

Anchor Of The Soul

Vol. 2, Issue 3

March 2008

The Dangers of Emotionalism

By Casey Head

Emotionalism is defined in the dictionary as the “tendency to be easily swayed by the emotions.” In the religious world today, emotionalism is running rampant! Rather than searching for and accepting the simple teachings of the New Testament, more and more people are simply doing what “feels right.” In fact, anything that is difficult to accept emotionally is rejected altogether. Why is emotionalism dangerous?

It is dangerous because the Bible condemns it! Proverbs 14:12 says, “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.” In other words, something may *seem right* but be completely wrong! Instrumental music may feel right, but it is not authorized. The “sinner’s prayer” may feel right, but it is not found anywhere in the Bible. A sermon may be exciting and it may appeal to our emotions and tug at our heartstrings, but it may have absolutely no basis in truth. Furthermore, Jeremiah 10:23 says, “O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.” You see, we cannot rely on our emotions to determine what God wants. Rather, we must rely on God’s revelation!

What will you do? Will you have the attitude of the noble Bereans in Acts 17:11 who “received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so?” Admittedly, many of God’s teachings are difficult to accept. That is why “many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him” (Jn. 6:66). But isn’t the truth worth it? Isn’t God worth it?

You shouldn’t accept difficult teachings simply because they are difficult, but the fact is, truth is sometimes hard to bear, and we should be willing to forsake all for truth. After all, we can hold on to our emotions and traditions for the rest of our lives, but in the end, all that will matter is whether or not we were obedient to God!

Are You Like Barabbas?

By Andy Mitchell

If you already know who Barabbas was, you may wonder why I would ask you if you are like him. If you've never heard of him, besides wondering who he was, you might ask, "What does he have to do with knowing Jesus?" or "What does this Barabbas have to do with me?"

1. Who Was Barabbas?

o What Did He Do? He was a "notable prisoner" (Mt. 27:16), a "robber" (Jn. 18:40), "Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison." (Lk. 23:19).

o What Did He Deserve? He deserved physical DEATH! He took life and so he deserved to have his life taken from him. (Gen. 9:6).

o What Did He Receive? The Jews had a custom to release a prisoner at the Passover (Jn. 18:39). They chose to release the one who took life – Barabbas; but killed the Prince of Life (Ac.3:14-15; Lk.23:25).

2. Are You Like Barabbas?

o What Have You Done? You've sinned. "All have sinned" (Rom. 3:23), and that includes YOU! "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." (1 Jn. 1:10).

o What Do You Deserve? If you think you are generally a good person, and don't deserve to go to Hell, you have a serious problem! You deserve to be punished! Your wages, or just reward is spiritual DEATH! "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 3:23). "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezek. 18:20).

o What Will You Receive? That's up to you? "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 3:23). The gift is there, you just have to take it. "Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ and ye shall receive the remission of sins" (Ac. 2:38).

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Lightning Lesson

Why is it that people in the religious world run to extremes? Let's consider a few examples. The Catholic church for centuries taught a system of salvation by works alone. All a person had to do in the Catholic church was “go through the motions.” Go to mass. Confess your sins to the priest. Do so many “signs of the cross.” Etc. There even came a point when you could purchase the right to commit a certain sin (the sale of indulgences). Along came men like Martin Luther and John Calvin, and they responded to the error of Catholicism by running to the opposite extreme. They began to teach that salvation is by grace alone apart from any kind of works. Of course, the Bible teaches that we are saved by both grace (Eph. 2:5) and obedience (Heb. 5:9). Extremes are also seen in worship. The church of England was formal and cold in their approach to religion (one extreme). John Wesley came along, saw the coldness in the Anglican church, and ran to the opposite extreme of emotionalism. Of course, our worship should not be so formal that emotions are non-existent, yet at the same time, our worship should not be so emotional that there is no order or concern for truth (1 Cor. 14). In an effort to escape the error of one extreme, let's not run to the opposite extreme, bypassing the truth in the process.

“Anchor Of The Soul” is distributed monthly by the **Spruce Pine church of Christ**. We are a non-denominational church whose only goal is to follow the New Testament pattern.

Meeting Times

Sunday

Bible Class.....10:00 AM
Morning Worship.....11:00 AM
Evening Worship.....6:30 PM

Wednesday

Bible Class.....7:00 PM

Directions

Our building is located at 36 McHone Rd just behind the Mitchell Veterinary Clinic in Spruce Pine. Call (828)467-1463 if you need a ride to services or have any questions about the church.

Ten Reasons to Assemble With Us...

1. Our sermons are completely Bible based.
2. Our classes are informative and uplifting.
3. We have Bible classes for all ages.
4. Our worship is in spirit and in truth (Jn. 4:24).
5. Our worship is meant to glorify God, not man.
6. We make all of our visitors feel welcome.
7. We are truly a spiritual “family.”
8. We will do everything we can to help you grow closer to God (as we do the same for one another).
9. There are people of all age-groups, including many young families with children. You won't feel out of place.
10. We are not “just another denominational church.” We have many things to offer that no church in the immediate area is currently offering.

“The Churches of Christ Greet You”

By Byron Smith

Jesus promised in Mt. 16:18 to build a church, and He claimed that the church He would build would be His. Paul also affirmed this truth when he said in reference to the church, “which **He purchased** with His own blood” (Ac. 20:28). Jesus bought it by paying the price of His blood when He died on the cross. Therefore, the church belongs to Jesus, and is fittingly spoken of as a “church of Christ” When Paul conveyed the greetings of the Gentile churches with whom he had affiliation he said in Romans 16:16, “**the churches of Christ salute you.**” Paul here uses this expression to describe the relationship one has with Christ if they are a part of His church.

This church described as being a “church of Christ” existed in the first century. In fact, it was the only church that existed at that time. Paul said, “there is **one** body” (Eph. 4:4) and identified that body as being “the church” (Col. 1:18). This agrees with the promise of Jesus to build His church (singular). It is only in secular history that we find the origin of the deluge of denominations that exist today. They were founded by men and unsurprisingly have deviated from the written Word in many areas.

So can a church of Christ exist today as it did so long ago? Certainly, it can! Whenever and wherever simple New Testament Christianity is proclaimed and practiced a “church of Christ” will exist. This is achieved by an uncompromising adherence to what the Scriptures teach. For a church of Christ to exist man must **get back to the Bible and speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent** (Gal. 1:8-9; 1 Pet. 4:11; Rev. 22:18-19). To **restore** New Testament Christianity to its simplicity and purity man must demand a **book, chapter and verse** for anything and everything that is believed, taught and practiced. I am not suggesting to you that this is merely the best way to serve God acceptably, but that doing these things is the only way to serve God acceptably. Why jeopardize your soul by doing anything, more or less, than what God has revealed in His word?

You can become a Christian by believing in Jesus (Jn. 8:24), repenting of your sins (Lk. 13:3), confessing our faith in Jesus (Rom. 10:9-10), and by being baptized for the forgiveness of your sins (Ac. 2:38; Mk. 16:16). Upon being saved from sin the **Lord will then add you to His church** (Ac. 2:47) of which He is the Savior (Eph. 5:23).

Until next month’s bulletin comes your way the “church of Christ” that meets in Spruce Pine, North Carolina sends you greetings.

God’s Power

By Edwin Crozier

When we think of the amazing displays of God’s power, we think of creation, the flood, the day the sun stood still, the fire from heaven that wiped out different people, etc. Though these are amazing displays of God’s power, they are not the most amazing. They are not the most incredible. They are not even the most powerful. That is saying something because these displays are unfathomable.

In reality, the grandest display of God’s power takes place in a pool of water. When a worldly, iniquity-infested, sin-sodden, wicked follower of the prince of this world steps into the water, declares his or her faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and is then buried with Jesus through baptism and raised to walk a new creature, holy, pure, righteous and justified, then we have seen the true power of our God.

That power is vested in the message of God. Paul wrote, “I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, ‘The righteous shall live by faith’” (Romans 1:16-17). From beginning to end, the gospel is the power of God to bring about salvation.

We see that power demonstrated when a gospel-transformed life stands out and attracts attention from those who are of the world. We see that power as the gospel message is proclaimed whether from pulpits, across kitchen tables or on the commute to work. We see that power as an ungodly sinner submits and is cleansed.

Yet, we only see that power when we are looking. Regrettably, many people don’t see the true power of the Gospel. Sure, they recognize it saves and hope to finally get around to sharing that gospel with someone so they can be saved. However, they do not recognize it is the power at every step of the process. They do not see the Gospel as God’s power to catch people’s attention or get them to listen. Instead, they think entertainment, welfare or social relationships are that power. They think that we must somehow capture attention through some means that parallels what prospects are already interested in as worldly people and then hope to bring it around to the Gospel someday.

We need to restore our faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. If we really want to save people, we do not need to erect theaters, sports leagues and soup kitchens. We simply need to let the Gospel transform our lives and then invite others to let it transform theirs. Let’s trust God’s power to save.

“I Am a Soldier”

Author Unknown

I am a soldier in the army of my God. The Lord Jesus Christ is my commanding officer. The holy Bible is my code of conduct. Faith, prayer, and the Word are my weapons of warfare. I have been taught by the Holy Spirit, trained by experience, tried by adversity, and tested by fire. I am a volunteer in this army, and I am enlisted for eternity.

I will either retire in this army at the end of time, or die in it; but I will not get out, sell out, be talked out, or pushed out. I am faithful, reliable, capable, and dependable. If my God needs me, I am there. If He needs me to teach a class, to teach my neighbor, to help someone in need, or just to sit and learn, He can use me because I am there! I am a soldier. I am not a baby. I do not need to be pampered, petted, primed up, pumped up, picked up, or pepped up.

I am a soldier. No one has to call me, remind me, write me, visit me, entice me, or lure me. I am not a wimp. I am in place, saluting my King, obeying His orders, praising His name, and building His kingdom. No one has to send me flowers, gifts, food, cards, candy, or give me handouts. I do not need to be cuddled, cradled, cared for, or catered to.

I am committed. I cannot have my feelings hurt bad enough to turn me around. I cannot be discouraged enough to turn me aside. I cannot lose enough to cause me to quit. When Jesus called me into this army, I had nothing materially. If I end up with nothing, I will still come out ahead. I will win spiritually. My God has supplied my needs, and will continue to supply all of my needs.

I am more than a conqueror. I will always triumph. I can do all things through Christ. Devils cannot defeat me. People cannot disillusion me. Weather cannot weary me. Sickness cannot stop me. Battles cannot beat me. Money cannot buy me. Governments cannot silence me, and hell cannot handle me, because I’m safe in my Savior.

I am a soldier. Even death cannot destroy me. For when my commander calls me from this battlefield, He will promote me, and then allow me to rule with Him. I am a soldier in the army, and I’m marching, claiming victory. I will not give up. I will not turn around. I am a soldier, and I am heaven bound, and here I stand! Will you stand with me as a good soldier of Jesus Christ?

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Bible Trivia

Mountains of the Bible:

1. Where did Moses die?
2. Where was Jesus crucified?
3. When Elijah fled from Jezebel, to which mountain did he flee?
4. On which mountain did Joshua read the law to Israel?
5. On which mountain did Elijah challenge the prophets of Baal?

True or False Questions About John the Baptist:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 6. King Agrippa put John in jail. | T | F |
| 7. Gabriel was the angel sent to announce his birth. | T | F |

Challenge Question:

8. How does the Holy Spirit dwell in Christians today?

Evidence of God and the Bible:

The “Law of Conservation of Angular Momentum” says that when a spinning object breaks apart in a frictionless environment, the fragments will spin in the same direction. According to the Big Bang theory, the entire universe was created when atoms and particles were spinning so fast that there was an explosion. Therefore, according to the above law, all of the planets and moons should be spinning in the same direction...but they are not. Venus and Uranus along with 63 moons rotate backwards! The Big Bang theory cannot be true!

Answers:

1. Mt. Nebo (Deut. 34:1);
2. Golgotha (Mt. 27:33);
3. Horeb (1 Kin. 19:8);
4. Ebal (Josh. 8:34);
5. Carmel (1 Kin. 18:20);
6. False, it was Herod (Mk. 6:17);
- True (Lk. 1:19)

Challenge Question ANSWER From February 2008:

Gambling is a major temptation for Christians today, but we must recognize that many biblical principles are violated when we gamble. First, we should work to earn our living (1 Thess. 4:11; 2 Thess. 3:10), but gambling is all about taking the easy route to easy street. Furthermore, someone always has to lose in gambling. It’s either going to be you or someone else. The winner wins at the expense of the losers. Third, so many vices surround gambling- drinking, drugs, etc. Finally, gambling can be addictive, which violates 1 Cor. 6:12.

We WANT to help you!

Do you or anyone you know struggle in any of the following areas? Circle any that may apply.

Marital problems

Drugs or alcohol

Gambling

Troubled teen(s)

Depression

Contemplating suicide

Anger

Pornography

Other- _____

Understand that Jesus Christ is the only true answer to these problems.

Are you ready to take that first step? If so, then cut out this coupon and mail it to P.O. Box 401, Spruce Pine, NC 28777. Or call us at (828)467-1463.

Man's Needs and the Environment

The atmosphere we breathe is composed of a combination of nitrogen and oxygen suited perfectly to our lungs. The distance of the earth from the sun and moon is scientifically correct for the maintenance of life, health and happiness. The perpetuity of the rain and snow makes the earth fertile. The tides of the sea keep the shore clean and fresh. Vitamins necessary for bodily existence are provided in abundance. Laws and forces of nature stand ready to be harnessed for man's use. Nor does nature exist merely on a subsistence basis. God has filled the earth with beauty and charm. There are majestic mountains and verdant valleys. There are tall trees and lush carpets of grass. The moonlight, the stillness of the desert, the melodious thrill of songbirds all witness that God has made the earth for our pleasure. Food for man grows plentifully, and beneath the soil are abundant minerals and oils for tools and fuel. Surely this minute agreement between man's needs and his environmental provision gives evidence of a miracle-working God.

-King's Business

"I Have Given Into Thine Hand Jericho"

By Casey Head

In Joshua 6:2, the Lord said to the commander of the armies of Israel, "See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour." I'm sure that you are familiar with this great story as it is one of the most famous stories of the Old Testament, but have you ever thought about the verse mentioned above? It is interesting because God said to Joshua "I have given into thine hand Jericho" before the city had even been taken and before the armies of Israel had even marched around it.

Now skip down to Joshua 6:20. It says, "So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, *and they took the city.*" Between vv. 2 and vv. 20, God gave them the instructions that they were to march around the city once each day for six days and seven times on the seventh day. Not only were they to march around the city each day, but they were to bear the ark, blow the trumpets, utterly destroy everything in the city and abstain from the accursed things in the city itself.

Why is all of this interesting? It is interesting because on one hand God gave them the city before they even began to march around it, but on the other hand, they didn't actually take the city until they followed the Lord's detailed instructions. Furthermore, we must recognize that the Israelites didn't *earn* the city simply because they marched around it and obeyed God's instructions! After all, God is the one who knocked the walls down flat! He is the one who blessed them in their efforts! He is the one who gave them the city...even though they had to meet the conditions He set forth!

Now, what is the application for us? John 3:15 says, "That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." Many argue that because God gives us eternal life now, that it cannot possibly be lost despite the evil we may commit. Is it true that we have eternal life now? Yes, in the same way that Israel had Jericho in Josh. 6:2 before they marched around the city. They had Jericho, and we have salvation...in promise. We are told in 1 Jn. 2:25, "And this is the promise that He hath promised us, even eternal life."

We serve a great God who keeps His promises, but we also serve a God who expects His people to obey Him (Heb. 5:9). Yes, we have salvation, but in order to truly receive it, we must be faithful (Rev. 2:10).