



The PARAKLETE

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SEPARATING CHRIST FROM DOCTRINE

Some who call themselves “evangelical” may be heard to say things like, “Christ unites; doctrine divides,” or “Ask, whom do you trust, not, what do you believe?” Whether they realize that such statements minimize biblical doctrine is not sure, but the fact remains, it does.

Is it possible to separate Christ from doctrine? Yes, but if you do the result will not be Christianity. God has said some good things about doctrine in His Word. For example *“You will know the truth and the truth will set you free,”* John 8:32. I doubt anyone will deny that Christ is the truth and truth is a doctrinal position.



“HE SAT DOWN AND TAUGHT...”
“MY WORDS WILL NEVER PASS AWAY”
“...BUT I SAY UNTO YOU...”
“HE TAUGHT AS ONE HAVING AUTHORITY”

God the Father and Jesus the Son are revealed in the Bible and that is no wax nose. It’s firm. It’s a standard. You measure truth by it, Romans 6:17. Our salvation is determined by whether we believe: *“Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son,”* 2 John 1:9. Depart from the doctrine, and you depart from Christ. As Paul wrote to Timothy, *“Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers,”* 1 Timothy 4:16.

I’m not saying that those who separate Christ from doctrine intend an evil result. However it is important to realize that if a person digs a ditch across a road for irrigation and a horse breaks a leg and a rider is killed because of it, the damage is the same. If Timothy ignored the admonition of Paul to watch his life and doctrine closely and he and his hearers are not saved as a result, what’s the conclusion?

George Barna was born in 1955 and is head of The George Barna Group, an organization that does marketing research, especially for religious organizations. He tells us how difficult it is to define those who call themselves “evangelicals.”

He states concerning them from a survey of American evangelicals, that they “don’t preach doctrine from the Bible, and therefore don’t practice differently from the world.”

For example he states divorce among them is about the same rate as the nation at large. Further, he states that of 12,000 teenagers who took the pledge to wait for marriage, 80 percent had sex outside marriage within seven years. He also states that 26 percent of traditional evangelicals do not think premarital sex is wrong.

However some who call themselves evangelicals are willing to say they have a personal commitment to Jesus Christ and that it is important to them. They believe salvation is only by grace through the work of Jesus, as well as other truths found in the Bible, yet for matters of convenience, they are willing to separate Christ from doctrine.

One trait I have noticed within this group of “believers” is that they put their finger to the wind to test what is in vogue, simple, attractive, and an “easy sale,” to determine the direction of their congregations. Will it attract numbers? No doubt for that is what it is designed to do and it is, after all, marketing.

To those who belittle doctrine as being troublesome, it may come as a surprise that they do live differently than the world. Ronald Siders, in his book *“Scandal of the Evangelical Conscience,”* reports that for the most part they do avoid immoral behavior. He states they are nine times more likely to avoid what is called “adult literature,” they volunteer for humanitarian causes, and four times more likely to boycott the companies that promote immoral behavior. That is admirable, but we must not forget good works will not save us, however, watching our life a doctrine closely will, according to the Apostle Paul, 1 Timothy 4:16.

The conclusion is that doctrine matters. Mr. Sider puts it like this: “Barna’s findings on the different behavior of Christians with a biblical worldview underline the importance of theology. Biblical orthodoxy does matter. One important way to end

SEPARATING CHRIST FROM DOCTRINE

the scandal of contemporary Christian behavior is to work and pray fervently for the growth of orthodox theological belief in our churches.”

As John Piper, writer for *World Magazine*, said “Who would have thought that the very survey system that lures so many to put their finger in the wind of opinion would tell them, take your finger down and teach the people what the Bible says?”

Some have attempted to give the word “doctrine” bad press when the Scriptures do the very opposite. The word “doctrine” (Greek DIDACHE) is akin to the word “doctor” which means “teacher.” It was given to one who taught, or instructed. What they taught was called “doctrine.”

We learn from 1 Timothy 1:10 that sound doctrine is intended to be an antidote for evil behavior. Paul warns in 2 Timothy 4:3 *“For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.”* Paul told Timothy to *“command certain men not to teach false doctrine any longer,”* 1 Timothy 1:3.

The question arises: Why would men be led into false doctrine or oppose sound doctrine. The Bible does not leave us in ignorance on this issue.

“If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions and constant friction between men of corrupt mind who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain,” 1 Timothy 6:3-5.

Many are the teachers, writers, publishers, and preachers who will teach in a manner and with content that will meet one or all three of these criterion: first to satisfy their own ego, second to satisfy itching ears and third for profit. Paul mentions all three in the text above.

Paul told Titus to tell the elders to *“hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.”*

It is true you can separate Christ from sound doctrine, but the end result will be something less than Christianity. What the Apostles wrote was inspired by the Third Person of the trinity.

DENNY’S SCHEDULE

Nothing this winter

Gallipolis, OH 740/446-6929

DANNY EVANS’ SCHEDULE

Nothing this winter

Huntington, WV 304/633-5908 (c) 304/736/2677

WE ARE BROKEN HEARTED OVER THE FACT THAT WE HAD TO CANCEL WWW2021. WE HAD NO CHOICE DUE TO THE COVID RESTRICTIONS PLACED ON THE MUSIC ROAD RESORTS AND CONSEQUENTLY ON BARNABAS. WE ARE HAPPY TO ANNOUNCE HOWEVER THAT WE HAVE DATES FOR FEBRUARY 14-17, 2022. WE APOLOGIZE FOR ANY INCONVENIENCE PLACED ON THOSE WHO HAD REGISTERED.

WE HAVE BEEN ASKED

We have been asked “Is it proper to pray to Jesus rather than to the Father?” This has been a question that most preachers have been asked many times. Here is my best understanding.

Most of us have grown up with teaching that we address the Father, with “Heavenly Father...”, or “Dear Father,” or as Jesus taught when asked how to pray, “Our Father.” Such prayers usually end with “in Jesus name.” I will not argue that it is the wrong to pray to Jesus but add these thoughts.

We would not be following the instructions of Jesus given Matthew 6, to pray “Our Father...” It would also be grammatically incorrect to end a pray “in Jesus name” if the prayer is to Him.

It also brings praise to Jesus for what He did on the cross to acknowledge the Son purchased the grace when we proclaim “in Jesus name,” meaning “by the authority of Jesus Christ our Lord.”

I know the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are one, Jesus taught us that on more than one occasion. However, Jesus taught that if we bear fruit of the Spirit *“Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name,”* John 15:16.

This isn’t an issue I choose to cause controversy over nor is it a hill I choose to die on. But the teaching of Jesus about how to pray seems enough for me to pray to the Father and in Jesus name. Jesus prayed to the Father, Lk. 22:42, so should we.

- .DOTS AND DASHES FROM DANNY. -

As I begin, I have one question; I mean a very important question. Now this question may take some serious contemplation to answer: **“Is 2020 over?”** I can only imagine since this is the January-February Paraklete, most will answer “Yes.” But there may be some that have had such a devastating year that it still feels like 2020. We may be in a new year and I hear shouts of praise that we made it through this most difficult past year. A year ago we would never have imagined all that happened in the past twelve month. It has been a year that will go down in history as a year of devastation, decisions, death, doubt, disappointment and social distancing. I also have to include one thing; the Prince of this World has used it for division in the body of Christ and that over wearing masks. Some will not wear masks while others are inclined to wear their masks even while sitting in their own house. Honestly, I can see both sides of this issue and a couple of past Paraklete issues I wrote on this issue some, so I won't repeat that here.

The past nine or ten months have been a giant daily confusion for most of us. It has been like a test and I am not sure I was prepared for it. It made us excited just to take a car ride or go for a walk. One thing I know on a personal basis is that I know every inch of my refrigerator. I can't walk past it without looking in. As a result I, like others, gained a pound or two, well okay 10 or 20. However, looking on the bright side of 2020 there have been more home cooked meals this year. People have remembered, they know how to cook, but at a cost of weight.

2020 introduced some to new occupations, like being a home teacher. In the process they have gained a new respect for the regular teachers especially when it comes to math. I heard one person say, “2020 is like looking both ways before crossing the street and being hit by an airplane.

We have lived with words and phrases that are fixed in our minds forever. Some such words are Covid, quarantine, social distancing, testing, pandemic, lock down, and uncertainty. The uncertainty include questions like: Are kids safe at school? Is it okay to go to the store for milk? Are they out of toilet tissue? Will I have a job much longer? Is working at home destroying my career? Is it safe at work? Is it safe to visit my family? Should I fly? Do I need to wipe down the mail? Is the information from the CDC reliable? Should I wear a mask?

There is, however, one word that I feel has been used to the limit, **“CANCELLED.”** Everything, it

seems has been cancelled. I could not begin to list the things that have been cancelled. Even Barnabas Ministries had to cancel something near and dear to our hearts, that was the Winter Worship and Workshop for 2021. There were too many restrictions and uncertainties.

People made a statement that concerned me: “We cancelled worship.” I know the intent of the statement is to say that the public gatherings would not be taking place for a time. But for some, I wonder, did they cancel their worship of God Almighty? May I ask you to consider something? Can we or should we cancel our worship of the Master. Worshipping God is not a once a week activity where we come to a building and, sing, partake of the loaf and the cup, hear a few words spoken by one called of God and then pray and go home, never to worship again until the next week. Worshiping God is not an hour activity but is a lifestyle. Because of Covid-19 it may not be a good thing to meet publicly but nothing, not even Coronavirus, can or should stop our worship. 1. Chronicles 16:23-25 speaks to this issue: **“Sing to the LORD, all the earth; proclaim His salvation day after day. Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous deeds among all peoples. For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; He is to be feared above all gods.”**

May I take this opportunity to remind you, **WORSHIP HAS NOT BEEN CANCELLED!** only corporate assembly. Express your worship today and every day. Enjoy quiet time with God and grow close to Him. Be safe, care for each other and give God praise!

**HENRY AND
SWEETIE SAY:**



S: What do you think of this Covid-19?

H: It's one more than Covid-18.

S: I mean aren't you afraid you might catch it?

H: I'm not chasing it, so I won't catch it.

S: Will you get serious? What if you or I catch it?

H: Then we'll get sick I guess.

S: What if we die of it?

H: We'll have to die of something sometime.

S: Henry, aren't you afraid of this thing?

H: Actually, no. I'm ready and so are you. I won't do anything to speed it up, but the Apostle Paul said, **“To live is Christ but to die is gain.”** We have all the bases covered. Living with you here with you is as living for and with Christ. Heaven will be to gain even more bliss.

S: Henry, you are so spiritual and so loving. It is heaven on earth to be in Christ and with you.

H: Yeah. I know.

THREE GIANTS DAVID FACED

By Denny Coburn

TEXT: 1 Samuel 17:4-7

INTRO: We all have our problems that are difficulties we face. The problems seem like giants at the time. When Israel was about to enter the Promised Land they saw the habitants as giants to face. I learned a long time ago that the difference between major surgery and minor surgery was who the surgery was on. But, in reality we do have giants (to us) we face. Perception is reality...to us. King David had his giants too. We usually think of David facing Goliath as "the" giant he faced, but he had at least two others. It might do us good to look at each giant he faced.

- I. **GOLIATH (An expected foe)**
 - A. **A REAL GIANT**
 1. Over nine feet tall with a metal coat weighing about 125 pounds, a spear with a 5 pound tip, a shield so big he had to have a carrier.
 2. He hated God's people
 3. Feared by everyone else but not David
 - B. **HE WAS A NATURAL ENEMY**
 1. Wanted to kill David
 2. Boasted about it
 3. David felt the duty though discouraged to
 - C. **AN EASY VICTORY**
 1. David trusted in God
 2. Used what he had, stone
 3. In defense of God's Honor
- II. **KING SAUL (An undeclared foe)**
 - A. **A GIANT TO DAVID**
 1. Head and shoulder taller than most men
 2. Developed hatred for David
 3. Jealousy of the heart
 - B. **THIS GIANT WAS A FRIEND**
 1. Yet tried to kill David
 2. Spoke of his love for David
 3. David's duty to protect this giant
 - C. **A MORE DIFFICULT VICTORY**
 1. Conflicted: Protect Saul/Guard self
 2. Strategy: Honor God's anointed
- III. **GOD (The unexpected foe)**
 - A. **NONE BIGGER**
 1. Not physical battle but spiritual
 2. No hatred was involved, just sin
 3. This time the Giant he faced loved David
 4. This giant fought for David...and never slept
 - B. **A GIANT BUT NOT AN ENEMY**
 1. Delivered David and gave victories
 2. He loved David
 - C. **THE GREATEST VICTORY**
 1. Had Victories over Goliath and Saul
 2. Yet he was at odds with God over Bathsheba
 3. He was at odds with God over Uriah's death

We make the God of love and compassion into a giant we hate to face, one we run from rather than running to. He is not an enemy but grants us peace in the time of trouble...unless we make Him seem as a giant enemy.

We do have physical Goliaths, in our jobs or relationships and to win we have to stay in the fight. We also have our Saul to defend against and often we are not even aware there is a battle going on but it is our duty to do the right thing.

Yet the greatest battle we often have is when we fight against the will of God. Some of our battles take courage, as did David with Goliath. Other battles build character as the one David fought to protect himself against Saul. But the battles we fight when we labor against the will of God are for our cleansing when we submit. In preparing this message I preached years ago, I recalled the personal "giants" I faced in my life. It is my opinion that everyone can see their own giants they met in life. The greatest victory is over self.

DR. FUNK'S TOP TEN LIST

Dr. Willard Funk, the well-known publisher of dictionaries was once asked to select the ten most expressive words in the English language. His reply:

1. Most bitter - Alone
2. Most tragic - Death
3. Most revered - Mother
4. Most beautiful - Love
5. Most cruel - Revenge
6. Most peaceful - Tranquil
7. Saddest - Forgotten
8. Warmest - Friendship
9. Coldest - No
10. Most comforting - Faith

AN IRAQIE DEFECTS TO AMERICA

Neighbor: "How was your home in Iraq?"
Defector: "Oh perfect, I had no complaints."
Neighbor: "Did you have a good job?"
Defector: "Yes, yes, I couldn't complain."
Neighbor: "Did you have good food?"
Defector: "Yes, of course...no complains"
Neighbor: "Then why did you move here?"
Defector: "Oh, here I can complain."

AGNOSTICISM

The word *agnosticism* comes from two Greek words: *a* (no, without) and *gnosis* (knowledge). Agnosticism literally means "no knowledge." Regarding the question of God's existence, agnostics claim they are unsure, having no knowledge about the existence of God. To them questions about God are allegedly inherently impossible to prove or disprove.

We see two forms of agnosticism. Soft or weak agnosticism, say a person does not know if God exists. Hard agnosticism says a person cannot know if God exists.

Logically, agnosticism is a self-defeating belief system. To say "one cannot know about reality" is a statement that presumes knowledge about reality. The statement is therefore self-falsifying. In other words, the statement amounts to saying, "We know enough about reality to affirm that we cannot know anything about reality." Ultimately, one must possess knowledge of reality in order to deny knowledge of reality. Put another way, to say that we cannot know anything about God is, in fact, to say something about God. Agnosticism is thus not a logically satisfying position to take.

Logic has a thorny way of poking holes in false world-views

BARN-a-book (a Barnabas Ministries study series)

A series of studies in encouragement by Denny Coburn

Study Number One Hundred Fourteen – What Makes us Competent to Admonish Others?

“I myself am convinced, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, complete in knowledge and competent to instruct one another,” Romans 15:14 NIV. The NASB has it “And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with knowledge and able also to admonish one another.”

The Greek word used in the text interpreted as “instruct” and “admonish” is NOUTHETEO and means “to put in mind, warn or to train.” The difference between “admonish” and “teach” seems to be that, the former has mainly in view the things that are wrong and call for warning, the latter has to do chiefly with the impartation of positive truth, see Colossians 3:16.

This word does not refer to casual communication or normal teaching and counseling. It implies a definite exhortation, a correction. Paul spoke often of accepting one another, but for the sake of truth there must be a balance to his instructions. In most of his writings Paul began by establishing his acceptance of them as members of the family of God with him, but he eventually got to the point of his writing. He was passing on words inspired by the Holy Spirit as he wrote 2 Timothy 3:16-17. *“All Scripture (truth) is God breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”*

Some of the most unforgettable instruction I have received is from those who have confronted me. I have also had those I have confronted thank me and the bond of friendship has grown stronger in both cases. Confronting and being confronted is a very emotional experience. However, some of the strongest relationships I have to this day are as a result of caring enough to confront even though at the time of these confrontations there was a period, in most cases, of self-examination, honest evaluation, and reconciling ourselves to the truth.

In our text we find the answer to the question in the heading of this study, “What makes us competent to admonish others?”

1. Paul told them they were “full of goodness.” He was making a statement of his belief that they were full of goodness. When we come to Jesus by obedience and He gives us the deposit of the Holy Spirit as a down payment of our redemption, we are good in His sight, on our way to being “full” of goodness. As the Spirit of God gains more and more control of our thinking, we grow in this area. So we “clean up our own act” before we try to help others. This can be referred to as the “log in the eye inspection,” Matt. 7:3-5. It is clear by this text that we must examine ourselves first.
2. He tells them they were “complete in knowledge.” Admonishment must be based on a well-rounded knowledge of the Word of God. That is to say, our admonition is to be based on the specific will of God, not on what we think others should or should not do or be. Many friendships have been broken because someone “spoke their mind” in an attempt to put others in “their place.” Sometimes good intentions cause trouble because our own will and manner of speaking get involved.
3. The Apostle gives us his own example for the third point – boldness. He writes it this way, *“I have written you quite boldly on some points.”* I want to say at this point that the word “boldness” does not mean arrogance or brashness. Biblical boldness comes from confidence and confidence is a fruit of knowledge. We not only must know, but know that we know. Paul’s boldness came directly from the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. However, we present day Christians know only what the inspired Word has to say on any given issue. I have heard many people say, “I was prompted by the Holy Spirit to tell them...” Any direct command of the Bible is a prompting for all of us and there is no independent relationship to the Holy Spirit that is beyond that of others. As Don DeWelt used to say: “The Holy Spirit does not come in pints, quarts and gallons. We get all of Him at salvation, the problem is He does not get all of us.” Be bold in your knowledge.

4. The fourth revelation is found also in verse 15 and is patience. He writes “...as if to remind you of them again...” The idea is not the “get them told,” but rather teach and admonish with great patience. Admonishment is not to be done in order to get it off our “check list” of things to do, but it should be done with deep concern and love. Paul wrote as he was departing Ephesus for Jerusalem, “***So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears,***” Acts 20:31. We can almost feel the love and concern he had for the Lord’s church. His tears were a reflection of his deep concern for these brothers in Christ. There is no way anyone could interpret this process as being judgmental.

Admonishment must frequently be personal. Paul told the church at Thessalonica “***For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory,***” 1 Thess. 2:11-12.

5. We have not exhausted this text, but we must turn to other references in the Bible to complete the persona of one who admonishes a brother or sister in Christ. Admonishment must flow from pure motives. The fifth and perhaps as basic as having knowledge of the word is: Pure motives. The Apostles wrote “***I am not writing to shame you, but to warn [admonish] you, as my dear children,***” 1 Cor. 4:14. One who admonishes in order to embarrass an individual is not loving and the motive would be more evil than pure and caring.

I have read of cases where congregations violated this biblical principle through over-zealous leaders and it resulted in lawsuits. This not only did not help the individual but (a) Hurt them and (b) Resulted in shame upon the Lord’s church.

6. There should be only one objective when we admonish others: to help them become a better Christian. Therefore number six is having the proper goal when we admonish others. To this end the Apostle wrote, “***We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. To this end I labor struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in m.***” Colossians 1:28-29.

When we admonish others for the wrong reason, there is little doubt that the result will be less than beneficial and more than likely the result may compound the difficulties we are attempting to correct.

CONCLUSIONS: Each of us must evaluate our own lives before trying to admonish others. Listed below is a check-list to be used on ourselves before we attempt to help others.

1. Can I say that my own life is “full of goodness?”
2. Do I really know what the Bible teaches about a godly and righteous life and what it says in the area I am about to address with my brother or sister?
3. When I admonish or encourage another Christian or more than one Christian, does my attitude reflect my deep love and concern for them?
4. When a Christian needs admonishment regarding specific sin(s), do I seek that person out privately rather than publicly to make it personal and not directing my remarks for others to hear?
5. Am I persistent in my admonishment without being obnoxious, overbearing or appear to be stalking them?
6. Do I want to admonish rather than to discourage, embarrass or otherwise do harm?
7. In short is my motive purely for their spiritual benefit?
8. What is my goal?



THE FICTIONARY DICTIONARY

BARRICADE – *n.*: A place where grizzly bear play video games. “Smoky like to go to the mall and spend hours in the barricade.”

BERNADETTE – *a, adj.*: “The act of destroying a bill that has been paid. “He went to the back yard to bernadette he just paid off.”

BANQUET – *n, v*: The act of the instrument players leaving the stage. “There will be no more music tonight because the banquet.”

CALENDAR – *n*: The act of loaning some livestock. Bill will rent you one of his cows, yes, he’s what is known as a calendar.”

CANTALOUPE – *adj*: Being unable to run away to get married. “She cantaloupe because her father forbid he to be out of his sight.

From *The Fictionary Dictionary* by Jim Marbles, Trade Life Books, Tulsa, OK

A TIMELY WORD FROM THE PAST

“Let us compare every constitution we have seen with those of the United States of America, and we shall have no reason to blush for our country. On the contrary, we shall feel the strongest motives to fall upon our knees, in gratitude to heaven for having been graciously placed to give us birth and education in that country, and for having destined us to live under her laws!” John Adams, *A Defense of the Constitution of Government of the United States of America*, 1787-88.

OUR EDUCATED ATHLETES

“I wanted to be a big league baseball player so I could see my picture on a bubble gum card.” Al Ferrara, Dodger outfielder.

“When I think of a stadium, it’s like a temple. It’s religious.” Jim Lefebvre, Giant’s coach.

“Age is a question of mind over matter. If you don’t mind, age don’t matter.” Satchel Paige, a pitcher in the early Negro League.

“The two most important things in life are good friends and a strong bullpen.’ Bob Lemon, Yankees
“When you come right down to it the baseball owners are really little boys with big wallets.” Harold Parrott, a baseball executive.

DO YOU CARE WHAT GOD WILL SAY?

When Madeline Murray said, “Take prayer out of school” where were you?

Didn’t you care what God would say,
the day we threw prayer away?

When the Ten Commandments were taken down,
Did you shake your head?

Did you wear a frown?

Didn’t you care what God would say,

The day we threw the Ten Commandments away?

Or when they said “Give us abortion on demand!
We have our rights just like a man.”

Did you turn and look away,

As the Supreme Court said, “That will be okay.”

Didn’t you care what God would say,

The day they threw our children away?

When they pull the plug on Granny someday, and
take her medication away,

Will you squirm a little in your chair,

And say, “I’m not sure if that’s fair?”

Do you care what God will say,

When we throw all the old folks away?

Is anything important enough to defend?

Can’t you see where it all will end?

Do you care what God will say,

When we throw America away?

Copied from “*Treasures From My Basement*” – Wayne Smith

ATTITUDE MATTERS

A Christian life should be cause for celebration, but sometimes we don’t feel much like celebrating. In fact, when the weight of the world seems to bear down upon our shoulders, celebration maybe the last thing on our minds...but it shouldn’t be. As God’s children, we are all blessed beyond measure on good days and bad. This day is a non-renewable resource, once it’s gone, it’s gone forever. We should give thanks for this day while using it for the glory of God.

What will be your attitude today? Will you be fearful, angry, bored, or worried? Will you infect others with the twin blights of cynicism and bitterness? Are you a person who celebrates your life ? Hopefully so! After all, God has richly blessed you, and He wants you to rejoice in His gifts. But, God will not force His joy upon you; you must claim it for yourself.

OPPORTUNITIES

(That we know of)

Feb. 15-18, Winter Worship and Workshop, HAS BEEN CANCELLED...Not much schedule for the winter months...we look forward to summer camps

WAS CHRIST DANGEROUS?

A concerned disciple of one of Christ's first followers could have viewed Him as dangerous. He claimed to speak on behalf of God, was critical of some religious leaders, and asked for the obedience and trust of His followers.

Reading Matt. 10:35-37 might make it appear as if the Lord was anti-family and trying to develop a dangerous cult, a cult much like the many isolationist cults of our day.

However, He didn't ask his disciples to sacrifice their wages to build a bigger house of worship for Himself, nor did He merely talk a good talk. He healed blind eyes and withered limbs, and raised the dead. He walked on water and calmed a stormy sea. Over and over in so many ways, He showed Himself worthy of a following, not just by talking about faith and self-sacrifice and the end-times, but by the miracles He did.

He proved He was God's remedy for our sins. He allowed Himself to be nailed to an executioner's cross. He rose bodily from the dead to show that He was King of kings and Lord of lords.

As part of His legacy, He left a band of disciples who were willing to live and die for their testimony that they had seen Him alive after His crucifixion. He proclaimed the Devil as His enemy as well as ours.

Was Jesus dangerous? Yes! But, only to those who are in league with the Devil. Is He worthy of following? We have a Savior who came to seek us while other religions go seeking after a god. He is our admission to Heaven, while other religious leaders would have us labor for a "possibility" of some sort of salvation. In addition to that other religions have monuments to their dead founders and we have an empty tomb to a risen Lord. Yes, Jesus and His disciples are a danger to the ungodly. How about you, are you dangerous like Jesus?

A PRAYER

"Father I give thanks for your rescuing me and making me right with You. I humbly ask for your Spirit's guidance as I serve you, in Jesus name"

A THOUGHT

He rescues us because He loves us.

GETTING PERSONAL

A preacher was on a train when a well-dressed lady boarded. "Ah here is an opportunity for discussing spiritual matters." He thought to himself.

However, for almost an hour she talked incessantly, about her family, her clothes, her illnesses, and her operation.

Finally, as she paused for a moment, the preacher asked, "May I inquire about your religious life, miss?"

"Sir she replied indignantly, "I am not in the habit of discussing my personal life with strangers!"

The preacher replied, "Madam, after listening to you for the past hour, and having your reply about spiritual matters, I know you both inside and out."

ENGRAVED ON HIS HANDS

In the book of Isaiah, 49:16 we read "*See, I have engraved you in the palm of my hand...*" I have never heard a sermon on this text, but I will give that some thought of doing it. But in this space let's make the connection between this text and His Son the Lord Jesus Christ.

The hands could very well refer to Jesus' hands being placed on a wooden cross and the engraver's tool was a nail, backed by a hammer. He was fastened to the Cross, that His people might be truly engraved on the palms of His hands. Jesus stretched out His hand so our name could be eternally engraved on his hands.

If and when we are tempted to think that God has forgotten us, we only need to look at our palms and remember God's promise. He has put indelible marks on His hands for us; He loves us that much.

Lord, how vast is Your love for me! You keep me ever before You.

SMILES

Did you hear about the office worker who ran out of sick days, so he called in dead?

~

I hate house work. You make the beds, you do the dishes, and six months later you have to do it over.

DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

What **BARNABAS MINISTRIES** believes

BIBLE: The only inspired record of God's revelation to us

SIN: The only thing standing between God and man

JESUS CHRIST: The only perfect One who paid for sin

THE GOSPEL: The only record of Jesus' life

SALVATION: The only hope of man

FAITH: is only "saving faith" if it includes repentance, confession of Jesus Christ as the Son of God and being baptized for the remission of sin.