

“WHAT MEANETH THOU O SLEEPER?”

Oh yes, there are a few schools of preaching around the nation with perhaps a combined enrollment of 450 or so. Yet these few can hardly fill the vacancies left by the deaths of preachers in this country, let alone provide a mighty missionary force to cover the globe in Jesus’ name. Every sound congregation ought to have its own preacher training program.

The major question is: How are our youth being trained to deal with these mind-boggling problems? For the most part, they are not. Few churches have a young men’s preacher training class, as was so very prevalent just after the Second World War. Too often now it is games, fun, food and frolic. There are several reasons behind this problem, not among the least being the apostasy of some colleges among us, who turn out glorified cheerleaders to baby sit the youth. Another major reason for the lethargy in soul saving is the saturation of our culture with games and sports.

Large numbers of young people along with their parents are in a virtual year-round pursuit of sports to the extreme neglect of spiritual growth and development. Concerning bodily exercise, according to Paul it “profits a little, but godliness is profitable unto all things having promise of life that now is and of that which is to come” (1 Tim. 4:8). Often worship, Bible study, gospel meetings and spiritual lectureships are neglected because of ball games.

The school year starts with football, then basketball, then baseball, then soccer, and don’t forget summer sports’

camp. Not only is active participation pushed, but a burning urgency to follow the home team - high school and college - is drilled into the minds of the young people.

If someone were to seriously put forward the notion that we ought to train our young men in such an intensive manner to be elders, evangelists, missionaries and gospel preachers, even tent-making gospel preachers (Acts 18:3), he would be scorned or thought to be some kind of a nut. Beloved, we need intensive Bible camps for young soldiers of the Cross where they learn to preach the gospel and to defend the faith. And we need parents as passionate about getting them into such programs as they are about ball games.

Another disturbing problem concerning the saturation of our youth with athletics is the deplorable fact that more and more churches are following the worldly craze for sports by spending millions (literally) on gymnasiums. How can it be that adding one more basketball arena to the tens of thousands that we have in this country will help spread the pure and unperverted gospel? Such funds need to be put into training preachers (2 Tim. 2:2).

There is no more authority to use God’s money to build a gym than there is to install a baby grand piano for use in worship. Could not The Captain of our ship say, “What meaneth thou O sleeper?” **We must love our brotherhood** (1 Peter 2:17) **and pray for it.**

BULLETIN BRIEFS

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WORLD POPULATION*

THE BIG TEN*

(*www.prb.org)

<u>Year 2007</u>	<u>Millions</u>	<u>Year 2050</u>	<u>Millions</u>
China	1,318	India	1,747
India	1,132	China	1,437
USA	302	USA	420
Indonesia	232	Indonesia	297
Brazil	189	Pakistan	295
Pakistan	169	Nigeria	282
Bangladesh	149	Brazil	260
Nigeria	144	Bangladesh	231
Russia	142	Congo	187
Japan	128	Philippines	150

“WHAT MEANETH THOU O SLEEPER?”

With the above question the captain of the ship bound for Tarshish stirred Jonah out of his indifference toward the lives of his fellow passengers (Jonah 1:6, KJV). Yet it took a life-threatening blow to him personally to remind him of his obligation to thousands in Nineveh (1:17).

What will it take to move our brotherhood to carry out the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20)? There are 6.6 billion souls with whom we share this planet and Jesus said, “no one comes to the Father except by

me” (John 14:6). Without Jesus they are lost, “having no hope and without God in the world” (Eph. 2:12).

Anti-Christ movements, like Islam and the ACLU, are doing everything they can to destroy the very thought of Jesus in the minds of the masses. The goal of the Islamists is for all to live under Shirate law. The goal of the ACLU is to kill the very thought of God in the minds of our young people. Where are the evangelists being raised up to defend the faith against such soul predators and to reach the masses? *(continued on back page)*

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THE FAITH OF CALEB—EVANGELISM

Perry Sexton

When God, through the lawgiver Moses, said to the Israelites: “go up and possess (the land)” (Deut. 1:21, 26), “Caleb...said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it” (Num. 13:30). “But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. And they brought up an evil report...” (Num. 13:31, 32).

They fell because of unbelief (Heb. 3:19)! We are cautioned: “Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God” (Heb. 3:12; 4:11). We have many such examples and warnings, yet some never seem to learn: “Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it” (Heb. 4:1).

We are also under orders from God through our lawgiver Jesus: “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15). Many in our day bring up evil reports of every sort, even saying such things as: “We are not under the Great Commission today.” How do they read Matthew 28:19, 20? “Go...Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you:....” Jesus had just commanded them to go into all the world to preach the gospel. Furthermore, in the book of Acts, we see those taught going forth with the gospel. And Paul instructed Timothy: “And the things that thou has heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (II Tim. 2:2). This is to go on until the world ends (Mt. 28:20).

**“If not us,
WHO? If
not now,
WHEN?”**

Perhaps the most common evil report among us today is that we cannot do it. WHERE IS THE FAITH??? Our God is the same God that instructed the Israelites: “Go....” We preach and teach on how the Israelites did not believe God, but many fail to see that they are not believing God in order for us to “Go...” We need to have the faith of Caleb: “Let us go up at once,” not the next generation, but we now in this generation. Every generation has that same charge.

As Caleb said then: “for we are well able.” Why? Because we are God’s people! The great God of Heaven has ordered it! Ordered it through the greatest lawgiver ever, our Lord, who will never forsake us (Mt. 28:20, cf., Deut. 31:6; Heb. 13:5). We have the greatest message ever (Rom. 1:16). The myriad of evil reports (excuses) will not stand in the day of Judgment! Yes, there are many obstacles, but “we are well able to overcome” if we have the faith of Caleb and Joshua and other faithful people of God.

It is our time now, our choice: To be like the two faithful spies or be like many who bring up an evil report against world evangelism. Make no mistake about it: We are like one or the other! Remember the words of Jesus: “He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth” (Luke 11:23). Jesus said “Go.” Are we with Him???

As an example of not going I offer this: In our Bible Correspondence Course work at Shenandoah we have trouble getting someone to study with students in other areas, which are near them. The attitude seems to be: “If it is not going to help our congregation (numbers and money) we are not going to waste the time studying with them.” This is NOT serving Christ!

Caleb’s faith did not leave him. At age eighty-five he said: “Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced; if so be the Lord will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the Lord said” (Joshua 14:12). The Lord has promised to be with us (Mt. 28:20). Do we believe Him?

Some Christians and even preachers want to retire from the Lord’s work in their later years. Compare: “Soul, thou has done much good works; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.” Enjoy your retirement (Luke 12:19). The aged Paul had a different outlook: “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:13, 14).

If and when a Christian retires from secular work, it is a great opportunity to be involved even more in the work of the Lord, not less (providing one has good health). Let us all: “Be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men” (Titus 3:8).

We know that without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11:6). We also understand that this faith comes only through hearing God’s word (Rom. 10:17), i.e., believing God! Where is our faith??? We have a great God and Savior. God has given unto us the greatest of all works and in the end the greatest of all rewards. Let us all strive to be like Caleb, Paul and other great men of faith.

We must be mission minded. Whether or not we are able to go physically, we should be supportive (financially and by words of encouragement) of those who are willing to “Go” into good works. We should be giving as God has commanded us so the church will be able to support effective evangelistic work such as: sound radio and television programs, publications and those who are doing mission work faithfully, both here and abroad.

I saw the following statement by President Ronald Reagan on a plaque on George Allen’s desk when he was governor of Virginia: “If not us, who? If not now, when?” This is most applicable to Christians and their response to the Great Commission. If we do not carry the truth to every creature who will? If we do not do it now, when will we?

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THE LETTER AND THE SPIRIT

W. E. Vine



Note: Change agents and promoters of the so-called new hermeneutics among us are fond of saying that those who insist on holding to the simplicity of the written word (I Cor. 4:6), i.e., the pattern of the gospel (2 Tim. 1:13) are binding the letter to the exclu-

“Attempts have been made to distinguish between the letter and the spirit, as if Inspiration merely attached to the spirit of the written records and passages. This is due to a mistaken idea concerning the words of the apostle Paul, when he contrasts “the newness of the Spirit” with the “oldness of the letter” (Rom. 7:6), and speaks of himself as a minister “not of the letter, but of the Spirit,” and says that “the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life” (2 Cor. 3:6).

The ‘letter’ here does not stand for the words, either apart from the literal meaning, or with any other meaning than what they were *prima facie* intended to convey; it denotes the law of Moses, the old covenant, which if not obeyed by man would kill him. It is in contrast, not with the spirit or the significance of a message, but with the Spirit

who gives life through the Gospel.

These verses then have really no bearing upon the subject now before us, viz., the question whether Inspiration attaches not only to the thought but to the words by which the thought is expressed. It is very clear that it attaches to both. Just as in the interpretation of human documents the actual letter of the document is all important in arriving at the intention designed to be conveyed by the expression used, and the meaning of the words used is the question rather than what the writer may have intended to say. Words are signs with a definite value.

Defect in the signs involves defect in the meaning conveyed. The Inspiration of Scripture is the Inspiration of its words, and the words themselves must be taken to express its real intention.”

Divine Inspiration of the Bible, W.E. Vine, Richies’ Christian book Service, Box 981, Manitoba, Canada, Reprint 1969, pp. 22-23

sion of the spirit. comments on this highly esteemed



Observe these wise subject by the Biblical scholar, W. E. Vine. (JW)