

Bedford Bulletin

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BUILDING BLOCKS OF THE
FAITH
1 Corinthians 3:9-11

Appointed for the Defense of the Gospel (Part 8)

Making Proper Application of What we Know to be True

Paul spoke these words to Timothy, “6 Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. 7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind” (2 Tim. 1:6-7). Any doubt that Paul was a “hearer, and not a doer”, (James 1:22-25), is dispelled by studying his life’s journey, capsulated in verse 12 “For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.” The question we all must answer is, are we keeping what we have committed to Him until that Day?

In previous articles we’ve discussed issues from what baptism is, to the errors of Calvinism. As Christians we are to “*sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear*” (1 Peter 2:15). Being ready to give a defense to all who ask why you believe, and why you have hope is critical, not just for them, but for each of us. When we refuse to answer, we become weak, withdrawing ourselves from those who question our faith. The end result is a life of fearing others. The only One we should be fearing according to Jesus is “...*Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell*” (Matt.10:28). It can happen to anyone, even the apostle Peter “*fearing those who were of the circumcision*” (Gal. 2:12) found himself face to face with Paul, who didn’t fear to speak the truth that corrected Peter’s course back to Godliness (Gal. 2:11-21).

Spirit of fear didn’t come from God (2 Tim. 1:7), but power and wisdom does, thus, it’s not our own might (2 Cor. 12:9-10), not our own wisdom, but we have the power of the gospel (Rom. 1:16), and the wisdom from above (James 1:5, 3:17). With this in mind let’s consider application examples from the sins of David and Samuel.

David first saw Bathsheba “*bathing*”, (2 Sam. 11:2) opening the door of David’s heart to temptation, which led to David’s lust, then trying to hide his sins, and even murder that brought on the consequences of his sins. Did David feel the consequences? Just read (Psa. 32:1-5; 51). Let’s see the way God dealt with David, and how that convicted him of his sin.

God sent Nathan to David: Nathan told the king of a poor man with one little ewe lamb that grew up with his own children and was equally loved. He tells the king of a rich man who had many flocks and herds yet, “*took the poor man’s lamb and prepared it*” as a meal for himself and the hungry traveler (2 Sam. 12:1-4). Upon hearing this, “*David’s anger was greatly aroused against the man*” (2 Sam. 12:5). David’s anger was justified, and he pronounced judgement, “*As the Lord lives, the man who has done this [a]shall surely die! 6 And he shall restore fourfold for the lamb, because he did this thing and because he had no pity*” (vv.5-6).



“And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”

Then God speaks through Nathan to David: “*You are the man! Thus says the Lord God of Israel*” (2 Sam. 12:7). From

this we learn the first principle God wanted David and all Christians to learn. God convicts the sinner of his sin by a messenger (Nathan), which today is you! He sent Nathan/us, to tell the sinner directly, “*you are the man*”, that is you’re guilty of sin. Can you see that God didn’t hem and haw, didn’t beat around the bush, God is always straight forward when it comes to dealing with a sinner. Could the king have turned his anger toward Nathan? Yes, and I am certain that Nathan

Knowing & Doing God's Will

Proverbs 11:14

knew that was possible, but Nathan feared God, more than the king. We must be like Nathan when error is taught, when sin abounds, we must not fear what men may say or do, but what God will say and do if we cower down in fear of them.

Another great example is King Saul. Saul was instructed to, "...*attack[a] Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and do not spare them...*" (v.3). But Saul disobeyed God's instructions and at verse 9 we read, "*Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all that was good, and were unwilling to utterly destroy them.*". Again, correction for sin must be made and as before, God sends a messenger, Samuel, to deliver his message to Saul (1 Sam. 15:10-13). Though Samuel was greatly grieved, even crying out all night, he still "*rose early in the morning to meet Saul*" (v.12). Is it ever easy to tell someone they have done wrong, they aren't keeping God's will, not worshipping in Spirit and Truth (John 4:24)? Hardly ever, but again, like Nathan, Saul was direct and to the point. In verse 13 it is crystal clear that Saul "thought" he kept God's commandments. Just like many today who believe their, "church", "worship", and life is properly aligned with God's will. Then, like today, Saul needed to hear how wrong he was so Samuel says, "*What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?*" If you're not guilty then why do I hear sheep and oxen? If you're not guilty why do you use the instrument in worship, why do you not baptize for the remission of sins, why do you believe "Calvin", and not God? God sends us just like Samuel to speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15). Note that Samuel didn't hate Saul for even though he separated himself from Samuel, he mourned for him (v.35). Saul tried to blame others for his disobedience, but this did not justify him before God (1 Sam. 15:20) and nor are those today justified because they were taught wrong. Remember, "*There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love*" (1 John 4:18). We are in "*the midst of a crooked and perverse generation*" (Phil. 2:15), and we must shine as lights in the world (Matt. 5:14) carrying God's good message.

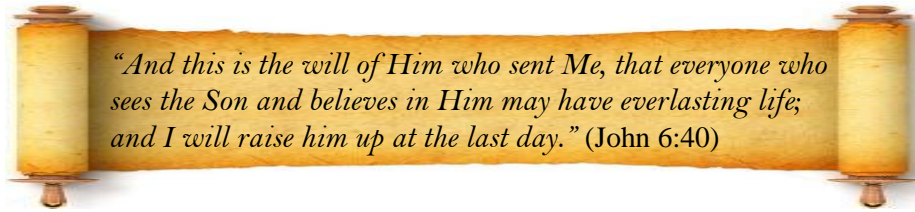
I hope you're getting the point by now, God sends us out to answer error, to speak the good news to sinners like me, yes, like me. If I had not learned the good news, I'd be lost in my sin. We're sent to reap by directly telling the world that Jesus is, "...*the Christ, the Savior of the world*" the, "*head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body*" (John 4:27-38, 42, Eph. 5:23). Like Peter to the Jews on the day of Pentecost sought to convict them of their sins. No hem-and-haw, no beating-around-the-bush. He spoke directly that this Jesus, "*you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death*" (Acts 2:23), and what you must do is, "*Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the [a] remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit*" (Acts 2:38). Again, when Simon sinned, trying to buy the power the apostles had (Acts 8:19), he was quickly and directly rebuked for his sinful actions and urged to repent (Acts 8:20-23). God knows best how to reach sinners, and He left a pattern for us to follow, be direct and to the point.

Yes, most today as then, resent being told they have sinned, and resent correction. On the day of Pentecost there were millions, and only 3,000 souls repented (Acts 2:38, 41, 47). Most continue to deny they're in sin, most blame others or seek to justify their unbiblical and ungodly practices by joining with the majority. Were there fornicators in David's day? Did that make David's actions any less sinful. David's responsibility is to keep himself pure, just as is ours and so everyone. Let every Christian be ready to deliver God's message in a direct, truthful, and clear manner. Let us teach the principles of righteousness by the oracles of God (1 Peter 4:11) using terms clearly and easily understood. Let us all make application that those who are guilty will be convinced of their sin and repent. Compare your spiritual life to that of a doctor who has in his hand—the cure for cancer—but hides it—never giving it to his patients. Are you giving the cure for sin to others, or hiding it in your heart? Knowledge without obedience only fosters foolishness and spiritual death (Matt. 7:24-27). Righteous principles taught in God's word are powerful tools against error and sin; yet, only valuable to those who make application of them.

We are to be light bearers carrying the power of the gospel to every soul. "*Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure*" (Phil. 2:12-13).

Is God working in you, "*both to will and to do for His good pleasure*"?

In Love
Dave Scarpino



"And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." (John 6:40)

Times of Our Services

Sunday Morning Bible Study	9:00 AM
Sunday Morning Worship	9:50 AM
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00 PM
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	7:30 PM

What Must I Do to Be Saved?

Hear the gospel-----	John 6:45; Romans 10:17
Believe the gospel-----	John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6
Repent of sins-----	Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30
Confess Christ-----	Matthew 10:32; Romans 10:10
Be baptized-----	Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38
Remain faithful unto and until death-----	Revelation 2:10; Matthew 10:22