect (Matt. 9:4; Isa. 32:4; Prov. 14:10; Mk. 2:6); the emotions (Matt. 27: 37; Neh. 2:2; Dan. 7:15); the will (II Cor. 9:7; Rom. 6:17; Col. 3:15) and the conscience (Acts 2:37; I Jhn. 3:20). Now we are better able to understand why the translators also rendered “psuche,” meaning the soul or life, into our English word “heart.” The heart is representative of the complete mental and moral activity of man. We may conclude that the word “heart” represents the real person. For this present age it is tabernacled in the flesh (II Cor. 5:1).

With this explanation of the heart in mind, we are better able to comprehend what has been made pure. We may now note the process by which the Lord made clean or pure the heart (intellect, emotions, will, and conscience).

Jesus said that the apostles were made “clean through the word which I have spoken unto you” (Jhn. 15:3). In the parable of the soils in Luke 8, the only soil receptive to “the seed” or word (vs. 11). was the “honest and good heart.” It heard and kept the word and brought “forth fruit with patience” (v.15). May we not conclude that this is not only how the apostles of John 15:3 were made clean through the word, but how any person's heart is made clean through the word.

Without the evidence found only in the word, there can be no faith or belief created within the heart (Heb. 4:12; Rom. 10:10, 17). And “without faith it is impossible to please him” (Heb. 11:6).

David P. Brown via the Christian Worker, August 1991

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY:

Bible Classes for all ages 10.00 a.m.
Morning Worship 11.00 a.m.
Evening Worship 6.00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY:

Bible Classes for all ages 7.00 p.m.

EVANGELIST: Ken Chumbley - Tel. No. (803) -279-8663

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GUEST EDITORIAL:

I am using the following article this week as it is timely. For some school is already out and for others it will end this week. With school out and next weekend being the Memorial Day weekend, it means that summer is upon us when we will, sadly, see in our neighborhoods and in our stores many who will be inappropriately.

Hopefully, this will not include Christians but, sadly, sometimes it does.

Summer Heat is On and the Clothes are Off

Pathetically, it never seems to fail. When summer heat starts coming on, the clothes start coming off. For the same reasons, Christians seem to be no exception. They often have the shortest shorts, the scantiest swimsuits, the highest hem lines and lowest necklines and the flimsiest excuses in town. The Lord commanded that Christians should be adorned in proper clothing modestly and discreetly (I Tim. 2:9). The principles applies to men and boys as well as to women and girls. There was a time when people were expected to be decently covered. In today's society (and unfortunately in the church of our Lord, as well) it is no longer necessary to be decent and covered.

While there is no logical reason for going around in public half-nude, there are a number of psychological reasons for it. (1) There is the need to be *noticed* and *admired*, perhaps with the intent of being "desired" by the opposite sex. Is it not strange, though, how indignant and offended these bare beauties become when some guy gets turned on and makes an ungentlemanly remark or "proposition" to them? (2) There is the need of *vanity*. Those who are physically attractive, or think they are, will try to "show off their assets" to the best advantage/ Some "grown up" women evidently feel they must compete with their daughters for their "fair share" of the attention and admiration of the male population. This is a sure sign of psychological inferiority and in reality an effort to compensate for a lack of character.

Jesus once met a man "which had devils [evil spirits] long time, and ware no clothes" (Luke 8:27). When Jesus cast out the evil spirits, the man was found "sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind" (Luke 8:35). When Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit of the tree of "knowledge of good and evil" (Gen. 2:17, they became aware of sin and their nakedness (Gen. 3:11). They covered themselves with leaves to hide the fact of their nakedness (shame) from each other. It would be gratifying if some such awareness of the shame of nakedness, suggestive behavior, and immodest exposure could be passed around today.

This article should not be construed to mean the writer is against comfort and fashion. It should be understood that the writer does believe in God's standards, and that comfort and fashion must yield to common sense, good taste, and respect for one's own character. As Christians, with summer's heat coming on, let us insure that our Christianity - and not our nakedness - is that which is on display to the world.

Author Unknown

Ken Chumbley

NEWS AND NOTES

Let us continue to keep in our prayers Helen Culpepper, Pam Gossett, Kathy Treadway's mother, Lanny Niver's father, Tim Arnold's father.

Tim Arnold's father is now back home.

Let us keep Helen Culpepper in our prayers as she is still having health difficulties.

Lanny Niver asked for prayers for his aunt who has had a partial hip replacement and also may have suffered a mini stroke. She is in Doctors Hospital.

Odie McLemore's brother is home from the hospital. Dot McLemore has shingles however she was able to be out last Sunday.

Ted Rush, preacher at Mauldin, SC, continues to recuperate and is gaining strength..

Kimberly Wilson was baptized into Christ for the remission of her sins on Wednesday evening by her father, Ron. We welcome Kimberly into the body of Christ.

Our next fellowship meal will be on May 28 following the morning worship.

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1050 AM -- WFAM
Sundays 8.00 a.m. to 8.30 a.m

FRIENDLY PERSUASION

If, indeed, all mankind were equally in love with the truth, we might have only to propose a change for the better and all would embrace it, but just the reverse of this is the true history of society. The more clearly and forcibly an unpopular truth is argued, the greater will be the dislike to it by all who are interested in representing error.

Pride, ambition and selfishness are all powerful allies of error. The pride of the understanding is the most invincible of all sorts of pride, especially when religion is the problem. And as long as there are conflicting creeds, sects, divisions among religionists, so long will be our duty to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.

Never was there so much need to study as in the defense of truth. We must conciliate the passions, while we besiege the understanding. We are not to suppose all our opponents to be knaves and impostors to be disinterested and obstinate. We must remember that in this world of weakness and error, the good and virtuous are often enlisted under the banners of error. There are honest differences of opinion, and men equally sincere on both sides of many questions.

Friendly and persuasive were the words and arguments of the prophets, apostles and our Savior to those who appeared honest in their convictions, but severe and tart were their reproofs to such as appeared obstinate in error. Courtesy and kindness will be our best guides, and a good example will often achieve more than a thousand arguments.

Alexander Campbell, 1830