

January 30, 2022

Facing Reality

by George Slover

“Then the Jews surrounded Him and said to Him, “How long do You keep us in doubt? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly.” (John 10:24)

Although the above request was most likely in jest, it is nonetheless an interesting one. How often does anyone really desire straight-talk? In our day of soft diplomacy the desire for reality is rare. Most of our speech, especially in religious circles, is couched in diplomatic terms. We call a “used car” a “pre-owned car”, and we call “sin” something besides what it is - sin!

Politicians and celebrities try their best to cover up the blemishes. They try to remove the warts, birthmarks, and wrinkles. They try to cover up the lies and false promises. Remember President Clinton’s: “It all depends upon what is is?” Vanity dies a hard death.

Perhaps that is why so many, however, are drawn to the message of the Bible. There is no other book that tells it more like it is! Jesus skipped the diplomacy for the sake of truth! He called adultery, adultery and not an affair. He called wine a mocker and homosexuality an abomination. He condemned laziness and lying. He made no excuses!

About the only time most folks want plain talk is when they go to the doctor. If it is a life threatening disease and causes much pain, they are ready for the

cure no matter what! Man’s greatest threat is sin! Jesus, the physician, will tell you what the problem is and offer a solution.

So, open your life to the scrutiny of God’s word. Acknowledge the transgression. Make the commitment to do whatever God asks to remove it from your life.

Generous Macedonians

By George Slover

“Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia: that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality.” (2 Corinthians 8:1-2)

Due to an urgent benevolent need in Jerusalem, the churches were called upon to send relief to these destitute saints. In the verses above Paul seeks to motivate love in the Corinthians by pointing to the amazing generosity of the Macedonian Christians.

Before considering the aspects of their generosity, please note at least two matters that could have hindered their benevolent spirit. A heavy affliction was imposed on the Macedonian churches, chiefly through the jealousy of the Jews, who excited the hatred of the Gentiles. In addition to this persecution,

Welcome!

When you visit our assemblies, you will be received friendly, kindly and courteously. We believe this to be the natural attitude of those who truly love God and mankind. Though you may at first be among strangers, we hope that you will come to know us well and count us as your friends.

We offer Bible studies as well as correspondence courses for those interested in learning more about what God expects of us.

Important Dates

San Marocs - gospel meeting, February 25-27 with David Watson.

If you know of upcoming events, please inform Darrell so they can be included here.

the Macedonians were poor. The Holy Spirit tells us they were in deep poverty. These two factors mark the amazing spirit of these Macedonian Christians.

Though afflicted and poor, they gave liberally. Their problem was not that they might give too little, but that they might give too much. Their affliction and poverty could not cramp their large hearts. The Macedonians were not pressed into giving by outward appeals. Their only pressure was a love from within. They gave voluntarily. They longed to help, and insisted on having a share in this good work. And by this grace, they reaped the rewards of the joy of giving.

The text also tells us these Christians had given themselves to the Lord. (Vs. 5). This relationship with God was due to his grace that was given to them. Their sins were forgiven. The wrath of God had been replaced with everlasting favor. Guilt was gone. Hope was in their hearts. These thoughts had led to their spirit of generosity.

These thoughts led to an abundance of joy that became a fountain of love for other saints. Paul called it a love that was genuine. (Vs.8) It was a God exalting love that first found joy solely in a relationship with God, and led to meeting the needs of others.

It has been said that true happiness requires love for people. Which is true to some extent. However, disciples must not seek to love in order to be happy, but seek to be happy in God in order to love. There is a difference between the two. The one who gives cheerfully is the one who is so full of joy in God that it overflows in their service to others.

Let us learn to have the spirit of the Macedonians. But it is more important for us to emulate the spirit of our Savior. "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become

rich." (2 Corinthians 8:9)

Prayer Requests

Jack Wilson has improved some but still has limited mobility.

Jerry Richardson is still undergoing cancer treatments.

Karen Hallmark has improved but is still struggling with her health and her eyes, as well as asthma.

Dinah Williams is home but still has very limited mobility.

Don Simmons is home and still struggling with his breathing, he is on oxygen at all times.

John Miller (Dyanne Turner's brother) is undergoing treatment for liver cancer.

Mark Braddock has stage 4 cancer and is not going to seek treatment. He is starting to feel poorly from it.

Debbie McMurray is undergoing chemo.

Randall Vanaman is having problems with one of his feet.

David Beckley is having health problems.

Ana Urquhart recently broke her arm.

Jim Trammel is having heart issues and is waiting for tests.

If you know of someone that needs to be on this list, please tell Darrell (email preferred) and provide updates so names stay on the list as long as needed.

"praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,"
(Ephesians 6:18 ESV)

The Oaks West church of Christ is a group of individual Christians who have been added to the Lord's body through baptism (Acts 2:38, 47; Gal 3:26, 27), and have joined themselves together (Acts 2:42ff) in an effort to do the Lord's will.

We are not a part of any larger organization - we do not follow any man-made creeds and we do not answer to anyone other than the Lord.

Our standard of faith and practice is the Word of God. We believe in the God of revelation (Eph 3:1-7; 2 Tim 3:16-17) and follow his instructions in an effort to have an ongoing relationship with him (1 John 4:7-11; 5:3).

Our times of study and worship are open to all, and our members are happy to meet with interested individuals or families for study.

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