



THANKSGIVING - NOT A COMMON TRAIT!

November 2003

One of the most pathetic cases of ingratitude is seen in Jesus' healing of the ten lepers - only one of them came back to thank Him for such a tremendous blessing. He obviously was disappointed for he said, "**Where are the nine?**" It hardly seems possible that they could be so hard hearted and self-centered, but over the years, we have seen some things to rival it. I was just a youngster during the Great Depression years. I can remember the long "bread lines" and the WPA workers standing on the street corners doing very little work. During those desperate times, there was a radio personality who had a program called "Job Center of the Air." He did his best to find jobs for those in need and in fact, he did find jobs for 2,500 people in days when jobs were as "scarce as hen's teeth." He reported that out of that large number who received assistance, only ten ever took the time to thank him. Can you believe that? What base ingratitude! I also read of a man who remembered a school teacher who had been very helpful to him when he was a child. So, he sat down and wrote her a letter expressing his thankfulness to her. She was now in her eighties and living all alone. Upon receiving his letter she wrote to him: "I can't tell you how much your letter meant to me. You will be interested to know that I taught school for fifty years, and yours is the first note of appreciation that I have ever received. It came on a blue, cold morning and it filled me with cheer."

Ingratitude is indeed a base sin. God says, "**Be ye thankful!**" The Bible says that in the last days, "**...men shall be lovers of their own selves.**" Now, that has always been true, for man is basically selfish...self is the essence of sin. But it is increasing and intensifying like all other sins in these last days. Unfortunately, this sin like many others is becoming more and more evident in professing Christians. Thanksgiving Day for most professed believers in Jesus Christ is nothing more than a holiday, a time of feasting, ballgames, etc. They hardly even think about God and they certainly do not have time to go to Church. We don't expect anything of the world, but God's people ought to take this time to express their thanksgiving to God for His salvation and provision. The first Thanksgiving, held in 1621 at Plymouth, Mass. was a time of gratitude to God after a very tough voyage, a hard winter, and the death of exactly half of those who had set out. How grateful are you for God's blessing and bounty? How grateful for that "**unspeakable gift.**" Are you thankful enough to surrender your all to "**Him who loved us and gave himself for us.**"? In spite of the sad condition of our land today, how blessed of God we are! In his Thanksgiving Proclamation, in the midst of that horrible war, Abraham Lincoln said: "We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven...But we have forgotten God..." If we are true believers in Jesus Christ, our gratitude ought to be abundantly evident. "**Oh, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men.**" ~Psalm 107:8, 15, 21, 31. Those words appear four times in one Psalm. I think God expects us to be thankful! Lord, forgive us for our ingratitude.

POLICING A DRESS CODE!

The following is by Hugh Pyle in *Sword of the Lord*: Yes, a platoon of ex-NFL players prowl the sidelines before games to identify violators of the league's strict dress code. Shirt out! That'll cost you. Socks down around the ankles? Pay up! The NFL is saying, "Look sharp or else!" The rules are strict: "No do-rags, no bandanas under the helmet..." Peyton Manning was prevented from wearing high-top shoes. The fine is \$5,000 for the first offense, \$10,000 for the second. Basketball players have had to give up their skimpy shorts and have gone to baggy ones. Now the baggy look is being scrutinized. My question is: If popular and highly paid professional athletes have an enforced dress code, what's wrong with doing the same with our school children (or for church)? Christian schools are caving in on dress code, many of them looking like hoodlums, when our bunch should set the example. Often now it is the same in church on Sunday. Funerals are about the only thing left for which some people look nice. In another article Pyle referred to Paul Harvey's statement while on the Larry King show. Asked why he always dressed up in tie and coat Harvey said, businessmen know that the way we dress does matter. "When we tried casual dress, things were not the same. When we went 'casual' we lost something." Harvey also referred to the way many students dress like bums. Pyle also noted that Bay County schools in Florida announced a new school dress code and said it will be enforced. They will be "watching carefully for skimpy clothes on girls and saggy jeans on boys." "Revealing garb" will no longer be tolerated. They're going to measure short shorts and other "attention-grabbing clothes." "Dresses must cover what they're supposed to cover." Ed. Isn't it strange there are worldly who people can see what some Christians can't see - or, don't want to see!

YOUTH CORNER

A VIRTUE YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD SEEK!

There are many virtues we should have, but one is extremely important but rare. It is humility! Humility does not come naturally and young people are especially prone to a proud and boastful spirit. Most of those you meet sound and act as if they know it all. There is not much you can tell the majority of them. I read of a young man who received a medal from an organization which used very extravagant language in extolling some of his accomplishments. Jubilantly, the prize winner proudly repeated the words to his mother. Then, he asked, "Mother, how many great men are there in the world today?" His mother paused for a moment and then wisely replied: "One less than you think!" **"Everyone that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord."** ~*Proverbs 16:5*.

BEWARE OF BOOZE!

On the last day of his life Abraham Lincoln said that since slavery was abolished, his next great work would be the abolition of the liquor traffic. He was unable to see that vision though some 60 years later the Prohibition Act was passed. I have often heard it said Prohibition was a failure. It was not! It did not stop a certain amount of illegal traffic, but it certainly was a great improvement and look where we are today without it. Someone recently told me they saw (or were told of) a beer commercial on TV. It showed several well-dressed young people drinking a certain beer with the caption: "Beer Belongs!" Well, I guess I will agree with that! Yes, beer belongs - in hell! You can get just as drunk on beer as you can on whiskey - it just takes a little more. Besides, beer is very often the introduction to stronger alcoholic beverages. Young people, unless you are looking for a life of grief, avoid all manner of booze, the plague - for it is a plague!

SOME GOOD ADVICE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The Bible tells it like it is and like it should be; and you had better pay attention to it!

The conflict is not so much between the old and the new but between the false and the true.

The choices you make today will have a lot to do with where you will be tomorrow.

You should be as careful of the books you read as you are of the company you keep.

You don't have to be listed in "Who's Who" to know what's what.

Gen. Douglas MacArthur was asked: "What is the greatest quality of a leader?" He said: "Selflessness."

Two wrongs don't make a right, but they often make a fight!

ARE YOU READY?

Many think that this old world is just going along hit or miss, there is no rhyme or reason to what happens day after day on this planet. These people do not know God's Word! God made this world and everything in it and He has a plan and purpose which is being worked out. Everything is right on schedule. Jesus said that He would come again and that all men will face the judgment of God. He also said that "**no man knoweth the day nor the hour.**" I read of a man who rushed into a railroad station and said, "What time does the 8:01 train leave?" The agent said, "At 8:01." The man said, "It is 7:59 by my watch, 7:57 by the town clock and 8:04 by the station clock. Which clock am I to go by?" The agent replied, "You can go by any clock you wish, but you can't go by the 8:01 train because it already left." Friend, you may believe what you wish, but that won't change reality. I never thought I'd see the time when men believed that everyone could go by his own "clock" - his own philosophy - and somehow everybody would be right. Jesus will come right on time and if you are not ready, you will be left for judgment. The Bible says, "**It is appointed unto men once to die, and after that the judgment.**" It is your responsibility to be ready when Christ comes. Since no one knows that time except God, I want to urge you to get ready now! There is but one way - "**Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.**" He said, "**Be ye ready for in such and hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh.**"

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HAVE COURAGE!

"There are many who dare not smite with the hand, who are very busy laying on their tongue, and this not by exposing our errors, which they have a perfect right to do, but in many cases the children of God are misrepresented, slandered, abused, persecuted, ridiculed for the truth's sake...anything to drive the servants of God from their integrity and from their simple following of their Master. Do not expect men to be friends of your piety...Thou must expect sometimes to be bullied and sometimes coerced, to be sometimes flattered, and anon, threatened; thou must expect at one time to be met with the oily tongue which hath tinder (in) it, the drawn sword... Look out, and expect that men will be against you...I do not know that it is of any great service to have numbers with you. I question whether truth has not generally to be with the minority, and whether it is not quite as honorable to serve God with two or three as it would be with two or three million. Never judge according to numbers, say they are nothing but men after all...Be a friend to the truth; make your appeal to the law and to the testimony...When Latimer preached before Henry VIII, he had greatly displeased His Majesty...and was ordered to preach the following Sabbath and to make an apology. After reading his text, he began--'Hugh Latimer, dost thou know before whom thou art to speak? To the high and mighty monarch, the king's most excellent majesty, who can take away thy life if thou offendest; therefore take heed that thou speakest not a word that may displease; consider well, Hugh, dost thou not know whence thou comest; upon whose message thou art sent? Even by the great and mighty God who is all-present...' He then proceeded with the same sermon he had preached the previous Sabbath, only with much more energy. God's minister counts it foul shame to stoop to any man..." -C.H. Spurgeon, from *The Baptist Vision*