

THE FOREST HILL NEWS



Forest Hill Church of Christ

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Anthony D. Callahan
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Barry M. Grider, Pulpit
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 Study7:00 P.M.

HOME OF THE
MEMPHIS SCHOOL
OF PREACHING

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

Volume 33

July 25, 2006

Number 29

COME AND HEAR
ABOUT

THE BIBLE AND ARCHAEOLOGY

WITH

Dr. Gary Young
Tazmania, Australia

SUNDAY, AUGUST 6

Brother Young will speak during all three services
on this Lord's day.

Brother Young will also include a presentation
concerning his ongoing work in Australia.

Please encourage friends and neighbors to be part of
this enlightening and interesting series of messages.

MISDIRECTED BENEVOLENCE

WAYNE JACKSON

Poverty in the biblical world was commonplace; it was so acute that we scarcely can appreciate it from our modern, American vantage point. While there are different economic levels among Christians, no one with whom I am acquainted in the church is “poor” in the biblical sense (cf. Mark 12:41-44). Furthermore, the Scriptures nowhere demand the Communistic concept that Christians are required to “level out” their resources so that everyone has precisely the same measure of economic prosperity.

Under the Mosaic regime, ample provision was made for the poor (Exodus 23:11; Leviticus 14:21, etc.). But being poor was not itself a reason to set aside all other considerations. For example, a murderer might not plead his innocence on the ground that he was poor (cf. Leviticus 19:15).

Tragically, today many would significantly ignore the guilt of criminals who live in slum areas. But what about those who live in disadvantaged areas who are **honest**? Clearly, one’s environment does not determine his morality.

Jesus declared that “you have the poor always with you, and whensoever ye will ye can do them good” (Mark 14:7). Note the emphasis that has been placed upon the verb “will.” This indicates that “when,” “where,” “how” and “whom” one assists as “needy” is a matter of judgment (cf. Galatians 6:10; 2 Thessalonians 3:10). In discharging one’s personal obligations, he/she makes those decisions. In congregational situations, the elders make those determinations. Sometimes our choices are wise; sometimes they may not be.

Phone calls that are directed to the church facility may ultimately come to my residence. Occasionally I am forced to make decisions regarding requests for benevolence. If it is a serious issue, I refer it to the elders. If I judge it to be trivial, I may handle it myself, and I accept that responsibility.

Recently I received a call from a gentleman asking for money. He had driven to our town from a city in the northern part of the state. He was about to head home and he needed gas money. Perhaps I was a bit curt, but I asked: “Sir, when you left home, did you not calculate that you would need money for the fuel to return?” There was a long pause. “Are you still there?” I inquired.

“Yes,” was the soft reply. “Well, didn’t you think about the return trip?” “I guess not,” he said. “I am sorry, sir, we cannot help you.”

The church of the Lord is not a re-fuelling station for travelers who seem to think Christians should finance their trips hither, thither, and yon. And yet some folks hand out cash to beggars with no sense of judgment in the process.

Theoretically, we could place a sizable container downtown in the slum district of our city. Each Monday morning we might fill it with one-dollar bills. The poor then could pass by and help themselves to what they might need. Might **some** good be done? It’s possible. But would not this be a very foolish maneuver? There is something to be said for “wisdom” along with “good intentions.”

Both individuals and congregations need to think judiciously about their benevolent plans. We need to look for **worthy** recipients, rather than simply providing gifts for any and all who pass by.

One man recently called and asked if I would take a hamburger and fries to his girlfriend at a nearby motel. Unbelievable! I was tempted [not really] to ask: “Would you like ketchup with those fries?”

This is not the type of benevolence that Christ and the early church practiced. It is more akin to ill-conceived denominational programs. We must learn to be prudent in our good works.

We must not swing to the radical position of our kinsmen in Christ who advocate the “saints only” benevolent doctrine, but we assuredly need to be wiser than we sometimes are.

“WORDS FROM THE MASTER”

Forest Hill Church of Christ
Wednesdays: 5:00-5:30 P.M.
Time Warner Cable - Channel 17

A PERFECT FIT FOR SATAN

Matthew Martin

Are you a perfect fit for Satan? Do you two just ‘click?’ Do you have more in common with the prince of darkness, than with the Prince of peace? “Who me, no!” you might say, but give it some thought before you jump to answer.

Jesus once said, to blaspheming Jews:

Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it (John 8:44).

What was Jesus actually saying. They had just said, arrogantly, that Abraham was their father, not the one to which Jesus was referring (John 8:38-39). Jesus countered their blasphemy by telling them that their father was Satan himself.

Now Jesus knew the lineage of the Jewish people. He knew Abraham was their “father” ancestrally; that was not the point. The point was they were acting more like Satan than Abraham. They had more in common with the mindset of Satan than with the mindset of “Father Abraham”

Like any good moral person would, had Jesus (or anyone) simply asked them, or any of us for that matter: “Do you have more in common with Satan or God?” the answer would have been a unanimous “God, of course!”

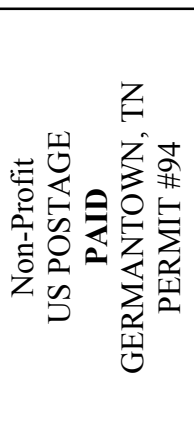
But is that really the case? Obviously we should strive to be God-like in character. It is possible, however, that some are just lying to themselves; thinking they are walking with God, but in reality are a perfect fit for Satan.

Perhaps answering a few basic questions, honestly, will help us identify whether we are, as Jesus put it, acting like children of God, or children of the devil.

AM I ALWAYS LOOKING FOR THE WRONG IN A PERSON?

“Nobody’s perfect.” “We all make mistakes.” “Accidents can happen.” We’ve heard them all so many times its beyond cliché. Since no one is immune to mistakes, we need to be considerate of others when they make one.

To be continued...



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