

Thus Saith God's Word

by Rev. Ted Brooks, West Saddletree Baptist church

How we got So Far Behind

"Then the steward said within himself, what shall I do? For my Lord taketh from me the stewardship, I cannot dig-to beg I am ashamed." (St. Luke 16:1-13)

Jesus is illustrating and teaching His disciples in verse one that faithfulness to men would prove them worthy of trust by God and that no man can serve two masters.

This man that Jesus here spoke of was a house agent, managing the house and servants, assigning tasks, being responsible for the goods of his master and the training of the heir. (Genesis 15:2; 24: 2; 49:19) Here this man was accused, implying malice, but not necessarily falsehood. Here we see a man ashamed to beg, but not to embezzle. The servant went and ask the debtors one by one- how much do you owe my master? One answered, a hundred jugs of olive oil. He said take your bill, sit down quickly and make it fifty. He asked another who said a hundred containers of wheat. He said to him- take you bill and make it eighty.

And his master commended the dishonest manager because he acted shrewdly: for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. (Verse 1-8)

Here we see a person who was ashamed to beg, but not to steal. He was resolved what to do so he went out quickly, doing dishonest things in order to be friends with the world. He ask the debtors how much do you owe unto my lord. The master of the steward, not God or Christ, commended the unjust steward because he done wisely, but it was not his to bargain off, it was his master's. The master simply acknowledged that the steward had made quite a plan to provide for himself. There was nothing he could do about it for the debtors would stand by the steward because it was to their benefit. The master could not prove that the new contracts were not the old ones.

The point that is made of his parable is that worldly men in their sphere to scheme and provide for themselves are wiser than Christians in their sphere.

Doubled mindedness is rebuke. "The light of the body is the eye; if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." (Matthew 6:22) "But if thy eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness, if therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness?" (Verse 23) An evil eye to the Jews denoted a covenant with covetous, envious, evil men, perhaps able to cast a spell upon another and cause him harm. The question was asked "How we (the church) got so far behind?" This steward went to each of these persons and convinced them to steal and rob from a master whose property they had gotten on a credit. They formed a scheme to steal. They probably went from house to house and convinced themselves how they could steal from another.

"And I say unto you, make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness that when ye fail they may move you into everlasting habitation. He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much. And he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." (St. Luke 16:7-10) What you gained by wrong, my friend, is unjust in God's eye sight and is by no means a pass port to heaven. One man said to his pastor, "Preacher, I got an opportunity to make a quick \$100,000 and if I do my plans are to give the church ten percent." The preacher replied, "That will be good, but beware if it is dishonest, you will lose your soul in hell and if it is dishonest we the church will not accept it." Jesus said ye cannot, and if Jesus said ye cannot, you cannot serve God and mammon.

The question is asked how did we as a church get so far behind. Why are we declining in membership? A few weeks ago Baptists and Methodists did like the unjust steward and took no heed to God's word. "Stewards are to be found faithful." At Wake Forest and at Duke University they joined hands to say nothing of same sex marriage. We have gotten behind when we are in the eyes of God unjust and are covetous people.

Holy matrimony is now paraded around in our churches like last year's bird nests. The church now exchanges partners. We have now gotten behind because of eroding marriage. Oh my friend, when church members can cross the hall of a church and commit adultery and "Mum is the word" and when we ignore God's plan and marriage becomes merely a civil union and becomes applicable to anyone and every one, the church has fallen behind. Oh my friend, can't you see how far we have fallen?

"Woe unto them who decree unrighteous decrees and who write grievousness which they have prescribed." (Isaiah 10:1) Look around you and see. Can't you see the prophecy of Isaiah. "And I will give children to be their princes and babes shall rule over them." (Isaiah 3:4)

The church no longer considers Hebrews 13:4 "Marriage is honorable in all." Whether saint or sinner, marriage is honorable. The bed where one may lay down, that bed is not to be defiled. If you, young man, young girl, defiled your bed, God will judge you. Your deacon, pastor may remain silent, but God said, "Fornicators and adulterers God will judge." God has declared "Let your manner of life be without covetousness and to be content with such things as ye have." (Hebrews 13:1-5)

"Husbands, love your wife, even as Christ loved the church." (Ephesians 5:25) When the church can breathe and move in a direction that she believes that one can take fire in her bosom and not be burned (Proverbs 6:27), I am afraid we have gotten far behind.

When we ignore or undercut God's plan, we effectively eliminate any spiritual aspect from the institution of marriage and it becomes merely a civil union, applicable to anyone and everyone, we have gotten far behind. Marriage can be monogamous or bigamous. It can be serial (involving multiple divorce and marriage). It can even be same sex marriage. When we reject God's perfect plan, we open the door to a perverse one instead.

How we got so far behind is easily understood when men of the priesthood dishonor their marriage vows. I personally feel cheated by these persons who stand and say you who are without sin cast the first stone.

Jesus did say that, but it was before he shed His blood that would cleanse us from all sin, following behind us was a voice that said go and sin no more. "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he slept and took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof." (Genesis 2:21) God closed up the side of Adam, leaving no sign of an entrance, meaning one rib and one wife, not to go back in.

The Christian family is knit together in a common bond through Jesus Christ. It is a circle of love, fellowship and worship to be earnestly cultivated in a society in which families are easily dissolved. My friend, if we are concerned about how we got so far behind, let our churches begin urging upon the ministers and congregation of our churches such teachings and practices which will strengthen and develop family ties. Deacons you ought to urge your pastor to preach clearly the biblical plan of the permanence of marriage. Let us step this nonsense of trying to share guilt by saying we have all sinned. We did, but "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lust of the flesh, fulfilling the desire the flesh, and of the mind and were by nature the children of wrath even as others." (Ephesians 2:2) There was a time I did the things of Satan, but that was in times past. I did serve Satan in times past, but not any more. I am now a new creature in Christ. Old things are passed away, now all things are new. (II Corinthians 5:17)

How we got so far behind? The institution of marriage was ordained by God in the time of man's innocence and is according to apostolic authority "Honored by all." It is the mutual union of one man and one woman for fellowship, helpfulness, and the propagation of the race. Our people should cherish this sacred estate as becomes Christians.

How we got so far behind? "The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth." The question to be asked here: is the wife dead or alive, or is the husband yet alive. If one is dead you are at liberty to marry to whom you will. (I Corinthians 7:39)

Now let us close by saying that there are those who are spiritual and have experienced the new life in Christ. And those who are still in darkness about God's intention for their lives. The redeemed ones are favored ones. They have the assurance, a confidence and knowledge that no one else has. They are the most fortunate persons on earth for they know what life and death are all about. They are the children of light.

You who are lost and sinners, you have little understanding of God, like the unjust steward who went out to make friends among others like himself, you will hear the same stern message "You cannot serve God and mammon." You can't straddle the fence. No matter how you start your fence the bottom rail never began at the top. You who are unsaved there is a good possibility that you can go through life and have a good marriage and a wonderful family. They may all get a good education, travel abroad, have the best of this physical life, but if you were to die in



Historical Location

The photo above was taken on the spot where the smoke house was where McKenzie and his cohorts kept Henry Berry Lowrie's father and brother the night before killing them. The farm is now owned by Rev. Sanford Locklear, Henry Lee Locklear and James B. Locklear. It is known as the McKenzie Farm and is located in the Union Township beside the Chicken Road.

sin, you'd go to hell. The question is asked: "What doth it profit a man, woman, boy or girl, if they were to gain the whole world and to lose their soul?" And as a sinner you have an enemy who will see to it that you don't have a wonderful marriage or family.

There are those as I write now in many homes with much grief and sorrow. Many mothers sit up night after night worrying over their children. Alcohol, drugs, aids, and permissive sex are all around us. What can we do? "Teach them diligently unto thine children and thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house and when thou walkest the way and when thou liest down and when thou risest up." We are told to beware lest you forget the Lord. (Deuteronomy 6:7-8) One would ask what is it God wants us to do as a parent? "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the house of bondage. (#1) Thou shalt have no others gods before me. (#2) Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above or that is in the earth beneath or that is in the water under the earth. (#3) Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me. And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

"Thou shalt not take the name of God in vain for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work. But the Sabbath day is the Lord thy God's, in it thou shalt do no work, thou nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gate. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, all that in them is, and rested the seventh day, wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it. Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days

may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

"Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's." (Exodus 20:1-17)

Would you not love to have children and a make up like this? You can if you start now teaching them God's Law.

Finally, the purpose of all these saying is to determine the true worth of our disciplined use of what we have learned and heard. For as it was said to the steward "Give me an accounting of your management because you cannot be my manager any longer."



The music term a capella comes from the Italian, meaning "from the chapel."

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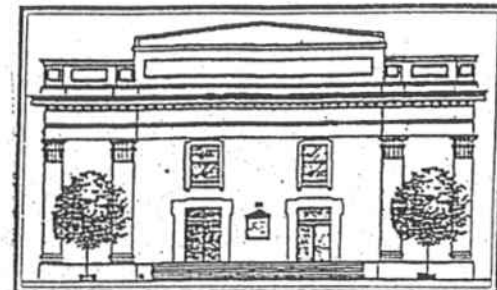
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The Carolina Indian Voice
Published each Thursday in Pembroke, N.C. by First American Publications

The first issue of the weekly newspaper, The Carolina Indian Voice was published on January 17, 1973, by then editor, owner and founder, Bruce Bartorff with a \$500 personal loan. It has a proud history of continuous publication, having never missed an issue since its inception. Bruce's sister, Connee Brayboy, the current editor, is the only person to have enjoyed full-time employment since the newspaper's inception. A brother, Garry Lewis Barton came to work full-time in 1973 and ended his affiliation with the newspaper in 1985; its founder, Bruce Barton left to further his education shortly thereafter. Another brother, Ricky Barton, has been affiliated on a part-time basis with the newspaper since its inception. For the first time in years, the four siblings are reunited and dedicated to publishing the best newspaper humanly possible.

Connee Brayboy Editor

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