

Thus Saith God's Word

by Rev. Ted Brooks

Poachers in the Church

"But there were false prophets also among the people... even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies even denying the Lord that brought upon themselves swift destruction. Many shall follow their pernicious ways" (II Peter 2:1-2)

"And many false prophets shall rise and shall deceive man" (Matthew 24:11)

"Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?" (Matthew 7:15-16)

The question is now asked: what has gone wrong? Where did we stray? Oh, my friend, Jesus spent thirty years training for a three year ministry. This has not been told often enough to our youth of today. They need to be made aware that "there is a divine balance of impression and expression in the life of Jesus," for their sakes. He tells us, "I sanctify myself"

Preachers of today have taken too many short cuts. They have gone over the fence and taken no notice of the sign boards which read "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." In other words, we are saved to serve.

Last week we tried to emphasize what the church is like when poachers are on the inside. We tried to tell you that a false prophet cares nothing for the commandment of God. We made every effort to let you know that rebellion, stubbornness, arrogance, and defiance are now in our midst. St. Paul left us words that these things would occur "in the last days" (II Timothy 3:1-2). For a long time now the church has yawned and looked in another direction. The church has been like these United States which has opened its doors to all people and none have kept their promises.

If a person from another planet were to suddenly appear on earth, they would be shocked as they observed our lawless life-style. They would be shocked as they watched the proceedings of a divorce court, read about the crime on our streets, felt the pressure and anger from homes, and listened to arguments in school classrooms. They could get the idea that defiance pays off. It would appear that those who break the law and defy authority get away with it. You see, my friend, when false prophets are in the church and have left the highway of holiness, homes now are dangerous places to be. Folks become rebellious. They permit rebellion and intimidation. Homes now are where children are in control. Parents have taken the passive route, giving their kids the authority. Today children can and do sue parents for parental malpractice. Because of false prophets in the pulpit your chance of becoming a victim of crime has doubled in the last ten years.

Because of false prophets, your chance of becoming a victim of violent crime has increased by more than five times in the same period. Today because of false prophets you have a one in twenty chance of being a victim of any crime. You see, a false prophet is satisfied with the shallows of life when there are the deep still waters upon which to sail. A false prophet is always concerned about up the road. Now it is down the road a short piece from where you and I live. For years they, the false prophets, have raved about the streets of other parts of the world and forgotten about the small stream here at home.

False prophets will measure Christianity in the town of hospitals, orphan homes and they will have organized charities and projects in human names. We need to never forget that it was Judas who carried a bag for the poor.

My friend, Jesus was ever so mindful of his prophets' training. On such a mission Jesus took with him Peter and John and James and went up into a mountain to pray. And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered and his raiment was white and glistening. (St. Luke 9:28-29)

Do you not see impressions on that transfiguration day? It was there that visitors appeared from heaven. It was a glorious light, a voice of God the father that made a great impression that could never be erased.

A true prophet of God is one who has had a day of vivid impression. A true prophet is one who does not take short cuts. A true prophet will read the marking of Christ's word. A true prophet of God does not march into the pulpit with man's legend. A true prophet does not speak of whom he does not know, but he will speak of his Mount of Transfiguration. A true prophet has an impression verses expression. Do you not see, my friend, an impression without expression is pure waste. First, it is the mountain where consecration began. "I sanctify myself that they also might be sanctified through the truth." (John 17:19)

There again we see where no impression is made to waste. Jesus said something is to take place and it is called sanctification. Any prophet or preacher who has gone to the mountain of God and did not return as a new creature is pure waste. He will no longer eat like the world, dress like the world, nor will he be addicted by the things of this world. He cannot be held as a slave to tobacco, drugs, alcohol, sex outside of marriage. Notice again when Jesus and his disciples came down from the Mountain of Transfiguration, it was there at the bottom of this mountain a father came to Christ with a devil-possessed son. He needed help. Jesus promptly healed his son.

Jesus did not take up time telling a story. He pulled nothing from a commentary. He healed the boy. First the impression, then the expression. My friend, without the expression it is pure waste. Faith without works is dead.

David said "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me; and to him that ordereth his conduct aright will I show the salvation of God." (Psalm 50:23) Well, my friend, the best commentary on humanity's defiance is not found in any book or television. The fact is it is not found in a documentary or newspaper, but it is found in scripture- God's book of truth.

If you were to read Romans, the first chapter, such verses would peel off all masks, scrape away all the veneer and get right down to the core of depravity portraying mankind as "Being filled with all un-righteousness, wickedness, greed, evil, full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful, and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them." (Romans 1:29-32)

These words are taught, but they are true, painfully true. These words are more true than any article taken from any daily newspaper.

Today false prophets are in the church. Every week now we hear of another false prophet who for years deceived the people. That is why our culture has been for a long time deteriorating. You have allowed the un-righteous to rule. We have been so busy raising dollars for charitable events and when the church came down from the mountain of transfiguration and faced the public school system, moral values were systematically erased until they became almost illegal to teach. The church found themselves with an impression without an expression.

In the second chapter of Second Peter, Verse One, there were false prophets among the people, even as there were false teachers, denying the Lord. These are wells without water, clouds that are carried without tempest to whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever. (Verse 18)

A false prophet does not care for his own. If he was really a man of God, he would be at the bottom of the mountain with his or her son, knowing that same Jesus who was on the top praying until his raiment was white, would make his way down to hear a father weeping saying "Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son." (St. Luke 9:38) A false prophet will go from church to church and leave his children in bed, leaving them in abandoned houses, beer joints, but a real prophet will fight for his sons and daughters. He is there at the altar with a voice, "O Lord, I the preacher am here waiting at the bottom of this mountain called a valley. I beseech thee, O Lord, look upon my son." O my friend, go no where. Make no effort til your sons and daughters are saved. Can you not see the many that are dying every day all around us?

There was a time a daughter was ashamed to live in sin. Now they shack right next door. Why? Your impression has no expression and what you do have is pure waste. A false prophet will remain undisturbed. He will make statements like "The Lord will get him when it is time." A true prophet will say, "Now is the time. Today is the day of Salvation. Tomorrow is not promised." (Hebrews 3:7-15)

We said last week that Christians are a dying breed. We are on the endangered species list. We have heard the voice, "Hast thou considered my servant." (Job 1:8) We are on the extinct list. Why? God said there none like him in the earth, a perfect and upright man. We have found pleasure in the eyes of God. We know to enter his presence one must order his conduct aright before God. We dare to live less than the hen that covereth her biddies. In this world we are those with an impression that is not of waste. We live in the moment knowing that Jesus could appear at any time. "That when he shall appear we may have confidence and not be ashamed before him at his coming." (I John 3:28) "And this is the confidence that we have in him that if we ask any thing according to his will he heareth us." (I John 5:14)

Thank God for an impression of Jesus Christ. Thank God for an expression which can be revealed by his power.

The false prophets are here and nothing is to hinder or to stop them. They were in St. Peter's day and in the day of St. Paul and they are here this present hour. Paul declared, "God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death. We are made a spectacle unto the world and to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ but wise in Christ. We are weak, but ye are strong. Ye are honorable but we are despised. Even to this present hour we both hunger and thirst and are naked and are buffeted and have no certain dwelling place. (I Corinthians 4:8-21)

There are false prophets among us today dressed in sheep's clothing. Words of idolatry, do you not see in your church defiance, stubbornness and rebellion. It is in every corner of the church. You take a stand and see if you don't become

a species on the extinct list

Check and see how many deacons have faithful wives. Check and see how many of them have children that are stubborn and rebellious. See if they will stand at the bottom of the mountain and say "I have a son he is a glutton and a drunkard." (Deuteronomy 21:18-21)

The truth is most deacons and teachers have children living in eye sight of each other, shaking up or in cohabitation. They're not ashamed. Why? False prophets do not tell them it is a sin. They are like the poachers who has entered the forest. He knows the law is not enforced. Your glowing is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the lump, ye may be a new lump. (I Corinthians 5:6-7)

If you as a Mom or Dad allow one child to live in whoredom, the rest will follow. Preacher, if you let one deacon in the door who has unruly children soon they all will become old leaven and we are warned in God's word not to keep the feast of God with old leaven. The church is to purge herself of malice and wickedness but to cloth herself with the bread of sincerity and truth. If any man that is called a brother be a fornicator or covetous or an idolator or a railer or a drunkard or an extortioner, with such an one know not to eat. (I Corinthians 5:1-13)

Search for Truth

by Elder Joseph Bullard

WORSHIP THROUGH OFFERINGS

Honor the Lord with your substance and with the first fruits of all your produce. Prov. 3:9.

The first thing we notice from this verse is that the Lord is honored when we give Him our substance. That should also be the first reason why we give them—not to reduce our income tax, nor to make the church comfortable in cold weather; not even to save souls or because God tells us to. But simply because He is our Maker and is Ruler of the universe, and we recognize Him as such. All the other reasons can come in their proper order.

Next point: the Lord is honored by our giving Him our substance. He is honored by our giving Him our hearts, of course, and by our singing and praying and studying His Word. But that does not exhaust our responsibility; we are also to honor Him with our substance—or shall we say, with His substance that He entrusts to us.

"Bring an offering," David the psalmist says, "and come into his courts!" In David's culture, people never came into the presence of their monarch without a gift in their hands. The same is true today among heads of state. It is not a form of bribery, but a manifestation of respect and regard. Especially as an act of worship, a gift is appropriate. To worship means to give of ourselves, and an offering is an emblem of that greater gift. Conversely, to withhold our means is to withhold ourselves.

In the experience of the centurion Cornelius, apparently the first non-Jew who was baptized as a Christian, we find an example and a lesson in freewill giving. Cornelius was a devout man who "prayed constantly to God" and "gave alms liberally to the people." An angel visited Cornelius and assured him that "Your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God" (Acts 10:2-4). The Greek word for memorial here is the same as was used of certain offerings regularly offered by the priests in the Temple service. Cornelius was as surely worshipping God when he gave in the Lord's name to help the poor as he would have been had he been a priest in the Lord's house.

It is not an empty phrase, then, that we "worship the Lord with our tithes and our offerings." He is honored when we give them freely and willingly.

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