

July 3, 2022

Viewpoint from the Valley Grove Church Of Christ

Humility And Wisdom

By James Adams

The truly great are always characterized by two attitudes, humility and wisdom. Some people erroneously equate humility with ignorance and weakness. This is a tragic mistake. Only the wise and the strong are capable of the highest humility. God's people through divine wisdom and spiritual strength can attain true humility.

Inspiration declares: "*Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.*" (Prov. 16:18.) And, "*Be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for He careth for you.*" (1 Pet. 5:5-7.)

We recently ran across the following gem in *Nuggets*: A haughty lawyer once asked a sterling old farmer, "Why don't you hold your head up in the world as I do? I bow my head neither to God nor man."

"Squire," replied the farmer, "see that field of grain? Only those heads that are empty stand upright. Those that are well filled are the ones that bow low." (*Capper's Weekly*.)

A loud mouth, a forceful personality, and a proud and powerful position are not necessarily marks either of great intellect or true worth.

Memory Rules

Forget each kindness that you do, as soon as you have done it.

Forget the praise that falls to you, as soon as you have won it.

Forget the slander that you hear, before you can repeat it.

Forget each spite, each slight, each sneer where ever you may meet it.

Remember every kindness done to you, whate're its measure.

Remember praise by others won and pass it on with pleasure.

Remember every promise made and keep it to the letter.

Remember all the happiness that comes to you in living.

Forget each worry, and each disaster, be hopeful and forgiving.

— Author Unknown

The Seven Thousand

By Russ Bowman

*“I have been very zealous for the LORD God . . . I alone am left;
and they seek to take my life” (1 Kings 19:14)*

Such was the complaint of Elijah as he hid on Mt. Horeb, discouraged, despondent, and desperate. During his life as the spokesman of God to Israel, he had witnessed degeneracy unequalled in their history. Omri had contributed to the moral digression of God’s people, infamously practicing evil *“worse than all who were before him”* (1 Kings 16:25). His son, Ahab, amplified that wickedness, marrying Jezebel and leading Israel to embrace her Sidonian god Baal. Elijah had faithfully opposed the ungodly influence of Ahab, performing significant miracles and defeating the prophets of Baal. But he had also seen Jezebel slaughter God’s prophets and certainly had witnessed the growing iniquity which accompanied Baal worship. Finally, when Jezebel vowed to execute him, Elijah fled, afraid for his future and that of Israel.

Our age is not completely unlike Elijah’s. Many Christians are scared, discouraged, despondent. We have witnessed unparalleled moral digression in our nation — promiscuity, perversion, dishonesty, violence, greed, selfishness. Every day we are confronted with increasing godlessness which seems to pervade every aspect of life. Disciples are rightfully concerned about the future of our country and the difficulties which will confront our children. Witness the particular passion for politics that has enveloped so many. The outcry for political change among Christians has been unparalleled. Yet I fear that we will see a continued trend toward ungodliness in our culture simply because our population is becoming more secular and profane. After all, a democratic government will always reflect the moral status of the majority. And if the majority become the animals that evolution has portrayed, then things will get worse. Perhaps much worse.

So do we, like Elijah, withdraw to the wilderness and hide in our caves? It’s easy to feel like we are defeated and alone and that no one else cares about what is right and holy. Even within many local churches there is so much temporality and compromise that faithful followers can become dejected. For a long time it’s been easy to be a Christian in America. How will we respond if it gets hard?

When Elijah complained to God that he alone was loyal, God responded by reminding him that *“I have reserve seven thousand in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal”* (1 Kings 19:18). I don’t know what the population of Israel was then, but I suspect that 7000 was a minute percentage.

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

Yet they reminded the prophet that the cause of Yahweh was not lost. And so with us. God's people may be in the minority and we may feel that we can have little impact, but there are lessons to be learned from the 7000.

God still reigns. It may not always appear so. We may feel overwhelmed by the power of government or media or academia. But the power of God remains unrivaled, and it is imperative that we remember that. Certainly the Christians who struggled under the sword of Rome must have felt similarly oppressed. But they spread the gospel into all the world and history has born out the survival of God's kingdom even as Rome fell. No matter what, there is no real doomsday until God's doomsday.

God's people can still be God's people. I suspect that it was difficult to be faithful and raise a godly family in a culture given to Baal worship. Certainly they faced the same selfishness and dishonesty and sexual immorality that we face. In fact, they may have had considerably greater challenges than do we. But those 7000 were still loyal to Yahweh. We can be faithful also. Culture and government may digress; our economy may fail and our children may struggle just to survive. But God promised to care for His own (Matt. 6:25-33) and perhaps they will learn faith that is far beyond our own. Service may be easier or harder, but it is always possible.

God has confidence in the influence of even a few godly people. Did He not offer to spare Sodom for the sake of ten righteous men (Gen. 18:23-32). Did He not expect the world to know of His glory through the influence of one tiny nation? Did He not send Elijah back to his work — one man to change the history of Israel? Did He not send twelve uneducated men to turn the world upside down? When Jesus designated His disciples "*salt of the earth . . . light of the world*" (Matt. 5:13-16), He obligated us to exert an influence which is far beyond our numerical measure. It doesn't take much salt to change flavor, or much light to dispel darkness. We have a job to do.

God's kingdom should be our greatest concern. These 7000 had not given themselves to temporality. Their citizenship was elsewhere; they served a greater King. It is easy to be swept away with circumstances. Perhaps the 7000 resented the godlessness of Ahab. Perhaps they longed for change in Israel. Surely they were repulsed at the cultural digression around them. But they had not bowed to Baal because they were loyal to Yahweh, confident in Yahweh. And no temporal circumstance was going to affect that. As Americans, we have the opportunity to affect change in our country, but let us not forget the kingdom that is to be our first priority. After all, like Israel, America is not eternal. The Kingdom of God is. May we promote it. 7000 was no great number. But they were God's 7000. And they were enough.

Example

‘Twas a sheep, not a lamb, that
strayed away, In the parable Jesus
told; A grown-up sheep that had gone
astray From the ninety and nine in the
fold. Out on the hillside, out in the
cold,

‘Twas a sheep the Good
Shepherd sought, And back to the
flock, safe to the fold, ‘Twas a sheep
the Good Shepherd brought.

Why for the sheep should we
earnestly long, And as earnestly hope
and pray?

Because there is danger, If they
go wrong, They will lead the lambs
astray. For the lambs will follow the
sheep, you know, Wherever the sheep
may stray; When the sheep go wrong,
it will not be long ‘Till the lambs are
as wrong as they.

And so with the sheep we
earnestly plead, For the sake of the
lambs, today; If the sheep are lost,
what a terrible cost Some lambs will
have to pay!

— *Unknown*

Read Your Bible

***Visitors — We pray that you
benefit spiritually from our
worship together and hope
to see you again.***

July Birthdays: The 9th Ruth Davis;
The 10th John Randolph; The 29th
Opal Yarbrough.

Postage
Stamp

Valley Grove Church Of Christ
2110 East Stateline Road
P. O. Box 461
Southaven, MS 38671

This Bulletin is a weekly publication of the
Valley Grove Church Of Christ, Southaven, MS

Sunday

Bible Study . . . 9:30 A.M.

Worship 10:30 A.M.

Worship 5:00 P.M.

Wednesday

Bible Study . . . 7:00 P.M.

Phone: 662-342-1132

www.valleygrovechurchofchrist.com