

THE FLORAL HEIGHTS INFORMER

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Condemning the Guiltless

Christians are commanded to watch for the souls of men out of a spirit of love. The apostle Paul tells the hard hearted Corinthians, who rejected the gospel, "*Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles*" (Acts 18:6). When speaking with the Ephesian elders at Miletus Paul said, "*Wherefore I testify unto you this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I shrank not from declaring unto you the whole counsel of God*" (Acts 20:26-27). When one compares these "*blood*" statements in Acts with the prophet Ezekiel's admonition to watch and expose sin in other's lives the simple conclusion of responsibility is identified. We are responsible for other people's lives of sin and are commanded to expose their wrong when seen or heard (see Ezek. 3:17-19; 33:1-9). With such grave responsibility comes the necessity of knowing the law of Jehovah God. To say that one has violated a law of God when in actuality no violation has occurred is to make a grave error of judgment.

The Pharisees were guilty of just such a grave error of judgment. Jesus accused the Pharisees of "*condemning the guiltless*" at Matthew 12:7-8. The Pharisees had witnessed Jesus and his disciples going through the grain fields on the Sabbath plucking ears of corn to eat. The action on the part of Jesus and his disciples offended the Pharisees. An accusation is levied against the Lord and his disciples. They are accused of violating the Sabbath by doing work. To understand the Pharisees charge we must understand the Sabbath law. The Mosaic Law forbid anyone to harvest and grind out the grain on the Sabbath (see Ex. 20:10; 35:2-3; Numb. 15:32-36). Jesus and his disciples; however, were not harvesting and grinding grain. They simply walked through the fields and plucked the corn because they were hungry. Jesus and his disciples were being falsely condemned because the very law that condemned a harvest permitted the individual to eat the corn as they walked through the corners of the field (see Deut.

Local News:

Welcome to all our visitors:

We pray that you will be edified by our service and that you will ask questions if things are not as you are accustomed to seeing. Please do come back at your every opportunity!

Announcements:

Please keep **Nell Hulsey** in your prayers. She has been battling a bladder infection that has her very weak. Walter's dad has come down with bronchitis and the illness is keeping the Husak family busy.

Herb Sims had to be taken to the hospital this past week due to a chest and throat infection. He is doing better and slowly regaining his strength.

Cindy Gray had an MRI test on her brain this past Thursday due to the symptoms of a concussion being slow to disappear.

Church Web News: Class notes on the book of Revelation have now been posted on the web (I Timothy Class notes are soon to follow).
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Continue to pray for our shut-ins:

Stella Davidson
696-1030 (Home)

Calvin York
692-0489 (Home)

Ila Belle Windham
(at home but request no calls at this time).

23:25). Rather than directly exposing the Pharisees erroneous conclusion with passages such as Deuteronomy 23:25 Jesus goes after the greater problem. Jesus exposes the sin sick hearts of the Pharisees. First, the Pharisees have wrongly condemned Jesus and his disciples because they were prejudiced, hated, and jealous of Jesus. Secondly, the Pharisees wrongfully accuse Jesus and his disciples because of their ignorance of God's laws.

Jesus first exposes their prejudice and hateful spirit in that he calls to their remembrance the time that David ate the showbread in the house of God, "*which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them that were with him, but only for the priests*" (Matt. 12:3-4). This incident occurs at I Samuel 21:1-6. The Mosaic Law commanded the bread to be eaten by the priest alone (see Lev. 24:9). Secondly, Jesus asks the Pharisees if they had ever read in the Law of Moses about the priests of God themselves doing work on the Sabbath (such as preparing and burning sacrifices to God) (see Numb. 28:9-10) yet they are considered "*guiltless*" (Matt. 12:5). Furthermore, Jesus exposes the Pharisees ignorance to God's laws by repeatedly asking them, "*Have you not read*" (Matt. 12:5; 19:4; 22:29).

The point made by Jesus is that David had sinned by eating the holy bread yet the Pharisees would not condemn that action. Secondly, the priests of Jehovah God had lawfully worked on the Sabbath day yet they did not condemn their actions either. Jesus and his disciples simply pluck grain and eat it out of hunger and the Pharisees cry foul. The Pharisees justified David in his error and accepted the work of priests because these were respected men in Israel's history. Their point is clear, "We don't like you Jesus." What they did not recognize is that Jesus was "*greater than the temple*" and should have been identified as just and holy rather than disdained (Matt. 12:6).

Sometimes overzealous brethren condemn the actions of others not out of love but rather out of jealousy, hatred, and ignorance. Let us all see that when we condemn another's action we better have book, chapter, and verse for our actions. Let us not hunt after certain people out of jealousy, hatred, or ignorance but rather let all your deeds among men be done through a spirit of love. If we act out of bitter jealousy, hatred, and ignorance we may do grave harm to another's faith and service to the Lord. Would you want to stand before the Lord with that error on your spiritual plate (Matt. 18:6; Rom. 14:15)?

John C. Robertson

Saul becomes a Christian

Introduction:

We are first introduced to Saul of Tarsus as one who eagerly watched, with an eye of approval, as the Jews stoned Stephen to death while calling upon the name of God (see Acts 7:54-8:1a). The more we look into the life of Saul the more he reminds us of many religious people. Many people are honestly participating in religious acts that are contrary to God's will in a very zealous way (see Acts 26:1-11; Gal. 1:13-14). Saul truly believed that he was doing great service to God while persecuting and even killing Christians (like many today who kill not with sword but with words). Saul was a man of misguided passions (Phil. 3:4-8). Do you suppose such people can be saved today?

I. Saul's Misguided Passion:

- A. Saul travels to Damascus to persecute Christians (Acts 9:1-2; 22:1-4).
- B. Latter down the road of Saul's life he would look back on his actions before being converted with shame (see I Cor. 15:9; Eph. 3:7-8; I Tim. 1:15).
- C. We may all look back at our past and proclaim, "What was I thinking?"

II. Saul's Conversion:

- A. Saul travels to Damascus and unexpectedly meets Jesus (the very one whom he was passionately against) (see Acts 9:3-18).
- B. Saul is baptized (Acts 22:16).

III. Why was Saul told to be Baptized?

- A. Saul was told to be baptized so that he would be forgiven of sins (see Acts 2:38; Rom. 5:1ff).
- B. Saul's baptism was a matter of his faithful obedience to God (II Thess. 1:8; I Pet. 1:22; 4:17; Heb. 7:18-19).
- C. Saul's baptism was a burial of the old man of sin (Rom. 6:1ff).
- D. Saul's baptism was a transformation that lead to his having a different and perfect direction in life (Col. 1:13).
- E. Saul's baptism was a matter of fellowship with God (I Pet. 3:20ff; Heb. 9:13ff).
- F. Saul's baptism was only a step in the direction of eternal heaven (Rev. 21:27).

IV. Why would anyone want to do anything different than what God reveals in His Word?

- A. Do you have misguided passion?
- B. Have the words of Jesus convicted you of sin?
- C. Have you been baptized for the remission of your sins?

Conclusion:

Many zealous and misguided spiritually interested people will only find the true end of their hope through the gospel message. Let us never be guilty of prejudging a man or woman unworthy or disinterested in truth before we even talk with them. We may be surprised.