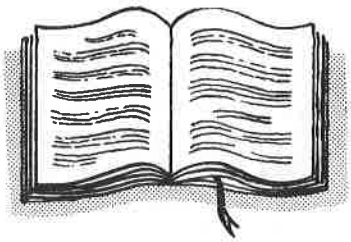
The Christian Courier



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MARK 12: 41-44: THE GIFT!

Between the Court of the Gentiles and the Court of the Women there was the Gate Beautiful. It may be the place where some come to rest themsleves in the shade. Nevertheless, in the Court of the Women there were thirteen collecting boxes called 'The Trumpets'. Each of them were for a special purpose, for instance, to buy corn or oil for the sacrifices. They were for contributions for the daily sacrifices and expenses of the Temple. Rich people gave much, and there came a certian poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which made a farthing. The coin was called a lepton, which means a thin one. And yet Jesus said that her thin, tiny coins was greater than all the others. Why? Because the others had given just a small portion of their money, but she gave ALL she had. Here is a real lesson in giving. Real giving must be just that: giving of that which you need to live on. Giving your all. No God doesn't require that you empty your pockets and put everything you have in the treasury! OR does he? No he expects us to give what we have purposed in our heart to give. But realize one thing, what ever we give, if given in the right spirit, we will be the one who gains. One man said God shovels it in and I shovel it out. And God has a BIGGER shovel. Real giving has a certain recklesness to it. The woman might have kept one coin, but she was thinking that someone else, (ie God) may have a greater need than she. To save one coin back would not have been very much to keep for herself, but it would have been something, so she gave all she had. There is a great truth here. It is our tragedy that there is often some part of our lives, some part of our activities, some part of ourselves which we do not want to give to God. Somehow there is nearly always something we hold back. We rarely make the final sacrifice or the final surrender.

It is a strange and lovely thing that the person whom the New Testament and Jesus hand down to history as a pattern of generosity was a person who gave a gift of half a farthing. We may feel that we have not much in the way of material gifts or personal gifts to give to the work of our Lord, but if we would put all that we have at His disposal, he can do things with it and with us that are beyond all our imaginations.

"For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living."

WHO IS THE RICHER? THE POOR WIDOW OR ME?

Editor:

ARE WE READY TO MEET GOD?

[11 Sam 12:23]....."But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." [11 Sam 11 & 12] David, king over Israel had ignored God's commands and had did a great evil in God's sight, the thing he had done would have been punishable by death in most cases, but he was king and ruled God's people. So God took the child's life instead and brought more grief upon David. Now, also, Saul called up Samuel from the dead, and Samuel told Saul the things he did not want to hear. I wonder today, if we could call up a dead loved one or friend and asked about our well being, if we would hear the things we want to hear? We think we are ready to meet God and that heaven awaits us. But if we could talk to one that has gone on to meet that Judge, if what we think is what we would hear?

Consider the rich man. [Luke 16: 20-31] He was happy in this world as many are but the one thing he wanted most was to keep his brothers from coming to that place. [1 Cor 10:12]...."Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Oh, we think we are OK, but what if one came back from the dead and told us we were not? What then? What if you Dad had passed on and came back and told you that you was not ready? What would you say? [2 Peter 3:10] ..."But the day of the Lord wil come as a thief in the night; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are there in shall be burned up." It will be to late to change if we wait till this happens. What about you brethren, that has enmity toward me, what will you say? If I have hurt the feelings of any one, I ask you to forgive me. Except it be the preaching of the Word, then it up to you. Will we be as the 10 virgins? Five foolish and five wise. They all got ready to meet the bride groom (the Lord) but the oil was gone out of the lamps of the five foolish who brought no oil. Also what about the angels. [Jude 6] Which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitations. They are reserved under chains of darkness unto judgement, to be punished. But we think we are OK. [James 2:10] Think brethren, if we offend in one point we are guilty of all. [Mark 13:37] ...."And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." What you do if a loved one came back from the dead and told you that you were not right? Would you argue or get mad, and ignore the warning. Just think. [1 Cor 10:5-12]

Yours in Christ

Lloyd Treat

IDEAS HAVE CONSEQUENCES

Something is obviously wrong with the world today. Take America, for example. You have to wonder about the moral health of a nation that has 900,000 abortions in one year, and we are not even at the top of the list. There are other nations that have more abortions than we do. And you have to wonder to about the moral and spiritual health of a nation that allows pornography to publically displayed so our young can quickly attain this material. (some of the milder ones, Playboy and Penthouse). Not counting the movies that are available for rent at the Video shops, and at the movie houses, where "R" rated means anyone can get in if they have the price. Something is greatly wrong with a nation that has reached our level of sexual promiscuity, our rate of divorce, our political corruption, our crime.

What causes such decadence in a people? I'd like to blame it on some condition we can't control, like sunspots, humidity, or cosmic rays, but that would be a cop-out. To be perfectly honest, we must blame it on ourselves - yes on the crafty ego, the greedy self, the sinful "I" that lives in all our bodies. This self refuses to live according to the divinely-ordained law of God. The wonderful law of Love. It willingly seeks out ideologies that allow it to live independent of God. It consciously suppresses the truth. [Rom 1:18]

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold not the truth in unrighteousness."

We should note at the outset that man is the only creature on earth that lives by ideas as well as by instincts. Animal behaviour is predictable, due to the instincts that is handed down from one generation to another. In human societies, however, most behaviour is transmitted by education, not heredity. We humans learn most of our characteristic behaviour by free conscious initiation. Man is the only creature that uses the advice, "Think before you do anything" To state it another way: there is no gene for morality or cultural patterns. If you seperate a human from his social group he'll never develope that particualar human behavior.

Now, if most of our behavior comes from education, you can see that vast importance of ideas in affecting human actions. Ideas are taught, not inherited. Ideas come through education, not through genes. To improve human behavior, therefore, you work on the mind, not on the body.

GOD VALUES IDEAS HIGHLY

The Bible shows that God is deeply concerned with <u>right thinking</u>, with true ideas. God isn't impressed with the extxerior of a man, but looks rather into his heart. [1 Sam 16:7]. Solomon said a man

becomes, on the outside, what he thinks on the inside. [Prov 23:7] God told Ezekiel that he didn't like the idea concealed in the proverb "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the childrens teeth are set on edge." The Almighty God contradicted this false notion of determinism with a true idea. "The soul that sins, it shall die." [Ezek 18:1,4.] Jesus scolded people for thinking something merely exterior, like washing hand, was so important. "There is nothing outside a man which by going into him can defile him; but the things which come out of a man are what defile him." [Mark 7:15] Our Lord agreed that you improve human actions by working on the inner man, not the outer man. "Each tree is known by its own fruit..... the good man out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil man out of the evil treasure produces evil: for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks." [Luke 6:43-45]

The apostle Paus claimed the same thing when he encouraged the Romans: [Rom 12:2] ....."And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

In summary, look at the relation between ideas and consequences: (1) Aztec Indian theology led to human sacrifice and war. (2) Nazi racism led to genocide, and so on and on. What about the ideas that are being put in our children's minds today. What consequences will they genereate in the future? Are we teaching them out of the Word of God? Or are they absorbing guidelines laid down by a worldly society? If you can forsee the damaging results, you must then attack the ideologies of the world, for the issues of life come out of the mind and heart. [Proverbs 4:23] "Keep thy heart with all dilignece; for out of it are the issues of life."

"One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully pursuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living." [Rom 14:5-9] "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For ther is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefor resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." [Rom 13:1-2]

Editor.

TO LATE!

A boy running to catch a train reached the platform just as the train left and he missed it. A watchman said; 'you didn't run fast enough.' The boy replied; 'I ran as fast as I could but I didn't start soon enough.'

Many people will rush up and find the gates of heaven closed because he didn't start soon enough. How many will have the door shut in their faces because they didn't start early enough to provide oil for their lamps, as the 5 foolish virgins? [Matt 25:10]

[Eccl 12:1]....."Remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil day come not, nor the years draw nigh when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." So many people want to sow their wild oats in youth then when they become old they intend to turn to the Lord, but find, as the boy, they started to late.

Maybe he could have caught the train if he had empted his pockets of the extra weight. [Heb 12:1]...."Let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us." Some people start early, buy their tickets and get off the train, just because it hasn't started yet, and they seem to think they have plenty of time to jump off and run to the nearest store and buy another lottery ticket, or time for just one more game of dice on the platform, or time to sit in on just one more card game, and maybe just before it leaves, have time for 'one more for the road' or a bottle of beer to take along. Possibly time for a last fling with the neighbor's wife. Whatever the cause, if we get off for any reason, the train will probably leave without us. Brethren, let us think seriously on not allowing anything to cause us to get off the train which is bound for heaven. [Rev 2:10]...."Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life." It is so sad that some church members will miss heaven just because of the pleasures of this world.

In love of the Gospel
Howard McCay
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PROVERBS 25:25
"AS COLD WATERS TO A THIRSTY SOUL, SO IS GOOD NEWS FROM A FAR COUNTRY"

Just a remeider. Have you sent in your letters or articles? Not many to print this month. Remember, this is your publication.

Editor

GOSHEN, ARKANSAS

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Everyone here is doing fine now. Sister Ferguson fell on the ice and had to have back surgery. She is home now and on the mend.

We have not had many visitors during the winter months. It seems to be cold or bad every week end. Brother Terry Warford has been up two times since I last wrote and gave us two very good lessons. Brother Gerald and Sister Wilma Buckner from the Stilwell congregation also have visited twice. The first time we couldn't pursuade Brother Gerald to give us a lesson, but the last time we 'twisted his arm' and got him to do it. It was worth it. He gave us a very good lesson.

Our meeting this year will be June 12 - 19th. Brother Mark Perigen from Bellflower, Ca. congregation has consented to do the speaking for us. I don't believe anyone from here has ever heard him speak and I believe this will be his first meeting. We are all looking forward to the meeting and I am sure we will not be disappointed. This will make three generations of the Perigen family that has held meetings for us. We enjoyed them all. Anyone that can, make plans to come be with us all or any part of the week. We will find a bed for anyone and everyone that is here.

All visitors are welcome anytime. Whether we are having a meeting or not.

In Christian love

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BELLFLOWER, CALIFORNIA

Dear Brethren:

We hope at this writing, that all congregations are doing well both spiritually and physically. It seems as though we see very little of each other as time swiftly moves along. It is hard for us to find time to pick up the telephone and call our loved ones. Please forgive us for this neglect. Most of us have had the flu this past month. Sister Myrle Lee Clouse has been in attandace part of the time, but has had medical problems. We pray that God will be with her in comfort.

Sister Tayna Brockman is very close to having her baby now. We are all looking forward to that occasion. This will be her second child. Brother and Sister Gerald Brockman have one child that is about four months old now. She is gaining weight and looking very healthy. We should all be very thankful for their health. Many people in this old world are not as fortunate.

We had another earth quake this month that caused a little more plaster to crack in the main auditoruim. Not serious but it will certainly make our painting and patching a little more work than before. Time to close for now. If anyone is passing through the Los Angeles area, please come and be with us if possible.

In Christian love
The Bellflower Congregation

GOSPEL MEETINGS

GOSHEN, ARK.	June 12 - 19 - 1988	MARK PERIGEN
BARON/STILWELL, OK	June 26 - July 3, 1988	BILL McCAY, JR.
WATERFORD, CA.	June 19 - 26, 1988	ROGER WALKINGSTICK
CEDAREDGE, CO.	July 3 - 10,1988	CAMP
GLENWOOD	July 24 - 31, 1988	J. D. JOHNSON
YAKIMA, WA.	July 31 - Aug 7, 1988	JIM BROWN/SAMMY BOEN
YUMA, AZ.	Oct 23 - 30, 1988	TERRY WARFORD
LORENZO, TX	Dec 25 - Jan 1, 1989	ELLIS FORSMAN

We are sad to report that Brother Lawrence Arnett, of the Waterford, Ca. congregation passed from this life on Feb. 23, 1988. He had been weakened by leukemia for quite some time. Brother Lawrence will be missed very much by so many brothers and sisters in Christ and by the many dear friends. Our prayers are with Sister Arnett and pray that our Heavenly Father will comfort her and all their loved ones who are left behind. Memeorial services were held February 26th, 1988 at eh Salas Brothers Funeral Chapel in Modesto, C.. Brother Rex Mickey conducted the services.

We are sad also to report that our Sister Ruth Dabbs, of Phoenix Arizona has passed away. She left this life on thursday, Feb. 25th. 1988. Services was held Sunday, Feb. 28th, and she will be buried in Aztec, New Mexico.

I have just received news that Sister Laura Esther Parker, of the San Gabriel, Ca. congregation has passed away also. She passed away Jan. 17th. 1988. She would have been 92 years young on the 20th of February. Brother Kellems reports that she was a long time friend and faithful church member. She is survived by her son, Russell Parker and family. Brother Kellems also reported that the San Gabriel congregation has lost their building, and has disbanded. They have met there for many years. Some of the members are now going over to La Habra, Ca. and attending there with Brother Marion Serrano and the brethren there. Let us remember all these dear ones in our prayers.

Editor