

WAITING TO SEE WHICH WAY THE WIND BLOWS

When dark clouds hover over us we are prone to gaze up unto them with anxiety. Or, if the wind picks up we look toward the direction from which it is blowing. It is natural for us to attempt to anticipate what the weather conditions will be within the next few hours or even the next day or so. This is why we listen to the daily weather reports over television and the radio.

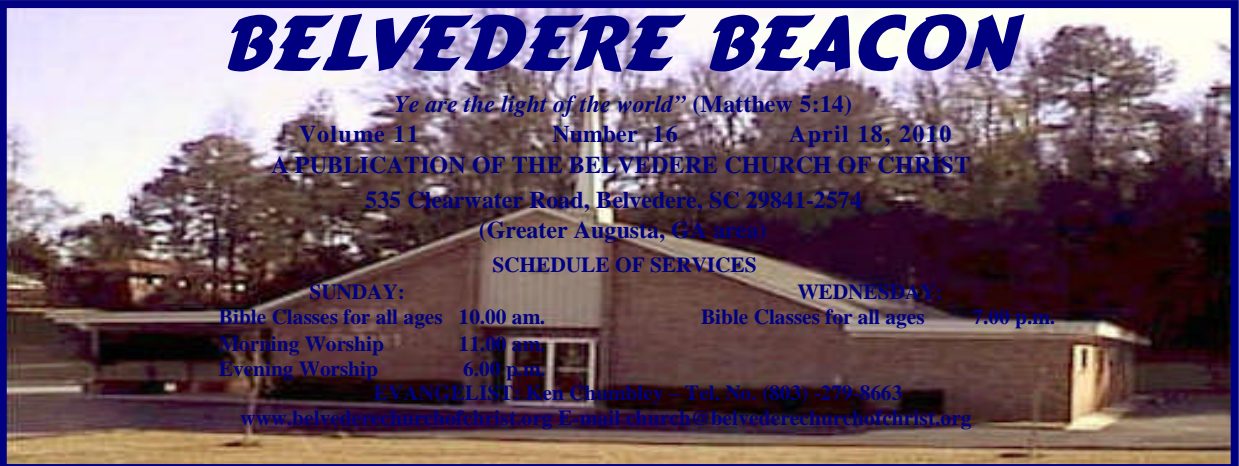
The expression: “Waiting to see which way the wind blows” is an analogy derived from weather observation. It figuratively has reference to someone delaying making a decision or taking any action on a given situation until he learns what other people are going to do. This is an indication of an individual lacking the moral courage to act on his own. The Bible reveals that a majority are frequently wrong pertaining to a given issue or situation. In fact, the Son of God warns: *“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it”* (Matt. 7:13-14).

Regardless of what others do or do not do pertaining to any situation or issue we still have our individual responsibility unto the Lord. *“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”* (II Cor. 5:10). So, have the moral fortitude to stand up for what is right. The old saying: “Everyone’s doing it!” won’t cut the mustard on the Day of Judgment.

Remember, the winds often bring stormy weather. Just so, if an individual feels compelled to let others decide for them on moral and Biblical issues then that person will easily be misled. *“So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God”* (Rom. 14:12). The Apostle Paul could well be describing many in the church today when he wrote: *“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;”* (Eph. 4:14). But the truth of the matter he was stressing how those in the church should not be carried about with every wind of doctrine. Paul was pointing out when the full revelation of God was given then it would be the standard to avoid false doctrines.

It is a pity that many brethren fail to turn to the inspired Word of God on matters of faith. Division over such issues as the false practice of the Reevaluation/Reaffirmation of elders could have been avoided.

Dub Mowery
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BELVEDERE BEACON
“Ye are the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14)
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ELEVEN INCHES EQUALS ONE FOOT

From 1987 until 1992 I was employed as a counselor for the State of Mississippi, Region Three Chemical Dependence Program. An interesting period of my life! Part of my duties was to conduct group-counseling sessions. I remember one such session very well. I was teaching/leading the group in the discussion of Step Four of the 12 Step Program, “Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.”

Some of the clients did not understand what moral meant. After giving a definition of the word moral, the group started to ask questions concerning *a principle that pertains to right and wrong*. Pursuing this line of discussion I made the point that there are fixed standards of right and wrong. A few of the men challenged me on this affirmation.

With chalk and blackboard I illustrated a 12” inch ruler. I stated, “Have we not been taught, and is it not true that one foot has twelve inches in it, according to *Tables of Weights and Measures?*” All answered, “Yes”. I continued, “What if you wanted to build a house. You selected a building contractor and a blueprint with all measurements and specifications on it. Both you and your contractor sign a contract to build per the specifications of the blueprint. You were scheduled to take a trip away from home for six months. Your contractor assured you that your house would be completed when you came home per your building contract”.

Continuing with the illustration I stated, “You come home and your house is built, however, it looks smaller than you expected. You start to measure the rooms, the outside and sure enough, it does not meet the specifications. You confront the contractor and ask him, concerning the breach of contract and blueprint.” Your contractor states, “All my life I decided that one foot has eleven inches in it, and that’s the way it will be.” “What do you do?” I asked. One of the men responded, “Well, if he thought eleven inches equals one foot, he has that right.” Oh boy, aren’t some people strange?

You know friends; there are many folks like that one man in this world. They see no standards, no principles, no right or wrong, no nothing. Now isn’t that sad and it’s more widespread than you think! Stinking thinking prevails in all walks of life, from the very powerful to the most common of people.

I will stand by fixed standards, principles that will bring about God-given peace, stability and rationality. We must all remember that God hates false standards of right and wrong. “A false balance is abomination to the Lord: but a just weight is his delight.” (Proverbs 11:1) “A just weight and balance are the Lord’s: all the weights of the bag are his work.” (Proverbs 16:11)

Wicked sinners and the unjust have always sought after disorder and calamity. *“Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil: that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!”* (Isaiah 6:20) *“If ye love me, keep my commandments.”* (John 14:15)

Donald R. Fox
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This week in the mail I received a request for funds from the Herald of Truth in Abilene, Texas. When this effort was first begun in 1952 by faithful brethren it was an excellent radio program which later produced television programs. However, many years ago the work was taken over by liberal brethren and, as such, is no longer a work that sound brethren can support. On their website, under the heading "About Us," in the section labeled "Our History" they state: "Founded in 1952, Herald of Truth has an illustrious past that began as a local radio program. When we entered the sixties, our programs could be heard on 238 radio stations and 50 television stations throughout the United States. In the seventies, our coverage grew to 468 radio stations and 152 television stations. Many of our broadcasters became household names in the Christian community. Men like Harold Hazelip, Batsell Barrett Baxter, Glenn Owen, Juan Monroy, Landon Saunders, Phillip Morrison and Randy Becton. Today, their legacy lives on as Herald of Truth has greatly expanded its global reach. Our radio and outreach programs now extend across the globe." I find it interesting to note that although they note when the work began, they make no mention of the faithful brethren that began the work including brother E.R. Harper, the original speaker, for the radio program, but emphasizes later speakers, many of whom led the work into apostasy.

Then envelope was headed with the logo "People to People, Bibles and Literature" In addition it had the sentence, "*The Bible contains the words of God.*" (using emphasis and coloring as used by them. In addition to the letter that was contained in the envelope was prepaid envelope and a form suggesting specifically a \$100.00 donation or other amount, that can be paid by credit card. Also, prominently printed on this was this statement: "**I believe the Bible contains the words of God. Here is my gift to share those words with His world.**" I will not give you an address for donations as I believe it would be sinful for faithful Christians to support that work.

I do, however, want to make comments regarding the statement that "the Bible contains the word of God." Does the Bible just contain the words of God or is it THE WORD OF GOD? If the Bible just "contains the words of God," how are we to determine what within the pages is the word of God and what is simply the words of men? Such language is commonly found amongst those who do not believe that the Bible is the inspired word of God. Is that what the Herald of Truth now wishes to proclaim to the world? If not, why do they use such terminology in their plead for donations?

Those who believe the Bible know that it is indeed **the word of God**. Paul writes: "*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*" (II Timothy 3:16-17) – all scripture – not some of it. Again, "*by inspiration of God,*" is better translated from the Greek, "God breathed," God "breathed" out his word that the inspired writers recorded. Peter wrote: "*For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*" (II Peter 1:21). Did these holy men ever speak anything that is recorded in Scripture that the Holy Spirit did **not** reveal to them? Note also Paul's words to the Corinthian brethren in I Corinthians 2. Our Lord taught his apostles: "*But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you*" (John 14:26); "*Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come*" (John 16:13). Did the Holy Spirit guide them into anything but the truth or did He, by inspiration, given them the very words of God?

Brethren, let us not be deceived, the Bible is the Word of God it does not just "contain the words of God."

Ken Chumbley

NEWS AND NOTES

Keep in your prayers the following: Pam Gossett, Lavonne McClish, Linda Chumbley, Maomi Aaron's sister, Leann Rogers, who is having health problems, and Lanny Niver together with his daughter and son, and Tim Smith.

Kathy Treadway is improving as a result of her doctor visit this week and the medication she has been given.

The next pot luck will be Sunday April 25 following the morning services. Plan to stay and eat together.

Paul Rebuked Peter

It is not uncommon in periods of digression to hear some justify their beliefs and/or actions upon the premise that some prominent brother holds to and/or endorses through fellowship a particular belief and/or practice that is wrong. This form of defense was made quite frequently on behalf of Missionary Societies and the mechanical instruments of music by their exponents. It was used by Premillennialists in the 1920s and 1930s in support of their infidelic positions. The reasoning is that if brother 'A' is prominent and well respected and endorses a view or practice 'B', then brother 'C' has authority to hold to or utilize 'B.' The problem with this argument is that the truth of anything does not inhere in the attitude of mortal beings (period). Truth is objective and is therefore originative from outside the mind of mere mortals. Truth emanates from God, who is True. This lesson is no more forcefully demonstrated than in Galatians 2:11-13, where Paul records by inspiration of God how he "withstood" even a fellow apostle, Peter, "to the face, because he was to be blamed." Peter's hypocrisy in the case was not justified, nor justifiable, on the basis—the subjective basis—that he was prominent and well respected by others. He was still in opposition to Acts 10:34-35 all the same! Paul rebuked Peter "even to the face" despite the latter's esteemed position in the eyes of many.

*Daniel Denham
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