

## ISOLATION OR INSULATION?

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There is a certain petition in Christ's marvelous high-priestly prayer that produces in me the effect of majestic music; it is this: "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." (John 17:15).

Since this prayer is also surely offered for us today, if we have "believed on His name" (John 17:20), we shall do well to consider the implications of our Lord's request to His Father.

In verse 16 He declares, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

There is a vast difference between being **in** the world and **of** the world. A ship may be in the sea and yet safe. But if some of the sea gets into the vessel, it comes to be "of" the sea, to a certain extent, and is thereby endangered.

It makes me think of a Christian young man I know. He once lived on a street called "Broadway." But he by no means was on that avenue of which Jesus spoke, "Broad is the way that leadeth unto destruction." Matt. 6:13. In one of his letters to the Christians at Corinth, that fearfully wicked city, Paul reminds his friends there that they are "not to company" with sinful, worldly people. Yet in this very passage he recognizes the fact that as long as believers at Corinth are in the body there will of necessity be a limited contact with ungodly folks, (I. Cor. 5:9-10) occasioned in many instances, no doubt, as is often the case today, by one having to earn a living in a shop or store or office where the employees are not all Christians.

The apostles state that if one were to withdraw from any kind of association with worldlings, "Then must ye needs go out of the world." But if we are to be "the salt of the earth," and "the light of the world," we must exert our influence where the corruption and the darkness are.

I think of a noble Christian man who works in a rail road car shop a few miles from the city where these words are written. The most of the men there are profane and evil-living. What awful langugae my friend must often hear! Yet Jesus seems to say to him, "I know thy works and where thou [workest], even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith."—Rev. 3:13.

I heard this man give a testimony in prayer-meeting the other evening that thrilled my soul. God "keeps him from the evil" in that worldly place.

Some folks have made the mistake of thinking that in order to escape the evil that is in the world they must go "far from the crowd," and in a monastery or a convent find the safety of an uncontamination with the present order. But these "do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God."

His program is not isolation but insulation. We are not to cultivate "fugitive and cloistered virtues," but "in the world's broad field of battle," to be, through the wonderful divine enabling "heroes in the strife."

What a noble confession Paul made that day he wrote, "And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom!"—II. Tim. 4:18.

A house-wife is able to "preserve" fruits and vegetables so that they will not spoil. Is

not God the Father Almighty able to cause us to escape the corruption that is in the world? Indeed He is! Hallelujah!

To isolate is to run away from; to insulate is to be preserved from. In Matthew's house on the day of the dinner, "many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus." Mark 2:15. And this same blessed Lord was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners."—Hebrew 7:26. Through the power of His Father He practiced not the principle of isolation, but of insulation. "As He is so are we in this world."—I. John 4:17.

## PORTRAIT OF A METHODIST

A Methodist is one who has the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him—one who loves the Lord his God with all his heart and soul and mind and strength. He rejoices evermore, prays without ceasing, and in everything gives thanks. His heart is full of love to all mankind and is purified from envy, wrath, malice and every unkind affection. His one desire and the one design of his life is not to do his own will, but the will of Him that sent him. He keeps all God's commandments from the least to the greatest. He follows not the customs of the world, for vice does not lose its nature through becoming fashionable. He fares not sumptuously every day. He can not lay up treasures upon earth, nor can he adorn himself with gold and costly apparel. He can not join in any diversion that has the least tendency to vice. He can not speak evil of his neighbor no more than he can lie. He can not utter unkind or evil words. He does good unto all men, unto neighbors, strangers, friends and enemies. These are the principles and practices of our sect. These are the marks of a true Methodist. By these alone do Methodists desire to be distinguishable from all other men.—John Wesley.

## WHEN BLESSINGS BECOME CURSES.

E. E. Shelhamer

Is it not a pity that we are so depraved that what God intended to be a blessing often becomes a curse? Notice a few instances:

Jacob's ability to "get ahead" made him covetous and tricky.

Absalom's beautiful hair led to his untimely death.

Judas' being a financier prepared the way for selling his lovely Lord.

Yes, friend, your gifts became curses when, because of them, you felt your importance.

When your sociability led you to talk too much.

When your beauty and changeable suits made you vain and self-conscious.

When a nice automobile took you away from the humble place of worship.

When a large circle of friends robbed you of time for devotion.

When you had learned how to pray and testify in your own strength without much help from God.

"The greatest wisdom, and most essential, is the knowledge of God. Self sinks into insignificance as it contemplates God and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent. The Bible must be made the foundation for all study. Individually we must learn from this lesson book which God has given us, the condition of the salvation of our souls; for it is the only book that tells us what we must do in order to be saved."—Selected.

## "ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER"

By Grace Blowers Redding

How can I hear what you say when what you are keeps thundering in my ears?"

This old proverb was brought to my mind anew when the following conversation took place: "Why don't you read so and so's article?" "Because I know him. He is selfish and irritable at home. His wife has to try her utmost to please him, and goes without clothes and things she needs so that he can have what he wants."

Not many years ago there lived a farmer who always went to church and very religiously had family worship each morning, even when threshers and other hired men were present. One day one of these men went to his house to buy some syrup. As he was measuring it out, a thick piece of board made to fit the bottom of his measure fell out. No one had confidence in his religion after that.

In the same neighborhood lived another farmer, also a professor of religion, who took eggs to town to sell. There were times when he lacked some to supply his customers. At such times he went to his neighbors to secure the needed amount. No matter how late the hour when he returned from town, and no matter how stormy it was, he climbed the hill to his neighbor's house and paid the exact amount that he received for the eggs. When told that he should not make a special trip for it he would say, "Well, I might die before morning or the house might burn and the money be lost. I want everything squared up before going to bed." He has been dead several years, but to this day his neighbors tell what a good, honest, kind-hearted man he was, and his influence lives on.

It is one thing to profess and another to possess. It is all right to tell others what to do, but the thing which counts most is the everyday life. Kindness, unselfishness and thoughtfulness for members of one's own family, trying to brighten and cheer others, suited with the place where the Lord wants one, "in honor preferring one another," these are the things which inspire confidence in one's religion.—Free Methodist.

## WHERE IS HAPPINESS?

Not in unbelief.—Voltaire was an infidel of the most pronounced type. He wrote: "I wish I had never been born."

Not in pleasure.—Lord Byron lived a life of pleasure, if any one did. He wrote: "The worm, the canker and the grief are mine alone."

Not in money.—Jay Gould, the American millionaire, had plenty of that. When dying, he said: "I suppose I am the most miserable man on earth."

Not in position and fame.—Lord Beaconsfield enjoyed more than his share of both. He wrote: "Youth is a mistake, manhood a struggle; old age a regret."

Not in military glory.—Alexander the Great conquered the known world in his day. Having done so, he wept in his tent, because, he said, "There are no more worlds to conquer."

Where, then, is happiness found? The answer is simple: "In Christ alone." He said, "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." (John 16:22).—Clarence Edward Macartney.

Despise not your situation. In it you must act, suffer, and conquer. From every point on earth we are equally near to Heaven and the Infinite.—Amiel.