

Lifting Up The STANDARD

"When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him" (Isaiah 59:19).

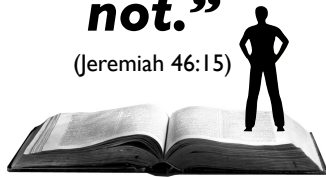


Challenging And Encouraging God's Remnant To Remain Faithful

Issue 6

**"Why are the
valiant men
swept away?
They stood
not."**

(Jeremiah 46:15)



When King Hezekiah died, he was succeeded by his son, Manasseh, who led Israel into idolatry. Baal was worshipped, pagan alters were built, children were sacrificed to Moloch, and God's prophets were persecuted.

Second Chronicles 33:9 says, "So Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen."

God's man of the hour was Jeremiah. Jeremiah's ministry was two-fold. Initially, he attempted to bring God's people to a place of repentance; however, the people had no intention of abandoning their apostasy. Accordingly, it was Jeremiah's task to warn them of the approaching judgment of God.

His message provoked furious anger among the Jews. Jeremiah was viewed as one with a bad spirit, causing division. He was persecuted more intensely than any other prophet before him.

Nine times the prophet stressed that the nation of Judah was a "backsliding" people. Twenty-two times he told them they had committed "iniquity." He repeatedly charged them with their transgressions against God. Forty times he warned them to "return" to the Lord. He warned them they would be "scattered" if they did not repent. Thirty-one times he warned them of impending captivity.

The question "why were the valiant men swept away?" The answer is plain and simple. **"They stood not!"**

"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."

(First Corinthians 10:11)



The Warning Is Clear For Pastors



"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God" (Acts 20:28).

First Corinthians 3:10

"Let every man **take heed** how he buildeth."

First Corinthians 8:9

"Take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock."

First Corinthians 10:12

"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth **take heed** lest he fall."

Galatians 5:15

"Take heed that ye be not consumed."

Colossians 4:17

"Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it."

Hebrews 3:12

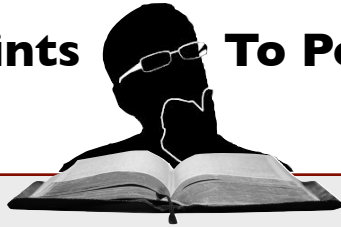
"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God."

First Timothy 4:16

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them."



Points To Ponder



Revelation 2:4

"I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love."

Point # 1 - The Lord's remarks here were directed at the pastor, not the people.

Point # 2 - The pastor was speaking the truth.

Point # 3 - The pastor was serving the Saviour.

Point # 4 - The pastor was separated from apostasy.

Point # 5 - The pastor was stable in his doctrine.

Point # 6 - The pastor's shortcoming was he "left his first love." **Notice he didn't lose it he left it.**

Specific First Love Relationships

As Christians, our first love should be our love for Christ.

As Husbands, our first love should be our wife.

As Wives, our first love should be our husband.

As Fathers, our first love should be our children.

As Mothers, our first love should be our children.

As Children, our first love should be our family.

As Pastors, our first love should be our church family.

The Lord rebuked **the pastor** for leaving his first love. He said, *"I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love."*

"And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment"
(Philippians 1:9).



Fighting Discouragement In The Small Church

Ninety-nine Percent of God's Churches Are Small Churches

Only one percent of the people who attend church next Sunday will be in a large church. A recent survey released by the Barna Research Group of Venture California, reported that the average church attendance in the USA five years ago was ninety people.

His survey revealed that the attendance in black churches put the average up, as they averaged one hundred people while white congregations averaged eighty five. He reported that in the U.S.A. fundamental churches averaged about seventy-five people on any given Sunday. Obviously, fundamental churches in Canada would average far less than those in the U.S.A.

In spite of this fact, the focus is always on the large churches. If the survey is accurate, when God looks down on our world next Sunday, He will see ninety-nine percent of the people who are attending a church in Canada will be in a small church.

Success Is Not Determined By Size. A church that has hundreds of people sitting in a building getting their weekly fix of religion while remaining spiritual pygmies, is not a successful church in God's eyes. God wants people who are capable of, *"Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers"* (Titus 1:9). When your life's work is ended be sure you can pray before you leave and say, *"I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do"* (John 17:4).



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Swelling Is Not Growth

You can smack your thumb with a hammer and you will have swelling, however, swelling and growth are two different things. There is much swelling in the ranks of some churches, that may be impressing people but it is not impressing God.



You Can't Make Them Drink!

Paul spent his life as a Christian with one major purpose and that was to help others. Writing to the Corinthians he said it was his desire "that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God" (Second Corinthians 1:4).

To the Corinthians, Paul said "I wrote unto you with many tears...that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you." He continued "I have said before, that ye are in our hearts to die and live with you" (Second Corinthians 7:3).

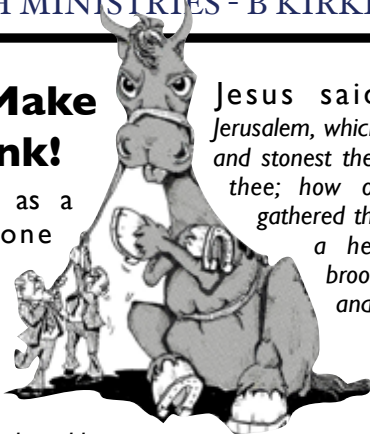
Paul continued saying "And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved" (Second Corinthians 12:15).

"Ye Would Not"

The phrase "**would not**" is in the Word of God 118 times. The phrase "**ye would not,**" came from the lips of Moses four times. He wanted to be a helper to their joy but they would not listen.

The prophet Isaiah said, "In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and **ye would not**" (Isaiah 30:15).

The prophet Jeremiah said, "Because they have not hearkened to my words, saith the LORD, which I sent unto them by my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them; but **ye would not** hear, saith the LORD" (Jeremiah 29:19).



Jesus said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and **ye would not!**"

In John 5:40 Jesus said, "...**ye will not** come to me, that ye might have life."

You Can't Make Them Drink!

It is discouraging for a pastor or a parent when the people they care about refuse to listen; however, they must make their own choices and face the consequences of their choices.

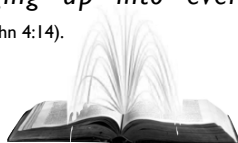
"A Heaviness of Heart And Continual Sorrow"

Paul said "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart...for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." (Romans 9:1-3).

Paul also said, "Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:26).

We must realize that we do not have "**dominion over the faith**" of our listeners we are simply **helpers of their joy**" (Second Corinthians 1:24).

Do not put a guilt trip on yourself because people will not listen. You can point them to the Bible but you can't make them drink from the "...well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14).



Jeremiah 17:13, "They have forsaken the LORD, the fountain of living waters."

"A merry heart doeth good like a medicine"

(Proverbs 17:22).

Attending a wedding for the first time, a little girl whispered to her mother, "Why is the bride dressed in white?" "Because white is the color of happiness, and today is the happiest day of her life." The child thought about this for a moment, then said, "So why is the groom wearing black?"

Don't forget to smile!!!



1. You cannot change what you refuse to confront.
2. Too many people buy things they don't need with money they don't have to impress people they don't know.
3. A small part of life consists of what happens to us but most of it on how we react.
4. It's better to be alone than to be in bad company.
5. As we grow up, we realize it becomes less important to have more friends and more important to have real friends.
6. If you really want to do God's will, you'll find God's way to do it. If you don't, you'll find an excuse.
7. Never do something permanently harmful when you are temporarily upset.
8. We can learn great things from our mistakes when we are not busy denying them.
9. We will never become who God wants us to be if we keep blaming everyone else for who we are now.
10. Anyone can come into your life and say how much they love you. It takes someone really special to stay in your life and show how much they love you.

**C.H. Spurgeon****Concerning Compromise**

"Neither when we have chosen our way can we keep company with those who go the other way. There must come with decision for truth a corresponding protest against error."
(The Sword and the Trowel
September 1887.)

"Complicity with error will take from the best of men the power to enter any successful protest against it...Fellowship with known and vital error is participation in sin...That I might not stultify my testimony I have cut myself clear of those who err from the faith, and even from those who associate with them."
(The Sword and the Trowel)

"There are many that are deceived by this method of reasoning. They remain where their conscience tells them they ought not to be, because, they say, they are more useful than they would be if they went 'without the camp.' This doing evil that good may come, can never be tolerated by an enlightened conscience. If an act of sin would increase my usefulness tenfold, I have no right to do it; and if an act of righteousness would appear likely to destroy all my apparent usefulness, I am yet to do it. It is yours and mine to do the right though the heavens fall, and follow the command of Christ whatever the consequences may be."
(C.H.S., Sermons, 37, p. 426.)

Jesus And "Same Sex Marriage"

Brother David Cloud

The argument for "same sex marriage" often includes the myth that Jesus didn't say anything against homosexuality, and His alleged silence on the issue is taken as support for it.

This idea could only be proposed successfully among people who are ignorant of the Jesus of the Bible and who are committed to an imaginary "Jesus" created after a contemporary image. It is an idea that resonates with a nation that is in love with the false christ of The Shack.

The Jesus of the Bible upheld the covenant of Genesis two, which is foundational to the Bible's teaching on marriage. When asked about divorce, Jesus replied:

"Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matthew 19:4-6).

Thus, Jesus emphatically upheld "traditional" one man/one woman marriage.

Further, the Bible as a whole is the infallible Word of God, as Paul so plainly taught.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is

profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

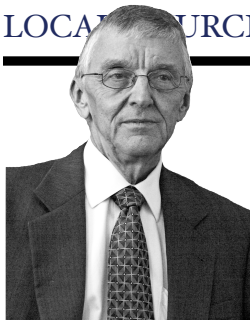
That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (Second Timothy 3:15-17).

**David Cloud**

The words of Paul in the New Testament Epistles are no less authoritative than the words of Jesus in the Gospels, and Paul emphatically taught that homosexuality is a corruption of God's created order. Consider the Epistle of Romans, which Paul wrote as "a servant of Jesus, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God" (Rom. 1:1). Paul is writing with authority invested in him by Christ, and in the first chapter of this Epistle homosexuality is called "vile affections" (v. 26), "against nature" (v. 26), "unseemly" (v. 27), "error" (v. 27), "a reprobate mind" (v. 28).

Those clamoring for "same sex marriage" aren't just opposed to a few Christian "traditionalists" who have allegedly twisted the teaching of Christ, they are opposed to Jesus himself, at whose name "every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and ... every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:10).





Pastor Bob Kirkland



Adventure In Christian Living ...part two

From October 7, 1955 until today, my life has been an adventure in Christian living. The dictionary says an adventure is "bold, exciting and unusual activities involving risk or danger." That pretty-well sums up the last fifty-eight years.

My Local Church Adventures

Billy Graham said we should "...join the church of your choice." That was foolish and unscriptural advice coming from a compromising preacher on the road to apostasy. However, by God's grace we joined a Bible-believing church. Although it was what we now call an evangelical church, as compared to a fundamental church, it was more fundamental at that time than most so-called fundamental Baptist churches of today. It was at that church, at the age of twelve, that I met the young lady who would become my wife.

I Immediately Became Involved In The Service of The Lord

One of the first things I remember in serving the Lord was going out on visitation with a deacon of the church. We drove his little Vauxhall Victor to a home where we were greeted in the driveway by two very vicious-looking German Shepherds.

The deacon laughed and said lets just go to another house. I said, "where is your faith?" I got out of the car and walked to the front door of the home, the dogs barking and growling at me all the way. The woman opened the door and with an astonished look asked me if I was not afraid of those dogs. I said "No," and gave her the Gospel materials we



came to deliver, and got back in the little Vauxhall. The snarling dogs were only inches from my face as I sat in the front seat of that little car. I don't know if that lady got saved or not; however, if she didn't it wasn't going to be my fault.

Asked To Preach

In my early teens I was teaching Sunday School, running a children's program and actively involved in the youth work at the church. One day they asked me to preach a message in the Sunday evening service. I had been studying my Bible about the soon return of Christ. I decided I would preach about "His Soon Return As Taught In The Scriptures."

I spent much time in my message denouncing A-millennialism. I had no idea that the church I was preaching in was an A-millennial church.

Sometime later when a deacon asked me to preach again, he told me I needed to preach a straight forward message and not get on any controversial subjects like the second coming. I said "sir, with all due respect, find someone else to preach." I said, "when I preach, only God will tell me what to preach about."

We Always Become Like Whom We Run With

The church had a very active youth group. They were active in everything except spiritual things. Soon I was smoking cigarettes just like the ones I associated with. The influence and the peer-pressure to fit in was very powerful. The people we associate with always have an effect on our character and behaviour. And so it was, that much of my teenage life was wasted playing church.

The Blame Lies At The Feet of The Pastor

I have no doubt about that statement and I make no apology for making it. Our family was on fire for God; however, that middle of the road Baptist church put the fire out. If we had received some Bible



teaching about the issues we would have followed the Scriptures; however, like most of our so-called fundamental churches of today, the focus was on numerical growth rather than spiritual growth.

My friends smoked and had motorcycles, and soon I smoked and had a motorcycle so I could fit in with my peers; however, God had this sweet little teenage girl in that church that caught my eye. I knew if I got too worldly I would not have a chance with her and that helped to keep me in line.

Married In 1964

By 1964 the cost of the average house had risen to \$13,000, the average income was \$6,000.00, a new car cost about \$3,500.00 and gas had risen to thirty cents a gallon. A loaf of bread sold for around twenty cents and a letter could be mailed with a three cent stamp.



The really big news in 1964 was Bob Kirkland married Daphne Jones on July 25. Our first apartment, in a brand new high rise apartment building rented for \$1,105.00 a year.

Big News In 1967

Canada was 100 years old, the Toronto Maple Leafs won the Stanley Cup. (As of the writing of this article they have not won it since.) The Boeing 737 took its maiden flight and more important than all of that a little girl was sent from Heaven to our home.

Debra weighed in at only five pounds, four ounces. The doctor handed her to me just minutes after she was born. As I looked into her tiny face with those big dimples, I realized it was time for me to grow up.



The awesome responsibility of raising a child hit home during the first few seconds that I held her. At that moment, I determined with the Lord's guidance we would raise our children to the glory of God.



A Solid Family Needs A Solid Church

The first change in our lives would be to seek a church where the pastor would not shy away from preaching "all the counsel of God" (Act 20:27).

In the previous twelve years the church we were members of never warned us about any of the issues of the day. The church was also picking up speed on the road to apostasy. (Not unlike many so-called fundamental independent Baptist churches today.)

This was not what we wanted for our children. We did not know for sure what we were looking for but we knew there had to be something more to Christianity than what we were experiencing.

We will Change The Name To Protect The Guilty

We met a man we will call Dr. "So And So," who wanted to start a church in our area. That wasn't his real name; however, we will change some names to protect the guilty.

We explained that we wanted a church that was interested in winning the lost, had Bible standards and would teach about the issues of the day.

People who say pastors should not preach standards are stupid people. Everyone from prostitutes to perverts have some kind of standards. The army, the navy, the boy scouts and every other organization on planet earth has standards. The only place that doesn't teach standards is a church with a compromising pastor.

Most of the Bible deals with the standards God demands for Christians. We are to be "Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord" (Ephesians 5:10).

From The Frying Pan Into The Fire

Well, Dr. "So And So," started a church and we joined it; however, before long we found that his talk was better than his walk.

One night while we were having a prayer meeting, his teenage daughter was in the local cemetery with some other teens having a seance trying to raise some spirits of dead people. We also found out that he had a very bad reputation with the business people in the area. We had jumped from the frying pan into the fire.



This was not at all the kind of Christian leadership we were looking for. Our children deserved better.

A Formal Education?

Immediately after I trusted Christ as my personal Saviour I began to study the Word of God. I fell in love with that Book. I still study it about forty hours a week. The Bible promises the Holy Spirit will guide the sincere Christian into all truth.

The dictionary tells us that, "A formal education is the process of training and developing people in knowledge, skills, mind, and character in a structured and accredited source." There is nothing more structured in this world than the Word of God and there is nothing more accredited than the Word of God. In that case, I guess I have a formal education.

M. R. DeHaan And A.W. Tozer

Two men who had a very strong influence on my life were M. R. DeHaan and A.W. Tozer.

I have every radio booklet that DeHaan wrote and many of the twenty-plus other books he wrote.

These books helped form the foundation for my Christian life. It has been said of A. W. Tozer that he "combined the power of God and the power of words to nourish hungry souls, pierce human hearts, and draw earthbound minds toward God."



M.R. DeHaan - A.W. Tozer

At the age of fifteen Tozer began a lifelong pursuit of God. He said "It will cost something to walk slow in the

parade of the ages while excited men of time rush about confusing motion with progress. But it will pay in the long run and the true Christian is not much interested in anything short of that."

It was statements like that, that helped define my philosophy for Christian living. A philosophy is "a theory or attitude held by a person or organization that acts as a guiding principle for behavior."

My life's Verses Are Proverbs 3:5,6. "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

It was time to put feet to my life's verse. In part three of our adventure in Christian living we will deal with the paths we have travelled.

"Hills And Valleys"

God warned the Israelites saying, "The land, whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys" (Deuteronomy 11:11). Our adventure in Christian living certainly fits that category.

In our next article we will look at, "Our Search For A Church." We wanted to find a solid church to raise our family in.

We drove thousands of miles across this country looking for a solid church. It was an exercise in frustration and disappointment.

In "Our Adventure"...part three, we will write about those many miles of frustration and how "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28).

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."
(Proverbs 3:5,6)