

## Role Models

When it comes to sports — we do it. In business — we do it. In almost every field of endeavor we look for role models. We try to find others who have been successful, and then we imitate them. God's word tells us to do the same thing in spiritual matters.

The best role models are found right there in the Scriptures. Jesus is the ultimate example:

"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps" (**I Peter 2:21**).

Other great heroes of faith serve as good role models, too. Paul urged us to be: "followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (**1 Corinthians 11:1**). In another place he wrote: "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample" (**Philippians 3:17**). Hebrews chapter eleven is full of examples of faith-

By Greg Gwin

ful men and women who serve as worthy patterns for us to imitate.

Some might complain that it is hard to fully relate to someone that we can only read about in a book. "Paul was a great Christian", they would say, "but we live in a different world. It's hard to imagine how Paul would deal with our situation." For these folks, let us suggest that they can also look to their own brethren. In any church there are faithful, zealous, devoted Christians who are working hard to live for the Lord. They resist temptation, spread the word, encourage others and generally work tirelessly to do His will. Look to them. Imitate them.

We know this method works. In all sorts of endeavors we look for "winners" and we copy them. Let's do the same thing when it comes to our most important endeavor — serving God!



**Romans 14:17-19 (NKJV)** - for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. <sup>18</sup>For he who serves Christ in these things *is* acceptable to God and approved by men. <sup>19</sup>Therefore let us pursue the things *which make* for peace and the things by which one may edify another.

### Sick

<b>Jim and Barbara Kicker</b>	<b>Pam Dial</b> (Laura Weldon's Mother)
<b>Heather Adams</b> (Luke Bridges' Cousin)	<b>Rose Tate</b> (Toni Herd's Cousin)
<b>Adriana Mininno</b> (Haley Chittam's Cousin)	<b>Dave Bradford, Sr.</b>
<b>Blake Whatley</b> (Hunt's neighbor)	<b>Dave Brown</b> (Friend of the Lanier's)
<b>Marty Meeks</b> (Toni Herd's Nephew)	<b>Call Yvette at 734-2134</b> <b>To Have Someone Put on this List</b>

### News and Notes

- Let's remember our expectant mothers: Jana Hall, Laura Humphrey, and Rachel Bradford.
- The Men's Home Class will meet at the Davis's house on Monday Night at 7:00.
- Starting today we will have a Sunday Evening class and singing for kids at 5:15. This will continue every Sunday.
- Let's be preparing for our meeting with Bob Harkrider, Jan 24-27
- Welcome back students! Be sure to come to the Rouse's house tonight for the College Study and singing. Stephen Rouse will be teaching.
- Audio CDs of Today's Sermon will be immediately available.

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# The Auburn Beacon



Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (**Matthew 5:16**)

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## The Blessing and Danger of Humor

By Stephen Rouse



### Thought to Ponder

Reverence is one of the signs of strength; irreverence one of the surest indications of weakness. No man will rise high who jeers at sacred things.

So, you know what the first car mentioned in the Bible was, right? When the apostles were all in one Accord... Ha. Well, I will say that no matter whether you laughed at that or not, humor is a gift from God and should be used as such (**James 1:17**). Our ability to laugh, be sarcastic, and simply be light-hearted should be enjoyed and shared as the blessing God intended it to be. However, as with all of God's blessings, Satan has taken humor out of its God-given role and perverts it to use against us. And he's doing a mighty good job.

### Humor as a Blessing

Used correctly and thoughtfully, humor can be a powerful tool in many areas. **Proverbs 17:22** states that, "A joyful heart is good medicine, But a broken spirit dries up the bones." Humor can certainly be used to make a heart joyful, even for a short amount of time. At the right time, it can be used to brighten someone's day and encourage them to lift their head when they most need it, which we all need from time to time. While this may not be a purely spiritual form of encouragement, it can certainly help us to face our days with more joy and vigor as we seek to

It's become too easy to joke about things like drugs, alcohol, and homosexuality. Satan, through television and movies, has used this tactic ruthlessly until we no longer gasp or cringe or feel any kind of repulsion at the sin that is rotting millions of souls all around us. Instead, we laugh.

serve the Lord with all the zeal we can muster.

Humor can also be used to soften anger and avoid potential conflict with our brothers and sisters in Christ. **Proverbs 15:1** tells us that "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." How many times have we snapped back at someone instead of taking a moment to consider our response to annoyance or aggravation? A well placed humorous comment can often help us to see the folly of our own frustrations and avoid unnecessary conflict with our brethren and those whom we associate with.

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**Do You Have a Bible Question?**  
Call (334) 734-2133 or  
E-mail:  
[LarryRouse@aubeacon.com](mailto:LarryRouse@aubeacon.com)

### SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday

Bible Class .....9:30 AM  
Worship .....10:20 AM  
Evening Worship ..... 6:00 PM

### Wednesday

Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

Ask about our home Bible Study Groups!

Larry Rouse  
Evangelist and Editor

Check Us Out On the Internet: [www.aubeacon.com](http://www.aubeacon.com)

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Humor also can function as a powerful evangelistic tool. Paul urges the Christians at Colosse to “Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person” (**Colossians 4:5-6**). Humor naturally draws people closer to the one who makes them laugh. If you’re meeting someone for the first time, and they’re able to make you laugh right off the bat, you probably already feel closer and more comfortable with that person. This sharing in laughter can help to build trust and camaraderie in relationships, which is fertile soil for the seed of the gospel.

### Humor as a Danger

Though we can see where God has given us our sense of humor to help us through hard times and help our relationships, it must not become a stumbling block to us at the same time. First of all, humor must *never* take the place of the truth (**2 Timothy 4:3-4**)! Many of those who claim to proclaim the word of God fill their lessons with little truth but with an abundance of side-splitting anecdotes—which keeps an audience listening, but does nothing for their souls. Once again, there is a balance here, because when it’s used correctly, humor can help open hearts to the truth, but it mustn’t push the truth out.

Satan can also use humor to get us to be dishonest. The fool in **Proverbs 26:18-19** is spoken of this way: “Like a madman who throws firebrands, arrows, and death. So is the man who deceives his neighbor, and says, ‘Was I not joking?’” There is a place for being sarcastic and playing tricks on our friends, but let us examine ourselves so that we don’t let our merrymaking turn into sin. It’s easy to let a ‘white lie’ slip for the sake of humor, but when we deceive someone legitimately and mar the truth, God takes it as though we’re throwing “firebrands, arrows, and death.” Don’t let it go too far.

Satan also lets us use humor to avoid confrontation that *needs* to happen, such as confrontation with our own sin or problems that demand our

action. One thing I’ve noted among some peers in high school is some of the funniest people are the people that are hurting the most on the inside. Instead of facing their problems and solving them, they simply laugh it off and hide under their humor to ease the pain—which ultimately will never fix their problem. The preacher in **Ecclesiastes 7:2-4** tells us “It is better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting. Because that is the end of every man. And the living takes it to heart. Sorrow is better than laughter, for when a face is sad a heart may be happy. The mind of the wise is in the house of mourning, while the mind of fools is in the house of pleasure.” Let us use humor to comfort one another in sorrow, but not so far as to hide from the reality of the problems that God lets us face.

Perhaps the biggest problem I’ve seen among Christians in dealing with humor is the way Satan uses humor to desensitize us to sin. Paul writes to the Christians at Ephesus in **Ephesians 5:3-5**, “But immorality or any impurity of greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or course jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.” These are serious words, and we must take them seriously when we use words. It’s become too easy to joke about things like drugs, alcohol, and homosexuality. Satan, through television and movies, has used this tactic ruthlessly until we no longer gasp or cringe or feel any kind of repulsion at the sin that is rotting millions of souls all around us. Instead, we laugh. Remember the town drunk in the Andy Griffith show? He was almost always found intoxicated, but he did the ‘funniest’ things. In reality, that lifestyle would destroy him and be something to mourn over, not laugh at. We must examine the things we entertain ourselves with and make sure we’re not letting Satan whittle away at our consciences!

May God help each of us to see humor for the blessing and danger it is, and to use it always to build one another up and to glorify our God!



## Winning Last Place

By Steve Klein

We live in a society that is sports crazy. We love football and fishing, racing and wrestling, soccer and softball -- not to mention baseball, basketball and golf. Nearly all of us have had the experience of cheering for our team or favorite player to win, whether the contest was professional, college, high school or just the youth league team that our child or grandchild played

on. And many of us have participated in sports ourselves. We’ve personally experienced “the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat.”

From a spiritual perspective, sports are not necessarily a bad thing. According to the Bible, sports teach us important lessons about disciplining ourselves when striving for a goal (**1 Corinthians 9:24-27**), playing by the rules (**2 Timothy 2:5**), and running with endurance (**Hebrews 12:1**). Obviously, we can allow sports to become a bad thing if we place too much importance on them or allow them to crowd out spiritual concerns. But sports can also impact us negatively in other ways. They can train us to be too competitive, self-seeking, and ambitious -- too concerned with winning at all costs.

In most sports competitions, everyone wants first place. But there are times in the life of every Christian when he should seek last place. In **Mark 9:35**, Jesus told the twelve apostles, “If anyone desires to be first, he

Here are some practical suggestions for winning last place. The next time that you disagree with a brother in an area of judgment or opinion, insist that your brother get his way. The next time that your wife or husband neglects to do a chore that merely benefits you, do it yourself. The next time they are looking for a volunteer at work to do some menial task, volunteer! Win last place!

shall be last of all and servant of all.” Jesus condemned the scribes and Pharisees because “They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues” (**Matthew 23:6**). He told His disciples, “But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place . . .” (**Luke 14:10**).

The Bible reveals that we should be striving to win last place in our relationships with others!

“Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.” (**Philippians 2:3**).

“ . . . Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”” (**1 Peter 5:5**).

“ . . . Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.” (**Romans 12:16**).

Here are some practical suggestions for winning last place. The next time that you disagree with a brother in an area of judgment or opinion, insist that your brother get his way. The next time that your wife or husband neglects to do a chore that merely benefits you, do it yourself. The next time they are looking for a volunteer at work to do some menial task, volunteer! Win last place!

