



## The *Pulpit Exchange*

It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. (1 Corinthians 1:21)

So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading. (Nehemiah 8:8) Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend. (Proverbs 27:17)

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### **What Spiritual Youth Expect of the Church**

One teacher at Numidia commented that this title seemed provocative. He understood that it made him think. I am not sure what it provokes you to think as we think of this title. I would especially like to focus on the word “spiritual.” What Spiritual Youth Expect of the Church. There is a direct connection between what the Church is and what each member is, and a Biblical church is a spiritual

church. A Biblical or spiritual church can only exist when spiritual members are making their contribution.

We cannot expect to have a church that will provide what we think it should provide, if we are not doing our part in being the kind of people we should be. Therefore, the challenge of this message is twofold. Maybe, most obviously on the surface, thinking of the title we could say

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that one challenge is that the Church must be what she should be. The second one then becomes really practical and is tied in with the first one. In fact, the first one maybe is dependent to a large extent on the second one — the youth of the Church (and everyone else for that matter) must be truly spiritual. The burden of being spiritual rests on many others as well on youth.

*Three reasons why this message is not only for youth.* This

message is not only for youth because 1) parents and grandparents of youth need to think about this kind of thing, in order to better understand the needs of youth. Another reason is that 2) a lot of the challenges presented here apply equally to any age group. When we challenge youth to be spiritual, we must challenge ourselves, whatever group we happen to find ourselves in, whatever age group we are part of, to be spiritual too. Another

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reason why this is not directed only to youth is that 3) the youth of today quickly become the middle aged parents and grandparents of tomorrow. I suppose this happens more quickly than any youth can imagine.

*With such a subject why focus on youth?* It is said, 1) *“The youth of today are the Church of tomorrow.”* Another reason is that 2) *The natural vigour and idealism (youth tend to be idealistic), present a special potential for success as well as for failure.* The same things that can make youth especially vital in strengthening the Church can also be a special snare for youth in weakening the Church. The natural vigour and idealism of youth can do one or the other.

We also want to focus on youth because 3) *Youth are in an especially intense time of development. When I think of development, I am thinking of things like conviction, and the developing of conviction.* It is almost frightening to think that in the course of a typical young person’s experience, only about half a dozen years go by from the time that person accepts the Lord as his personal Saviour, until he is preparing to begin courtship. This happens fairly often — about a half a dozen years — sometimes less. It is not very

long. It is a time of broadening social relationships. Again, in a few years time, a growing child changes from a person with limited social relationships, we might say, to a much broader field of relationships, and capacities for making contributions change too.

Suddenly the young man, who was merely helping his father at home, is capable of holding a job of his own and maybe earning a wage equal to or greater than what his father earns sometimes. It seems that in a very short time, the capacities for making contributions change.

Another reason that we want to focus on youth is that 4) *Youth often find themselves on what we might call the cutting edge of either spiritual growth or spiritual decline in the church.* Therefore it is especially important that they have right attitudes toward the church, a good relationship with the church and that they are truly spiritual.

I want to mention a little on the word “expect.” I suppose this is one reason why this title makes us think a little bit. What do we mean by ‘expect?’ — What spiritual youth expect of the Church. This word does not imply that youth, or anyone else, should be part of the Church only to see what we can get out of it. We are

part of the Church because, “We expect this and if we do not get it . . . well then . . . we’ll go somewhere else.” It is not that. It does not mean that we should demand things of the church like a parent who expects his child to obey. That is a form of demand. If the child does not obey then there are consequences. It is not expecting in that way. However, it does mean that everyone should have some expectations of what the church should be, or what the church should provide. We should have some expectations. If we do not expect the church to be, or to do anything, then we do not have a very deep insight, or we are not very sincere in our relationship with the church. I suppose we could say it that way.

*Thus, the title implies also that what we expect or can expect depends to a large extent on what kind of people we are.* Therefore, what do spiritual youth expect of the church? First of all, since we are focussing on what spiritual youth are, as we think of this subject, we would like to think of only that. What are some marks of spiritual youth? Then in the second main part of the message, I would like to look more directly at what spiritual youth expect of the church.

The word ‘spiritual’ has been given an unpleasant connotation

by some people who dislike conservatism, who dislike tradition, or who do not appreciate it. We do not plan to say a lot about tradition necessarily in this message. Again, we would like to remember that we cannot be Biblical without being spiritual. Those things are so closely related that we could say it this way, we cannot be Biblical without being spiritual any more than we can be men or women without being human. They are that closely related. The two are so closely tied together that in order to be Biblical we must be spiritual. Can we not say that every true Christian is a spiritual person? Certainly, every true Christian in a spiritual person. Therefore being spiritual is not only desirable for a Christian, something that we would like to be, but rather being spiritual is essential for being a Christian. If we are not spiritual, we are not Christians. This is why it is so important to be spiritual.

*Some marks of spiritual youth.* 1 Corinthians 4:16, 17 (in particular verse 17) gives us points for this first part. Paul sent Timothy to the Corinthians to help them be followers of him. We see this in verse 16. Timothy filled the part well, undoubtedly in part because he was a spiritual young man. We think of Timothy as a

young Church leader. Someone has pointed out that he was probably about forty at this time. Some people would not call that young, some others would, but we are thinking of Timothy as an illustration of a spiritual young man. I would like to think of him that way. “Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.” Paul wrote this to the Corinthian church. Then he says, “For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.”

Paul sent Timothy (Timotheus here) to do a number of things for the church. We see in Timothy a good example of a spiritual young man. We are thinking of some marks of a spiritual youth. In the first place, I would like to draw from the phrase Paul used about Timothy, “my beloved son.” Did you ever do a Bible study of verses that talk about being children of God or sons of God? That is an inspirational study. What are children of God like? I have picked out a number of things from Scripture. Not all of these Scriptures use the phrase “children of God,” or “sons of God,” but they are clearly characteristics of children of God. As

we think of children of God, the point I would like to make is that spiritual youth behave as true children of God. I would like to think more about what children of God are like.

1) *Children of God are peacemakers.* This is from the Beatitudes — Matthew 5:9. They are led by the Spirit of God — Romans 8:14. They are delivered from the bondage of corruption — Romans 8:21. They have put on Christ — Galatians 3:26, 27. Children of God are blameless and harmless and without rebuke — Philippians 2:15. They are engaged in progressive sanctification — 1 John 3:1–3. That is not a quote from there, but that is a paraphrase of what is included in those verses. Children of God love their brethren — 1 John 3:10. Children of God are like this.

2) *Spiritual youth behave as true children of God.* What else do they do? They cultivate meaningful communication with the Lord. This is another thing that true children of God do. Therefore, on a daily basis, they talk with the Lord and expect the Lord to talk with them. Bible reading and prayer are the things in focus there. True children of God have a sincere interest in the things of the Lord.

Some of these things may

sound very simple. They are, but I think a sign of this, for one illustration, is taking notes in church. Taking notes in church can well be an indication of a sincere interest in the things of the Lord. It is interesting to note that where young people have little interest in spiritual things, hardly any of them take notes, and where they do have a good spiritual interest, quite a few of them do. I suppose it is easier for youth to take notes than it is for parents with children on their laps. Therefore, maybe we could say youth especially should take advantage of the opportunity while their laps are empty to pay close attention and learn and remember all they can. This is one illustration of having a sincere interest in the things of the Lord.

3) *True children of God also endeavour to understand and apply God's Word to daily life.* We can take a sincere interest in the things of the Lord and do things like take notes and read the Bible like we should every day, and pray every day, but it is possible to do it in an abstract way without really applying it to our life. As we do that sincerely, we do tend to apply it to our life. This is exactly what happens with true children of God. They try to apply the Word to their

daily life. Therefore, in reading, studying, and listening to messages, we as spiritual people, are continually looking for ways to improve and ways to apply truth to our daily lives.

4) *True children of God have a constant desire to please God in all things.* Therefore this desire is something that affects them not only on a year by year basis (although it does certainly affect that). It affects the big things like what kind of job to take, or person to date, where to live eventually, and things like that. It certainly does affect things like that. It might include what church or congregation we will be a part of after marriage and things like that. It includes that when we have a constant desire to please God in all things. It affects what we do on a year by year basis.

It also affects what we do on a week by week basis and a day by day basis. In fact, I would like to bring this right down to a minute by minute basis, or even second by second. Sometimes we have to make decisions on the spur of the moment. We must decide where we will look or not look. We need to decide what we will read or not read. We must decide whether we will enter a certain door or not, or in a certain store or not. We must decide what route we will take from one place

to another. We need to decide whom we will ask to go along with us to visit a certain church Sunday evening, and all kinds of decisions that we have to make on the job. Maybe on the spur of the moment, we are all of a sudden confronted with something, like someone playing the radio, or whatever it is, and we need to make decisions on a minute by minute, second by second basis sometimes. When we have a constant desire to please God in all things, it helps us to make the right decisions. It affects what we do even on a minute by minute basis.

5) *True children of God also discern properly between right and wrong.* 1 Corinthians 2:15 helps us think about discerning properly between right and wrong. Here it even uses the word ‘spiritual.’ “But he that is spiritual judgeth all things,” (we might say discerns all things) “yet he himself is judged of no man.” Why would it say that the spiritual person is not judged of any man? The best conclusion that I can come to here, is that the truly spiritual person discerns so well between right and wrong that he does not have to be judged.

People do not feel obligated to judge him because they can see that he is upright and a good per-

son. He is not up and down or wishy washy — the type that we do not know whether we can trust him or not. He is a reliable, dependable, consistent observer of truth, and so he does not need to be judged. He is not judged of any man because he judges all things of himself. He discerns properly between right and wrong, and so other people trust him. That is a general truth about people who judge right. Here it says, “he that is spiritual.” He judges like that.

6) *True children of God are also growing in the Christian graces.* The fruit of the Spirit, comes to my mind first of all perhaps. We would also include things like courtesy, gentleness and other graces that make us pleasant to be around. True children of God are growing in the Christian graces.

7) *Another mark of spiritual youth is that they are faithful in the things of the Lord.* In 1 Corinthians 4:17, Paul wrote about Timothy that he was “faithful in the Lord.” He sent Timotheus, “who is my beloved son,” and he wrote “faithful in the Lord.” When we think of the things of the Lord, we are thinking of our commitments to serve Him. This would include living up to commitments like our baptismal vows, and even the com-

mitment that a person makes when he repents to begin with before baptism. That is also a commitment to serve the Lord. Those who are faithful in the things of the Lord live up to their commitments.

The things of the Lord include what we study, what we know about the Bible, what we know about truth, and anything related to Christian experience — what we should and should not do. These are things that we learn from the Word. People who are faithful in the things of the Lord are dependable. They can be counted on to help like Timothy. Paul was able to send Timothy because he was reliable and dependable. He could count on him to help. Those who are faithful in the Lord also develop conviction of their own. We are thinking of marks of spiritual youth. They are faithful in the things of the Lord and this includes developing conviction of their own.

A good illustration of this is the young man who learns to go the speed limit. If he did not learn it when he started to drive, when his father was with him, why at least he soon learns to go the speed limit when his father is not with him. This is an illustration of developing conviction of our own. This is only one small

illustration of the type of thing we must do if we are faithful in the things of the Lord. We need to develop conviction of our own.

Those who are faithful in the things of the Lord also allow spiritual priorities to overrule other priorities. Therefore, if we are contemplating jobs, friends, places to live or go, spiritual priorities should overrule other priorities. Thus, if we would have a desire to go visit a certain place (maybe for a little sight seeing or something like that) and then we realize that there is something really not appropriate for a Christian to do there, or because of the environment it puts us in, it really is not the best place for a Christian to be (even though in many ways it might be all right to visit such a place) we will not go. Allowing spiritual priorities to overrule other priorities, in some cases, will say to them, “Let us not go there at all.” If there are some things that do not suit very well for the Christian, let us avoid the place. We might be crucifying some kind of desire to see certain things or visit certain places sometimes because of that, but this is an example of allowing spiritual priorities to overrule other priorities.

8) *Another mark of spiritual youth is that they communicate truth to others.* We see this in

verse 17, “Who shall bring you into remembrance.” Timothy was one who would help the Corinthians to remember what Paul had taught. He would communicate truth to them. While youth do not usually go out and preach, they do help to teach and communicate truth to others. Maybe we should mention first of all the need to be willing to share our testimony with others to testify of God’s work on our behalf. Of course, some have more opportunities for that than others.

Another thing that maybe affects practically all youth in a more frequent way, I think, is that they play an invaluable role in the education of their siblings. Youth play a valuable role in the education of their brothers and sisters. This does not mean that younger brothers and sisters must be destined to follow the steps of their older brothers and sisters, but it often works that way. It is not hard to see families where the first one or two chose a certain course and then many of the rest of them did the same thing.

We can see quite a few examples of the first one or two choosing the right course and many of the rest of them did the same thing. It certainly is not the only factor, and there are many exceptions to that general rule. I think

youth should be reminded that they have an invaluable role in the education or influence of their brothers and sisters.

Another thing we notice in verse 17 is that Timothy was one who would bring them “into remembrance,” (of the last part of that phrase) “of my ways which be in Christ.” He would communicate Paul’s ways in Christ. What were Paul’s ways in Christ? When we read Paul’s epistles, it becomes clear that Paul made applications to Bible principles. He apparently had a particular style, and form of administration and particular applications that he made consistently among the congregations that he served.

Quite a few times he said things, like we read here in verse 16, “Be ye followers of me.” In another place he said, “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.” (1 Corinthians 11:1) Then he refers to the things that he taught. We do not have all the details of the things that he taught, because he is not administering personally now, but when he said that Timothy would bring them, “into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ,” I think he was thinking at least partly of the specific applications and form of administration that he was teaching. Timothy knew

him well enough to be able to communicate that.

9) *Another mark of spiritual youth is that they love the Church.* As we think of this phrase, we see in Timothy that he loved the Church. If we can sing the song *For Christ and the Church* sincerely, I think it is a sign that we love the Church. One who loves the Church is loving the body of Christ — God’s administrative authority for His people on earth. People who love the Church, follow the example of faithful Church leaders. That is what Timothy did. In fact, he was communicating that to the church at Corinth.

Spiritual youth today love the Church and follow the example of faithful Church leaders. When they love the Church, they have a deep respect for those in authority. We do not mention this by any means to try to develop more respect in a personal way for any particular ministering brother. However, I think it is obvious that respect for those in authority is a part of loving the Church. Those in authority include more than Church leaders. It includes civil leaders too. All of those categories (anyone who is in authority) receive respect from a person who loves the Church.

Such people do not refer to their father as the old man. I

would hope that is not mentioned among us. It is common in some circles. Maybe it shows itself sometimes too, in referring to the minister of your congregation as brother so and so, rather than plainly whatever his name is. That custom may vary from place to place (and I am not judging customs) but I think it does show a certain respect (maybe particularly when people are older and not necessarily only ordained brethren either, but older brethren). Somehow, it seems more appropriate to refer to some of them as brother (whatever his name is) than only using his name like we would our first cousin or classmate. This would be something for us to think about in relation to showing respect. However, whether we say that or not, we need to have a deep respect for those in authority, and those who love the Church are willing to sacrifice for the cause of Christ as well.

10) *Another mark of spiritual youth is that they strive for unity in the church.* Here we are thinking of the last phrase in verse 17 which says, “As I teach every where in every church.” That was implied in the last point that they love the Church, but now especially here we have a focus on unity, “As I teach every where in every church.” Timothy was

communication to the Corinthian church, what Paul taught everywhere else. He was concerned that they would have a uniform practice everywhere. Once again, the time of youth can be a time, or can tend to be time, of experimentation. Youth, if they are not careful, get caught in trying new things, or caught in the novelty of being different, which is so common in the world today. However, those who strive for unity in the Church are not striving for individualism but rather for unity.

Therefore, what are some things they do? A) In the first place (maybe this is the most important one of all) those who strive for unity in a Biblical church, commit themselves to a life of separation from the world. I would like all the youth to think about that carefully. They commit themselves to a life of true separation from the world. This translates itself into some things as practical as being willing to appear different because we are separate from the world. It certainly involves a lot more than that. Why would we do such a thing? Why would we commit ourselves to a life of separation, as a part of unity in a Biblical church which is obviously separate from the world? Was it not because we, "Looked for a city .

. . . whose builder and maker is God?" (Hebrews 11:10)

B) Another thing that people who are striving for unity try to do is they try to avoid a generation gap. Some people in worldly sources have made fun of the generation gap already. I do not think it anything to make fun of particularly in the Church. Ideally, older ones should try to get to meet the younger ones sometimes, and the younger ones should try to get to meet the older ones after church services. It is a healthy thing and this is a part of striving for unity. We avoid a generation gap by interchange among generations.

If we are not careful, we know it is so easy for the thirteen to fifteen-year-old group to talk among themselves nearly all the time. They get together after a service and it is only they. Then we might have the sixteen and seventeen-year-olds and the eighteen and nineteen-year-olds. (They are not all divided quite that clearly). We might have the young married people and the middle aged parents. Then we have the older ones. Maybe part of this happens because we tend to sit a little bit segregated in that way too, but one way to strive for unity is to try hard to avoid a generation gap.

We should make a point of try-

ing to interchange with various ages. Young people do your part in going out of your way to meet some of the older ones. If older, to us, means thirty, forty, fifty or whatever the age is, start there and move on up. Try to meet them all sometime. This does not mean that we always have to have an equal intermingling of ages after every service, but the challenge is that we do our part to avoid a generation gap.

C) Those who strive for unity are also interested in what the church has to say on current issues. For that reason, spiritual youth in our particular church group are interested in reading the EMT each month because that represents what the church is saying on various issues. It is one place we find it. It is not the only place. Spiritual youth are interested in that. They want to know what the church is saying on current issues, as well as what the church has said on issues in the past. This does not only mean looking into old bound volumes of the EMT either. It means studying church history from further back, and seeing what the Church had to say on issues then. It helps us to apply it to the present.

D) Another thing that those who are striving for unity do is they are ready to help in church

extension. When we pass out the *Living Waters* how voluntarily do we help? Do we need to be drafted, or are we glad to help? We have cottage meetings. How willingly do we share in it? Maybe the church asks you to serve in some special church work, or even to leave home to help build church in another country. Are we willing to do that kind of thing? I believe that those who strive for unity are ready to help in church extension too.

*Four things spiritual youth expect of the church.* We have focused on what spiritual youth are. I think that is the more important of the two parts of the message. The kind of youth we have looked at, will be able to expect the following things of their church. I say that because, as we indicated earlier, the church depends to a larger extent on what its members are like. Therefore, if we want the church to provide the right kinds of things for us, then we need to be the right kind of person. This is the challenge of the first main part of this message. What then do spiritual youth expect of the church? I will use four simple words for these points, then I will expand a little bit on each one.

*Spiritual youth expect the church to protect, correct,*

*instruct, and to direct.*

1) *When spiritual youth expect the church to protect, they are expecting the church to provide a spiritual haven in a dangerous world.* This does not mean providing substitute social activities for the world's social activities. That is not a spiritual haven. A spiritual haven in a dangerous world is a place where we can receive spiritual help and be safer spiritually. A spiritual haven is not a place where we are guaranteed safe conduct to heaven. We are not thinking of the church in those terms. We cannot guarantee spiritual protection for any particular one because the degree to which he can be protected depends quite a bit on how much he is willing to receive, and what his attitudes are and so forth. A spiritual haven is also a place that makes it harder for them to fall and easier for them to grow. I would like to think of it that way. Spiritual youth expect the church to protect them in the sense that it makes it harder for them to fall and easier for them to grow.

2) *They also expect the church to give them encouragement for the right and correction for the wrong.* Some of us could use some encouragement to give encouragement a little more freely. Spiritual youth expect the church to give correction for the

wrong. Correcting is the second point that we have already touched a little bit in this one. Spiritual youth expect the church to correct them when they begin to go astray, not only when they are half way down the road to ruin and it is obvious that there is a great big spiritual problem and then finally the church says something. No, spiritual youth want the church to tap them on the shoulder when they see the first signs of going downhill. I think that can actually be part of stimulating conviction too.

Maybe all of us can remember times when someone (whether it was a leader or whoever it was) tapped us on the shoulder and said, "There is something that they noticed that they thought they ought to talk to us about a little." Then we listened. Maybe it was something we had not even thought of. That is typical of the beginnings of problems sometimes. We tend to do some things sometimes and we do not really think about it too much. Remember we are not only addressing youth. Spiritual youth and spiritual people look forward to that. They welcome that correction when problems are beginning so that they never get too serious. Correct them when they begin to go astray.

Incidentally, this was one that

was mentioned to me when I asked the question of youth, “What do you expect of the church?” One of the things mentioned was that the church decisively address sin in the church. I think maybe that was mentioned because there is frustration with how long it takes to take care of sin. Sometimes that may happen because of reasons that are not obvious on the surface, and so sometimes youth need a little patience in relation to this kind of thing too. It is a challenge for the church and for the church leaders to work decisively with sin in the church. Spiritual youth know that if sin is allowed to take root and grow, soon it will affect the whole group. It needs to be attended to decisively in order to protect the rest and in order to continue to be a spiritual church. Spiritual youth do not expect the church to wink at discipline violations. Again this can happen inadvertently or deliberately.

3) *Spiritual youth expect the church to instruct.* This includes thoroughly indoctrinating her people. Indoctrinating means teaching the beliefs, practices and the doctrines — the why and the how of what we do — and to explain Bible doctrines in a practical way. Spiritual youth expect the church to instruct in that way.

4) *Spiritual youth expect the*

*church to direct.* This includes giving proper guidance to their parents. There are a lot of things that Christian parents need to do in order to direct youth properly, and the church needs to give guidance to parents. Directing may well, and should include supervising their education. I am thinking especially of formal education and it would also continue with things like instruction classes, Bible schools, regional winter Bible school, and things like that. These are efforts of the church to educate, and the church should direct in that, to supervise the education, and also to give specific direction to issues of youth.

When the church directs as it should, spiritual youth expect the church to give specific direction to issues of youth. When I say issues of youth, I am thinking of things like choices in occupations, social life, courtship and marriage. All of those should be addressed by the church. Spiritual youth expect the church to give specific direction on those things.

They also expect the church to keep abreast of current trends. This is a part of directing right. If fathers know nothing about what kind of car is appropriate for their sons, how can they direct in that area or any other

current trend? They expect the church to provide guidance and opportunities for Christian service. Sometimes there have been youth who may have felt frustrated because maybe the church did not provide opportunities for Christian service. I do not think it is that way in our church group, most of the time, at least, if we are looking for opportunities. However, things like local literature distribution, jail work, maybe special services for the elderly or street meetings, and some of these things do not appeal to the flesh but spiritual youth expect the church to give guidance in those areas. Disaster relief work, school teaching, foreign mission work or whatever else could also be mentioned.

Spiritual youth expect the church to plan spiritually stimulating activities. What are the highlights for spiritual youth in the course of a year as we think of the church? We are thinking of what spiritual youth expect of the church. What are the highlights of what the church provides? I think in the first place we would think of all of our reg-

ular worship services. Are those not highlights in a course of a week? They certainly should be. They are for spiritual youth I believe — All of our regular services. Maybe even more outstanding would be some of our services like revival meetings, or all day meetings. These are highlights. Of course, for many young people there is Numidia Bible School. Three weeks there a year for a number of years, or more — these are highlights.

In conclusion while we have a burden that the church provide the right thing, we would like to remember that the church is largely what we make it. The challenge is that each one of us would do our part so that when Christ comes to claim His bride, He can find a truly spiritual church, and so that He can find what he expects to find when He comes to claim His bride for Himself. I am sure that each of us wants to be a part of that bride then. We want to go to be with Him. Therefore it is important for us to be spiritual now, then we can expect the right thing.

## **Understanding the Need for Fellowship Lines**

I am certainly grateful for the blessings of Christian fellowship. It is one of the things which God

has designed to help us to be faithful and to keep on serving Him in a world that is not a friend

to grace. We appreciate our brethren. We certainly appreciate the Church. It is also true that there are many warnings in Scripture regarding the danger of fellowshiping with those whose hearts are not after God and who are compromisers, and the danger of having that influence affect us. I think that is what our subject is about — understanding the need for Church fellowship lines. Involved in this is the need to maintain a place of safety in relation to our associations that will help us, by associating with the right people and avoid the snares of associating with the wrong people. The Lord Jesus is the One in whom we find the basis for our fellowship one with another.

*The problem of knowing where our fellowship lines ought to be, is certainly not a new problem.* It is a very old problem. We have many, many warnings in Scripture of the dangers of associations with those who may influence us in the wrong way. We often say that we can choose our friends or our associations, but we cannot choose whether or not to allow them to influence us. The fact is they will influence us. When we make choices of friends, we bring ourselves under their influence. This is also true of our relationships to other

church groups and other believers. We will be influenced.

The subject somewhat focuses on maybe more on other groups than even other individuals. Individuals certainly are involved in what make up other groups. One of the problems we run into is that the groups we may have the most problems with, probably have few problems with associating with anybody. Thus, sometimes there is a problem of understanding. We have had various times where, in our community, we have been invited to things, or to the preachers' prayer breakfast that we somewhat have a regular invitation to. Someone apparently tries to invite all the pastors/preachers from the area to get together for a prayer breakfast. Various times I have told those people that we simply do not do that. We draw some fellowship lines and are fairly careful as to whom we associate with. This seems a bit offensive to people like that. "Why would you be afraid of our influence? This is a good group. This is all preachers. We just want to help you be a better preacher, better minister." I do not doubt their goals but as a group, we do not do that. We draw fellowship lines. We do not freely associate. This does make some problems.

Sometimes it does make some

problems with all of us. There is a sense of comradery and friendship which we feel with many people that we work with, and that maybe are even relatives. However, we do not feel comfortable with relating to them in a church level or on a church basis. I want to refer to the example of Jehoshaphat and Ahab to give an example. Jehoshaphat did not look at Ahab as all that dangerous. He was a fellow Israelite. Yet, he was more dangerous to Jehoshaphat than the many nations around them were. He was not on guard with his fellow Israelite who was just as wicked as those nations around, as he was on guard with those nations that were around. Thus, there is a problem.

*Some Bible principles that give us warning regarding our associations.* To lay a Biblical groundwork, I desire to bring into focus that God is concerned about our associations, and it is important for us to be discerning, to evaluate the influence, and be warned. I would like to use a few different Scriptures to establish a Biblical base. In Matthew 7:15, 16 we have a warning about false prophets, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits."

Jesus continues and concludes this little section in verse 20 by saying, "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

The Bible gives a special caution regarding the dangers of associating with religious professors who would claim to be to have some things in common. This is an example of that. It is wolves in sheep's clothing. They come with the idea of "we are the same as you are. We are sheep. There is no reason we cannot have fellowship." However, Jesus is saying, "beware of those. They are false prophets, because those individuals claim to be one, but are bringing forth different fruit." In Romans 16:17, 18, we have a warning given. Again, it is regarding those who are very closely associated with the people of God. He says, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." Again, they are people that were among them who were talking very kindly and very nicely just like the wolves in sheep's clothing, but they were deceivers. Again, it is in the context of a warning

regarding religious associations.

1 John 2:19 is another similar Scripture. “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.” Here again, there is a group that he actually refers to, in verse 18, as antichrists. They were individuals who were against the truth. If we go back to the Scripture in Matthew 7, they were people who, while they were wolves and had sheep’s clothing on, they were against the best interests of the sheep. They were against the truth. These people are against the truth. It was evident by their lives and actions.

Matthew 18:15–20 would be another one that I think will not be quite as specific. Jesus speaks of a person (maybe we could also say a group) who has rejected the authority of the body of Christ and because of their own interests is a person (or people) who will not hear. Verse 17 says, “And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.” There is a fellowship line. A line needs to be drawn at some point. He is saying here that one of these

places to draw a line is when there is a rejection of the authority of the body of the group.

The other one that I want to refer to is the one which I have already mentioned and that is Jehoshaphat from the southern Kingdom of Judah when he was associating with Ahab from the other Kingdom of Israel. This was a time when Jehoshaphat was considered a godly man, and Ahab was considered to be among the vilest of Baal worshippers. Ahab was the husband of Jezebel, who we know as a notorious idol worshipper — a worshipper of Baal — and a hater of Elijah the prophet. Jehoshaphat went to visit Ahab. While he was visiting, Ahab raised a question, “Wilt thou go with me to Ramothgilead?” (2 Chronicles 18:3) It was with regard to a military campaign. This was a town of Israel which had been lost, and Jehoshaphat reluctantly agreed. We know how the account finished. It turned out that the Jehoshaphat nearly lost his life in that battle, and Ahab did. It turned out to be a disaster. Jehoshaphat did return safely home again. In the chapters following, we have an account of an intermixing between Ahab’s family and Jehoshaphat’s family that resulted in Judah having a king as bad

as Ahab.

This points us to a principle that runs throughout the Scripture, that the power of evil influence tends to overpower a good influence. This is how it tends to work. There is a principle in the natural world to that effect. The laws of thermodynamics in the natural world, is that there is a constant transfer of energy always into less stable and usable forms. There is always energy lost and the tendency toward decay and disintegration. If we leave a house unrepaired for long enough, eventually that house is a wreck. This is the tendency. If we leave a garden untended, it becomes a wreck as well, and the weeds take over. We cannot throw carrot seed out and expect that our garden will be overrun with carrots for the next couple of years. We will have to be continually pulling carrots to have other vegetables. It does not work that way. Do the same thing with thistle seed and you will have thistles. There is a law toward disintegration and decay in the natural world.

This same truth is also true in the spiritual world. There is a tendency toward that. The possibility of Ahab being influenced for good by Jehoshaphat was far less than it was that Jehoshaphat

would be influenced for bad by Ahab. It is the way that it works. This is why we are warned of associations because of the influence that they will have upon us. It always is that way. Whenever there is a loss in relation to spiritual life, it is always a harder way back. We lose some time with our children in training them for whatever reason that might happen, but it is a hard way back to bring it back to where it ought to be. This is true in the natural world as well.

Years ago when working in the operating room, we were very conscious that we had the need for keeping the operating room field sterile. It was very difficult to get it there. Everything needed to be sterilized — the drapery, gowns we wore, gloves we had on — everything was supposed to be clean and sterile. One little touch of something contaminated, whether it was a wall, or whatever it was and immediately that part of us was considered contaminated. We needed to change our clothes, our gown, or whatever it took to get rid of what was contaminated. One little touch — so easily we could become contaminated. In the training that was given for my work as a surgical technician they emphasized this over and over again, how easy it is to con-

taminate the operating field and how difficult it is to keep it clean, or to make it clean again. It was much more difficult the one direction than the other.

This was true of Old Testament Israel. Old Testament Israel had very elaborate procedures for purifying certain things, but the slightest “wrong move,” and it was completely contaminated. It was always more difficult one way. This underscores the Biblical teaching regarding the dangers of associations. It also helps us to understand why this is an important subject to look at. We are influenced by our associations. If we open ourselves to associations, if we err, or these associations are not good, by the time we are aware of that, it has an effect already on us that is very difficult to reverse. This is the point. This places the urgency in this message.

*A few examples from history of this process.* We need to understand how dangerous it is to open to associations which are not good for us because of the way they influence us after we have done that. One example is during the Reformation period. We notice the very sad capitulation of the Waldensians to the Reformation movement after centuries of suffering. When we

go back and look at Church history prior to the Reformation, we can identify with the Waldensians in a lot of ways. The Waldensians were a group that was very similar to the Anabaptists. They came out of the mid 1100’s in the middle of the middle ages. They were a group who went back to the Scripture. If we study that we will discover that they had church standards. They had certain things that they did not do. They did not go to war and they were non-resistant, in a lot of ways like the Anabaptists.

However, as they moved up to the Reformation, they were feeling the brunt of persecution. There were a number of powerful periods of persecution against them by the Roman Catholic church, and they were feeling the pressure of that. Suddenly, they became aware that there were some stirrings of new life in Switzerland. There were people challenging the authority of the Catholic church. There were people who were having Bible studies and were going back to the Scripture. They were thrilled that something was happening that maybe would broaden the fellowship for them, and maybe also would be a place for them to flee persecution. They sent some representatives to the Zwingli

reforming movement. To make a long story short, they had concerns about some of the direction that the Reformed church was taking, but they were so overjoyed to find people who were open to study the Scriptures that they modified their own Scriptural positions so that they could fit in with the reform movement. As a result they disappeared as a group from the face of history as a Bible practicing group. Where they lost it, the Anabaptists picked up the very same things.

At the point where they merged in with the reformers they were not likely even aware of the Anabaptist movement. It is a very sad story. It is one that is interesting, but it points out the danger. The Anabaptists could often have lessened persecution by broadening fellowship. They believed that common regard for the authority of the Scriptures and a common interest in obedience was a necessary basis for fellowship. In the disputes they had with their opponents, over and over again, their opponents appealed to them to show a spirit of love and open up themselves to fellowship and exchange, but they said, "There must be a right basis for it."

One reformer who was somewhat sympathetic to the

Anabaptists wrote quite a bit about them. Oekolampad accused the Anabaptists of "transgressing against Christian love by their refusal to identify themselves with the state church. . . . 'Your doctrine is in direct opposition to true love.'"<sup>1</sup> "We ought to have a working relationship here." The Anabaptists were adamant in contending that loyalty to the Word and a practical concrete obedience to it was necessary. The basis for relating to each other, was not love alone, rather a basic willingness to take the Scriptures and follow that. Wherever the Anabaptists felt affinity with some of those other groups around them, they did not last long.

This is highlighted a bit by the group we call Halbtäufer during the Anabaptist movement. They were a group of people, sometimes called the true hearted, who were very sympathetic to the Anabaptists but they were not quite ready to pay the price of identifying with them. They would go so far as to say, "Yes, we believe they are good people." They went so far as to help them by offering them help when their property was taken away. When they were hungry, they would feed them. They were some of those people that even lost their lives because they gave help to

Anabaptists when they were not supposed to. This was a real issue of contention among the Anabaptists. “Are these people truly believers or not? Should we accept them as brethren? These Halbtäufer that are sympathetic to us but still go to the state church and are not quite ready to make the step of completely identifying with the Anabaptists — are they believers? Are they Christians? Should we accept them? Should we fellowship with them?” This was an issue.

Historically the Mennonite church has been called a separatist church — a group that does not fit in with the major Protestant groups. It is often-times viewed as backward and, by some, as hopelessly traditional. However, in actuality, their non association has been part of the reason for the survival of conservative Biblical Christianity among the elements of the Mennonite church. It is because of their care in their associations. There is not a question about that. Where the associations became open the end was always near.

One more example from history is that of Mennonite mission efforts. In Mennonite mission efforts it is very evident what happens when there is open association with the other groups.

This happened in India and Africa. The Mennonite missionaries found an affinity with other Protestant groups and began attending larger missionary meetings. Eventually they became very close friends and had very close associations with those other groups with an eventual adjustment of their standards to those other groups. It is that same principle of why when you have good and bad influence, the bad tend to dilute the good, and it destroyed the work, because they were not careful in their association.

*Some current problems with drawing fellowship lines.* These are some things that make it difficult today. 1) The very loose attitude toward church and the authority of the church. This has resulted in a number of new groups arising in what we would call “low church loyalty” groups. There are many who want a form of conservatism but absolutely no more than is necessary. There have been a lot of new church groups that have begun over the last forty to fifty years. Where should the lines be drawn? There is every shade. This makes the problem more difficult among Anabaptist related groups.

2) The abundance of groups stressing a feeling oriented Christianity or emotionalism. It

is a very emotional expression, and light on the Scriptures, and its details. One individual told me that he thinks feeling is more important than truth. "Fellowship is truth. We should not quibble about what the Scripture means. We ought to be concerned about fellowship." There is much of this. I think some of the feeling orientation and emotionalism is sometimes a screen for getting one's own way. This complicates the issue.

There was a pietist evangelist who ministered among the Mennonites in Russia in the 1800's and he referred to them as a "field ready to be harvested." There was a lot of spiritual deadness among them. They were not all that way. There were needs among them. However, after some of those revivals spread through those Russian colonies in the 1800's they were as much a mission field then, as they were before, only it was a different kind of mission field.

It is a little bit like people today. They look at some of the conservative Mennonite groups as a mission field. It is pietistic emotionalism that is promoted. It is a little like it is in Bolivia among some of the Mennonite colonies there. There are some spiritual needs. There are Mennonite colonies there which

have some spiritual life with people who really want to do what is right. There are also colonies that overall are a very spiritually dead group. A number of people have been witnessing and working among them, trying to help them. Very liberal Mennonites are doing mission work among them. When they lure them away from the colony, to their other unscriptural church life, all they have done is create a different kind of mission field. They have not helped them at all. There are a lot of groups around us in that category, who equate emotionalism as spirituality rather than equate Biblicism as spirituality. We cannot be more spiritual than we are Scriptural. There is an appeal with that kind of thing.

3) Groups who claim to want the same thing and yet by all appearances are headed in a different direction are more difficult maybe than the ones I already referred to. This becomes more difficult yet. Where do we draw the lines with the groups that say, "We want the exact same thing you do?" Their teaching might almost be exactly the same, but somehow there is a different course that is being taken in a practical outworking.

*Guidelines for drawing fellowship lines.* There is a real need for guidelines. Our subject is

understanding this. I would like to, in light of some of the things I have shared, give a few directives for helping us to understand. I would say this at the beginning — I find a real safety and blessing in the fact that we do not need to make some of these decisions by ourselves. As we identify with a Scriptural church group, there ought to be a group consensus about drawing some fellowship lines. I think there is among us. I appreciate and depend on that, and I think we all should.

We should avoid feeling like we need to categorize or label every group. That is we do not need to say, “This group is unscriptural, therefore we cannot fellowship with them.” Thus, we have to label them as unscriptural before we say no. We want to be careful about that. There are a lot of groups around us which may be moving in the right direction even though we would not necessarily feel comfortable opening up fellowship with that group. This does not mean that we are saying that they will not find their way. We need to keep on doing what needs to be done and keep on having church. We need to use caution and reserve in making judgments. If we err, it is probably safer to err on the side of caution than it is to err on the side of a lack of caution. We

should avoid the tendency to feel we must pass judgment on a group to justify the reserve that we feel toward that group. We may feel a reserve. A certain reserve is Scriptural and we ought to have some reserves without needing to feel we have to put them in a box or categorize everything.

*Fellowship must be based on similar concerns and goals.* There are a few things we look at in relation to making evaluations. How seriously are trends taken? How seriously does a group look at various trends? What is the prevailing attitude toward authority? Why does a group exist? Is there a trend toward independence and disregard toward Biblical traditions? Or, is there a movement toward that? These are questions that we look at in relation to where we draw fellowship lines. Is a group centred around a person? It is important that we keep a Scriptural (what I would call) Anabaptist, obedience centred faith, as a basis for fellowship with any group, not the “Lord, Lord” and not doing the things that He says kind. However, we should look at this, and along with that, exercise caution, and if we err, err on the side of caution.

We need to help each other find a way, and we ought to

respect the position of others. In relation to groups, or individuals who have gone out from us, there is a sense in which they have already made some decisions regarding fellowship. There are a lot of categories of this and we wish everyone around us well in finding their way with the Lord. However, this does not mean that we simply open fellowship and decide that everything is fine. One individual told me some time ago something that will maybe illustrate this. It was what we would call, I suppose, a modified conservative group. He was chiding me a bit for the fact that we are a little tight in opening up our fellowship lines. He said, "We are struggling as a group." (He was referring to his group) "We need help. We need the influence of your young people with our young people." Then I said, "That may be true. Do you think our young people are strong enough to be able to help influence your young people in the right direction especially when you cannot do it, and yet not have them lose the way? I would like you to reverse that and put yourself in our position. Do you think it could happen in the right way?"

Then I raised this question, "What about," (And I called attention to another group that

would have been a number of steps down the road). I said, "Do you associate with that group so that your young people can help them?" He said, "No, that would not work. It would be lost. I see your point and I respect your position, but I wish it could be that way." I replied, "There is one thing for sure, and that is that we will not be able to do for you what you are unable to make happen among yourselves."

We must keep that in mind. We can so easily feel "maybe we can help everybody." However, we cannot really help everybody. We want to help all we can, but we want to be careful that in the process we do not lose more than we gain. One person, years ago, referred to an individual whose entire family went into the world. He lamented in his later years, "All my efforts to help other people, but I failed to help the group that the Lord holds me the most accountable for than anyone else." This is something to think about.

We must be willing to bear the stigma and rejection that caution in this area do bring to us. This actually can be a safety to us. I mentioned the invitations to the prayer breakfast. The stigma that the caution brings, and the little bit of disgust, that I felt for example, by the person that has invited

me different times to that. This is a safety that is good for us. We must be ready and willing to bear some of that, because that can be a safety to us.

The other side is that is we need to see that we do need others, as individuals, and groups to help us. This is also important. As a group we have been greatly helped by other groups, and we have grown in some areas as a result of a challenge by others. Our survival is related to helping others to survive as well. We want to do that. Our survival is also related to being open to influence from others to help us to survive. We should understand that. We should be concerned that we are worthy of the recognition of others who are determined to stand for the faith. We should be worthy of that. We should be the kind of people who are cautious enough in our associations that we do not influence the very ones in the wrong direction that we want to help in the right direction, and that we are not influenced in the wrong direction by those we are trying to help. There is a real need to understand this.

*Conclusion.* The Biblical basis and the historical examples are very clear, but the challenge of applying it in our own situation can be difficult. This is what

we are looking at. This challenge needs to be faced, and taken, as a larger group, as congregations, and as a larger body. There are some situations we face as congregations in relation to local situations, but there are many things we face as a group. We need to find our way together.

Some time ago, someone (we could say) was scolding one of our brethren for their stiffness, and for our caution in relation to maintaining some fellowship lines. This other person was a very loose person who did not have many lines. He was a part of one of these, I would say, pietistic, emotional emphasis groups. This brother replied, "As we look at the broader pattern of history, the conservative Mennonite groups that have survived, have survived because they have drawn some lines. This affects people like your group. If we throw that away, we will put ourselves on a course like your group is." He then called attention to the young people of their group and to a number of things. He continued, "In thirty or forty years do you expect that there will be a semblance of the faith left in the generations which are following you, that you are holding to today in light of what is happening?" The man's conclusion was, "Probably

not.” The brother continued, “You are scolding us, scolding me, for holding to some things that have proven to be a help in maintaining a faith and practice over a period of years. You want me to give that up for what you have, when what you have has proved the exact opposite.”

Again this comes right down to where we are. Let us be willing to bear the stigma of drawing some fellowship lines. This does not mean that we are deciding that everybody else is wrong. We are not deciding that. No, however we know that we are responsible for a certain amount of the influence which we place ourselves under. We do need to draw some lines or else we will lose our way. May God help us, and give us wisdom as a people, as a group, to find our way, and may we satisfied as a people to find our way together.

Whenever we do things as a group, there will be those among us who draw it at a different place. Maybe I should say that I do not think that anyone would probably be exactly the same on that. Our safety is in finding our way is together, in a careful way. If we err, I would urge us to err on the side of caution rather than

the opposite. There are some situations where people say, “You think you are too good to associate with us.” Then there are sometimes when really it is exactly the opposite. We are really not strong enough. This is what Jehoshaphat did not understand. He thought he had himself and Judah so firmly established in serving the Lord that this did not present a danger. However, it undermined the entire kingdom, because the influences which Jehoshaphat brought in, laid the ground work for the disintegration of the southern kingdom as well, later on. May God help us to maintain the faith in an environment that is against the faith, and to maintain fellowship lines that will help protect that faith even though there is a stigma that needs to be born to do that.

Note: a condensed version of this appeared in *The Eastern Mennonite Testimony*, Vol XVIII, March 1986. *Strengthening the Conservative Position: Relating to Various Movements and Groups*

<sup>1</sup> John Horsch  
“Mennonites in Europe”  
(Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press; 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Edition 1950.) P. 353

## From the Previous Issue:

### The Christian and Halloween

From a message by Wilmer Martin

Sunday, September 21, 2003

Culbertson Mennonite Church

### Scripture References

<b>2 Chronicles</b>		<b>1 Corinthians</b>		<b>Philippians</b>	
18:3	214	2:15	203	2:15	201
		4:16, 17	200		
		4:17	203		
<b>Matthew</b>		11:1	205	<b>Hebrews</b>	
5:9	201			11:10	207
7:15, 16	213				
18:15–20	214	<b>Galatians</b>		<b>1 John</b>	
		3:26, 27	201	2:19	214
<b>Romans</b>				3:1–3	201
8:14	201			3:10	201
8:21	201				
16:17, 18	213				

### Book Reprint (Continued)

## One Hundred Lessons In Bible Study

### LESSON 13.

#### Moses.

- I. Sketch of his life.
  1. Birth. — Exodus 2:1, 2.
  2. Adopted by Pharaoh's daughter. — Exodus 2:3–10.
  3. Education. — Acts 7:22.
  4. Flight to Midian. — Exodus 2:11–15.
  5. Marries Zipporah, Jethro's daughter. — Exodus 2:21.
  6. Called to deliver his people.
    - a. The burning bush. — Exodus 3:2–10.
    - b. Moses excuses himself. — Exodus 3:11, 13; 4:1, 10.

NOTE. — There are several things which might account for Moses' hesitating policy. (1) His former failure was not yet forgotten. (2) He had not yet learned to appreciate fully the value of God's help and guidance in great undertakings. (3) His meekness would naturally make

him shrink from notoriety. God accepted none of his excuses. When God calls, no excuses are lawful. It is God's work to call; it is our work to obey.

c. Aaron chosen as Moses' spokesman. — Exodus 4:14-16.

NOTE. — Modesty is an excellent trait of character; but is it not possible to be so extremely modest as to become stubborn?

7. Intercedes for his people. — Exodus 5-12.

8. Leads Israel out of Egypt. — Exodus 14.

9. Mediator between God and Israel during the wilderness wanderings. — Exodus 15:25, 26; 16:4-6; 17:4-6; 19; 20:20-22; 32:11-14, 31, 32; 34:9; Numbers 11:10-26; 12:13; 13:1-3; 14:11-25; 16:20-26; 20:6-10, 21:7-9; 26:1-3; 31:1-3.

10. Meets the Lord on Mt. Sinai. — Exodus 19:3; 24:18; 34:2.

11. The law-giver. — Exodus 19:25; 20-23; 34:10; 35:1; Leviticus 1; Numbers 5; 6; 15; 27-30, 36; Deuteronomy 12-26.

12. Forbidden to enter Canaan. — Numbers 20:12; 27:12-14.

13. Joshua appointed his successor. 27:1-23.

14. Farewell address. — Deuteronomy 27-31.

15. Death. — Deuteronomy 34:5.

II. Appears in the Transfiguration. — Matthew 17:3; Mark 9:4; Luke 9:30.

III. Further Observations.

1. His meekness. — Numbers 12:3.

2. His faithfulness. — Numbers 12:7; Hebrews 3:2; 11:24-28.

3. A prophet 18:15-18; 34:10.

4. A Type of Christ. — Deuteronomy 18:15-18; Acts 3:22; 7:37.

IV. Thoughts on his life.

1. Moses sacrificed a brilliant earthly career for the cause of his people. The Lord rewarded him by giving him a name more glorious than any earthly kingdom can bestow. Sacrifices for God are the best investments that can be made.

2. Moses was a profound scholar, a great military leader, a matchless lawgiver, and a prophet unequalled in Israel. These accomplishments failed to purchase his way to Canaan. What light does this

throw on the question of justification by works?

3. Who am I . . . that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" (Exodus 3:11) asks Moses. Before the work had proceeded far, Moses had learned to know that it was not he that did it, but God working through him as an instrument.

4. When Moses came from the presence of the Lord, the glory of the Lord shone from his face with such brightness that his fellow churchmembers asked him to put a veil over his face. Worldly-minded church members today have no use for Christians who are really sincere, devoted, pious, consecrated, conscientious. Their clamour is, "Don't be so cranky. Put a veil over you that your light will not shine so brightly."

1. Name the most admirable traits of Moses' character.
2. Tell what you know about his family.
3. Who were his parents? Of what tribe was he?
4. Give his age at the time of the following events: (1) finding by Pharaoh's daughter, (2) flight to Midian, (3) the call to deliver his people, (4) death.
5. What is known about the death and burial of Moses?

## **LESSON 14.**

### **Joshua.**

- I. Sketch of his life.
  1. The son of Nun. — Numbers 14:6, 30, 38; 1 Chronicles 7:27.
  2. Victory over the Amalekites. — Exodus 17:8–14.
  3. Accompanies Moses into the Mount. — Exodus 24:13, 32:17; 33:11
  4. Represents Ephraim in spying out the land of Canaan. — Numbers 13:8; 14:6–9.
  5. Appointed Moses' successor. — Numbers 27:15–23; Joshua 1:1–9.
  6. Leads his people into Canaan. — Joshua 3; 4.
  7. Conquers Canaan. — Joshua 6–12.
  8. The allotment of lands. — Joshua 13–21.
  9. Allows the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh to return to their possessions. — Joshua 22:1–9.
  10. His speeches.

- a. Upon assuming leadership. — Joshua 1:10–18.
  - b. Exhortation to Israel. — Joshua 23.
  - c. Address at Shechem. — Joshua 24:1–24.
11. Public acts of worship.
- a. Erects memorial pillars. — Joshua 4:1–9.
  - b. Re-enacts circumcision. — Joshua 5:2-9.
  - c. Keeps the Passover. — Joshua 5:10, 11.
  - d. Renews the covenant. — Joshua 24:25, 26.
  - e. Death. — Joshua 24:29, 30.

## II. Strong features about his career.

- 1. His oratory. — Joshua 23; 24.
- 2. His exemplary life. — Numbers 32:12; Joshua 14:8, 9.
- 3. His decision of character. — Joshua. 24:15.
- 4. His boldness. —Numbers 14:9.
- 5. His personal magnetism. — Joshua 1:16–18; 24:16, 21, 25).
- 6. His justice. — Joshua 13–21).
- 7. His fidelity to God. — Numbers 14:9; Joshua 4:1–9; 5:1–11; 24:15, 25, 26.

## III. Thoughts on his life.

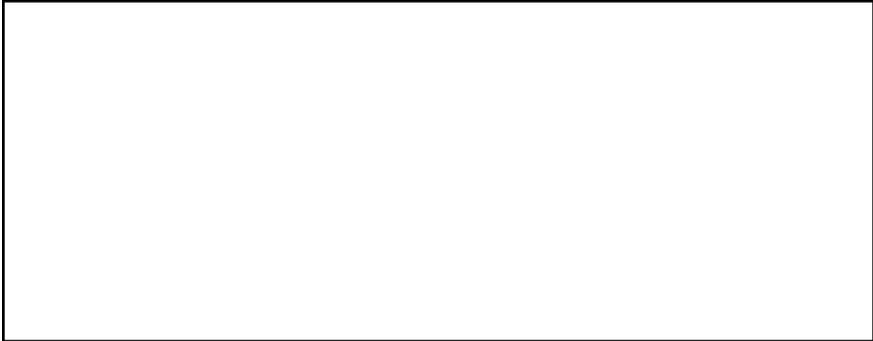
1. Joshua stood by the Lord, and the Lord stood by Joshua. The result was a happy end for Joshua, and prosperity for God’s people.

2. The only time when Joshua’s forces were defeated was when there was an Achan in the camp. One enemy in the camp is a greater obstacle to success than a dozen enemies outside the camp.

3. “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” This should be made the battle-cry of every Christian.

4. Joshua possessed the characteristics of all successful leaders: courage, zeal, devotion.

- 1. By what names is Joshua known in Scripture?
- 2. How did Joshua compare with Moses as a military leader?
- 3. Give the age of Joshua, (1) at the time of the exodus from Egypt, (2) at the time of the entrance into the promised land, (3) at his death.
- 4. Who composed Joshua’s “house”?
- 5. What was Achan’s Sin?



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Comprehensive list of omissions comparing the King James Version based on the Received Text to the Modern translations based upon the Westcott & Hort texts and modern doctrinal variations. # OL001