

A Lesson in Life

Try this quiz:

- Name the five wealthiest people in the world.
- Name the last five Heisman trophy winners.
- Name ten people who have won the Nobel or Pulitzer prize.
- Name the last half dozen Academy Award winners for best actor and actress.
- Name the last decade's worth of World Series winners.

How did you do? The point is this: none of us remember the headliners of yesterday. These are no second-rate achievers. They are the best in their fields. But the applause dies. Awards tarnish. Achievements are forgotten. Accolades and certificates are buried with their owners.

Here's another quiz. See how you do on this one:

- List a few teachers who aided your journey through school.
- Name three friends who have helped you through a difficult time.
- Name five people who have taught you something worthwhile.
- Think of a few people who have made you feel appreciated and special.
- Think of five people you enjoy spending time with.

Easier? The lesson? The people who make a difference in your life are not the ones with the most credentials, the most money, or the most awards. They are the ones that care.

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Editor's note: Our modern media bombards us with immoral thoughts and images. Our minds are polluted with the evil things we see and hear. But the problem is not a new one. Consider these words from long ago:

Wounded at the Theatre

– by John Chrysostom (AD 349-407)

If you see a shameless woman in the theater, who treads the stage with uncovered head and bold attitudes dressed in garments adorned with gold, flaunting her soft sensuality, singing immoral songs, throwing her limbs about in the dance, and making shameless speeches . . . do you still dare to say nothing human happens to you then? Long after the theater is closed and everyone is gone away, those images still float before your soul - their words, their conduct, their glances, their walk, their positions, their excitation, their unchaste limbs - and as for you, you go home covered with a thousand wounds! But not alone - the shameless woman goes with you - although not openly and visibly but in your heart, and in your conscience, and there within you she kindles the Babylonian furnace in which the peace of your home, the purity of your heart, and the happiness of your marriage will be burnt up!

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8)

"No man ever achieved any great good to mankind who did not fight for it with courage and perseverance, and who did not, in the conflict, sacrifice either his good name or his life. John lost his head. The apostles were slaughtered. The Saviour was crucified. The ancient confessors were slain. The reformers were excommunicated. If I am not slandered and misrepresented, I shall be a most unworthy advocate of the cause which has always provoked the resentment of those who, fattened upon the ignorance and stupidity of the mass, will not try to think or learn."

- Alexander Campbell

"People seldom change towards being more conservative or more strict in adherence to the Scripture. It seems they are ten times more afraid of being narrow than they are of being unscriptural. They are more afraid of being out of step with the crowds than out of step with Christ."

- Gardner S. Hall

Why do we have the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week?

The New Testament accounts of the institution of the Lord's Supper are found in Matt. 26:26-29; Mk. 14:22-25; and Lk. 22:19-20. Paul also cites this occurrence in 1 Cor. 11:23-26. In all of these the followers of Christ are commanded to observe the Lord's Supper. Those who constitute a congregation or local church are taught to assemble together for this observance (1 Cor. 11:18,20,33). In Acts 20:7 we have the example of the church in Troas assembling together "upon the first day of the week" for the purpose of eating the Lord's Supper (called "breaking bread," just as it is in Acts 2:42). This approved example is the only New Testament clue we have as to when first century Christians observed the memorial feast of the Lord's Supper. Church histories compiled by men confirm that it was indeed the practice of Christians in the first few centuries to assemble on the first day of each week for the purpose of eating the Lord's Supper. In later years, led by those who believe that the frequency of doing so and the day of the week upon which it is done are not important, the practice of annual, quarterly, and monthly observances were begun. There is no Bible authority for such.

- by Bill Crews

"Keep Watch over the Door of My Lips"

Our words have powerful potential for good and for evil – to help or to harm. Knowing this, we need to exercise great caution concerning the things we say.

Have you ever been hurt – seriously wounded – by the words of another? Has a brother or sister spoken something that seemed to cut like a knife? And then, when you responded, they replied: "Well, that's not what I meant." Or, "you took that in a way that was not intended."

Okay, we accept that explanation if sincerely offered, but we would warn to be ever more careful with your words. Even when not intended, words carelessly chosen can do much damage. And, who knows how often we might have said things that unknowingly hurt another and they suffered silently, never mentioning how painful our words were to them. Be careful!

Know that your words can cut like a sharp sword (Psalm 57:4). Make sure that what you say will build up and not tear down (Ephesians 4:29). By taking great precautions with our words we will keep ourselves out of trouble (Proverbs 21:23).

Let us pray as the psalmist did: "Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips" (Psalm 141:3). Think!

- by Greg Gwin