

Rend Your Heart

By Tim Johnson After his sin with Bathsheba, he wrote, "The sacrifices of

"So rend your heart, and not your garments; return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful" (Joel 2:13).

Rending one's garments was the action of one experiencing distress. Such actions, however, might be only superficial. According to Joel, that which really needed rending was the heart. One could tear his garments into shreds and still not be right with God.

The basic need is the recognition of the guilt of sin and godly sorrow from a broken heart. Because of sin in his own life, David knew the kind of heart that pleases God.

God are a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart -- these, O God, You will not despise" (Ps. 51:17). In the 34th Psalm, he further showed the vital need of the broken heart: "The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit" (Ps. 34:18).

Paul knew that, where there was no sorrow for sin, there could be no forgiving of sin, "For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation" (2 Cor. 7:10).



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)

Bitterness, A form of Religious Insanity

By Cled Wallace



Thoughts to Ponder

Bitterness imprisons life; love releases it. Bitterness paralyzes life; love empowers it. Bitterness sours life; love sweetens it. Bitterness sickens life; love heals it. Bitterness blinds life; love anoints its eyes.

The bitterness and malice which is often displayed toward each other by members of the body of Christ when unpleasant situations arise in the church is occasion for tears. Worthy men and women in normal situations act very unworthily under emotional stress. Good men sometimes threaten each other with physical violence or recourse at law, and have been known to make good their threats.

They take advantage of each other, watching hungrily for any statement that may be used or warped for personal or factional advantage. Men under the domination of the party spirit, party passion running high, often display evidence of religious insanity. They are beside themselves, and their best friends outside the heat of party passion marvel at their excesses in speech and rancor. Situations can arise in any church which call forth the best efforts of level-headed men, "sober-minded, sound in faith, in love, in patience." We need more men who are anxious to claim the blessings of the Lord. "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God." "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor,

Parents are responsible for the life and oftentimes the destiny of their children. Parents certainly are responsible oftentimes for the success in society of their children. Children should be kept under the home influence of their parents.

and railing, be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you."

It is most difficult for even good men to tell the truth when they come under the influence of factional passion. It is reason enough why we should all be watchful of the intents and purposes of our own hearts. "But if ye have bitter jealousy and faction in your heart, glory not and lie not against the truth . . . For where jealousy and faction are, there is confusion and every vile deed." Every observer of church troubles has noted conflicting reports of what actually

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Classes This Week

Sunday 5:15 Kid's Class at the Building	Monday 7 PM Men's Class at Walker Davis' Home	Wednesday 10 AM Ladies' Class at the Rouse's	Thursday 7 PM Joshua Study at Jillian's House
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Sick

Fran Snyder (Mother of Carla Humphrey)	Lori Holloway	Chick Wade	Sandlyn Fultz (Davis Fultz's Sister)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Carrie Chavers (Friend of Sharon Bailey)	Jared Nixon	Philip Locke (Jeremiah Johnson's Uncle)
Ross Folmar	Grandparents of Mary Ann Roberts	Joe Perry (Anna Miller's Relative)	Marsha and Lee (Toni Herd's Cousins)
Ed Mort (Friend of Sharon Bailey)	Kenn and Ellen Smith (Ken Sullivan's Parents)	Erlene Davis (Walker Davis' mother)	Mary Smith (Nathan Smith's Grandmother)
Gerald White (Christopher's and Wesley's Father)	Dave Brown (Friend of the Lanier's)	Bill Rhodes (Toni Herd's Uncle)	Larry Alexander (Friend of Phillip Box)
Marty and Aubrey Meeks (Toni Herd's Nephews)	Frank Johnson (Debbi Coleman's Uncle)	Herbert Missildine (Toni Herd's Uncle)	Jo Faust Williams (Manna Jones' friend)

March Birthdays

- 20- Jimmy Roberts
- 21 - Carter Hunt
- 24 - Audra Hargett
- 24 - Debbie Johnson
- 24 - Jordon Toombs
- 26 - Jared Burton
- 28 - Shelby Freeman
- 29 - Rachel Stephens
- 30 - Amanda Stephens

April Birthdays

- 1 - Melissa Harrell
- 2 - Melanie Smith
- 2 - Missy Toombs
- 3 - Sharon Bailey

News and Notes

- Barney Keith, grandfather of Jared Johnson, passed away on Wednesday and was buried on Friday.
- There are slots available to sign up to prepare the Lord's Supper.
- Let us remember our expectant mothers in our prayers: Anne Morton and Jana Hall.
- Mike and Debbie Johnson's son, Matthew, is deployed overseas. Also David Golden will be deployed soon. Also Tim Morton is in Afghanistan.
- Kaylee West's great grandmother died on Thursday Morning.
- Group meetings tonight.
- Kaylee West's great grandmother died on Thursday Morning.
- We have an upcoming meeting with Mark Broyles on Marriage, April 15-17.

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



SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday

Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 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

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happened by men who were considered reliable in matters where their personal feelings were not so deeply stirred. A truthful man can earn a reputation for being a consummate liar in a short time in the middle of a church fuss. And too often the reputation is deserved. "Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by his good life his works in meekness of wisdom . . . But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance, without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for them that make peace." And it often happens that the individual who is most aberrant in his handling of facts is also most ready to hurl the short ugly word at the opposition. It reminded Paul of the manner in which beasts go at one another. "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." Think of brethren in Christ biting and snarling at one another like hungry wolves or wild dogs! It often happens.

Does It Favor My Side?

The factious spirit plays some ugly tricks on its possessor. It victimizes and deceives him. When he listens to a sermon or reads an article, his eye is single to only one consideration. Does it favor my side? If it does, then he is not critical of the facts involved. The rankest inaccuracies or the most reckless perversions may be passed upon with approval. If it does not, he may react resentfully toward pointed and helpful truth. A factious spirit can rob a man of the good he might receive from reading the Bible. It can change him into a mote-hunting, faultfinding hypocrite. Light becomes darkness as soon as it reaches his soul.

Preachers and Petitions

It sometimes happens that a preacher who advocates majority rule will lead off a minority if he can't get a majority. There is usually a grievance against elders and a circulating of petitions. Sometimes the preacher has an advantage in that he is in a position to do more electioneering

among his admirers than the elders can. And when it comes to voting and circulating petitions, it may be that some of the most active ones were in a state of suspended animation before the fuss came up. Children and various irresponsibles can be herded for a vote who are incapable of judging the principles involved. It is easier for them to fancy a preacher than an elder, anyway. Elders are not as good at flattery as preachers are who circulate petitions and advocate majority rule in churches of Christ. The friends of one preacher circulated a petition demanding that the elders "resign" and turn the church over to "the pastor." Think of a thing like that happening in a church of Christ! In a case like that, of course the elders are responsible for any trouble that arises over their refusal to "resign" and turn the church over to "the pastor." Circulators of petitions among churches are ordinarily good logicians also! If they cannot arrive at a conclusion along the route of sound reasoning, they can jump at it.

No Doctrinal Difference, But No Fellowship

Our brother mixed a little humor with his philosophy as he watched a preacher lead away a following to another place of worship. In justice to the preacher, be it said, he disclaims the idea of leading away anybody. He didn't follow, either. Anyway, they went along together. I'm not good at splitting hairs. The ones who went away, including the preacher, could not worship amidst the awful conditions in the old church. Our humorous brother thought it a bit arbitrary for anybody to come along and thus separate the sheep from the goats, when the only difference he could see between the sheep and the goats was that the sheep followed and the goats didn't. No doctrinal difference now exists between the two groups. And there is no fellowship between them, either. Former friends are now enemies, and those who once thought well of each other now have nothing to do with each other all in the name of Christ.

(Reprint from "Sword Swipes" column, Gospel Advocate LXXV [5 Jan. 1933]: 3, title and sub-heads supplied by Ron Halbrook for reprint here.)



God's Faithful Promises

By W. Frank Walton

"He who promised is faithful" (Heb 10:23).

The Hebrew writer gives encouragement to the tired, depressed faith of Jewish Christians ready to defect back to Judaism. He urges, "It's worth it to hang in there by faith in Christ! You can count on God to help you! He is utterly dependable to perform what He has promised." "Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised" **(Heb 10:35-36)**.

So, divine promises give us hanging on power, whatever comes our way. To the persecuted Christians under imperial Roman paganism, the apostle Peter offers hope by reminding them that the gospel of Christ contains "exceedingly great and precious promises" **(2 Pet 1:4)**.

No one can point to any instance where God has failed to keep His promises. We've all been disappointed by people who did not keep their promises to us. Countries may default on their bonds, but God cannot lie and will never fail to keep His promises. He will perform, in due time, His assured promises, which gives us "strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us" **(Heb 6:18)**.

In All the Promises of the Bible, Herbert Lockyer reports that Everet Storms in 1956

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counted up all the promises of God to man in the Bible, during his 27th reading of the entire Bible. He figured (in studying for over 18 months) that there are 7,487 promises to man in 31,173 verses of the entire Bible. The Bible is a general treasury of divine promises that we can bank on. How many have we claimed and are depending upon?

God's promises all dovetail affirmatively into the person and work of Jesus Christ. "For as many as are the promises of God, in Him they are yes; therefore also through Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us" **(2 Cor 1:20)**. God promised a coming Savior to bless the world **(Gen 3:15, 12:3)**. This plan of salvation has been offered to all, without exception or distinction, on the gracious condition of obedient faith **(Gal 3:8, Jn 6:37)**.

God has promised that anyone, through Christ, can go to heaven who really wants to go the Lord's way of trusting, loving obedience **(Matt 11:28, Jn 14:6, Heb 5:9)**! Jesus is always with His true church **(Matt 28:20)**.

The Lord will not forsake us and can take care of us, regardless of what men may do to us **(Heb 13:5-6)**. He will not allow any temptation to overwhelm us **(1 Cor 10:13)**. Jesus will return one day for us to take us Home **(Jn 14:1-3)**. There are dozens more....

