

# Teaching in the Moment

I often speak of my father with admiration – I have had many years both to be impressed by his breadth of knowledge and wisdom, and to compare him with other effective students and teachers I have known. He WAS able at both studying and teaching, and an avid reader – and unique, as well. But I was thinking recently about one thing I noticed in him, which seems to be true of many, not always in a bad way but sometimes.

By Aubrey C. Belue

As with many others, he got caught up in the "issue" of his time – for him, it was a concern about the effects of PREMILLENIALISM upon the church and those who had bought into it. This was probably because it was front and center during his impressionable years (from 25 to 45). All his life, at any given moment this foundational concern of his would be his "default" application – everything else would be seen as it related to this subject, and most of his writing (he had an article in the local paper for several years) was at its sharpest when dealing with it. This is not to say he never dealt with anything else – in fact, he spoke or wrote on almost everything, over time – but his preoccupation with it no doubt would cause some to say, "that's his 'hobby'."

When this issue dominated the scene, it NEEDED focus, and it was by the concerted and persistent effort on the part of men like Foy Wallace and R.L. Whiteside that the damage caused to the brotherhood by it was minimal. (ala "Hymaneus and Philetus", and the same general question raised in **2 Tim 2:16**).

I said all that to say that it occurred to me that I must be careful personally to not get so weighted down with one issue that

I get out of balance...Factually, most of my posts have to do with the "grace-fellowship-unity" trend among some brethren, and this is because to me it IS the "issue of the day". (Difference between me and dad was that this is the same "issue of the day" I confronted 60 years ago when I started, and has been cropping up ever since—and I think must still be considered front and center, because the advocates of it are ever replaced by clones year after year).

Choosing what to teach about is not simple. Even casual reflection upon things we face reminds us of issues like indifference, worldliness, irreverence, discipline, self-denial – each is "large", and deserves more than passing notice. My reasoning in making the focus on the issue of authority and collective action is that those other issues are constant, and like the "poor, which you always have with you" (**John 12**)...they never go away, and need constant admonition (which we must not be lax in doing). But if the question of authority is not addressed strongly, and contained, those other questions become largely irrelevant because, if we surrender the principle that ALL must be done by divine authority, we lose the very grounds on which we can glorify God, not self – and that is why He put us here!



Sick			
Sam Cox (Friend of Anna Stallings)	Owen Mauldin (Seth and Summer Mauldin's Son)	Frank Hand (Laura Humphrey's dad)	Sandlyn Fultz (Davis Fultz's Sister)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father)	Joan Parker (Aurie Adams Grandmother)
Emma Hettinger (William Herd's Mother)	Neal May (Manna Jones' Mother)	Roger Whatley (Daphne Whatley's son)	Andrew Hagewood (Friend of Sarah Norman)
Betty Bradford	Quinton Addison (April Jerkins Grandfather)	Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother)	Sandra Qadeer (Rafia Qadeer's mother)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Meredith NeSmith (Jessica Anderson's Cousin)	Emily Stallings (Anna's sister)	Madi Wise (Friend of the Robert's)
Marty Meeks, Russell Dickerson (Toni Herd's Nephews)	Peggy Theis (Timothy Jones' grandmother)	Toni and William Herd	Kate Miller (Daughter of Brandon and Erin Miller)

- June Birthdays**
- 1 - Kenlee Burton
  - 3 - Philip Stephens
  - 8 - Mac Searcy
  - 9 - Kay White
  - 11 - Hannah Alexander
  - 11 - Clint Stagner
  - 12 - Orié Cecil
  - 13 - Addison Dembowski
  - 17 - Sarah Norman
  - 17 - Brooks Pender
  - 20 - Jonas Dembowski
  - 22 - Paul Tam
  - 24 - Justin Bice
  - 25 - Corey Hunt
  - 28 - Allison Chandler
  - 29 - Josh Hudson
  - 29 - Lisa Lanier

**News and Notes**

- ☑ Our VBS begins tomorrow! Ryan Hasty will be teaching the night classes at 7 PM. (June 24-27). Please continue to distribute the cards are in the foyer to be distributed.
- ☑ - Laura Weldon will have an additional surgery on July 11.
- ☑ - Timothy Jones' grandmother died on Friday.
- ☑ - Debbi Coleman continues to recover from knee replacement surgery.
- ☑ - Jon Coleman's sister Mary continues to be treated for seizures.
- ☑ - Tom Davis, Walker's uncle, has lung cancer and is awaiting possible surgery.
- ☑ - Jennifer Daniels continues to recover from surgery.
- ☑ - Susan Sullivan continues to recover from surgery.
- ☑ - David Tant will be speaking for us tonight!

A weekly publication of the University church of Christ in Auburn, Alabama

# 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**)

Volume 4, Issue 33 June 23, 2013



**Thoughts to Ponder**

If there is one thing upon earth that mankind loves and admires better than another, it is a brave man--a man who dares look the devil in the face and tell him he is the devil.

**Elders**  
Walker Davis (334) 703-0050  
Larry Rouse (334) 734-2133

**SCHEDULE OF SERVICES**  
**Sunday**  
Bible Class .....9:30 AM  
Worship .....10:20 AM  
Evening Worship ..... 6:00 PM  
**Wednesday**  
Bible Classes.....7:00 PM  
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Larry Rouse  
Evangelist and Editor

## "The Accuser of Our Brethren"

By Steve Wallace

In **Revelation 12:10** Satan is referred to as "the accuser of our brethren." The word "accuse" is defined, "(1) to charge with, or declare to have committed a crime, (2) to find at fault; to blame . . ." (Webster 14). Sometimes a person is justly accused. However, that is not what is spoken of here.

Do we have any examples of Satan accusing "our brethren before God" (**Rev. 12:10**)? Yes, we find such in **Job 1:6-11; 2:1-6**. Job was a good man! God himself testified to this fact. However, it did not matter to Satan. He accused Job anyway. Here we see a true picture of Satan as "the accuser of our brethren." Satan also tempts mankind. Hence, people can become "accusers of our brethren" and share in the devil's work.

We see people carrying out the work of the devil in both testaments. Job's brethren falsely accused him (**4:7-9**). The Pharisees falsely accused Jesus (**Matt. 12:22-24**). Among the sins characteristic of the "last days" is that some will be "false accusers" (**2 Tim. 3:3**). If people can become false accusers, then brethren can become false accusers. The danger that brethren might partake in the devil's work evidences the need for this study.

*Anyone Can Accuse Anyone of Anything!*

The Bible teaches that the above point is true. Job said to his accusers in the long ago, "I also could speak as ye do: if your soul were in my soul's stead, I could heap up words against you and shake mine head at you" (**16:4**). Likewise the

The Pharisees falsely accused Jesus (**Matt. 12:22-24**). Among the sins characteristic of the "last days" is that some will be "false accusers" (**2 Tim. 3:3**). If people can become false accusers, then brethren can become false accusers. The danger that brethren might partake in the devil's work evidences the need for this study.

Pharisees' accusation against our Lord shows that anyone is able to dredge up any kind of charge against another (**Matt. 12:24**).

Today our media has dredged up countless "witnesses" of questionable character and quoted them to the hurt of some public figure. A headline I have before me now reads, "\_\_\_\_\_ accuses \_\_\_\_\_ of dishonesty." I have deleted the names as they are unimportant. Experience with our news media tells us that we could place almost anyone's name into the blanks, so rampant is the practice of trumping up charges against others. The danger is that, in such an environment as we presently live, brethren might adopt such tactics. In fact, they have.

Let us note some false accusations that have been leveled among brethren. When brethren opposed church contributions to orphans' homes and "sponsoring church-

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es" in the 1950s and 60s they were accused of being "orphan haters" and "anti-missionary." More recently, when faithful brethren have taught against fellowshiping those in adulterous marriages or those who teach false doctrine on marriage, divorce, and remarriage, some have accused them of not believing in local church autonomy. (What about when we teach against what Baptists believe about inherited sin? Are we infringing on the autonomy of Baptist Churches?) In the last few years, when some brethren's teaching on fellowshiping error or influence towards that end was called into question, they accused those who differed with them of having an "inferior motive," of being "extremists who have their own cause to promote," and other similarly reckless charges and have therewith stifled Bible study. (Let us all take note that the Bible teaches that only God and the person in question know what motivates that person [1 Sam. 16:7; 1 Cor. 2:11].) Accusations have been based on what part of the country a person is from. Some on the West Coast have prejudicially used the label "southern preacher," and the term "West Coast preacher" has at times been too broadly used in light of the faithful men doing the Lord's work in that area of the country. If a brother writes an article that uses Bible teaching to expose sinful practices or erroneous teachings of a brother or brethren in other places, whether in a paper or in the bulletin of the church where he preaches, he is accused of "trying to control the brotherhood" or "trying to make a name for himself."

A major cause of problems among brethren today is unproven accusations and brethren feeling free to make them. Brethren are doing the work of the devil! What happens when brethren so conduct themselves?

#### The Effects of Unproven Accusations

**1. Such accusations hurt people.** Even a child is upset when accused of something of which he is not guilty. Job's friends hurt him with their words (Job 16:1-2). Job felt the inward pain that comes to one who is falsely accused as have many brethren today who have faced such accusations.

**2. Such accusations hurt people's reputations.** It is evident that Paul's reputation suffered in the eyes of some of his brethren in the church at Corinth because of false accusations made by his enemies there (2 Cor. 10:2, 10). They apparently even turned Paul's refusal of support from the church there into an accusation (cf. 2 Cor. 11:7-9; 12:13). This reminds me of a story from modern day America where a public figure was accused of a crime or impropriety and "tried" in the media. He was eventually found not guilty and, upon pronouncement of the verdict, asked the judge, "Now where do I go to get my reputation back?" When we consider what it takes to build a reputation, it is sad

to note how a person can be hurt by the false charges of irresponsible people.

**3. Such accusations can result in physical harm.** Our Lord's treatment at the hands of the Jewish authorities shows the truthfulness of the above point. He was accused again and again (Matt. 12:24; 26:59-61; Luke 23:3, 10) and though he was found innocent (Luke 23:14), they killed him anyhow! The false charges against Jews of being "untermensch" (subhuman) and plotting against non-Jewish people made by the Nazis in Germany in the 1930s resulted in the mass killing of millions of them in the 1940s. In our day, who will deny that the rash of black church building fires in our country is not at least partially fueled by the racist accusations made by hateful people? While all hope that accusations made by brethren today would not lead to the bodily harm of those accused, we must admit the possibility in light of the above facts.

**4. Such accusations can poison the atmosphere among brethren.** We need only look at Paul's relationship with the Corinthians to see that this point is valid. Because of the charges made against Paul by his enemies at Corinth, he was not able to continue with his work of building up the church there. Rather, a large part of his second letter to the Corinthians was taken up with explanations of his conduct and answers to enemies (cf. 1:12-2:4; 4:2; 7:2; 12:19; chs. 10-12). Brethren can come to believe the worst about their brethren simply by hearing and believing false accusations. Brethren can be motivated by the desire to accuse others (Mark 3:2; John 8:6). False accusations can lead to the severing of relationships among brethren.

#### Conclusion

Such results as we have listed above ought to cause all to think soberly before blasting off with some wild charge against a brother or believing an accusation made by another. Call the brother in question or write him, seek to build bridges, not to destroy them. Remember, anyone can make false accusations about anyone else. God's people should seek what is true and not be led by idle charges. They should treat others as they would like to be treated (Matt. 7:12) and judge others by their fruits, and not by accusations they have heard (Matt. 7:20; Gal. 2:14). The devil is "the accuser of our brethren." It is bad enough that he is involved in such activity. God's people should want no part of the devil's work. — **Guardian of Truth, March 20, 1997**



## Truth the Touchstone

By Gary Henry

The ultimate truth, of course, is the truth about Jesus Christ. When we choose how to deal with *that* truth, we are choosing our eternal destiny, simply because that choice is proof of our character at its deepest level.

There is an anecdote about a smug tourist who stepped out onto the sidewalk after going through one of Europe's greatest art galleries. Loudly he boasted to the doorman, "Well, I don't see what's so great about all those pictures." The doorman answered politely but pointedly, "But sir, don't you wish you *could* see what's great about them?" Sometimes the offhanded comments we make say more about *us* than they do about the things we pass

judgment upon. Standing in the presence of greatness, we often lack the experience and discernment to appreciate what's before us, and when we give out ill-considered evaluations, we frequently find *ourselves* to have been weighed in the balance and found wanting. We thought we were *doing* the judging, only to find out we have *been* judged.

In the past, the quality of gold or silver samples was determined by the use of a "touchstone," a hard, black stone such as jasper or basalt. The sample was rubbed against this touchstone and the resultant streak was compared to that made by a standard alloy. The sample's "encounter" with the touchstone said nothing about the touchstone -- its qualities were well known -- but it said a great deal about the sample. So it is with some of the most significant things in life: they assay us by our reaction to them. What we truly are is made clear by our contact with these things.

Truth is such a touchstone. You can tell a lot about a person by the way he reacts when confronted with reality. What a person does when he stands face to face with truth says volumes about his character and the kind of human being he has chosen to be. If we will not accept truth and adapt ourselves to it, we not only demonstrate our character to be inferior; we doom ourselves to the suffering that inevitably comes from living on the basis of illusion and error. A life built on unreality is not the "good life," however good it may seem outwardly.

Truth is what it is, with or without a right response to it on our part. But our reaction makes all the difference for *us*.

The most telling events in life occur when we are faced with facts that are unpleasant. How do we respond to truths that have hard consequences? Do we accept them and determine to do what is right? Or do we rationalize, shift the blame, and dodge the issue? Each of these confrontations with truth tests us and shows what we

are made of. And if we mean what we say when we claim to "love the truth," we will *welcome* these tests, knowing that the final reward of truth is far greater than the short term ease that comes from denial and defensiveness.

The ultimate truth, of course, is the truth about Jesus Christ. When we choose how to deal with *that* truth, we are choosing our eternal destiny, simply because that choice is proof of our character at its deepest level. Jesus Himself said, "He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him -- the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day" (Jn. 12:48). It would be extremely foolish for anyone to brag; "Well I don't see what's so impressive about the teachings of Jesus Christ." At this point in history, the real question is not about Jesus. That He was God in the flesh was established once and for all by the resurrection. No, the only question is what kind of people *we* are. The truth about Jesus is the most marvelous of touchstones because it gives us the opportunity to deal with the most important of facts. Our integrity, or the lack of it, is manifested by our reaction to the Son of God.

