

Slow to Wrath

By Jonathan Perz

James exhorts us, "So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God" (Jas 1:19-20).

Thinking on James' inspired words, and reflecting upon those times where I was quick to anger, I think I have come to a greater appreciation of this wisdom.

When anger sets in and the blood boils, it is amazing how quickly the ears shut down (slow to listen) and the mouth opens (quick to speak). Can you relate to what I am talking about?

I know, from looking back on my own "outbursts of wrath," that my wrath has led me to be foolish with my words, careless with other's feelings, hurtful towards those I love and just plain ugly in the eyes of all around me. I always justify my wrath, believing I have cause. Yet, I can't recall one single time where God's righteousness was manifest in my wrath. Rarely has happiness been found in such episodes of wrath either. Venting my head of steam resulted in nothing but sorrow and regret.

When sorrow didn't come shortly on the heels of my wrath, I can honestly say it was because rebellion had set in and anger had given way to bitterness. This is truly dangerous ground for a disciple (see Heb. 12:15).

Not all anger results in sin (see Eph. 4:26) and anger is indeed a natural, God-given, emotional response, as surely as crying and laughing. Still, there is that place where anger gives way to wrath, which are things disciples are called to "put away from" us (see Eph. 4:31-32). Instead, we are challenged to be kind and forgive, just as we have been forgiven by Christ.

The irony is that I know these things to be true (and perhaps you do to), yet still I struggle to live these truths as a disciple of Christ. God help me to be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger in those moments when this world, or someone in it, is getting the best of me. Instead, let me show them the best of You.

Your struggling servant...



Classes This Week

Tuesday 8:00 PM Truth Seekers in room 2326 of the student center	Thursday 7:00 PM Ladies Class at the Rouse's. "Seasoning Your Words"
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Lisa Carter (Luke's mother)	Jesse Godwin (Troy's father and Mac's grandfather)	Nell Holcomb (Ben's grandmother, Joannetta's aunt)	Louise Pack (Anna and Christopher's grandmother)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father)	Jamin Hymel (Chad's son)
Madeline Morton (Greg Lanier's g'daughter)	Alexander Locke (Jeremiah's cousin's son)	Betty Bradford	Hazel Gilliland and Sherry Carroll (Toni's relatives)
Ricky Tucker (Tyler's cousin)	Ermogene Laxson (Sara Lail's grandmother)	Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother)	William Smith (Ken Sullivan's brother)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Arabelle Rich (Joannetta's aunt)	Sasha Rozier (Makenzie Reynolds' cousin)	Eva Jean Cavender (Matt's grandmother)
Bonnie Rhodes Kirkley (Toni Herd's family)	Howard Vaughan (Mary Ann's Granddad)	Aubrey Meeks (Toni Herd's Nephew)	Maria Aragon (Liseh's Mother)

September Birthdays

- 2-Denise Davis
- 3-Trenton Anderson
- 3-Larry Lauderdale
- 4-Kevin Anderson
- 10-Bj Winslett
- 10-Eleanor Weldon
- 10-Matthew Sullivan
- 11-Sheryl Fowler
- 11-Kimberlee Myers
- 12-Jared Johnson
- 13-Adam Saylor
- 14-Patsy Ogle
- 16-Brittany Bagents
- 17-Laura Weldon
- 21-Sarah Chandler
- 24-Wade Winslett
- 24-Lauren Johnson
- 25-Ashley Collier
- 28-Hallie Hall
- 29-Sandlyn Fultz

News and Notes

- ☒ - Please remember William Herd's family in the death of his father Wed morning.
- ☒ - Please pray for our expectant mothers: Amanda Stephens and Cristin Chavez.
- ☒ - We rejoice in the baptism of Berta this week!
- ☒ - Carrie Reid (Julian and Nakia's mom) had successful jaw surgery on Friday.
- ☒ - Please pray for Tim Morton, Greg Lanier's son-in-law as he is deployed to Afghanistan.
- ☒ - Please pray for Nakia's father-in-law who has been diagnosed with cancer.
- ☒ - Please keep those in your prayers who are in the adoption process: Kevin and Jessica Anderson, Craig and Paula Davis
- ☒ - Be sure to have your picture taken (or updated) for the directory in the foyer on Sunday mornings.
- ☒ - Please continue to park in the grass when possible at all services.
- ☒ - All audio is posted to www.auchurch.com.

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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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Thoughts to Ponder

They sow the wind, And reap the whirlwind...
(Hosea 8:7)

Elders
Walker Davis
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Larry Rouse
(334) 734-2133

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES
Sunday
Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM
Wednesday
Bible Classes.....7:00 PM
E-Mail:
larryrouse@aubeacon.com

Larry Rouse
Evangelist and Editor

Reaping the Whirlwind

By Fanning Yater Tant

One of the truly frightening things about denominationalism, and one that is often overlooked, in the insidious way in which it lays the basis for complete moral anarchy in human affairs. It destroys and undermines the very standard, the authoritative guide, by which men can tell "right" from "wrong"—good from evil. This is the very same spirit which has produced such chaos within our own ranks in recent years. Indeed, the present horrendous wave of lawlessness in the land, with crime soaring at a terrifying rate, is due in no small measure to the preaching that has been done in American pulpits for the last one hundred years!

Preaching the cause of lawlessness? Incredible! you say. But the kind of preaching that has been done in our nation, and sometimes in pulpits of the churches of Christ, weakens and vitiates the actual foundation for all moral judgments and all moral standards,

We look at a certain action and say, "That is right;" we see another act and say, "That is wrong." Now, what do we mean by "right" and "wrong"? By what standard are we reaching our verdict? On what basis do we judge? Why is it "wrong" for a human being to kill and eat a fellow human being, and yet not "wrong" for a beast of the jungle to kill and eat another beast of the jungle? Why can we not say that murder is a noble act, that the murderer is a hero,

deserving of praise for his action? Why do we not put a premium on dishonesty? And on cowardice? By what standard, or for what reason, do we declare that theft and falsehood and cruelty are "wrong", but that virtue and honesty and courage are "right"?

Traditional Teaching?

"Well," one replies, "we have been taught that standard. This is that which comes from the scriptures. The Bible teaches that it is 'right' for a man to act a certain way but 'wrong' for him to act in another way." This is certainly true. We have LEARNED to judge between right and wrong, between what is good and what is evil. We have been taught by a long and arduous process of education through many generations as to what is "right" and what is "wrong." Thus moral truth has been embedded in the conscience, and in the consciousness of the race. The world feels the influence of this even in lands where the Bible is not known. The whole human race has learned that lust and greed and dishonesty are "wrong" and that virtues and honesty and love are "right."

But for more than a century now, denominationalism has been subtly and insidiously undermining the very standard, the authoritative guide, by which these values and judgments are determined and established. For the Bible is the standard and the rule by which all

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moral values can be ascertained. And, since the days of the Campbell's, denominationalism has been more and more de-valuing the authority of that standard.

The Dilemma

So terrific was the impact made by the Campbell's and their co-workers on the conscience of the nation, so deep and powerful the conviction wrought by their charges of denominational sin, that from their day to ours, denominational leaders have been frantically seeking some way to overcome the weight and the stinging rebuke of their indictment. In view of Bible teaching, the simple, plain and unequivocal words of the inspired scripture, denominationalism was wrong and sinful; the denominational churches had no right before God even to exist!

Confronted with this devastating attack on the very principle of denominationalism, the forces of entrenched error were faced with a dilemma: they could either surrender their denominationalism, or they could deny the authority and weaken the impact of that teaching which threatened their existence. Many thousands of these sincere and devout people refused to surrender their conviction in the absolute authority of the Bible, and consequently broke with their traditional denominational affiliations completely and became simple New Testament Christians. Other thousands, however, enmeshed in the labyrinthine toils of their religious heritage, clung to the old ties at the expense of their convictions as to the absolute authority and sufficiency of the scriptures. They could justify themselves in their position only by a refusal to acknowledge the supremacy and final authority of the Bible as a guide and standard.

Thus came about the self-justifying rash of rationalizations which has plagued us these past decades: "Every man has a right to his own beliefs," "if you are totally sincere in what you believe, that makes it truth for you; one church is as good as another; we can never agree on what the Bible says, we can only agree on love; you worship God in your way, and I will worship Him in mine," etc. This sort of teaching, spread out over a century and more, spawned the belief that the Bible can NOT be understood by the common, ordinary man; that it does NOT necessarily mean what it seems to be saying. A denominational preacher fifty years ago might well have gone into the pulpit, picked up his Bible to read, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be

saved," then spend his entire sermon to show that baptism is NOT essential to salvation! The same procedure might deal with passages that teach of the one church; immersion; the Lord's Supper, and a score or a hundred other items.

Without realizing it, such preachers and such preaching laid the basis for moral anarchy; they destroyed faith in that authority of God's word. People were slowly conditioned to question, or to reject, plain Bible teaching as to a great many problems or questions regarding the plan of salvation, the church, worship, and other such things. They were sowing to the wind!

Reaping the Whirlwind

And the terrible fruitage of such sowing? Well, take a look at the divorce evil, as an example. When people have been taught for four or five generations that the Bible does NOT mean what it says on baptism; does NOT mean what it teaches on the subject of the one church; does NOT mean what it says on a score of other subject, then can those same people be blamed for believing that perhaps the Bibles does NOT mean what it says about a woman being bound to her husband, "for so long as he liveth?" And perhaps it does NOT mean what it says about theft, and lying, and drunkenness, and lasciviousness too!

Thus denominationalism, by weakening men's faith in the authority of God's word, laid the foundation for moral anarchy. And do not think for one moment that this teaching is unrelated to our soaring crime wave in the nation! We have become a nation with no moral standard, no final authoritative basis for judging "right" and "wrong." The terrible fruitage of a century of chipping away at the authority of the divine standard has brought down upon our heads a tidal wave of crime and lawlessness. The "situation ethics" of Joseph Fletcher becomes the standard, and every man does that which is right in his own eyes. Sadly enough, some of our own brethren have succumbed to the spiritual miasma of the age, further weakening and invalidating the divine standard. They have forgotten that, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." They have sown to the wind; and the whole nation, the church included; is reaping the whirlwind. Crime in the streets, bloodshed, lust, avarice, debauchery —these are the fruits of the nation. And the building of human organizations, the reliance on human wisdom, the general departure from "thus saith the Lord" in church work and worship —these are the end products we see in the churches.

Vanguard – May, 1975



The Anti-Gospel

By Doy Moyer

The anti-gospel shuns the Lordship of Jesus. It mocks those who embrace God's authority as revealed in Scripture. ... Because the anti-gospel denies true repentance, it also denies the kingdom of Christ.

The gospel is rooted in the fact that all have sinned and fall short of God's glory (**Rom. 3:23**). The wages of sin are death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (**Rom. 6:23**). Mankind, left to himself, is lost, without hope, and unforgiven. There is no grace without Christ, and no path to God without the way, the truth, and the life (**John 14:6**). The gospel message is that we can receive forgiveness of sins through the blood of Jesus and be born again to that living hope, reserved in heaven, through the resurrection (**1 Pet. 1:3-5**).

The gospel is also inseparable from this primary message: "repent!" Jesus said, "repent and believe in the gospel" (**Mark 1:15**). This is a clear kingdom mandate:

"Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (**Acts 2:38**)

"Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord" (**Acts 3:19**).

God wants all to "come to repentance" (**2 Pet. 3:9**). He wants the gospel taught to grant "repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth" (**2 Tim. 2:25**), for godly repentance leads to salvation (**2 Cor. 7:10**).

Sadly, this message has been rejected in favor of one much more palatable and easily accepted by a world indoctrinated with moral relativism and forced tolerance.

The anti-gospel is the message of non-repentance. This message tells people that repentance is not necessary, that it is good to embrace your own version of self, that those who say otherwise are the haters, the bigots, the ones who need to be shunned and shamed. God made us the way we are, so there is no need to do anything but affirm our own feelings. Modern culture deems that the more enlightened embrace the anti-gospel, for modern understanding is superior to the ancients; and since Scripture is a product of the ancient world, we can see the need to move beyond it as a relic of the past.

The anti-gospel turns the grace of God into a license to sin (Jude 4), allowing for all to continue in sin while affirming this twisted version of grace (Rom. 6:1-2). The anti-gospel preachers proclaim that love wins, that the Spirit is with them, that God understands. In the process, a new idolatry has emerged. God has been re-shaped to look just like the anti-gospel message. This god no longer requires repentance and despises those who preach it. This god bends to the whims and desires of those who have

shaped the anti-gospel. The standard of the anti-gospel is self-will, not Scripture, though once in a while some passage will be trotted out as support of what has already been decided. Those Scriptures that do not support the predetermined conclusions are summarily dismissed and relegated to the shelf of antiquities, appealed to only as evidence of a world that everyone now knows was backwards.

This message is anti-gospel because it teaches people to affirm their sinfulness, to be proud of their sinful behavior, to march in lock-step with flags unfurled to show solidarity. Grace is perverted and the real gospel is veiled as the minds of the anti-gospel advocates are unable to "see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ" (**2 Cor. 4:4**), while they preach themselves rather than "Christ Jesus as Lord" (**vs. 5**).

The anti-gospel shuns the Lordship of Jesus. It mocks those who embrace God's authority as revealed in Scripture. It manifests the works of the flesh while parading in disguise as the fruit of the Spirit. Because the anti-gospel denies true repentance, it also denies the kingdom of Christ. There is no grace of living waters in the anti-gospel, but only a poison that may momentarily taste of pleasure. In the end, it will become bitter, and it will kill those who drink of it.

"Repent and believe in the gospel." Only in Christ will true salvation be found. Preach the gospel. Let the foolishness of the cross become the power of the saved (**1 Cor. 1:18**). Now is not the time to compromise; now is the time to embrace the real gospel with even more intensity. It's not about politics; it's about truth.

