

## DO YOU NEED TO BE ENCOURAGED OR WARNED?

Next Sunday morning, which kind of sermon do you need to hear: a comforting lesson that helps you deal with discouragement or one that stirs your heart and warns you to take God more seriously? Depending on your circumstances, you will probably need one more than the other, but whatever your needs are, the Scriptures have what you need.

If, despite your best efforts, you've been struggling and doubting whether you're going to make it to heaven, you need to be encouraged. You need to trust a God who is greater than your hardships, and there are texts in the Scriptures that you need to pay particular attention to. You need, for example, to hear Jesus encourage His disciples: "*In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*" (**Jn. 16:33**).

But if you've been lax and overconfident lately, your problem lies in the opposite direction. You need to be warned, and there are passages that will do just that. You need to hear, for example, the Lord warning the Laodiceans: "*I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.*" (**Rev. 3:15,16**).

Passages that give us solace and security (such as **Heb. 4:16**: "*Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need*") are not in conflict with those that stress reverence and responsibility (such as **Heb. 12:29**: "*For our God is a consuming fire*"); they just address two different needs, both of which we will have at one

time or another. The Bible is like a medicine cabinet that contains both calming and stimulating medications, which we need at a particular time depends on our particular situation.

Over time, of course, all will need a balance of both, and that is one good argument for learning all that is in the Bible. We need to be so familiar with all the book of God that in the exigencies of any moment we can turn to the passage we need to hear at that moment. And not only that, we need to be able open the Bible and read to someone else what they most need to hear at that moment.

Any time a gospel preacher steps into the pulpit, he faces a tough challenge: he must judge the needs of a group of listeners wisely and present a lesson that meets the main need of the group as a whole, without doing damage to individuals in the audience whose needs lie in the opposite direction! A group that needs to be encouraged may contain an individual who is already overconfident concerning his salvation, and a lesson that comforts the group is likely to send that overconfident individual away confirmed in his overconfidence. On the other hand, a strong lesson that warns those who think they stand to take heed lest they fall is likely to have an unwanted effect on downtrodden souls in the audience who are already doubtful of their salvation and go away thinking the task is even more impossible than they thought.

So what is the answer? It is that we all need all of God's word. And not only that, we need all of those who preach and teach God's word. Some individuals need encouraging while others need warning. Some congregations need to be comforted while others need to

be confronted. Some preachers tend to be better encouragers while others do a better job of warning. It is the net effect of all of us doing what we personally think needs to be done that—over time—will be the mix out of which God will bring forth the accomplishment of His purposes (**1 Cor. 12:14-22**). The work is much too important (and much too big for any individual) for us to waste time quibbling about whether someone else is putting the emphasis where we personally think it needs to be put.

And what is the application for me personally? It is that I probably need to hear that which I think I least need to hear! The preacher who emphasizes things that I think don't need to be emphasized is probably bringing a helpful counterbalance to my thinking. And the passages of Scripture that seem least congenial to my thinking on a given day are probably those that I most need.

Variety is more than just the spice of life; it's a requirement for spiritual survival. Do you want a deeper devotion to God? Do you want to be more devout? Then study Bible passages you think you don't need to study and listen to gospel sermons you think you don't need to listen to. Somehow, you'll be encouraged. Sooner or later, you'll be warned. And in the long run, you'll be healthier spiritually.

**Gary Henry** adapted from **Charlottesville Beacon**

*"Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."*

**Acts 20:26-27**

## BIRTHDAY

Ed Hanson, 05-26.

## ILL

**Sunday:** Millie Robertson.

**Wednesday:** Chris Edwards; Millie Robertson; Debbie Schlieff.

Cleo Stone is recovering at home. Bill Nelson, Joel's father, is having some health difficulties.

**Those battling cancer:** Ledgia Campbell, David Cole, Shauna Heck, Betty James and Cleo Stone. Please remember these in your prayers.

## HOME BOUND

Kathleen Camp is in Room 101 at the Royal Terrace Nursing Home in Olathe. Ralph Franklin is in Room D3 at the Evergreen Center. Barbara James' Aunt, Evelyn Marquardt is at Sharon Lane in Shawnee. Please remember these in your prayers and visitation.

## OUT OF TOWN

Wilba Hopkins is in Neosho, MO this weekend visiting relatives. John Dodson was in Colorado last week. Monica Nemechek was in California on business during last week.

## GRADUATIONS

Our congratulations are extended to our High School Seniors who graduated on Sunday, May 16, 2010. Jessica Carter graduated from Olathe South and Sarah Marcum graduated from Osawatomie High School.

## GOSPEL MEETING

Toney Smith will conduct a meeting at Chipman Road in Lee's Summit on June 6-9 on the theme of "*Marriage and the Home*." See the flyer for details.

## ATTENDANCE

Sunday AM, 39; Sunday PM, 28; Wednesday PM, 28.

## Those To Serve

May 23, 2010

BUILDING AND COMMUNION.....Thrasher (1)

### MORNING WORSHIP

ANNOUNCEMENTS..... Stanley Anderson  
SONG LEADER..... George Thomas  
OPENING PRAYER ..... Trent Thrasher  
PRESIDE..... John Dodson  
ASSIST..... Chris Edwards  
ASSIST..... Steven Schlieff  
CLOSING PRAYER..... Joel Nelson

### EVENING WORSHIP

OPENING PRAYER ..... Jared Nelson  
CLOSING PRAYER..... Jeff Nemechek  
LORD'S SUPPER..... John Dodson

### WEDNESDAY 26th

SONG LEADER..... Joel Nelson  
INVITATION ..... John Cody Carter

## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

### Sunday

Bible Study ..... 9:30 AM  
Morning Worship ..... 10:30 AM  
Evening Worship ..... 6:00 PM

### Wednesday

Ladies Bible Study ..... 10:00 AM  
Bible Study ..... 7:00 PM

Preacher: Ted J. Thrasher

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