Lessons From a Nursing Home Visit

By David Maxson

In the eleventh year, in the third month, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me: “Son of man, say to the people of Pharaoh king of Egypt and to his multitude: ‘Whom are you like in your greatness? Behold, Assyria was a cedar; Egypt was a cypress. She was waters nourished it; the deep made it grow tall, making shoots.

(Ezekiel 31:1-5)

Going to a nursing home is quite an education. What we see is not always what we are led to believe. In our prayers at the death of Toni Herd’s cousin, William McCullogh and Savannah Spohn’s grandmother, Janice Thompson, we often pray for the dead to be with us in prayer. In the case of Toni’s death, we pray that she may rest in peace. However, the reality may be different. Toni’s death may have been caused by complications that her body was not able to overcome.

(Toni Herd’s Mother)

September Birthdays

- 2. Denise Davis
- 3. Trenton Anderson
- 4. Logan Robertson
- 5. Kevin Anderson
- 6. BJ Winnett
- 7. Josh Carter
- 8. Tanya Schoene
- 9. Danielle Weldon
- 10. Keeley Porter
- 11. Sherry Fowler
- 12. Kimberlee Myers
- 13. Jared Johnson
- 14. Ashley Wendland
- 15. Patsy Ogle
- 16. Brittany Baggett
- 17. Laura Winnett
- 18. Kaye Pearsall
- 19. Sarah Chandler
- 20. Wade Winnett
- 21. Ali Ingram

Thoughts to Ponder

“Mobocracy” is disorderly rule. It seldom reflects the will of an entire nation, state, or community. It may well reflect the unbridled emotions of a portion of a community or state. However, for some, it will sometimes do things if they think their identity is being lost in a crowd which they will not do if their individuality is recognized. In a multitude of “don’t cares” one may do and say things of which he is neither ashamed nor afraid yet apart from such company he would be both ashamed and afraid to do and say the same things.

The ethical standards of a crowd can often lower than the individuals who compose the crowd when such persons are considered as individuals. The good names of otherwise good and law-abiding citizens are sometimes forgotten under the frenzy of lynching a Negro. The same white man who would hesitate to take the law in his own hands under normal conditions may become either a Nadderer or follower in a mob. By himself, no; with the crowd, yes.

Many young men, returning from the thick of battle, have testified concerning the hatred for the enemy they felt on the field yet alone with their thoughts they condemned their own emotions. Many otherwise decent people who would condemn conduct unworthy and unbecoming a saint of God will curse, drink, gamble, and dance in a crowd given to such sins but they dare not thus act in the presence of even one person whose respect they esteem. There is a tendency within some of us to play to the gallery for sympathy or support yet we will refuse to meet face to face the individual we accuse. Is this not sometimes true of preachers?

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There is a brother or sister the preacher doesn’t like. He has been itching to tell her off. So what does he do? He goes to the pulpit and lets go with both barrels. Maybe the intended game is hit, maybe not. In either event, however, the preacher has accomplished his purpose. He got her told. He did not possess the moral courage to meet the sister face to face to deal with her error. He gets the moral strength he needs from the great number of brethren who will back him in the crowd but would refuse to hold up his hands if they understood all the details of his actions.

Christians should never cooperate in an unrighteous cause because that cause is popular. God’s standard of Christian conduct does not permit the Christian to “follow the multitude to do evil” (Ex 23:23). The theology of modernism says that the ultimate standard of right and wrong, of good and evil, is that which a given social group says it is. This philosophy denies that Jehovah of the Bible is actually the source of moral and spiritual consciousness. Instead it makes “God” the projection of the human mind, i.e., the creature of man rather than man being the created image of his Maker. In other words, the modernist’s fact that the Bible teaches the sinfulness of murder, rape, theft, and lying actually counts for little. These are sins simply because man in his evolutionary development, has declared them so. An omniscient God has had nothing to do with it because, to the modernist, omniscience exists not with one eternal self-existent Being but only with the sum total of human knowledge. The Christian thinks otherwise for he recognizes that “it is not in man to direct his own steps.”

The weighed judgment of the majority is never a test of truth. If history proves anything it establishes this fact. Ideas which at one time were universally accepted have long since been discarded. At one time it was believed that the earth was flat. The greater portion of mankind gave assent thereto. Time and experience, however, have declared the falsity of this assumption. The earth is not round because men have declared it so. It is round because God made it that way. Murder, adultery, and theft are not evil because men have so declared them. They are sinful because God has decreed them to be sin.

Men are fickle. Their ideas change with changing conditions. While this is true with the individual it is especially true of the multitude. The crowd will curse today and praise tomorrow; it will kill today and canonize tomorrow. “Hosanna” was the cry of the multitude when Jesus entered Jerusalem. “Crucify him” was the chant of the mob when He stood before Pilate.

Righteousness is usually unpopular and in the minority. This is why men should be weighed as well as counted. Gideon called for volunteers to drive the Midianites from Israel’s borders. Thirty-two thousand answered the call. The numbers rapidly dwindled, however, when placed in the scales. The minority had come for the fight, the majority for the fun. Again they were placed in the scales and again the majority had little conception of the cause at stake and for whom as well as for what they had been called forth. Then this minority was pitied against Midian an even greater majority, who stood in overt opposition not to Israel alone but to Israel’s God. Israel’s cause was just and right and God vindicated Himself and His people by giving them victory.

The Christian must “prove all things” (1 Thess 5:21). He must entertain only righteous principles. Then he must hold fast that which is good. He must pursue the good regardless of the costs to him personally. God does not settle all His accounts here. This is why the righteous and faithful shall reap in due season when “we faint not” (Gal 6:9). It is easy to float with the tide and go with the crowd. We should not forget, however, that at the judgment God will deal not with the crowd but the individuals who composed it.

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Predisposition

By James W. Adams

All of us to one extent or another are creatures of prejudice, of “predisposition.” While imagining that we are independent thinkers, studiously logical, and quite objective in our appraisals, we have strong dispositions toward certain views, procedures, and organizations. These dispositions result from many things: rearing, custom or tradition, popularity of the thing in question, innate personality traits. The cause may differ with different individuals, and whatever the cause the practical result is the same, but we all have predispositions. This fact should cause every man who desires to spend eternity with God to reexamine the spiritual ground on which he stands. Am I what I am and do I believe and practice that which I believe and practice because they are right and true, or because they are what I want to be right and true?

One of the universal tendencies of mankind has been to worship a God of his own creation. This can and is done without constructing a graven image of wood, stone, or precious metal. Many individuals professing to be New Testament Christians who would consider it quite heathen to bow down to a graven image (to worship) a God of their own creation. The Psalmist warned against this tendency when he quoted God as saying to the wicked: “These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself.” (Ps. 50:21) Do we worship and serve God as He is revealed to us in His word?

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Do we worship and serve God as He is revealed to us in His word? Or, do we worship and serve Him is we desire Him to be?

Frances Bacon wrote: “What a man had rather were true he more readily believes. Therefore he rejects difficult things from impatience of research; sober things, because they narrow hope; the deeper things of nature, from superstition; the light of experience, from arrogance and pride, lest his mind should seem to be occupied with things mean and transitory: things not commonly believed, out of deference to the opinion of the multitude. Numberless in short are the wars, and sometimes imperceptible, in which affections color and infect the understanding.” (Novum Organum via Logic and Language.)

Jesus impressively taught in the “Parable of the Sower” that the “good seed” — “the word of God” — takes root and grows to fruition only in the “good and honest heart.” (Lk. 8:11-15) The more strongly therefore we desire to believe a thing, the more carefully we should guard against being deceived by our own predisposition.

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