

# Thus Saith God's Word

by Rev. Ted Brooks, West Saddletree Baptist church

## Witnesses

We have been writing on how to be a witness in an evil world. We have said witness means martyr, which means literally to put to death. Anything that is in our lives that does not glorify God needs to be put to death.

Death means dormant. Dead, not moving. We said before you have never seen a dead person move. They are dead. So you and I need to put it to death. You can't go around sinning and claim to be dead in Christ and alive in the resurrected body of Christ. Paul said therefore now there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus. That is so wonderfully true, my friend. But when you read the rest of Romans, Chapter 8, it goes on to say "Who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit." We are faced with evil tidings in the church simply because folk still think they can sin and have fellowship with God.

Again we say, witness means put it to death. Anything which does not please God, put it to death. Don't sit all night trying to figure out how to move the preacher just because you don't like what he is preaching. Oh, my friend, more churches are in disorder because no one loves preaching any more. I see and hear it every day. Churches divided. Some claim he is not Baptist. Some claim they are Holiness. Some don't even know what they want. You see, they are not witnesses. What they are doing will not glorify God. Anytime, anytime you seek to harm a person and his family, you are not a witness and what you are doing will not factor out the will of God in your life. That is what you thought was dead has been watered and has come back alive and that which dwelleth in you now is lust and envy. (James 4:5). And I will say again, you better mind how you set out to destroy your enemy. I can tell you one thing, when you seek to do harm, you better be careful. The scripture says "Compensate to no man evil for evil. Provide honest things in the sight of all men." (Romans 12:17) "Let love be without hypocrisy, abhor that which is evil, cling to that which is good." (Verse 9)

Oh, my friend, we are talking about how to live in a world that is filled with evil. But if you are going to overcome evil, you must overcome evil with good. Most of you, if you would, could spend the whole day trying to keep self straight. If you take a look, you would notice there are some things in your own life that are not dead yet. Children who are unruly. There are those who will partake of the sins of their children. Deacons who will partake in evil and yet will judge the minister. You better be careful. "Touch not my anointed and do my prophets no harm." Let me tell you why you had better be careful how you set out to destroy what you think might be your enemy. We all have been warned "bless them who persecute you, bless and curse not." (Romans 12:14)

Story is told in the Bible of a lady who said "The creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be slaves. The preacher replied what hast thou in thy house. And the woman said thy hand maid hath not anything in the house, except a pot of oil." She was instructed to shut the doors of her house and pour out the oil and to sell it to save her sons. The oil in the Bible means the Holy Spirit of God. Listen to me, there are those of you who are about to pass judgment on a preacher. Some of you have done so in the past and you thought you had gotten by. I can tell you of those whom I know personally that the creditor shows up and claims their sons because they had no oil (The spirit of God had departed from them.) The reason folks can't bless and persecute not is that they have no oil in their house (body). God warns us and declares "He that ruleth over man must be just." (II Samuel 23:3) Also God said he who rules over men shall be as the light of the morning. When every morning is without cloud, as tender grass, then David declared his house to be not so and God refused to let David build his house because of bloody hands. I ask you again, is your house so? Are your children in order? Do you sit and judge? Be careful, my friend, the creditor is on his way to collect.

A few weeks ago I visited a lady in the hospital who claimed to have been backslidden on God for over forty years. Her reason for being a backslider was that no one in the church was anything but hypocrites. Some minutes later, after talking and praying, she said, "Preacher, now I know it was the devil that caused me to backslide." I was unable to lead her back to Jesus. She said nothing to assure her a place in heaven. The next day I went back and her mind was gone. All she could say was, "It pays to be ready," over and over she said, "It pays to be read." All because she saw people who could not factor out the will of God in their lives.

You Sir, Madam, and myself, better be careful that no one is in hell because of our careless living. You can convince yourself all you want about eternal security, God said we would reap what we sow.

Before you go out this day to pass judgement, remember David declared that the Spirit spoke and declared his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said "The Rock of Israel said "He who ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." (II Samuel 23:2-3)

There are deacons, preachers, church leaders, who need to resign. But I know you won't. But remember the creditor is on his way to make claim on your sons.

Let me close with this. Noah was a man whom God found favor with. Noah was living in an evil world and it was condemned by God. God told Noah to build an ark. Noah built the ark for the saving of his family and himself. Noah was close up in the ark because God promised a flood to destroy mankind. Let me say this, the hand that saves can also destroy you. Noah was safe. He had been rescued and in the ark. He was protected. Remember this, God will not pressure us from sin. We are to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh. (II Corinthians 7:1). While one may rejoice over sin being defeated, one needs to be aware of thinking your work is done. See Noah's husbandry and excess. Even though the best and holiest of men God is sending them here below must understand some honest calling.

Noah had been shut up in safety, but when the ark, landed upon dry ground, Noah came on shore. It was here he took things of the earth, corrupted them, made wine and got drunk. Oh, my friend, Strong drink is a mocker and will deceive the holiest of all men. Noah was declared to have been a preacher of righteousness, but Noah stared at the color of the grapes and decided what he could do to enjoy it. Somebody said God made it and if so, let's drink and be merry. Oh, my friend, God made dogs but you don't eat dogs.

Jesus declared as it was in Noah's days so will it be in the last days. There are those who will say alcohol is good, a creature of God and I enjoy it. Yes, rattlesnakes, boa constrictors and so are altogether creatures of God, but we don't enjoy swallowing them. Neither acid nor arsenic.

Poor Noah, once he ruled over men. He was a man God found just. Now he is about to plant a vineyard. Notice now Noah is not free from the snares of Satan. There was nothing wrong with having the grapes. It is what Noah did with them that was wrong. He made wine, not just grape juice, but wine that would make Noah a drunkard. "Wine is a mocker. Strong drink is raging and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." (20:1) They who tarry too long are not wise. Poor Noah was not aware of the strength of wine and he was deceived by it. Noah years later was rescued from the flood. Now self indulgence, excess, pleasing one's self of desire, now driven by an unconscious force. No control. Out of the ark with no restraint.

What we are about to see is a warning to you and I. "Drunkenness is a sin which breaks the law of God. Drunkenness is the way to ruin." From drunkenness many a man can't find his way home. A drunkard's cry is, "I have lost my way. Where am I going?" My friend, he is on his way to a ruined house of children, family and respect.

As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be when Jesus comes again. Today ABC stores, grocery store shelves are filled with wine, beer, liquor. It is ruining marriages and destroying homes.

Last week a young man said to me, "Preacher, when I was a little boy my stepfather would come home drunk and we, the children, would flee to the woods and hide. And we could hear him beating our mother."

Notice with me will you, Genesis Chapter 9 Verse 21: "And he drank wine and became drunk and he was uncovered within his tent. When his sons noticed his drunkenness, Shem and Japheth took a garment..."

You know, there are children today who attempt to cover their parents. The shame of poverty: no lights, no running water, no shoes to wear, no food to eat. Why? Because liquor, strong drink, wine is a mocker, destroying the hope of man and the plan of God. Oh, my friend, our streets are filled with wounded men and women with red eyes and in a wobbly condition. Many a child today is covering the sins of their parents' drunkenness with shame. They can never invite a friend home for a visit. They live a life of shame.

There are those of you who are destroying children's lives, but the creditor is one his way. You won't live forever. "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth thy bottle to him and maketh him drunk also that thou mayest look on their nakedness." (Habakkuk 2:15)

Listen, if our mate sins we cannot be partakers of their sin. Church, don't let others cause you to hate. Do good to you preacher. If you are going to fall out, let it be from loving. Pay your preacher well. Help him in medical and insurance programs and love him or her. Be a lover of hospitality.

**Congratulations**  
**Rev. Marshall Locklear**  
on your retirement from Southern Bell. We wish you much happiness and great joy as you continue to lead us as Pastor of West Robeson United Methodist Church.  
**Good luck and good health.**

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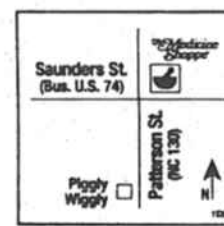
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