ON THE HOME FRONT

Gary Colley

Many will not know what their lives have meant to the world until eternity begins! But we do know that we are to keep the commands of God so that He will give the increase (Jn. 14:15). Inspired Paul wrote of his work of preaching: “I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase (emp. mine GC). So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase” (I Cor. 3:6-7). We are hereby assured that by teaching and living in harmony with the Word of God we can make the world a better place! (Lk. 8:11; Matt. 28:18-20; I Tim. 2:2; I Tim. 4:16).

C. R. Brewer wrote in part under the title “Who Sowed The Seed.”

Who sowed Good Seed? Perhaps not now,
But in eternity we’ll know,
The Master then will tell us how
Some gentle soul, devoid of fame,
Proclaimed a truth in His Great Name,
Showed someone else the way to go:
And then another, seeing the light,
Turned from the way of doubt and wrong,
And followed the pathway of the right
And thus the good work moved along.
But only in Heaven will it be known
By who the original seed was sown.
Confusion will always be in the minds of those who refuse to “know the truth” by which we can be free (Jn. 8:31-32). Some today are singing the premillennial song “Jesus Is Coming Soon,” advancing the thought that the “signs are right” for Christ’s second coming. We do know that the first coming of the Lord was to “seek and save the lost” in the church He purchased (Acts 20:28); He will now accept into His kingdom those who accept his conditions (Lk. 19:10; Mk. 16:15-16; Acts 2:47; Col. 1:13). But we also know that THERE ARE NO SIGNS ABOUT THE SECOND COMING. We do know that the second coming will be to bring judgement! (Jn. 3:16-17; Acts 17:30-31; Matt. 25).

Be Aware and Beware
Speculators and prognosticators such as Billy Graham and Hal Lindsey, cultists like “Heaven’s Gate members” and “Branch Davidians,” have all spent much time working on the superstitions and ignorance of folks to gain their following. They talk about the rapture, the Battle of Armageddon, and the 1,000 year reign of Christ! All of these points are foreign to Bible teaching, but these have made millions from the unsuspecting! Their predictions are based on what they call “unfulfilled prophecies,” and their misconceptions of Matthew 24 and Revelation 20, none of which foretell of “Jesus’ return to the earth” (I Thess. 4:13-18) or the setting up a literal throne in the city of Jerusalem, for a literal 1000 years. Neither does any man know when Jesus’ second coming will be, or that “it is imminent” since the Bible says neither the angels, or the Son of God knows (Matt. 24:36). There were signs of the coming destruction on Jerusalem AD 70),” but ABSOLUTELY NONE will be given for the second coming of Christ (II Pet. 3:10).

Christ Will Return
It is a Bible fact that Christ will return to receive His own to Himself (Jn. 14:1-6). At that time all the dead will be raised (Jn. 5:28-29); All will be judged (Matt. 25:31-45); This world shall all be burned up (II Pet. 3:10); The saved will go with the Lord to Heaven, and the lost to everlasting torment (Matt. 25:46 ). All must prepare now (Tit. 25:11-12).
What Do You Worship?

How would you feel if someone asked you this question? Would you feel insulted, put-upon, or just down right offended by the very query? Well, what may appear to be a discourteous, offensive, “how dare you” kind of question may in actuality be a question that determines your eternal destiny. Now do I have your attention?

Many have heard of the Ten Commandments (even though they may have difficulty listing them in the correct order) but many may not have given serious attention to the first in the list provided in Exodus 20:3: “You shall have no other gods before me” (NASB, emp. added). In verses 4-6, Moses, through inspiration of the Holy Spirit, provides the framework, boundaries, and expectations associated with the aforementioned command of Jehovah God:

You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments (emp. added).

While God was explicit in His directive and expectations, man still chose to disobey. Aaron, Moses’s brother, who certainly knew better than to succumb to idolatry, did just that when he led God’s people to build a golden calf in Exodus 32:1-4. He even had the audacity to exclaim in 32:4b, “This is your god, 0 Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt.” It is hard to fathom that Aaron would put himself in such grave jeopardy with God—but he did. While we could spend time talking about his transgression and several others in the Holy Scriptures, perhaps we would be better served examining our own lives and who we worship.

When we lived in Nashville, Tennessee, I had the distinct pleasure of attending a college football game at Neyland Stadium. It was an experience I will never forget! The pageantry, the tail-gates, the costumes, the shrines, the nags, you just had to see it to believe it! And all of this occurred before we even got inside the stadium!

And then sitting amongst 100,000 screaming, rabid, out-of-control fans ... priceless. When I later attempted to put that weekend in perspective, my brain nearly exploded when I thought about the money that was spent on travel, lodging, food, parking, tickets, souvenirs, and other incidentals . . . and that was just one Friday/Saturday experience! College football has been described as a “religion” in many circles and from what I witnessed in Knoxville, I am inclined to believe that statement. So let’s get real:

- Some bow to the shrine of their children ... nothing is too expensive or out of bounds for them! As a matter of fact, some are committed to make sure their children get everything they didn’t have growing up ... and an idol is created.
- Some bow to the shrine of education ... The more letters behind one’s name—the more prestige/respect they seek ... And an idol is created.
- Some bow to the shrine of their careers ... The days, hours, years don’t matter because the end-goal is to “Be on top!” If family, friends, or relationships are lost along the way ... so be it ... career is all that matters ... and an idol is created.
- Some bow to the shrine of reputation ... after all, you are nothing without a rep! And every effort is made to show people that we are important—so much so that “I don’t mind, and you don’t matter” ... and an idol is created.
- Some bow to the shrine of entertainment/activity ... It is important for me to “be there” and to be a part of the scene! Put it on my credit card ... I must be part of “the life” ... and an idol is created.

The issue is not what we worship but who we worship. Jesus’s perspective in Matthew 6:24 still rings true: “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.” We either serve Jesus or ourselves (wealth is a metonymy for self). We would do well to heed the counsel of our Lord and Savior. Jesus is Lord of all that I am, have, and hope to be. I pray that is your position as well!

--Billy R. Davis, Ph.D. USAF Ret.
THINK Magazine
April 2018