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Consent of the Governed

The American Revolution was the result of pent up grievances caused by an oppressive governance. Colonialists were treated as minions, or as gears and cogs in the wheel of an economic engine by the British monarchy. Like tossed-aside smoldering sullied rags in an airless closet of a greasy machine shop, or the bone dry silage in a poorly ventilated silo, the disenfranchised are likely to suddenly burst into flame with a spark. The fresh air of fairness is the best stabilizer for society and an invisible peace-keeper of civil order and domestic tranquility. Even the congregants of the early Christian church balked at a perceived unfairness in the distribution of goods, favors, and kindness during its infancy.

The Bible itself warns parents about the danger of provoking our “children to wrath.” America is based on a common ideal of individual rights, which are God given, (not government given) creating what is commonly described as “the consent of the governed.” Take God out of that equation, and all bets are off. The result will be catastrophic, resulting in a revolution, coup, or collapse of order. From those ruins will rise Fascism, Iron-fisted Communism, Nihilism, Tribalism, or Anarchy. Nations that reject the authority of the Bible, breed Authoritarianism.

Jesus said, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” That is only the first step to real liberty and breaking the chains of tyranny. The second step to real freedom is just as

important. "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

A Christianity without Christ's "yoke" is a joke. Real faith trusts God enough to bow its head and gladly slip into the harness of Heaven. With faith in Christ, Satan's chain is broke and the sinner is freed and WOKE (as seekers of civil justice like to say today). But it is through the gravitas of gratitude, and the grateful consent of the governed that we enter into an eternal partnership with God and experience his grace and power. We can be assured, that He who loads the wagon will help us carry the load. -id

Conster - Nation

Last year there were hundreds of TV commercials offering products to consumers with the seductive incentive “No payments until next year.” Well, guess what? It’s next year. Home foreclosures are not only up, fiscal reality has come down like a ton of bricks. Past due notices, like gaping fissures in the earth are swallowing borrowers and lenders alike. Sink holes are opening on the floor of the stock exchange and financial behemoths find themselves sinking in the tar pits of their own greed.

Satan has always been a predatory lender. He will gladly give you credit. He will let you have what you want with “no money down,” and if you buy today, he will throw in a set of steak knives for free. Faust was a fool. The pathetic figure of German legend makes a deal with the devil. The word “faust” comes from the Latin meaning “lucky.” America may have run out of luck. She has been on a credit card binge and now comes the hang-over. She has maxed out her Master

Card and she is about to find out that Hedonism has a hard taskmaster.

Hypocrisy is singing “

God Bless America,” while living as if there is no God. It is a “so called” Christian nation that is writing checks “in faith” when there is no money in the bank. We sent our children off to study MONEY and get their MBA’s at MIT while the best business advice could be had for free all along.

The Bible says “Better is a little with righteousness, than great revenues without right.”

America was once a great nation. Now we find a certain consternation. We need repentance more than rebates and the wish that America will rush out on another spending spree. Like the prodigal that “spent all” we need to say

“Father I have sinned.” Only repentance will make a Debtor Nation a Better Nation. Only then can we sing without being a hypocrite,

“

God, Bless America.” -id

Death for Dummies

Death for Dummies

Democrats seem to have a death wish. Oh, not for themselves, but for many others. They loath conservatives, along with the “Ever-Trumpers,” and “Bible Thumpers.” Democrats seem to be scared to death of death. Most people try to avoid it. That’s a good idea. Nobody wants to die. They, however, live with an irrational fear of death. Ironically, they have become the party of death. Yes, the Democrat Party has a death wish. Death to common sense, death to reason, death to fetal life, and to fertile liberty. They have sent freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and freedom of religion to the gallows. They wish death on their political opponents, openly wishing death on the President, his supporters, and more and more these days, on the freedom of thought itself. Their “Thought Police,” are on college campuses, and ready to incapacitate, incarcerate, or incinerate any who oppose their dream of a “New World Order.” The Democrat Party is the Abortion party. If they had their own Mt. Rushmore, it would Include the faces of Darwin, Freud, and Marx. These three have done more harm than the Corona virus to destroy the body, soul and spirit of all mankind. Democrat-controlled Hollywood hates the God of the Bible. The Democrat-controlled media hates the Bible. They mock Moses and mimic Mao. They Believe in evolution, natural selection and “survival of the fittest,” yet have a fit if only the fittest survive. Sigmund Fraud [sic] turned “talk therapy” into a business in which millions have spent billions on empty snake oil bottles

filled with hot air. God loves everyone regardless of their politics or crazy ideas. "God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love and of a sound mind." The Bible also says, "It is appointed unto man, once to die and after that, the judgment." That's not hate speech, its just the expiration date on the milk carton of life.

Jesus Christ was no Democrat. To be fair, neither was he a Republican.

What he was was the founder of the New, Abundant, and Eternal Life Party, otherwise known as the Church. Jesus Christ faced death head on and came to solve the death problem. Hiding from death is not life. Hiding in attics or in mental concentration camps of indefinite confinement won't make the Nazis of Nihilism go away. Even if you avoid starving to death during this pandemic (no thanks to them), they will come after you in the middle of the next plague. They will force you to drink the cool-aid of political conformity, or vaccinate you with some bat virus vaccine, or make you pay dearly. When someone is fueled by fear, they are fooled by fear. Keep your irrational rat vaccine of fear. No Thanks. I am immune to your hatred and from the fever of hating you. Democrat or Republican, refusing the cure for fear, hate, and death, makes you a spiritual dummy. I have been cured by faith in the Great Physician, Jesus Christ, who died once for all. Through simple free faith in Him, he has shown me how to live, how to die, and by his grace, how to live with Him forever. -id

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Defeating Death by Easter

The etymology of the word “pathogen” is found in the Greek root which means “to produce suffering.”

Nothing, nothing produces suffering more than sin.

From the Wet Markets of China to the Slave Markets West Africa and Charleston; from the Black Markets and Drug Markets of mendicity, mankind seems still willing to sell their soul and birthright, and the hope of heaven itself for a farthing. Paul described all of creation as “groaning” under the weight and curse of sin. Sin has turned the world into a gulag and long chain gang, a slaughterhouse, a cemetery, and a way of sorrows.

Billions of sheep, bulls and goats have been slain on a million bloody altars, since the first sin, and yet sin waxes worse and worse. I saw a photo of a dog about to be slain in a Chinese dog market, and it pained me. Yet worse, the sight of an innocent lamb being led to the slaughter should be enough to break our hearts, yet most remain unmoved. God takes no pleasure in such a sight or sacrifice. On Earth, every death is tantamount to a tombstone that could be etched with the words “from the beginning it was not so.” Morgues are filling up with corpses and civilization is collapsing while the world’s disciples (of Darwin, Freud, and Marx) either struggle or dance with demons at the bottom of Mount Calvary, oblivious to the fact that the answer to all man’s woes hangs there, there on the cross. They are unmoved by the scandal, the spectacle, the only solution and Savior who died to defeat death itself. Death? Yes, death, for “from the beginning it was not so.” Let the whole world know that “the wages of sin is death.” But, let it also hear the only hope that “the gift of God is

eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Social distancing may save some people to prepare for the next plague or next pandemic, or to fight over the remaining scraps and bones of economic and moral ruin, but those scraps are contaminated still. Sin has already separated us from God, with an impassable gulf of spiritual separation. Perhaps some will lift their eyes during this unusual Easter season and without chocolate bunnies and jelly beans, see Jesus, the Lamb of God dying once for all and for all their sin, who also arose on the third day as he promised, so all that put their faith in him, should not perish, but live a new and abundant life, and to live with him forever. – id

Faith Tested

“Faith Tested”

(Substance of things hoped for, and evidence of things not seen)

Faith untested is like a river that never flows a flag that never flies a wind that never blows a coin that never buys

Faith that's real is given feet

“Arise,” says God, “and walk.”

a burning fire must have heat and God's Word is more than talk. -id

Higher

The righteousness of the Pharisees we're told we must exceed but how can we then hope to please or dream we can succeed

In pleasing such a Holy God or climb so high a hill or satisfy a law and rod that will all sinners kill?

The only hope, a single one meet all of God's commands

Jesus Christ God's only Son fulfills all God's demands

He alone our righteousness

His work forever done

He alone can save and bless and we pray His Kingdom come

-id

Hollow-een

America's Children will play with evil again this

Halloween. They will be encouraged by their parents to dress up as devils, demons, ghouls, and ghosts. They will play with evil. They will come home with shopping bags full of candy taken from strangers. I played the game.

I had more loot gathered for Brooklyn apartment houses in 1950 than Blackbeard had gold. Playing with evil may seem innocent, and non-habit forming, but take my advice, don't play with evil.

Iran has been called part of an "axis of evil." It lived up to that billing this week when it's President declared that "Israel should be wiped off the map." It is not often that we get to look inside the head of a fanatic. What we saw was the abyss. We also saw a ticking

"time-bomb." What we saw was a glimpse of evil.

We cannot smile evil away. Polly-Anna prescriptions of cheer and potpourris of rose petals will not protect us. We are told by authorities that a pandemic is coming. Stocking up and hoarding Tamiflu won't help much either. As if that is not enough, there is another outbreak the Center for Disease Control does not have on its radar. Evil.

The President of Iran gave us a glimpse into the mind of fanatical Islamic fundamentalism. He said that "Israel must be wiped off the map." It was chilling. Many thought Smallpox had been completely eradicated from this planet, but it still lives in test tubes and laboratories across the globe just waiting for someone to let it loose.

Anti-Semitism is alive and well also.

The idea of “wiping Israel of the face of the earth” is an old idea. Assyria tried it, Babylon tried it. Rome burned Jerusalem to the ground. Hitler used gas chambers and incinerators, but all have failed to destroy God’s promise to Abraham.

Rather than rebuilding Babylon and saving Iraq (Ancient Babylon) or hoping democracy will save Iran (Ancient Persia), we should be both kneeling in prayer for and standing in friendship with Israel. I decided a long time ago not to die on the wrong battlefield, if I could help it. For that reason, I have always been un-enthusiastic about our military adventures, or misadventures. But when it comes to this battle, the survival of Israel, this battle of battles, I want to be on the right side.

I don’t suggest our CIA “take out” anybody. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal. I do not suggest any “preemptive”

strikes by the US or by Israel. What I do suggest is that

Christians stop playing games like politics or pretending there is a “road map” for

Palestine, and playing with evil.

Revival comes when we repent and renounce evil, not play with it. We cannot win the war with the axis of evil when evil has access to our own hearts. We cannot destroy evil with any laws that come out of Washington. Evil can only be held in check when the Law of God’s

Love and the Love for God's Law are mixed together in the apothecary of a broken and believing heart. Many don't want to choose sides. Israel and

Iran are all the same to them, unfortunately so is good and evil. Israel's prophet has a word for you: "Woe." We cannot eat the world's candy without getting a belly ache, and wishing we hadn't.

Homeless

He was Homeless. It is hard for most of us to imagine being homeless. The idea of being homeless never crosses our minds, until we see that person living in a cardboard box, or that family living in a station wagon, or those people under an overpass warming themselves by a fire.

When we see them we might have pity or we might think of them “losers.” Rather than a “loser,” I believe Jesus would rather we see them as “lost.” If anyone in life has ever lost, it is he who has lost his home. Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost. Some people live in castles, some find rest among the catacombs, but even there some find comfort and protection from the harsh elements of the world. Jesus said, “the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have their nest, but the Son of Man has no where to lay His head.” The writer of Hebrews says that He was “touched with the feeling of our infirmities.” Few know what it is to feel the infirmity of being “homeless.”

Most of us have some door to close at night. Most have a hearth. Most have a place to go. Almost as if to teach us that this world is not our home, the Lord

Jesus was (at least for three and a half years) homeless. Many people are homeless in this world. Jesus identified with them. And no more than He knew, that this world is not our home..

He was born in a stable. He and His parents were refugees in Egypt. He was an itinerant preacher that

slept under the canopy of heaven, when He didn't have a home to go to. There are lessons even in this

"homelessness" of our Lord.

Jesus went where He was welcome. Once again His homelessness was a test for us more than it was a trial for Him. From the first foolish innkeeper at Bethlehem, to doorman at the church at Laodicea, woe to the person or group that has no room for Jesus. That the Son of God should have to sleep in our streets is an indictment against us. And that a whole generation missed Him when he stood on their doorstep is a shameful breach of law of love and kindness. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not."

The next time we turn the key to our well constructed homes (which, by the way, would make Herod the Great green with jealousy) let us think of the Homeless Son of God who was not welcome in this world. Isaiah called Him "rejected."

"Where dwellest thou?" Asked two of John's disciples. Jesus answered "Come and see." Think of what "hospitality" is to the homeless. Generally, today our hospitality is to those who need it least. There was a time when there were no such things as hotels. Travelers found "hostels"

or inns where they could take shelter and maybe find a bite to eat. Such a place is described in the story of the Good Samaritan. In that parable, the religious crowd (priest and Levite) were of no help to the wounded soul on the Jericho road. They either ignored him or gave him a wide berth. The Samaritan did what he could and brought him to shelter. A homeless person needs shelter.

While the church still has “homeless shelters,” few are involved in this messy ministry.

Even fewer would even think to open up their own home to a stranger. The homeless also need love. They need to see our love, but more than that, they need to know God’s love.

The second thing we might learn from Christ’s self-imposed homelessness (as an traveling minister) was that life is a pilgrimage. We are all on our way to eternity. We are just passing through this world unto a “world to come” (Lk. 18:30). We all need stopping off places along the way. We sometimes think of Christ as “that homeless stranger.” It might be better to say that He was “houseless.” When the Lord Jesus spoke of home, He spoke of the Father’s house. It is one thing to be houseless and another to be homeless. The Christian can never be homeless, even if he finds himself far from home. Some have found themselves houseless, because of war, or fire, or earthquakes, floods, tornados and hurricanes. Under such circumstances, the believer remembers that “this world is not my home, I just-a-passing through,”

as the song goes. If you have never been “houseless” praise God, but look around at the many not as fortunate and remember the Good Samaritan.

If you are not “houseless” or “homeless” should not that house be dedicated to God. Joshua said “as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.” Consider how blessed a home might be if it is dedicated to God.

Think of how blessed it might become when the Lord Jesus is welcomed in. The New

Testament is filled with homes that held precious memories of being visited by such a Special Guest. If He were not “homeless,” perhaps He would not have gone into so many homes, or sat at so many tables. He was homeless in order to give us an opportunity to welcome Him. Consider that happy home in Cana where He changed the water into wine. Consider the home in Bethany where Mary, Martha, and Lazarus were blessed by His presence. Consider what would have happened (or not happened) on the road to Emmaus if those disciples had not “constrained him, saying, Abide with us” (Lk. 24:29). In Hebrews 2:9 we learn that some have “entertained angels unaware.” The Lord instructed his disciples to look for the spirit of holy hospitality as they ministered (Lk. 10:5). Hospitality is a spiritual gift. The gift of hospitality is not so much the ability to “entertain,” but the ability to make someone “feel welcome.”

A house is not a home. When the Lord spoke about the house in Mat. 7:24 He was not speaking about curtains or parquet floors. He was talking about a small community of faith that was founded on the solid foundation of God’s word. Too many are “homeless” because they did not heed the Builder’s advice. Instead, they built on the sand of emotions, feelings, superstitions, or self-will only to have everything washed away in some great storm of life. The Lord Jesus came into our world as a poor traveling stranger. He was also homeless. He became “poor” in order that we might become something “rich.” (2 Cor. 8:9) On His way to the cross, His “poverty” left us many lessons. Because He

was also “sinless,” this single death offers salvation to all and no one needs to be God-less.

I See You

Intensive Care.

The place of lines or tubes for air

Of IV drips intensive care

Where beats of heart are measured by

The sound of bleeps and watching eye

Where life hangs on as if by hair

Or lungs cry out in gasps for air

Where worried looks and darting glance

Or loved ones pray for one last chance

But if that one upon the bed

Has trusted Christ who once was dead

He can be certain God is there and holds with great
intensive care for no one loves as much as He

Who made us for eternity

And gave in Christ a life brand new

Will hear God whisper, It's ok

"I See You." -id

Hello,

Hope you and yours are safe and well. In another retirement center down the road there were 57 staff and residents testing positive for COVID-19. We are still all well at Pittsboro Christian Village. Please continue to pray for the staff and residents here and everywhere. Yet it is wonderful to know that God's children need not

fear for even in the ICU the saint will hear God whisper,
“I see you.”

His,

-id <http://www.idchristian.wordpress.com>

Keeping Christmas

Twass the night after Christmas and all through the mall

All that was left -- merchants counting their haul.

Out with the Old Santa, gone is Saint

Nick, the Spirit of Christmas, cut to the quick.

Forget about wise men, mangers and such.

Here come the Accountants, asking "How much?"

Instead of their asking, "What did we learn?"

They push aside

Jesus and ask, "What did we earn?"

The world's 'done' with Christmas,

Magi and Kings, out from the stockroom - Saint
Valentine's things.

Gone are the shepherds and angels above, singing in
'Joy to

World' for God's love.

But for those who in faith have taken God's

Son, the Gift for all Ages, it has only begun, for the
Spirit of

Christmas, Who comes with new birth brings peace,
love, and joy, and a measureless worth.

Kingdom Come

Subject: Fwd: Kingdom Come

Kingdom Come blessed are the have-nots blessed are the broken blessed those the world forgot of these the Lord has spoken found in the Beatitudes rushing to His kingdom meek and humble attitudes watch the Spirit bring them

Christ announced a Jubilee where debtors find a pardon those in prison are set free the desert becomes a garden blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see the Father peacemakers also have a part with the persecuted and martyred rejected by the powerful who thought they knew the letter but grace to sinners wonderful found simple faith was better.

Some puzzle over what or where, or when this kingdom starts

Jesus said, it is very near it begins now in our hearts -id

The Bible says "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God, the things that are God's." It also says, "Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft." Jesus told Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight." If you feel you must fight, don't use carnal weapons. God has a better way. Pray. Pray for those in authority. Pray for Caesar and pray for the seizers who mistakenly think they must seize their share, or push their way to get to the front of the line. If compelled to walk a mile, smile, and walk two. People may ignore what we "say," but seldom what we "do." It's the way of the Kingdom. -id

Lead Me to the Rock Higher Than I

In 1850 the political division in the United States was so acute that there was great doubt if America could endure as a Nation. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote a poem reminding her of the divine hand seen in its founding. He wrote, "The Building of the Ship." The last stanza sounds like a plea and a prayer that America would survive.

He wrote:

Thou too, sail on, O Ship of State!
Sail on, O Union, strong and great!
Humanity with all its fears,
With all the hopes of future years,
Is hanging breathless on thy fate!
We know what Master laid thy keel,
What Workmen wrought thy ribs of steel,
Who made each mast, and sail, and rope,
What anvils rang, what hammers beat,
In what a forge and what a heat
Were shaped the anchors of thy hope!
Fear not each sudden sound and shock,
'T is of the wave and not the rock;
'T is but the flapping of the sail,
And not a rent made by the gale!
In spite of rock and tempest's roar,

In spite of false lights on the shore,
Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea!
Our hearts, our hopes, are all with thee,
Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,
Are all with thee, — are all with thee!

Once again there is some concern about America, (as we knew it) surviving. I pray she does, but while my hopes are with her, they are no in her. My hope and hopes are in God alone. In the year 1776 America's Ship of State began to rise in the shipyards of providence and was launched for some divine purpose. Only God knows if that purpose has run its course, if she founders, sinks (like the once proud Spanish Armada), or is overtaken by pirates. In 1776 beautiful and majestic words were penned:

.....We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

We can only pray that America's sons and daughters will come to their senses and remember the courage, craftsmanship, and careful considerations of the authors of both the Declaration and the Constitution, as well as the unseen hand that guided the founding fathers. Yet, our hope and faith is not in the Constitution or in the Government. Our hope is in a far more secure and greater power. David wrote, "When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock higher than I." Some other words were also penned in 1776 by someone far less famous than Thomas Jefferson, but these words are

much more powerful, life changing, and important. They are:

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy wounded side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Save from wrath and make me pure.
Not the labor of my hands
Can fulfill Thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and Thou alone.
Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to Thee for dress;
Helpless, look to Thee for grace;
Foul, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Savior, or I die.
While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my eyes shall close in death,
When I rise to worlds unknown,
And behold Thee on Thy throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,

Let me hide myself in Thee.

- Augustus M. Toplady

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Let My People Go!

Satan, like Pharaoh, does not want you to "Go." The message was clear and simple, "Let my people go that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness" (Ex. 5:2). After it became obvious that Moses was not going to give up,

Pharaoh attempted to negotiate. Satan also wants us to settle for something less than full salvation. He offered four alternative proposals to substitute for God's plan.

1. Stay in Egypt. Stay "in the land" Ex. 8:25. It was as if he was saying, "You can be a worldly Christian. You can believe all you want, just stay where you are." The problem with that is "we can't stay where we are" and be where God wants us to be. Salvation is a Journey. We must forsake Egypt.

Abraham had to leave Ur, Lot had to leave Sodom, the Prodigal must leave the pigpen. Noah

"condemned" the world. It is a lie of the Devil, that we can have faith without following, life without leaving, or a crown without a cross.

Stay in Egypt? We would just as soon stay on the Titanic, for with all its splendor it is destined to the deep.

Don't compromise.

2. Don't go too far. Don't "go very far" Ex.

8:28. If Satan can't keep you from going he will at least try to keep you from going far. The modern day Pharaoh's say "don't get carried away" with all this religious stuff. Don't be an extremist or a fanatic. A little religion is alright, but just "don't go too far." Many take

his advice. They settle right on the border of worldliness. They hug the boundary. They live in the shadow of the

Sphinx. The problem with listening to Pharaoh's advice to not "go very far," is that in your spiritual life you will "not go far." Those who hug the shore line never see God's wonders in the deep. Only those who are willing to

"go far" with God enter the gates of his Kingdom. Let's determine from the beginning that once we agree to going, we must go all the way.

3. Keep it Private and Personal. "Ye that are men" go but leave your families behind (Ex. 10:11). It was as if Pharaoh was saying, "If you have to embrace the Bible, please keep it to yourself. At least don't be one of these Evangelicals. If you want to go, fine, but leave those you love here in Egypt. Just the men, please. "

Today he would say, "just the women and children please" for that is what most churches are made up of. Somehow he has convinced people that this

Church stuff is alright for women and children. When children are no longer willing to be called children (teens and young adults) they will forsake the church and leave in droves, because, of course, church is for "women and children."

4. Salvation without Service. Go if you must, but may "your flocks be stayed" (Ex. 10:24). Leave your cattle here. Cattle constituted their wealth, their food, their basic necessities of life, but it was something more than that.

The cattle were necessary if there was to be sacrifice. Satan does not want us to have a faith that involves any sacrifice. There is, however, no real faith without it. Service and sacrifice are the evidences of a genuine life of faith. Moses, Hebrews tells us gave up the riches of Egypt to have Christ. Faith can do no less. We are saved to serve.

Moses was faithful in delivering God's message to Pharaoh, the representative head of the world. May we faithfully declare the plain "thus saith the

LORD" making not concessions which may lead to false professions.

Memorial Day 2020

Once a year America salutes the memory of those who fell in battle to defend freedom, liberty, and justice. Flags and flowers are placed beside graves, and gratitude graces the gravity of the ultimate sacrifice of her sons and daughters. The great wheels of industry grind to a halt, and with all the solemnity owed to sacrifice, again, America bows its head beneath God's Amazing Grace. In recent years, the words in the Pledge of Allegiance "One Nation, Under God" has become controversial and divisive. Some want the very word "God" expunged from our currency and legal contracts. Memorial Day marks the value and gives meaning to the sanctity of life beneath the belief in a benevolent Creator who gave us our unalienable rights. Yes, America is unique as a Nation among nations. I can almost hear the drumbeats and footsteps of marching columns of the courageous defenders of good, and imagine the flickering campfires of a hundred circling camps glowing in the darkness, as lights and beacons of hope even during these difficult times. We are grateful. Yes, God bless America! -id

In the beauty of the lilies, Christ was born across the sea
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me
As He died to make men holy, let us live to make men
free

While God is marching on

Glory, glory, Hallelujah! Glory, glory, Hallelujah!

Glory, glory, Hallelujah! His truth is marching on!

(the Battle Hymn of the Republic)

Not in Temples Made with Hands

Not in Temples made with Hands

The first Tabernacle God's Children made was from all the spoils and gifts God gave as former slaves by faith obeyed they made a tent for He who saved.

With colored string, some brass, some gold rods and curtains, and badger skin; the Lord their Shepard, they His fold, day and night they followed Him.

God no longer dwells in temples

As once in olden days, which were shadows and examples; now God inhabits Praise.

Set up in a moment tents of gratitude and grace,

Joy is the environment of the Most High's Secret place.

Thanksgiving is the sacrifice, the altar, a grateful heart;

Tetelestai, Christ paid the price, in Praise real worship starts. -id

Sense and Nonsense

And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way side begging: And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant. Luke 18:35-36

He could not see, but he could hear. That means that he still had some sense. We are supposed to have five: taste, touch, hearing, seeing, and smell. Once I had no sense for spiritual things. Bartimaeus could not see, but he could hear. God always works with what we have, not with what we don't have. God wants us to come to our senses. Long before we could "taste" and see that He is good, He was good to us. When we were without any feeling for God or the things of God, He touched us, but we never knew it because we were dull. We were as blind as a bat or were satisfied with shadows. Then one day we began to come to our senses. We heard. "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God."

Bartimaeus could not see, but he could hear. That is the way it is when faith is born. It always "hears" before it "sees." The Lord Jesus was coming by. May we not let Him pass without an audience. God has given us senses that are now sensitive to His presence and purposes. May we learn today when we hear God's Word, and ask, like this once poor beggar, "What does it mean?" Then when we know by faith that it is Him, that God is passing by, may we like Bartimaeus (Mk.10:52) have enough sense to follow our Lord Jesus Christ. To follow any other is simply nonsense.

Some More on Words

Some More on Words

I wish to speak some more on words

As moron words I've found can as easily harm the
shepherd's herds as Gadarian swine were drowned

Words are things that we create

And tools with which to build.

We are the kings of our own fate,

By the chosen words we willed.

A single word can lift a soul,

Another one can kill.

One will help to reach a goal,

And one can crush the will.

Choose each word more carefully,

To bless, to help, to heal.

Once spoken, I say fearfully,

The pain or joy is real. -id

Tongues

A Lesson from James to the Churches

Watch out when tongues get loose. They can do a lot of damage. Nothing saddens the heart more than to hear of local churches divided, broken and destroyed by the

Devil. It is especially sad when good churches are needed to be winning souls for Christ.

The Devil has many devices which he uses to split a church and to divide one brother from another. Let there be no mistake about it, the Devil hates the church. Today, a church is more likely to be destroyed from within than from without.

Within the church there is one member everyone had better watch out for. If allowed to, this member can cause much havoc and chaos. This little member is the tongue. Satan often uses this uncontrolled member to destroy the unity and harmony of a local assembly. God warns us about this potential danger. He warns us about the problem of tongues.

The tongues problem in question is not the one in Acts chapter two, that is a "tongue of fire." I am speaking rather of the tongues in James chapter three, which is a "tongue on fire."

Tongues, I believe, is the besetting sin of many believers (including myself). Dear Lord Jesus, teach us the awfulness of this evil phenomenon called

"tongues." Amen.

I. THE RAGE OF THE TONGUE

James 3:6 tells us that the tongue is a fire, and what a fire it is!

Now, fire is a very useful thing when controlled and in its proper place. It is a real blessing when it is controlled on the stove, but what a terror when it is on the bed or the sofa. Every precaution must be taken to keep fire in its proper place. While we enjoy the flames dancing upon the log in the fireplace we must never let down our guard or become careless, lest a beautiful experience becomes a tragedy. Whole forests have gone up in smoke because someone was careless. Much sorrow and loss of life has begun with a spark. Yes, the tongue is a raging fire that must be kept under control.

Let us now look at some examples of this rage and evil of the tongue.

Slander, gossip, lies and evil speaking are all ungodly things. Before WWII the Nazis first spoke with contempt and disdain about the Jews before they broke their shop windows and then turned them into the gas chambers. The furnace of hatred is still billowing ashes around the world today. Much of the German propaganda machine was fueled by hatred and envy.

Even the truth about someone's weakness or shortcomings can be used to hurt him. Innocent sounding words can have evil intentions. The tongue is a fire.

Who has not felt the heat of it upon their own lives and reputations? Yes, the tongue is a fire. Oh, be careful of the devastation it can cause.

II. THE RANGE OF THE TONGUE

In verse five of the same chapter, we are told that the tongue is a

"little member." Its littleness, however, does not limit its range of influence.

It has been said that a lie can travel around the world twice while truth is still getting its boots on.

We must be aware of the range of this weapon of Satan. Just as a pebble dropped into a pond will send ripples to the farthest shore, so a word ill spoken will eventually reach the farthest ears and do its damage.

There is a story told about a woman who was a gossip and had spread lies and slander all over town about a godly servant of Christ. The day came when she was convicted about her wrong doing and wanted to clear her conscience. She came to the man and asked forgiveness for speaking such false things about him. The man said, "I will forgive you but there is one thing I must ask you to do first." He instructed her to

"Get a bag full of feathers and come back and see me." Although this seemed to be a strange request, she complied and returned with the feathers. "Now I want you to go and place a feather on the doorstep of every person you have spoken to about me."

She again complied and returned. The wise man then said, "Now I want you to go back and gather up all the feathers you have left and bring them back to me."

After a time, she returned explaining that the wind had apparently blown them away and there was no recapturing them. The man then went on to explain,

"Yes, no chance, and so it is with a word once it is spoken. It can never be recaptured again. The wind will carry gossip like a feather from one house to another and all the repentance in the world will not undo the damage done." The woman went home in tears realizing that she had caused so much harm. This brings us to the pain cause by the tongue.

III. THE RUIN OF THE TONGUE

Verse eight of James 3 speaks of the "unruly evil" of the tongue. Whole cities have been reduced to ashes by uncontrolled fire. The devastation and destruction of fire is well known to all. Fire is one of the most destructive forces at our disposal. We must be careful with fire. A house can burn to the ground in minutes. So too, a man's life can be greatly harmed in minutes by false, unkind, or careless words. The tongue "on fire" has left the reputation of many a man or woman in rubble. Its damage can be catastrophic.

Being sorry will not restore a building from a pile of ashes, nor will it retrieve destructive evil words, or restore a damaged name, or mend a broken heart.

We have seen the rage of the tongue, the range of the tongue, and the ruin of the tongue. We will all agree to the seriousness of a fire gone out of control. We will also agree that evil tongues can severely damage a church fellowship or ministry, making is either powerless or a poor testimony to the world (which is the same thing).

What can we do to prevent such a tragedy?

There are three ways a fire can be started:

1) By carelessness. Many homes have been destroyed and lives lost to fire because of careless people.

2) By accident. Through no real neglect, an appliance has been known to catch fire.

3) By intent. This intentional fire-starting is called arson.

ARSON

The arsonist is someone who slinks about in the shadows with his gasoline and oil-soaked rags. After he has done his evil work, he will often stand openly looking innocent among the crowd watching the holocaust.

If you saw someone about to set your church building on fire, you would call the police, I am sure. But what if someone was trying to burn down the spiritual closeness and sweet spirit of that very same church? Would you not be concerned?

The spiritual arsonist goes about with the gasoline of gossip and the filthy rags of rumor and slander. If allowed to do his dirty work, he would leave the church in ashes. Don't let him do it.

What are the oily rags an arsonist would use? First, there is the rag of gossip. Proverbs 17:20 says "He that hath a perverse heart findeth no good; and he that hath a perverse tongue falleth to mischief." Prov. 18:8 says, "The words of a talebearer are as wounds, they go down into the inner most parts."

Prov. 20:19 says, "He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets." If someone comes to you with a hand cupped over his mouth to

"share" a "secret" watch out, he might be a spiritual arsonist. The same verse goes on to say. "Meddle not with him."

Prov. 26:20 says, "where no wood is the fire goes out." The fire will die if you do not add any wood. Do not add to the fires of gossip. Refuse to throw a log or twig onto that fire.

Another arsonist's rag is a complaining spirit. It is combustible.

We are told in Numbers 11:1 that complaining displeases the Lord. God is never pleased to hear us complain. When something is not right, there is a correct way to deal with it.

Complaining is not the way. Numbers 14:27 tells us that it was for their complaining that the Israelites fell in the wilderness. First Corinthians 10:10 tells us that, for this they were destroyed. In Numbers 12 we see that complaining brought leprosy to Miriam. In

Numbers 21 complaining brought fiery serpents. Beware of the complainer.

Complaining is like a smoldering rag that is about to burst into flames. For this reason, Paul admonishes us to do all things without murmuring and disputings. Don't play with these matches or with those who do.

Another trick of the Devil is to use flattery. Gossip is cotton, flattery is silk. Both rags burn as well in the fire. Flattery, if it works, will ignite someone's pride, and "pride goeth before destruction. Flattery comes off an evil tongue." Psalm 5:9 speaks of flattery as an "open grave." Psalm 12:1-3 we see that God hates flattery. Proverbs 29:5 says "A man that flattereth his neighbor spreadeth a net for his feet."

HOW TO PREVENT RELIGIOUS FOREST FIRES

First Corinthians 10:13 says, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not permit you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

1. One way to "escape" committing this sin of tongues is to keep your mouth closed. I have never heard of someone criticizing another while his or her mouth was closed. James speaks of the tongue as an animal to be tamed. If you are not able to tame it, just keep it in its cage. Close your mouth. May we bite our lip before we bite another with ungracious words.

2. If you do not want to start a fire, don't carry wood or oily rags around with you. Anger or dissatisfaction must be dealt with properly or it will burst into flames at the first provocation.

I heard of a fire that started with a pile of old rags and spontaneous combustion. They just sat smoldering until someone came along and opened the door. The flames shot up as the air rushed in and fed the flame. So too, in many a heart, there can be smoldering hurts and resentments just waiting for the door to be opened. If there is a smoldering hurt in your heart, ask the Lord to pour the water of his Word and grace upon it, before it hurts you worse, or hurts others and the work of God.

If you come upon a spiritually destructive fire such as criticism or gossip, what should you do? First, refuse to feed it. Do not contribute to its flames. If someone complains to you about the preacher, Sunday School teacher, the church program, or any of a million things one can complain about, don't encourage it. If you are

not a trash collector, make sure someone is not just "dumping" their garbage on you.

Second, refuse to spread it around. Many times, a person passes the arson's torch from house to house via the telephone and a, "have you heard?" Remember, we must all give an account of ourselves to God for the words that we speak.

3. Sound the fire alarm. We must all learn to sound the alarm. If someone comes to you with a juicy tid-bit of information that sounds like gossip or an unconstructive criticism, tell that person that he or she is wrong. Be firm, but loving and point out the seriousness of carrying the oily rags of arson.

There is a right way to handle a complaint or concern. The Bible gives a model of conduct in such a situation. In Matthew 18:15 it says "if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone."

If one does not like the way someone has done something, he should go to that person first.

Unfortunately, someone often "shares" the problem with a few choice friends, and by the time the offending party is approached and informed of the offense, a small fire is already burning in the hearts of others.

Even if the originator of this fire is satisfied after going to the offending party, there is no guarantee that those who "took up" the hurt will be able to extinguish the fire that has begun to burn in their own hearts. They may not be able to forgive or forget the hurt you felt. Long after you have forgiven and forgotten they may still carry the fire. Perhaps they have their own little hurts,

which are nothing big in themselves, but are fanned into flames by your gossip or criticism.

If, after going to the party who has wronged us, we get no satisfaction, we are to take two or three witnesses and again approach this person with a loving spirit. If we still get no satisfaction, then we are to take it before the church.

In a church situation, one or two of the witnesses should go to the leadership, the elders or deacons. Of course, the last recourse is to go to the congregation.

The children used to sing a song; "Sticks and stones will break my bones, but words will never hurt me." Not true! Words cannot only hurt, they can destroy. Unkind words can kill joy, harmony, unity, and peace in a ministry.

May the Lord, place a guard at our lips that every word might be checked before it is allowed to enter the world. Ephesians 4:29 admonishes us "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers." Matthew 12:34-37 tells us that what we say reveals what we are. Let us also remember that we will have to give an account to God for every idle word we speak.

Yes, more churches are destroyed by "tongues on fire" than by

"tongues of fire." *

Lord, we pray that our speech would always be seasoned with salt and that we would never be guilty of evil speaking. May our words be carefully chosen and guided by your Spirit. Make us aware of the dangerous

potential for destruction that is in the tongue; and may we allow you to control and approve our every word.
Amen.