

CHRISTIAN WORKER

“We are workers together with Him...” (2 Corinthians 6:1)

VOLUME 110, NUMBER 11

In My Priorities

John Haffner

As modern society seems to be constantly pulling us in different directions, the task of sorting out our priorities is essential. What is important? What is urgent? What should be given the most attention? Examining the life of Jesus, we find a man whose priorities were unwavering and were always aligned with God’s will. As members of His church, we have been called to match our priorities to Christ’s, and must ensure that our lives reflect the mission, values, and character of the Lord.

First, it is obvious that Jesus prioritized the proclamation of the truth. From the time He began His earthly ministry, Jesus made it abundantly clear His purpose was to preach. Moving with His followers from place to place, the Lord Jesus was committed to heralding out the message (Mark 1:38). This commitment to truth was evident from His teachings, His parables, and His confrontations with the religious leaders of His day. Often sacrificing comfort, rest, and safety, Christ chose instead to bear witness to the truth (Mark 3:20-21; John 10:27-31; 18:37). Even after He ascended from the earth, He continued this work through His apostles, the men whom He had specially chosen and equipped to continue the task of proclaiming the truth (Mark 3:14; John 14:26; 16:13). If we are to match the priorities of Jesus, then we must be faithful to speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15). Especially when it is challenging or unpopular, we must hold up the message of truth to facilitate the process of making disciples (Matt. 28:18-20; 2 Tim. 2:2). We should instruct the people in our communities, workplaces, and homes, and we ought to be eager to support those who do the same.

Second, we know Jesus prioritized the Father’s will. Throughout His life on earth, Jesus continually emphasized the importance of submitting to the will of His Father. Whether as a boy of twelve, or a man in his thirties,

Jesus consistently made His life about the Father’s work (Luke 2:49; John 4:34). Even amid intense suffering, His resolve was unwavering. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed, “Not as I will, but as You will” (Matt. 26:39). This complete submission to the Father was not easy—He knew it would lead to His betrayal and ultimately His death on the cross. Yet, He humbled Himself and was obedient, without hesitation (Phil. 2:8; Heb. 5:8-9). Too often, we are more concerned with our own desires and ambitions than submitting to God’s purposes for our lives. Jesus modeled for

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“Let the beauty of Jesus be seen...”

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FROM THE EDITOR:

THE BEAUTY OF JESUS

Cody Westbrook

“Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me!” A familiar refrain from the hymn written by Albert Orsborn. In what way can Jesus be described as “beautiful?” Interestingly, Scripture discusses the topic from two different points of view. On the one hand there are passages like Isaiah 4:2 which describe His beauty—“In that day the Branch of the Lord shall be beautiful and glorious.” On the other hand, Isaiah 53:2 states, “He has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him.” There is no contradiction to be found in these passages. Rather, there is a sense in which Jesus’ beauty can, and cannot be seen.

The beauty of Jesus is not seen physically. His appearance was no different than the average Jewish man. He was not tall and handsome, like Saul (1 Sam. 9:2-3). He was not born into a royal family and He was not wealthy. Jesus did not represent the things that were important to men. He had no interest in the social prestige of the day (Luke 14:7-14; 15:1-2). He valued characteristics like meekness (Matt. 5:5) and humility (Luke 18:9-14) which were despised in the eyes of men. He had no interest in being served or pampered (Mark 10:45). Even His death was unattractive to the eyes of the first century world (1 Cor. 1:18, 23).

His beauty is seen in His actions and the roles He fulfills. He is the Lamb of God who became the sacrificial servant (Phil. 2:5-11) and gave Himself for the sins of humanity (Isa. 53:5). He is our “merciful and faithful High Priest” (Heb. 2:17) who appears in the presence of God for us (Heb. 9:24) and serves as our mediator (1 Tim. 2:5) and advocate (1 John 2:1-2). He is the “Good Shepherd” (John 10:11) who leads and provides for His sheep. He is also our King (Rev. 19:16), ruling with grace and mercy and, too, our Judge (John 5:22) Who executes judgment in righteousness and justice.

The beauty of Jesus is seen in His character. Jesus described Himself as “gentle and lowly in heart” (Matt. 11:29). His is perfect in holiness (1 John 3:3). He is compassionate (Matt. 9:36) and faithful (Rev. 19:11). In Him we find perfect expressions of faithfulness

(1 Tim. 1:16), grace (2 Cor. 8:9), love (1 John 3:16), humility (Phil. 2:6-7), and mercy (Matt. 20:30-34). Jesus always did that which was pleasing to the Father (John 8:29). He was God in the flesh (John 1:14) and “in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. 2:9). Thus, whatever quality of goodness, righteousness, and holiness; whatever quality of the Light; whatever quality of God there may be, is seen perfectly in Him.

The beauty of Jesus is seen in His accomplishments. He did for us what we were unable to do for ourselves. He redeemed us from the bondage of sin and death (Eph. 1:7). Tempted in all points, yet without sin, Jesus won the victory over temptation and is thus able to aid us in our pursuit of the same (Heb. 4:15). He arose victorious over Satan (John 12:31) and over sin and death (Rom. 6:9, 1 Cor. 15:57). He destroyed the works of the Devil (1 John 3:8). Jesus lived a perfect life (1 Pet. 2:22), fulfilled the Father’s will (Heb. 10:9), and has provided for us a perfect example (1 Pet. 2:21).

The beauty of Jesus is not seen physically, but spiritually. Our goal should be the reflection of His beauty in our own lives. Paul wrote that we must “adorn the doctrine” (Tit. 2:10), which is to cloth ourselves with it. Be covered in the teaching and example of Jesus. Doing so will enable us to leave a “beautiful life” (1 Pet. 2:12) which embodies and exemplifies the teachings and example of New Testament Christianity before an unbelieving world. Truly, “Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me!”

CW



Wade Webster

The song that serves as the central thought of this lesson contains both direct and indirect references to our speech. In the fourth verse the song speaks of letting the beauty of Jesus be seen in all that we say and to keep sweet. In the third verse, the song speaks of remembering how Jesus was treated when someone speaks some word that pierces us through. Clearly, the implication is that we should show the same restraint that Jesus showed in His speech. What kinds of words characterized the speech of Jesus?

Gracious Words

Luke records, “So all bore witness to Him, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth...” (Luke 4:22). Just think of the words that Jesus spoke from the cross. For those who had shouted for Him to be crucified, He prayed, “Father forgive them, for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34). To the woman who was taken in the act of adultery and cast down at His feet for sentencing and stoning, Jesus told her to go and sin no more (John 8:11). It should not surprise us that Jesus spoke gracious words. After all, the mouth speaks from the abundance of the heart (Matt. 12:34; Pro. 4:23; 23:7). When John spoke of the incarnation of Christ, he described Jesus as full of grace (John 1:14). Since Jesus was full of grace, that is what came from His mouth. If we have the mind/heart of Christ, then grace will come out of our mouths also (Phil. 2:5). In Colossians, Paul wrote, “Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man” (Col. 4:6).

Thoughtful Words

Jesus said, “But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned” (Matt. 12:36-37). Idle means lazy and useless. Idle words are words that are uttered without thought. We must give great thought to our words because the power of death and life is in them (Pro. 18:21; cf. Jas. 3:5-6). Life was in the words of Jesus. He declared, “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63). What about our words? Do we give the necessary thought to them before we speak (Pro. 15:2; 17:27). Are we slow to speak (Jas. 1:19). Do our words tend toward life or death?

True Words

Peter wrote, “For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth...” (1 Pet. 2:21-23). Deceit means bait or treachery. On many occasions, Jesus dealt with those trying to catch Him in His words. They were baiting Him with their words and questions. They never caught Jesus because he was full of truth (John 1:14). In fact, He was truth (John 14:6). Often, in the gospels, Jesus used the words verily, truly, or most assuredly to make a statement. Jesus had a reputation for truth. Matthew records, “Then the Pharisees went and plotted how they might entangle Him in His talk. And they sent to Him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that You are true, and teach the way of God in truth...” (Mat. 22:15-17). The context makes clear that those asking this question had evil intentions. They were likely using flattery to gain an advantage. Yet, their assessment could not have been more accurate. If the beauty of Jesus is going to be seen in our speech then we are going to have to speak true words. In Proverbs, wisdom declares, “For my mouth will speak truth; Wickedness is an abomination to my lips. All the words of my mouth are with righteousness; Nothing crooked or perverse is in them” (Pro. 8:7-8). In Ephesians, Paul wrote, “Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour...” (Eph. 4:25).

Good Words

Jesus declared, “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. (Mat. 12:33-37). The good man brings out of his heart good things. Good means excellent in nature, useful. Evil means bad. We are not to let corrupt communication proceed out of our mouths “but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers” (Eph. 4:29). Corrupt means rotten, unfit, putrid. Certainly, curse words and crude talk would fall among the forbidden. Sadly, sometimes we feel that we have used our tongues properly if we do not say bad things. While it is very important not to say bad things, it is also very important to say good things. Notice the rest of Paul’s inspired instructions: “...but that which is good to the use of edifying that it may minister grace unto the hearers.” We are to speak good words that build up and impart grace. Solomon wrote, “Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, But a good word makes it glad” (Pro. 12:25; 15:23). Just think of all the good words that Jesus spoke in the gospels. Think of how he encouraged and comforted people through His words. For example, think of the words that He spoke to His disciples as

Second Quarter Class Schedule/Nov 2024 - Jan 2025

Southwest School of Bible Studies



Chapel @ 8:30 AM / Lunch @ 11:50-1:00

Time	First Year	Time	Second Year
Monday			
9:00-9:50	Hermeneutics 2, Steve Lloyd	9:00-9:50	Greek 3-Trent Kennedy
10:00-10:50	English Grammar 2, Matt Gibson	10:00-10:50	Isaiah 2- Trent Kennedy
11:00-11:50	Cong. Dev 2, Trent and Steve	11:00-11:50	Cong. Dev 2, Trent and Steve
1:00-2:20	GSP	1:00-2:20	GSP
2:30-3:50	Leviticus - Trent Kennedy	2:30-3:50	1 Corinthians - Matthew Gibson
Tuesday			
9:00-10:20	Godhead - Steven Lloyd	9:00-11:50	Ch. History - Ronnie Scherffius
10:30-11:50	Numbers - Clay Bond		
1:00-3:50	Luke - Ronnie Scherffius	1:00-2:20	Matthew 2 - Matt Gibson
		2:30-3:50	Psalm 2- Clay Bond
Wednesday			
9:00-9:50	Hermeneutics 2, Steve Lloyd	9:00-9:50	Greek 3-Trent Kennedy
10:00-10:50	English Grammar 2, Matt Gibson	10:00-10:50	Isaiah 2- Trent Kennedy
11:00-11:50	Cong. Dev 2, Trent and Steve	11:00-11:50	Cong. Dev 2, Trent and Steve
1:00-2:20	GSP	1:00-2:20	GSP
2:30-3:50	Leviticus - Trent Kennedy	2:30-3:50	1 Corinthians - Matthew Gibson
Thursday			
9:00-10:20	Godhead - Steven Lloyd	9:00-11:50	Jere and Lam - Cody Westbrook
10:30-11:50	Numbers - Clay Bond		
1:00-3:50	Deuteronomy - Mel Hutzler	1:00-2:20	Matthew 2 - Matt Gibson
		2:30-3:50	Psalm 2- Clay Bond
Friday			
9:00-9:50	Hermeneutics 2, Steve Lloyd	9:00-9:50	Greek 3-Trent Kennedy
10:00-10:50	English Grammar 2, Matt Gibson	10:00-10:50	Isaiah 2- Trent Kennedy
11:00-11:50	Cong. Dev 2, Trent and Steve	11:00-11:50	Cong. Dev 2, Trent and Steve
1:00-3:50	Intro to Preaching - Matt Gibson	1:00-3:50	Rhetoric - Steven Lloyd

See Academic Calendar for Special Events

they sadly and fearfully contemplated His departure. He told them not to be troubled in heart because He was preparing a place for them and coming again to take them there (John 14:1-3). These good words must have edified and ministered grace to them. If the beauty of Jesus is going to be seen in our speech then we must let good words come out of our mouths. To the saints at Colosse, Paul wrote, “Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one” (Col. 4:6).

Calm Words

Peter wrote, “Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth”; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously” (1 Pet. 2:22-23). When Jesus was reviled, He didn’t revile back. Revile is from the Greek word *antiloideó* and means to return abusive insult. In addition, Jesus didn’t threaten. Jesus didn’t respond in anger though it would have been easy to do so. He calmly and compassionately asked God to forgive those who were mocking and murdering Him because they didn’t know what they were doing (Luke 23:43). When one of the two thieves who were crucified with Jesus stopped mocking Him and requested to be remembered, Jesus promised the penitent thief that He would be with Him that day in paradise (Luke 23:39-43). If we want the beauty of Jesus to be seen in our speech we must never let angry words from the tongue unbridled slip. Jesus spoke of how anger can cause us to say the wrong things. We read, “But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, Raca!’ shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, ‘You fool!’ shall be in danger of hell fire” (Mat. 5:22). To the saints at Ephesus, Paul wrote, “Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath” (Eph. 4:26).

If the beauty of Jesus is going to be seen in our speech, we must speak like Jesus. We must speak gracious, thoughtful, true, good, and calm words.

CW

neighbors, and distresses our spirits. David wrote of “...how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity” (Ps. 133:1) — so how can we find “beauty” in disagreements?

Human revulsion at the prospect of conflict springs from our familiarity with the rejection, anger, hurt, disappointment, acrimony, and resentment that flourish when seeds of disagreement are allowed to germinate. Some people court, and even seem to thrive on disagreement; for many, the distaste it produces can be so strong they are willing to forfeit fundamental convictions just to avoid its bitter flavor. Even an “agreement to disagree” does not actually resolve any issue, however.

Our Lord experienced all the emotions and conflicts common to our lives (Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet.1:22), and this includes the acidic flavor of confrontation with those who contradicted and falsely accused Him. Despite the rancor they directed at Him, Jesus managed to cope with such situations and avoid sinning in doing so. What can we learn of our Lord’s “beauty” in the face of conflict and disagreement?

We can learn an effective strategy for answering those who try to use God’s word to justify their own ends. In Matthew 4:1-11, Jesus answered the devil’s challenges by appealing to the instructions of God’s word, acknowledging that His choices and subsequent actions should always be determined by the Father’s will, not merely by His own momentary “need” or desire. Similarly, when challenged by the Pharisees to declare which “position” He held concerning divorce and remarriage (Matt. 19:1-9), the Lord seized the opportunity to redirect their attention to the Father’s original pattern for marriage. Much as He would later point out the a lawyer (Luke 10:26), the proper question is not “whose side is right” but “what does God say about this?”

We learn that sometimes criticism is not rooted in a legitimate “fault” in the one criticized, but in a critic’s self-righteousness, (Mark 2:15-17; Matt. 15:1-9). At Matthew’s home, Jesus deflected the objection of the scribes and Pharisees with a contrasting statement of compassion toward those in need. When they later challenged Him for a perceived flaw in His disciples’ behavior, the Teacher pointed out their own hypocrisy in a far “weightier” matter. Jesus was not shy about “answering back” strongly when others were wrongfully maligned, but He did not become defensive when the ire of His critics was directed at Him.

At the home of Jairus we learn to cope with the uncomfortable experience of ridicule (Mark 12:38-43). When mocked and scorned by those who “knew better” than He, the Master simply let His actions “speak” to silence their derision! Sometimes the example we provide can

IN MY DISAGREEMENTS

Dave Rogers

How can there be “beauty” in disagreement? Disagreement is unpleasant; it disrupts harmony among brethren, disturbs peace of mind between

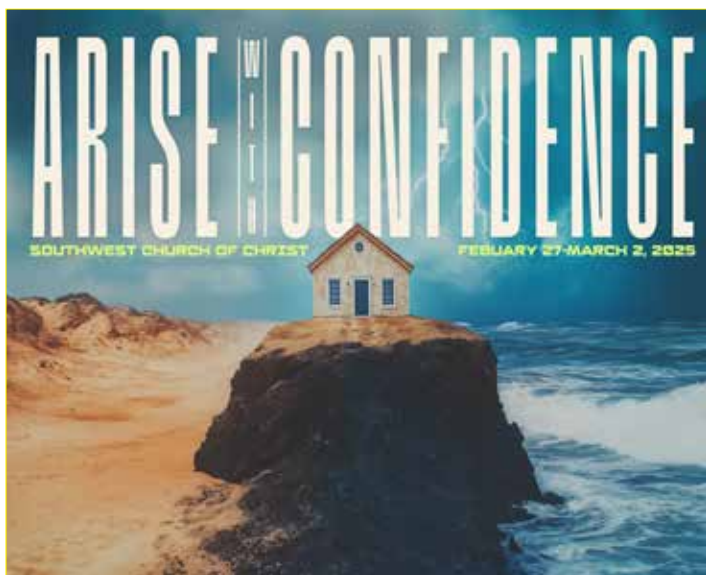
speak far more eloquently than any words we could utter (cf. Matt. 27:12-14).

We learn from Matthew 12:1-8 that a mere accusation of wrong-doing does not constitute proof of sin. The Pharisees' charge ("working" on the Sabbath) was not correct (the law actually permitted what the disciples were doing, Deut. 23:25), and Jesus highlighted their inconsistency by pointing out that they willingly overlooked real sin if it suited their agenda. "The legs of the lame are not equal" (Pro. 26:7).

The three challenges in Matthew 22:15-46 provide several valuable lessons about handling disagreements. Jesus used the question about tribute to Caesar to demonstrate that one responsibility does not "cancel out" another. He did not acquiesce to the implication that paying Roman taxes necessarily made one guilty of sin: Rather, He used the opportunity to point out that they should have been at least as concerned about whether they had honored God with their offerings as they were about whether paying tribute to Rome was evil. His response to the convoluted "story" presented by the Sadducees (vv. 23-33) highlights His use of logic in dealing with disagreement, by linking their ignorance of God's word with their ignorance of (and thus, disbelief in) His eternal power. Had they paid attention to the words of Moses and the prophets, they could have answered their own question! In His response to the Pharisee lawyer's question about which commandment is "greatest" (i.e., the most important), Jesus shows the folly of his attempt to "rank" God's commands as greater, or less, in importance.

Beauty CAN be found in disagreement, but the "beauty" of disagreement lies in revealing of heavenly truth and the exposure and correction of ignorance, error, prejudice, and malice.

CW



IN MY LOVE

Curtis Scherffius

Love is one of the strongest things in this world. As a member of the Body of Christ this fact is no different. One of the most important commands that we have is to love. In the book of Deuteronomy, we see that God commands His people to "love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength" (Deut 6:5). The Bible shows the importance of love by stating that "...everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love" (1 John 4:7-8). If God is love, then He would be able to show the purest form of it, and He did by sending His Son to die on the cross. But how exactly are we to love? How are we to show and express that love? Since Jesus is Deity in the flesh, we can look at how He lived and see the beauty of true love in one's life. We will briefly look at a few examples of how Jesus loved, and see how we can let the beauty of Jesus be seen through our love.

One cannot deny the love Christ had for His disciples while on this earth. In the book of John, we see that Christ gives a commandment to His disciples, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another" (John 13:34). In this statement Jesus Himself says that He loves His disciples, and tells them to follow His example and love one another. This attribute is one of Christ that we, as Christians, ought to strive to perfect. Too often, there are divisions among the brethren. Though we are commanded to withdraw from those living in sin, we should not let little and petty things divide us as members of the body of Christ.

Another thing that we can see in Jesus' love for His followers is that He loved them enough to pray for them. In the book of Luke, we see Jesus tell Peter that Satan had desired to have him, but He had prayed for Peter, that his faith would not fail (Luke 22:31-32). What a wonderful thought to have that our Savior prays for those who follow Him. We ought to imitate this in our lives and pray for our fellow brethren.

Along with showing love to His followers, Christ also showed love for His enemies. After enduring a night of false accusations, being the center of an improper court, beaten, spat on, scourged, nailed to a cross, and hoisted up for all to look upon and mock, Christ looked up to the Heavens and uttered, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do" (Luke 23:34). What a great example to look to;

when He is at His lowest point, when anyone else would have wished harm to those who caused them hurt had they been in His position, Christ prayed to the Father on their behalf. This love is the kind that we, as Christians, ought to show every day. There are those in the world who disagree with the Word of God. They will argue, ridicule, say you are not loving, and may even seek to harm you for not supporting them in their sin. When this happens to us, will we show the love that Christ showed (cf. Matt. 5:43-44; Luke 6:35)?

Not only did Jesus show love to those who followed Him, as well as those who saw Him as an enemy, but Jesus showed love to all. In arguably the most well-known passage in the Bible, we see that “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). Being deity in the flesh, our Savior could have, at any point, thrown in the towel and given up on humanity. He did not have to endure such a death like He did on the cross. But, because of the love He had, and continues to have, He offered Himself as a sacrifice for all. That means those who love Him and hate Him, those who never believe in Him or obey His commands, He died for them all. What a love to have. As Christians, as followers of Christ, we should portray this kind of selfless love in our lives. If we wish to let the beauty of Jesus be seen in us, then we **MUST** love as He loved. We must love our fellow brethren; we must love those who wish us harm, and we must love those who are lost. Let us seek to show the love of Christ to all in the world who rarely see true love.

CW

minister to them. No wonder Peter summed up the Lord’s life saying, He “went about doing good” (Acts 10:38). But the physical and emotional aid was rendered as an introduction to much greater work. Jesus was not concerned with fame or popularity, but with the vital task of spreading the message of salvation (Luke 19:10). In Mark 6:34, we read that when Jesus saw the crowds, He had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd, “so He began to teach them many things.” Jesus prioritized the hurting, the lost, and the broken—and we are called to do the same (Matt. 25:35-40). We must be willing to pause in our busy lives and focus on the needs of those around us, whether it’s a friend in crisis, a neighbor who is lonely, or a stranger in need. In our lives, we must seek to reflect Jesus’ heart for others, making time to serve, love, and teach, even when it’s inconvenient or uncomfortable.

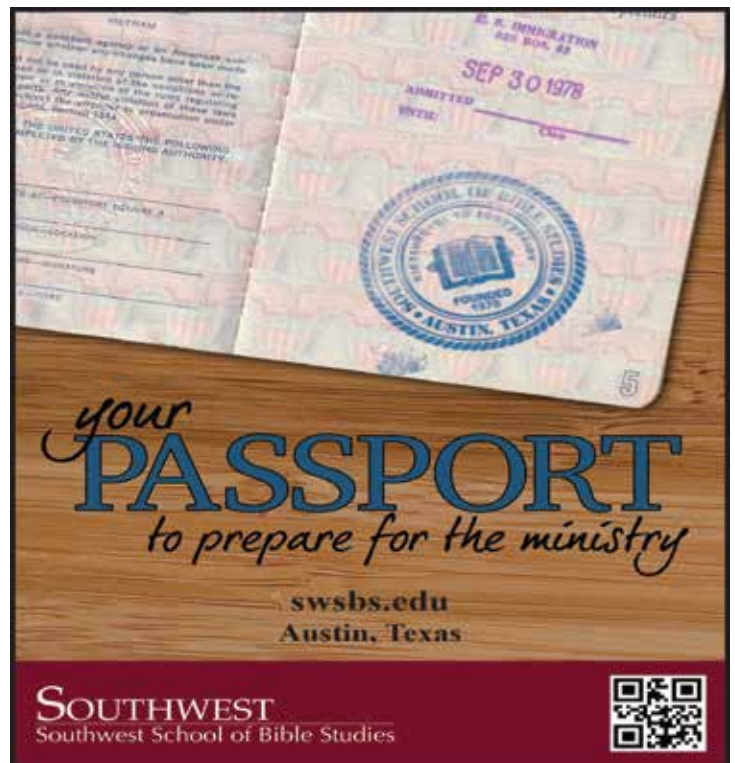
The life of Jesus provides the perfect model for how we should prioritize our own lives. As members of His church, we must take pains to align our wills to the will of God and reflect the mission, values, and character of the Lord. Like Him, we are called to prioritize the preaching of truth, submitting to the will of our Heavenly Father, and meeting the needs of those around us. May we today set our sights on these same priorities, so that we may faithfully follow Jesus and bring glory to God in all that we do.

CW

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

us a life of obedience, not based on personal gain or ease, but on trust in God’s perfect plan. Christ plainly taught His followers the need for obedience (Matt. 7:21; John 15:10; 1 John 5:3). This same sense of duty should be had by all who wear His name. It is as the Psalmist said, “I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart” (Ps. 40:8).

Third, Jesus always prioritized the needs of the people around Him. One of the most striking features of Jesus’ life was His deep compassion for others. Time and time again, we see Him setting aside His own concerns to care for the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of others. In Mark 5, a woman with an issue of blood comes to Jesus for healing, interrupting the Lord and His party while they’re traveling to help a man’s daughter who is about to die. He is quite literally helping people on the way to helping people! He saw souls, not interruptions, and He devoted Himself to serve and





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From the Director's desk



Trent Kennedy
Director
SWSBS

Preachers, do you ever find yourself having the congregation turn to the same book or passages over and over again? Do the same four or five Scriptures always seem to be part of your sermons, week in and week out? Is this type of preaching keeping you and your audience from growing? I think many of us revert back to our “comfort Scriptures” that we have memorized, preached, and know so well. However, when we carefully examine our preaching, it would be good to challenge ourselves and our audiences. Here are some tips for bringing variation into your sermons:

Read the Bible more. This will help you vary your preaching. Keep reading your favorite books, chapters, and verses, but do not neglect the sum of God's Word (Ps. 119:160). Read the Old Testament and the New Testament.

Expand your memory verses. If you have memorized Luke 13:3 and 5, challenge yourself to memorize and quote verses like Numbers 23:19; Isaiah 1:18-19; Acts 3:19; 2 Corinthians 7:8-10; or similar passages. Remember, Revelation 2:10 is not the only passage in the Bible that speaks of our eternal reward.

Keep passages in their context. Our country does not value the Bible like it once did. The good brethren (and ourselves!) need to be reminded of the context of our passages. When we preach out of the book of Jeremiah, allow Jeremiah to be the primary spokesperson for Jeremiah. Once we clearly know and have taught what Jeremiah did, then expand to other passages which may or may not be our “comfort Scriptures.”

When God's Word is studied and proclaimed, it is good. Even if we remind of the same Scriptures over and over, God will still bless this preaching. But, if we are willing to examine our preaching, grow in our preaching, and challenge ourselves, then we and our audiences will be blessed!

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