



**Forest Hill  
Church of Christ**

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**Ministers:**

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Matthew Martin, Associate  
Douglas Alvarenga, Hispanic

**VISIT US SOON!**

**Sunday:**

Bible Study..... 9:30 A..M.  
Morning Worship.....10:30 A.M.  
Evening Worship..... 6:00 P.M.

**Wednesday:**

Bible Study .....7:00 P.M.

**HOME OF THE  
MEMPHIS SCHOOL  
OF PREACHING**

[www.msop.org](http://www.msop.org)

**Missions Supported:**

Far East/World Evangelism  
Gospel Broadcasting Network  
Iglesia de Cristo (Getwell)  
In Search of the Lord's Way  
Kakinada, India  
Manila, Philippines  
Murmansk, Russia  
Truth for the World  
Words of the Master

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**“DON’T SHOOT IF YOU DON’T INTEND TO KILL”**

Barry M. Grider

Last week, while attending the Gospel Broadcasting Network’s Family Forum in Chattanooga, I once again had the pleasure of hearing that great communicator, James Watkins, preach the gospel. In his sermon, brother Watkins recalled a quote he heard early in life from his father, which stated, “don’t shoot if you don’t intend to kill.” Wise words indeed. What is the analogy? Often we shoot from our lips, only intending to hurt someone a little, but instead we permanently damage a relationship. I do not know of more sobering lyrics than the following,

Angry words are lightly spoken,  
Bitterest thoughts are rashly stirred,  
Brightest links of life are broken  
By a single angry word.

It appears we are living in a time when rudeness and meanness are common characteristics in so many people. Last month Terrell Owens of the Philadelphia Eagles was suspended from his team and apparently will not be allowed to return because of continually making disparaging remarks against fellow teammate Donovan McNabb and against the entire organization. Did Owens’ talent and ability on the football field cause him to become filled with pride and arrogance? Does he not understand the principles of common courtesy and the importance of being a team player? Furthermore, did Owens not stop to think about the consequences of his words? After a pitiful apology statement, his agent tried to have him reinstated, but to no avail. As Rush Limbaugh so often says, “Words have consequences.” Owens perhaps did not intend to “shoot to kill,” but that is precisely what he did.

So often brethren behave like Owens. They shoot off at the lip, defame the character of others, and engage in hurtful and harmful gossip. Such behavior brings to recall the following truth, “And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity” (Jam. 3:6). What should be our response to those who engage in such? In the words of my friend and mentor Wendell Winkler, “do not respond to them, and stay away from them.” Remember the words of the wise man, “Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth” (Pro. 26:20). The Philadelphia Eagles will be better off without Terrell Owens. Likewise, the Lord’s church is better off without those who behave in similar fashion.

## TAMPER-PROOF

On February 8, 1986, a Peekskill, New York, woman took a Tylenol capsule she had purchased at the local supermarket. Unknown to her, the bottle had been tampered with and the contents were contaminated with a lethal dose of potassium cyanide. Instead of helping her as she expected, the medicine took her life. Johnson and Johnson, the manufacturers of Tylenol, responded by removing the product from the store shelves and re-issuing the drug in caplet form contained in tamper-resistant bottles. These actions, however, could not alleviate the pain and grief of this woman's loved ones.

Millions of people have turned to the Bible to find relief from pain of sin. Some, unfortunately, have not found the relief they sought. Instead they discover that people and denominations have tampered with the words of Scripture, changing and adding to their meaning – even making what God says is evil appear to be good. For example, many say homosexuality is not a sin, they claim it is an alternate lifestyle – The Bible says it is sin (Rom. 1:24-27). Many say abortion is not murder, but simply a choice – The Bible says otherwise (Ex. 21:22-25). What the bible calls adultery, people refer to euphemistically as “having an affair.” Fornication is passed over as “living together.” What is called drunkenness in God's Word is called the “disease of alcoholism” by a society bent on calling evil good and good evil. Obedience, on the other hand, is labeled as legalism.

Don't be fooled by this truth twisting. What God calls evil will never be made acceptable simply by using another word. Make sure that your beliefs and doctrines are based on the solid foundation of God's Word. To keep your faith “tamper-proof,” compare everything you hear with the Bible and see what God has to say (Acts 17:11). The Gospel gives spiritual life, but these additives and contradictions can be fatal. Friends, truth can't be improved with additives.

(From *The Pattern*, weekly bulletin of the North Main Church of Christ, Malvern, Arkansas)

## YOU CAN'T RUN *NOR* HIDE!

Matthew Martin

Have you ever seen a little boy playing hide and seek with his siblings? He may run to his room, pull a blanket off his bed, and pull it over his head, but accidentally leave his entire lower half uncovered. “No problem,” he thinks, “because as long as I can't see them, they can't see me.”

How many have that same attitude toward God? How many adults are trying, vainly, to play hide and seek with the One who “searches hearts, and knows thoughts” (Psa. 139:23)?

Looking around at, not just the “religious community,” but also at the Lord's church, sometimes I get the feeling people think they can hide things from God. The expression is often heard, “He can run but he cannot hide.” That is not true with God. With God, you cannot run *nor* hide. In fact, with God, you have been found before you even start to run, or try to hide.

Consider, as an example, a person who attends every worship service. He is there every time the doors are open; he sings along with the congregation; he bows his head when the prayer is led; and yet, he does not worship at all. He sure looks good, but God can see through looks. Recall the words of Jesus:

“Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.” (Mat. 6:1-2)

Jesus says there are people who will go to worship just to be seen of men. Not *necessarily* because they want praise. It could be they go to worship, so no one will get on to them for not being there. So they are there, so people will see them there. They may go through the motions, they may have everyone fooled into thinking they are worshipping, but they cannot fool God.

Like a little boy with his head covered, some may think they are hiding from God, but He can see. So don't insult His intelligence, too. The point: When you go to worship, make sure you are going to worship.

