

QUOTES THAT COUNT

“Most men do not reject the Bible because it contradicts itself, but because it contradicts them.”

“Most books were written for our information; the Bible was written for our transformation.”

“Sampling the Bible only occasionally will never give one a real taste for it.”



Announcements

Monthly Men's meeting—noon

Those in need of prayers...

Rick & Sheila Beauchamp—his job hunt, mother, and co-workers; her ears

Lavonne McClish—her foot; her aunt and uncle

Janice Parks—back, new job, mother, and family

Jerry Smith—grandfather

Waynette Davis, Karla Dobbs, Sharon Harp—health problems

Rick Heimberger, Dub Mowery, Darrell Conley—health problems

Records you helped make...

Bible Class	17
Sunday AM Worship	20
Sunday PM Worship	12
Wednesday PM Bible Class/Worship	10
Contribution	\$622.00
Contribution average (2009)	\$329.00



The Northpoint Lighthouse

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SCRIPTURAL “RED FLAGS” No. 5

James 1:16 contains another “red flag” warning us against deception: “Be not deceived, my beloved brethren (ASV).” This warning looks backward to what James had just written about temptation, sin, and death. However, it also anticipates the declaration of the goodness and immutability of God in the next verse. Note some observations about this warning:

1. We must not allow ourselves to be deceived into thinking that God is the source of the enticements and seductions of Satan that appeal to our fleshly desires (v. 13). God despises sin. Rather than trying to get us to sin, it is His will that all men forsake sin in repentance (2 Pet. 3:9). Just as God cannot be tempted, He does not tempt anyone to sin. One who blames God for sin in the world or for his personal sins errs grievously. The folly of the skeptics that claim they cannot believe in God because He is allegedly to blame for sin in the world is thus exposed.
2. Sin does not occur because God tempts men, but because men allow themselves to be enticed to unlawfully satisfy various fleshly desires (v. 14). When one satisfies his lusts in a way that violates God's law, he sins. Sin, if persisted in, results in death—eternal separation from God (v. 15; cf. Rom. 6:23). Men may call various sins “sicknesses,” and there may be some ways in which some of them may “overlap” and be thus identified (e.g., alcohol and other drug addictions, sexual perversions, etc.). However, since such practices violate God's law, they are no less sins just because medical science calls them “illnesses.” They will damn the soul eternally if not repented of, regardless of what medical authorities call them (1 Cor. 6:9–11; Gal. 5:19–21; et al.). God has never required of us anything that we are incapable of doing. We must not be deceived about this matter.

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Sunday
Bible Class 9:30 AM
Worship 10:30 AM
Worship 1:00 PM
Wednesday
B.C./Worship 7:00 PM

3. Rather than setting before man enticements to sin, God gives only good gifts to men (v. 17). He was this way from the beginning and He does not change. In spite of this, men frequently blame God for every sort of tragedy. It is true that He has at times used natural means to physically punish and destroy rebellious men (e.g., the Flood), but these are exceptional cases with stated purposes. The rule is that our God is a benevolent God who gives only good and perfect gifts. Our physical universe, the home, the Bible, His Son, the church, the plan of salvation, and Heaven at last for His faithful ones are examples of his beneficial generosity to mankind. Men charge God foolishly when they blame Him for evil and suffering.

“Be not deceived, my beloved brethren” about these significant Truths.

—Dub McClish
Denton, TX



“CHOOSE YOUR BATTLES”

Have you heard the above expression? It is often used to express the desire not to get involved in certain matters as they are not worth fighting about. There are times in the world when such is good advice, for one can waste much time on matters that are inconsequential. However, there are things that are important enough for citizens to fight for. It is not my point in this article to discuss political matters in general, although there are “battles” in which citizens need to engage for the benefit of the county, the state, or the local community. Also, there are political battles that, as Christians, we must get involved with as they are of a moral nature, such as the matter of abortion and homosexuality, since such matters are contrary to God’s will.

In this article I want to concentrate on matters that pertain directly to the church of our Lord and the doctrine of Christ. Sadly, some Christians spend their time getting involved in “battles” over matters of no consequence such as the color of the song books, whether to remodel or move to a new location, and a host of other matters. In matters of opinion, we need to “hold our powder” for wasting our efforts in these “battles” does not further the Lord’s cause.

However, there are preachers and elders who are advising brethren to “choose your battles” even when it comes to matters of the doctrine of Christ. Some will not “battle” for Biblical baptism, preferring to take any who would desire to “place membership” even if their baptism was such

that they considered themselves saved before baptism and the baptism was not for the remission of sins. Some will not “battle” for the Biblical doctrine regarding marriage, divorce, and remarriage thus allowing members to continue in unscriptural marriages rather than “rock the boat” and call upon those involved to repent. Some will not “battle” against change agents in the church.

Now we have those who will not “battle” in the matter of withdrawing fellowship from false teachers, but would, instead, have fellowship with them even though they themselves have earlier taught against the error that is espoused. Those who continue to fight this “battle” are being characterized as being hateful and toxic to the brotherhood. Such is the opposite of the truth. The hatred is often seen in those who would rather fellowship the false teacher (for whatever reason) towards those who would uphold the teaching of such passages as Ephesians 5:11 and 2 John 9–11.

Brethren, as Christians we are “soldiers” in the Lord’s “army” and we are called to “battle.” In writing to the Ephesian brethren, Paul exhorted them to take on the whole armor of God that they may be able to withstand the wiles of the devil (Eph. 6:10–18). Such involves wielding the sword of the Spirit, clearly indicating that we are involved in battle and not just “dressed up for a parade” Again, Jude exhorts:

Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints (Jude 3).

Yes, we must “choose our battles,” but we cannot afford to avoid the battles that will come because we are upholding the Word of God. If we avoid necessary “battles” for whatever reason, we will have to give an account of our words and actions at the judgment:

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad (2 Cor. 5:10).

At the end of life’s journey, may we be able to say, as did Paul: “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith” (2 Tim. 4:10). Then, we can look forward, as did Paul, to that “crown of righteousness” (v. 11).

—Ken Chumbley
Belvedere, SC

