

## By Many Or By Few

The situation look grim. Saul's men had dwindled to only about six hundred. The army of the Philistines numbered into the thousands. Saul's men were poorly armed. Since all the smiths were among the Philistines, Saul's soldiers had neither sword nor spear. There was much trembling among the Israelites. Some were hiding in caves, thickets, rocks, pits, and other out of the way places. Some had fled to the region east of Jordan (1 Sam. 13).

Jonathan, Saul's son, took his young armor bearer and approached the Philistine garrison. Saul was not informed of this movement. Jonathan said to the young man that bore his armor, "Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the Lord will

By Irvin Himmel

work for us: for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few" (1 Sam. 14:6).

The faith that Jonathan had in God brought reward. Despite their being terribly outnumbered and poorly equipped to fight, the Israelites were given victory over the Philistines. God turned seeming defeat into certain triumph.

Too often we suppose that we are defeated if outnumbered. Not so! God is able to save by many or by few. God can use a few faithful people to do great works in his sight. God is not swayed by numbers.



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)	James Palmer (Rachel Hobbgood's grandfather)

### December Birthdays

2-Katelyn Sullivanne  
5-Rusty Weldon  
5-Charlie Johnson  
5-Allie Hosey  
5-Grace Green  
8-Macy Johnson  
9-Anna Acuff  
9-Kayla Reid  
9-Anna Cagle  
11-Alex Nguyen  
13-Dave Hosey  
13-Will Bruce Harris  
14-Beth Zeannah  
15-Sabelis Moreno  
17-Joseph Miller  
18-Tin-Yau Tam  
19-Chase Sanders  
20-Chris Zeannah  
20-Brandon Walker  
20-Meredith Reid  
20-Micah Waters  
21-Holly Johnson  
21-Andrew Dunaway  
22-William Herd  
22-Carter Burns  
24-Jessica Yates  
24-Dustin Marsh  
27-Jacob Neeley  
28-Turner Stephens  
28-Gabby Borden  
30-Douglas Bethea

### News and Notes

- Ruth Addison, grandmother of Julie Johnson and April Jenkins, is making progress and managing the pain from her fall.
- Those who graduate this semester: Winston Atnip, Stewart West, Micah Waters, Robert Ziama - Masters
- Please pray for friend of the Greens, Matt Jones, who was in a dirt bike accident.
- Please continue to pray for Chuck Hunt's dad, Charles, Chuck Hunt's dad, Charles, as he receives his chemo treatments.
- Please remember the family of Jessica Yates, Taylor and Douglas Bethea as their gma/great gma, Ethel Romano died on Tuesday.
- Please remember the family of Becky Daniels in the loss of her nephew, Scott Allen.
- Please pray for the family of Bruce Daniels whose brother, LD, died last night.
- Please pray for our expectant mothers: Amanda Stephens, Brooke Perkins and Jenna Vaughn.
- Please continue to pray for Terri Sams who is not doing well in her battle with cancer.
- Please keep those in your prayers who are in the adoption process: Kevin and Jessica Anderson.
- Please pray for the Moreno's in the visa process.

# 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)

## All That Glitters Is Not Gold

By Dee Bowman



### Thoughts to Ponder

And He said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."

(Luke 12:15)

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### 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

Many years ago, my brothers and I went to New York City. We arrived very early in the morning. We could not wait to get our bags into our room and get our first look at Times Square. I shan't soon forget the sight. It was as if we were immersed in a sea of lights. There were lights that cascaded like water falls, lights that sparkled like Christmas, lights that wrote messages, lights that twinkled.

There were pulsating lights, performing lights, lights that made little paths around huge pictures of people. The scene seemed to take you along with it, whether you wanted to go or not. It was as if you were in a current the strength of which was so overpowering you had no resistance.

Society is like those lights. It has a strong attraction. It pulls people with great subtlety. You're caught up in the flow of it before you know it; and when you're in the flow, it takes great

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power--more than most of us have--to dislodge yourself.

With its various methods of seduction, society invites us into the slime pit of sin. It accomplishes this by making sin attractive. If sin were left to its own, nobody would get involved in it. It promises things; it holds out a certain satisfaction. Sin is never presented to you in its bare form. It's always dressed up in something. And the trappings are well thought out. The Devil is a mas-

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ter of disguises. He conjures up all manner of packages in which to place this most deadly enemy of mankind. When he has it just right he presents it with deadly skill. You can be in it before you know it.

How do we fight this kind of attraction? What can we do?

**Get to know yourself.** Each of us is different. Each has his own vulnerabilities, his own weaknesses. Only when you get to know yourself can you prevent the hypnotic spell. Paul said, "Examine yourself..." (**I Cor. 13:5**). Such an introspection is private; no one can do it for you. It takes an amount of courage, a sort of "push yourself" attitude. The Devil would like you to just "go with the flow," and "not fight against the feeling." But when you know yourself, you're able to guard against getting into trouble before you know it.

**Decide what's important.** The Devil wins lots of folks simply because he convinces them, ever so subtly, that it's OK to major in minors. How often we dedicate ourselves to that which is of so little value. How does he do that? Well, he just dresses it up so that you can't see it for what it really is. How many people have been deluded into thinking that life consists of the abundance of the things possessed? (**Cf. Lk. 12:15**) How many times have fame and material things blinded the vision of some unsuspecting person? After all, success is important isn't it? Sure it is; but only if it's real success--the kind that relates to the eternal.

**Store up the message.** The word of God is the key to overcoming the Devil. Jesus proved that when He was tempted by Satan (**Matt. 4**). His answer still works today. But if you've not stored up the information,

you can't use it when the moment of disaster is near. "It is written" cannot be used by him who doesn't know that it's written. Store up the information and be ready. It's a war, folks. And we can't fight it without the armaments necessary for the conflict (**Eph. 6:11-ff**).

**Take control of your own life.** It's amazing how easy it is to surrender yourself. Almost without thinking you can surrender yourself to some hobby, to some project, to some dominant personality, to some movement of some sort. That's how the Devil's process works. It's like those lights--you're mesmerized before you know it. Paul told the Romans, "Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are whom ye obey?" (**Rom. 6:17**). It's your choice. You don't have to surrender to anybody. You choose the one you serve. Be careful.

**Follow through.** Follow-through is important whether it's a good tennis stroke, a good golf swing, or a disciple's obedience. Intention without follow-through--a most sagacious ploy. He doesn't have to get you to decide not to do what's right if he can just get you to put it off. Oh, you intend to, you just haven't gotten around to it. And intention--isn't that something which is commendable, something good? Sure it is. But only if you follow through. James said, "to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (**James 4:17**).

After we had seen the lights in the black of night we went back to the hotel with visions of brightness still burning in our minds. The next morning, we went to the same area of and saw Times Square in God's light. What a difference! Litter, last night's confetti, drunks in the doorways, alleys filled with filth.

Things aren't always what they seem.



## "As Long As It Doesn't Harm Anyone"

By Doy Moyer

One of the most prominent moral justifications heard today is that as long as the practice doesn't harm anyone, then it is right and should be allowed. The primary argument this is being used for today is gay marriage, to no one's surprise. However, it carries broader applications, and those applications aren't just about politics.

"The practice is not harming anyone, so you need to let them do what they want."

Doesn't that just make sense? How can we not agree with that?

First, the argument from "no harm" makes assumptions not only about what "harm" is or is not, but also about who should or should not perceive something as harmful.

We might notice that when people talk about what doesn't "harm" anyone, they don't really define what they mean. They assume that everyone's on the same page, and proceed to argue from their assumptions. Interestingly, some of the same people will argue against all religion on the basis that they believe religion "harms" people, showing that "harm" is often a matter of perspective.

What does it mean to "harm"?

"Harm" means to injure or do damage to something. Something good can harm something bad, and something bad can harm something good. Truth will injure the false, and what's false can damage the cause of truth. The issue shouldn't be so much, "does it cause harm?" but rather, "is it right or wrong?" What we should always be concerned about is doing what is right, and "no harm" isn't to be equated with "right." "Harm" is too fluid of a concept to be anchored to "right" or "good." If what's good harms what's bad, then that's as it should be.

Is there such a thing as universal harmlessness? Is there really a practice that is totally and completely harmless to everyone and everything in all circumstances? When people say that a practice "doesn't harm anyone," are they making some universal statement of truth? Or are they focusing on a particular circumstance? Are there bigger issues that we ought to think about?

What of something considered harmful to one group or person, but not another? Do we ignore part of the equation in order to push an agenda? Who gets to de-

cide that? Who is the authority on what harms people?

There are different kinds of harm, including physical, emotional, and moral harm. These seem most obvious, but let's also consider the idea that something can be subtly harmful overall because it chips away at and destroys the structural foundation of a society. When it comes to matters like living together apart from marriage, having children apart from marriage, easy divorce, or gay marriage, we are looking at practices that challenge the infrastructure of the family, which in turn harms the structural foundation of our society.

By redefining marriage or family, against both God's revealed will and all conventional wisdom of many thousands of years, we are naive if we think that there is no harm to the structural foundation.

Of course, the worst of all harms is spiritual in nature. Sin is always the real harm, so if something is sinful, as defined by God, then it is absolutely harmful to the ones who practice the sin as well as the surrounding society. We all ought to desire avoiding that.

"Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people" (Prov. 14:34).

If we take something that is sinful, then argue that it is acceptable because it doesn't cause anyone "harm," then we have misunderstood the true nature both of what is harmful and the consequences of sin. We are no different from those who called good evil or evil good (Isa. 5:20).

Rather than asking whether something is harmful, we need to ask whether something is right. "Right" isn't defined by our own selfish perspectives, but by a Creator who ultimately knows what is most beneficial or harmful to all of us.

Finally, the gospel addresses the situation in that it calls on us to repent of sin while offering forgiveness and reversing the eternal effects of what sin does to us (Acts 3:19). When we deny the harm that sin causes, then we deny the power of the gospel to overturn our sinful condition. This will result in irrevocable and permanent harm to us, and none of us can afford that. This is why we need to diligently teach the truth that will set us free from sin (John 8:31-32). This isn't about taking a political position; it's about reaching a lost world that needs to come home to God.

