

Life In The Body

News and Notes for the :
Shelbyville
Church of Christ

January 24, 2021

The Cutting Power of the Gospel

“For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Heb. 4:12). We would be hard pressed to find a more powerful description of God's word anywhere in the Bible. Paul taught that we must take “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Eph. 6:17) into battle against Satan. The sword of the Spirit has the ability to cut the hearts of men and to defeat Satan.

The word of God has the power to cut man's heart, but how man will react to this will depend on the condition of his heart. Let us consider some examples from the book of Acts on how diverse hearts react differently to being cut by the word of God.

In Acts 2, after Peter wielded the sword of the Spirit in valiant form, the following reaction is seen, "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). Here you will notice that when the sword of the Spirit was thrust into the hearts of these honest seekers of truth, a reaction of guilt occurred. This guilt led them to ask, "What shall we do?" The plunging of the sword of the Spirit into a good and honest

heart will produce the awareness of sin and the need to be reconciled to God.

On another occasion in the book of Acts the apostles had just been released from jail for preaching the word of God, and they proceeded immediately into the temple to teach the Gospel once more. The council was very angry with Peter and the rest of the apostles and said, "We strictly charged you not to teach in this name: and behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us" (Acts 5:28). But Peter responded, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). Peter then began to thrust the sword of the Spirit into their hearts by proclaiming the Gospel. Notice, "when they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them" (Acts 5:33). This reaction to the cutting of the heart was much different than the reaction in Acts 2. These men were cut to the heart resulting in guilt; however, instead of wanting to know how to remove the guilt, they reacted like a wounded lion. It is hard to understand why some, when pierced by the sword of the Spirit, will rebel in such a manner. Most will not react as violently as those in Acts 5, but many do reject the piercing influence of the sword of the Spirit.

On still another occasion, Paul standing before Felix "reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee" (Acts 24:25). In Acts 2 they that were cut by the sword of the Spirit accepted the Gospel message. Those in Acts 5 who were cut by the sword of the Spirit attacked the Gospel messenger and rejected the message. In Acts 24 you will notice that Felix, when pierced by the sword of the Spirit, apathetically rejected the Gospel message. Many know that they are guilty of sinning against God, but they procrastinate in being reconciled to God. It is difficult to understand why some are content to just lay there and bleed to spiritual death after being pierced by the sword of the Spirit.

How do you react to the cutting power of the Gospel? There is only one reaction that leads to heaven (Acts 2:37).

— Tom Moore

“Be more concerned with your character than with your reputation. Your character is what you really are while your reputation is merely what others think you are.”

— Dale Carnegie

Destructive Little Foxes

*Catch for us the foxes, the little
foxes that ruin the vineyards.*

— Song of Songs 2:15

Foxes invade vineyards, eat the grapes, and trash the vines. The foxes must be destroyed or the foxes will destroy the vineyards.

The little foxes of greed, deceit, and envy are more deceptive than the big foxes of murder, adultery, and fraud. Jesus exposed the fangs of both in Mk. 7:21-22.

Paul pounced on the big foxes of idolatry, homosexuality, and murder; then exposed the little foxes of strife, gossip, and slander in Rom. 1:29-30.

There are lots of little foxes that ruin the vineyards: lying, dishonesty, selfishness, gossip, neglect, compromise. These little foxes will destroy you ... unless you first destroy them.

Little sins create big problems.

— Joe Barnett

Reading : Isaiah 58: 1-12 ; I Luke 18: 9-14

Birthdays : Bob Stevens January 24

NEXT WEEK : (January 31, 2020)

Song Leader : Delmar

Scripture Reader : Jonathan

Table & Announcements : TBA

Prayer List :

Stan Uphoff : Stan was admitted in Sarah Bush Hospital and treated for pneumonia. However, he has since been released into Pat's tender care. Even so, he can most certainly benefit from you prayers. He still continues to cough and is taking several medications.

Susan Bowyer : Though Susan continues to improve. She is getting around some now so our prayers are being answered.

Doris Bartanen : This week or next, Doris will be released from Shelbyville Rehabilitation & Health. Thankfully she and Ron will be together in the Mason Point assisted living facility.

Lisa Vanmeter : No update, but Gary's sister is very sick. At last report she was improving.

Those with ongoing need of prayer :

Those with age related issues :

Marge, Mary, Doris, Delores, Betty, Pete & Hazel, Fay Julius

Others with ongoing issues :

Madonna Nichols : Madonna continues to receive chemo every other week to treat her liver cancer.

Butch Reynolds : Heart condition and back issues

Jerry Rankin : Jerry has multiple serious ongoing issues.

Brenda Stevens : Ongoing painful back issues.

Debbie Adams : Lengthy recovery from severe car accident

Susan Bales : Rosanne's mother is growing progressively weaker. Even a few steps are difficult and her mind is slipping

Tim Gaddis : The son of Deloris remains in the Prairie Rose Rehabilitation Center in Pana w/o visitors

*** Each day as you pray for those on this list,
always include our congregation and her elders**

*Visitors are always welcomed.
We invite you to visit our assemblies.*

Ya'll Come !

Schedule of Services :

Sunday Morning : Bible Study 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:20 a.m.

Sunday Evening : Worship 6:00 p.m.

