

Purposeful Preaching

Nathan's subject was adultery, murder, and kindred lusts; but he spoke of a little ewe lamb which a rich man took from the bosom of its owner (**2 Sam. 12**). The problem was that of application--getting the audience to apply to self the standard by which others were readily condemned.

Nathan's audience deplored "sin" and could list many sins. Nathan's courage as a "preacher" was little tested by a rip-snorting sermon on "Adultery"; but when he told the king, "Thou art the man!"--aye, here was his moment of truth.

John (the immerser) could decry the awful sins of the times, and call upon people to "REPENT!"--out there in the wilderness--and King Herod be unmoved. But John said to Herod, "It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife" (**Mk. 6:18**).

Several years ago one of "our" ultra-liberal preachers criticized John's direct "approach"--suggesting John need not have "lost his head." In a sense he was right about that. John could have spoken in generalities, kept

by Robert Turner

his head, and perhaps his "job"--but he would have failed in appointed purpose, and lost his soul.

Nathan and John used different ways of teaching their targets; and different means of presenting truth are needed today. But both presented and applied the truth. When they were finished, the audience knew what was wrong, and felt the sting of rebuke.

Today preachers speak of "sectarianism" without explaining that this spirit lives in the "party" concept of the church. They cry for "unity" but refuse open discussion of issues that divide, with God's word the final authority. This is hypocrisy.

Tell the people they must Do Bible Things In Bible Ways--and they will love you. Tell them a church-sponsored skating party is not a Bible Thing; and church support of human institutions is not a Bible Way; and you may lose your "job," but you will have served your purpose as a preacher.



Classes This Week

Sunday Evening College Devo at Craig and Paula's, Ty Randolph teaching	Monday 7:00 PM Men's class at Walker's on how to change yourself.	Tuesday 10:00 AM Ladies' class at Laura Humphrey's house on "Seasoning Your Words"	Tuesday 8:00 PM Truth Seekers in room 2310 of the student center
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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)	Ruth Addison (mom of April and Julie)
Madeline Morton (Greg Lanier's g'daughter)	Alexander Locke (Jeremiah's cousin's son)	Betty Bradford	Jay Jennings (Brooke Perkins' dad)
Jean Buchanan (Abbie Harrison's grandmother)	Tina Atnip (Orie's cousin)	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)	Charles Hunt, chuck Hunt's dad
Gay Ulrich (Emma's mom)	Charles Cecil (Orie's g'dad)	Taina Acuff (Anna's aunt)	John Duke (Jared Johnson's cousin)

April Birthdays

- 1-Rachel Hobgood
- 2-Caroline Scott
- 3-Cameron Abernathy
- 4-Julie Henriquez
- 5-Tate Pender
- 5-Oseas Chavez
- 8-Laura Humphrey
- 8-Hannah Morris
- 8-Hayley Wright
- 9-Brooke Perkins
- 12-Becky Daniels
- 12-Austin Adams
- 14-Jesse Roberts
- 14-Anna Price
- 16-Carla Luther
- 16-Carson Fowler
- 17-Cal Sandlin
- 18-Spencer Sullivan
- 18-Taylor Godwin
- 18-Joel Black
- 20-April Jerkins
- 20-RJ Martin
- 22-Paul Grubbs
- 23-Anna Miller
- 23-Catherine Butler
- 24-Bob Simpson
- 25-Elijah Jackson
- 28-Johnathan Hand
- 29-Ariah Strickland

News and Notes

- ☒ - There will be a work day on Saturday, April 22, from 8-12.
- ☒ - We rejoice in the baptisms of Carlos and Angelica Moctezuma!
- ☒ - Please remember Chuck Hunt's mother, Jane, who has blood clots in her lungs (and is awaiting knee replacement surgery)
- ☒ - We encourage our members to always be looking out for visitors and reach out to them.
- ☒ - Please pray for our expectant mothers: Brooke Perkins and Ingrid Chavez.
- ☒ - Please continue to pray for Gustavo as we are seeking to have approval of a work visa so he can continue to preach here!
- ☒ - All audio is immediately posted on www.auchurch.com.

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**)

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Growing Doubts about the Resurrection of the Dead

By Wayne Jackson

In his defense before Agrippa, Paul asked his Jewish audience: "Why is it judged incredible with you, if God doth raise the dead?" (**Acts 26:8**).

There have always been those who found the concept of the bodily resurrection incredible, i.e., unbelievable, and their modern counterparts are appearing increasingly—even in today's church.

False Ideas

The ancient Greeks disdained the notion that the body could ever be raised. Thus when Paul spoke concerning "the resurrection of the dead [ones—plural]" in Athens, his message was mocked (**Acts 17:32**). During the time of Jesus, the Sadducees denied the resurrection of the body (**Matthew 22:23; Acts 23:6-8**).

Even some Christians in the primitive church had fallen for this error and so affirmed: "There is no resurrection of the dead" (**1 Corinthians 15:12**)—a heresy which Paul attempted to correct. In the late decades of the apostolic age, a sect known as the Gnostics

arose, denying the resurrection of the body.

In our own age, atheism, of course, rejects the idea that the human body will be raised from the dead. An article in the Soviet Encyclopedia asserts that the concept of the resurrection is in "decisive contradiction with scientific natural knowledge" (Smith 1999, 455).

Religious modernism repudiates the idea of the resurrection, since, having "demythologized" the Scriptures, it rejects any element of the miraculous.

(Continued on page 2)

Thoughts to Ponder

Why should it be thought incredible by you that God raises the dead? (**Acts 26:8**)

Elders
Walker Davis
(334) 703-0050
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

Find us on the Internet: www.auchurch.com and www.aubeacon.com

(Continued from page 1)

Cultish groups also have a problem with the doctrine that God will raise the body. The Jehovah's Witnesses assert that the incorrigibly wicked "will never be remembered for resurrection" (Make Sure of All Things 1953, 314).

Within the churches of Christ, those who have converted to the dogma of Max King deny the resurrection. Like Hymenaeus and Philetus, men who erred in Paul's day, these brethren suggest that the resurrection is past already (**2 Timothy 2:17, 18**), having been spiritually effected in A.D. 70 with the destruction of Jerusalem (see *The Menace of Radical Preterism*).

Whether ancient or modern, within the church or outside of it, the denial of the bodily resurrection is radical error. And in this age of biblical illiteracy, this false doctrine will continue to make its presence felt among the people of God unless gospel preachers return to a teaching of the fundamental principles of the Christian faith, one of which is the resurrection of the dead (cf. **Hebrews 6:1, 2**).

The Bible and the Resurrection

The Bible clearly affirms the doctrine of the general resurrection of the dead. Note, in brief, the following points.

Old Testament Evidence

The concept of the resurrection is found in the Old Testament—though not as vividly as it comes to light in the New Testament (cf. **2 Timothy 1:10**). God's declaration to Moses regarding Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was an indication of the eventual resurrection (**Matthew 22:31, 32**). Other Old Testament passages also suggested that man's body would be raised ultimately (see **Job 19:25-27; Psalm 17:15; Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:2; Hosea 13:14**).

New Testament Evidence

The doctrine of the bodily resurrection is affirmed abundantly in the New Testament (see

John 5:28, 29; 6:39, 40; Mark 12:18-27; Acts 17:32; 26:8; Romans 8:23; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; 1 Corinthians 15; 2 Corinthians 5:1, 2; Philippians 3:21).

How any person could read Paul's great discussion of the eventual disposition of the dead in **1 Corinthians 15** and not believe in the resurrection has to be one of the mysteries of the ages. In that remarkable chapter the apostle develops his line of argumentation in the following fashion:

(1) Paul persuasively pled for the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ on the basis of numerous eyewitnesses of the risen Lord, which, on one occasion, consisted of more than five hundred people (**15:1-11**).

(2) The apostle maintained that the Lord's resurrection is Heaven's guarantee that we too shall be raised. Jesus is the "first-fruits" (a figure suggesting a future harvest) of the general resurrection to be effected at the time of his return (**vv. 12-34**).

(3) Paul discussed the nature of the resurrected body. It will not be a physical or a corruptible body; rather, it will be spiritual and incorruptible (**vv. 35-49**). Nevertheless, there will be an identity continuum between the former body and the new one. Only in this light can the term "resurrection" (which means to stand up) have any relevance.

Moreover, each body will have its own individuality (**v. 38**). Further, it is thrilling to reflect upon the fact that our new bodies will be identical in form to the glorious body of our resurrected Lord (see **Philippians 3:21**).

(4) Finally, the theological impact of the resurrection is set forth. It is a declaration of victory (**vv. 50-57**). In view of this great hope, saints are admonished to persevere in their fidelity (**v. 58**).

The biblical doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is a comforting concept. Those who would rob us of this hope are not friends of the cause of Christ.



Unfair Criticism

By Tim Nichols

The following story has been around for many years. I do not know who the original author is. It well illustrates what most of us have experienced from time to time. You simply cannot please everyone. It is not reasonable to try. Our time and energy are best spent in trying to do what is right. If some critic can help us to better understand what is right, then it is reasonable to follow such suggestions. But changing what we are doing or not doing to try to please unfair critics is absolutely futile.

A man and his grandson went on a journey, walking and leading a donkey. Soon they met a passerby who said, "How foolish for both of you to be walking. One should be riding the donkey." So the man put his grandson on the animal. The next person they met frowned and said, "How dreadful for a strong boy to be riding while an old man walks." So the boy climbed off the donkey and his grandfather climbed on. The next traveler down the road said, "I just can't believe that a grown man would ride and make a poor little boy walk." So the man pulled the little boy up and they rode on together. This seemed to be the solution, until they met the next fellow who cried out, "I never thought I would see anything so cruel in all my life -- two intelligent human beings riding one poor defenseless donkey." Down the road a piece, they met a couple of men traveling together. When they passed, one said to the other, "Did you ever see tow dummies carrying a donkey before?"

Soon after I began preaching I was confronted by a critic who believed that there was something wrong with preparing notes for sermons. At the time I was using extensive outlines in the pulpit that I had prepared in my studies during the week. The critic said, "A real preacher can stand up and preach a sermon on any subject in the Bible right now without using notes!" Over time I developed the practice of using fewer and fewer notes while preaching expository sermons over passages of scripture. I eventually got a wide margin Bible and now do most of my preaching from the text of the Bible and the notes that I have made in the margin. This takes more work in the study but it seems to be the most effective way to preach the word of God for me at this time. I was not surprised to hear another critic point

out that "real preaching cannot be done from a few notes scribbled in the margin of a Bible."

Such criticism comes from a variety of sources. Job's "friends" came to him without knowledge of what was actually going on and made criticisms concerning things about which they were ignorant. They could have come with open minds. They could have listened and learned. Instead they came attempting to instruct Job.

The Sadducees were a proud people in Matthew 22 where it is recorded that they came to Jesus attempting to "show Him up". Jesus "put them to silence" (verse 22). Before doing so he showed them where they had gone wrong; "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God" (verse 29). Even though their criticism was put forth in the form of a question, it was a loaded question that blew up in their faces. They should have learned from the reasonable answer to their question. Instead, it appears that they went quietly back to looking for opportunities to bring Jesus down a peg or two.

In Joshua 22 we read of an incident in which the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh went back to the other side of Jordan. They built an altar to God. Their brethren in Israel heard about it and assumed that it was an altar to an idol. Based upon their assumption they prepared to go to battle against them and kill them. According to verse 16 the whole congregation believed it! All of Israel was stirred up and "red-hot mad" because they had failed to investigate before acting. They nearly killed faithful brethren because of unfair criticism.

Before you criticize ask questions and learn facts. If you must criticize try to help and not hurt. Look first at yourself. Some of the most bitter criticism seems to come from those who have the least knowledge of and interest in spiritual things.

Let us also be prepared to at least hear those criticisms from brethren with open Bibles and loving spirits. We should be ready and willing to repent if we have done wrong (Psalm 51).

