

Pay Attention

A man was killed on the local freeway recently. Police report that he first got his car entangled in the cable barrier in the median. He managed to get out safely, but he then walked into oncoming traffic - all the while talking on his cell phone!

This article is not about how distracting and dangerous cell phones are to drivers. It is about allowing ourselves to be distracted on the journey through life. Bad things happen when we are not paying attention, among them...

Sin. *"Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour"* (1 Pet. 5:8). Satan is subtle. He tries to catch us off guard. If we are not careful, sin is the result, with all its ugly consequences. 1 Corinthians 10:12 sounds a warning to overconfident brethren who think they can toy with temptation and not be affected: *"Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall."*

Lost Opportunities. *"So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith"* (Gal. 6:10). What if we are not looking for those opportunities? What if we are focused mostly on self? We will be goats in Jesus' shepherd picture of judgment: *"Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?"* (Matt. 25:44). The goats went to eternal punishment (v. 46).

False Teaching. Paul warned the Ephesian elders, *"I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be on the alert..."* (Acts 20:29-31). Our shepherds must be watchful, yet each of us is responsible to avoid the wolves. John wrote, *"For many deceivers have gone out into the world... Watch yourselves, that you do not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward"* (2 John 7-8).

Lack of Readiness. *"Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming"* (Matt. 24:42). May God help us all not to be distracted by the scenery or "fall asleep at the wheel" in His service.

- by Frank Himmel

A Needed Warning

There is a constant need to teach our children and others His word. In doing so, we will not forget and they will know what we believe and WHY we believe it.

When I first began preaching 55 years ago there was much division among brethren over church support of human institutions and churches promoting the social gospel. Much teaching was done encouraging respect for Bible authority. Much of this teaching fell upon deaf ears and many brethren left the pattern found in God's word. As time went on there was less and less teaching among those who had stood against this departure from truth. As a result, I am convinced there are many today in what have been labeled "non-institutional" churches that have no idea why it is wrong for churches to support human institutions or even what the social gospel is.

In fact, we are hearing some say that the division over these issues was "much ado about nothing" and it should never have taken place. I agree that it should never have taken place. The false teachings and practices should never have been introduced, but once they were it was necessary for lovers of God and truth to stand and emphasize the need for adhering to that which is authorized by God. So much of the preaching that is being done today is little more than emotional "pep-talks" and could be preached in any denominational church without receiving any opposition. We must get back to preaching the need to respect the authority of God's word. "If any man speak, let him as the oracles of God" (1 Peter 4:11).

The fact that truth was taught and adhered to in the past does not remove the need for continued teaching of that truth to the present generation. A failure to do so will result in a forgetting of God and His will. Yes, the warning God gave to Israel is much needed today.

- by **James Hahn**

“In Modest Apparel”

“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety . . .” (1 Timothy 2:9). In studying this verse, and considering its truth as it applies to daily living, we encourage you to look at the meaning of these key words:

ADORN: “to put in order, arrange, make ready . . . this orderliness must not extend merely to the relationship of the various articles of wearing apparel to one another, but also to the relationship of that apparel to her Christian character and testimony. In other words, the apparel must be congruous with, fitting to, and consistent with what she is, a child of God.” (Wuest).

MODEST: “orderly, well arranged, decent” (Vine)

SHAMEFACEDNESS: “a sense of shame” (Vine) . . . “respectful timidity . . . as the feeling of an unfortunate (one) in the presence of those from whom he seeks aid, (or) of a younger toward an older . . . a blend of modesty and humility” (Wuest).

SOBRIETY: “it is that habitual inner self-government, with its constant rein on all the passions and desires, which would hinder the temptation to these from arising . . .” (Trench).

With these definitions understood, we wonder how some Christians can attempt to justify swimming suits and short shorts (and these on women or men), split skirts, low cut dresses, etc. If such are right, then they are always right, regardless if one be an elder, deacon, preacher, or the wife or child of one of these. If they are right, then they are always right, whether one is in Florida or Maine, among close friends or total strangers. Consistency demands that these conclusions follow. Are any of us willing to accept such consequences? Decisions about the clothes we wear must be made in view of judgment and eternity. Think!

- by **Greg Gwin**