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All Scripture quotations from the Editor are from the New King James Version (Bible Resources may be found on: www.johntpolkll.com)

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QUESTION: Why is there so much outcry about the dangers of social media (such as Facebook, Twitter a.k.a. X, Zoom, etc.)?

ANSWER: One reason is because it is so difficult, or impossible, to be certain of a stranger's claim. Please read **Joshua 9:1-27** and notice:

1. V. 3-15 The Gibeonites presented a faked appearance, lied about their homeplace, falsely claimed to be "servants" and pleaded for peace when they were part of Israel's enemies! On "social media" it is practically impossible to verify the personal claims, or picture(!) a stranger may present. It is especially sad to learn of someone who has only communicated on "social media," who leaves home and family to meet that stranger! Because strangers may be lying like the Devil to our face, friendships are best made with those who are "face to face." "Having many things to write to you, I did not wish to do so with paper and ink; but I hope to come to you and speak face to face, that our joy may be full" (**2 John 12**). "Neighbor" means "those who live closest," thus friendships should begin with our own family, then those living in our community. "Covenants" a.k.a. "contracts" should very cautiously be entered into with "strangers."

2. V. 14-16 Before consulting God's Word ("He who is surety for a stranger will suffer, But one who hates being surety is secure" **Proverbs 11:15**), Joshua and "the rulers of the congregation," "made peace with them," promising "to let them live." When the truth was revealed (that they were actually living close by, and thus part of those to be destroyed, **Joshua 9:22**), it was too late. The Israelites, bound by their loyalty to God, kept their part of that covenant (**Joshua 9:17-19**). According to Jesus, Christians, as sheep, "will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers" (**John 10:5**). Meeting, mingling, marrying, or "merging" with someone you don't really know is never good! Promises made in ignorance may have serious consequences! Learn all you can before entering into agreements! (This also applies to all "charities," "causes," "good works" receiving donations!)

3. V. 17-27 The Israelites simply held the Gibeonites to their word, "We are your servants" (**Joshua 9:8**), and made them agree to be just that, "woodcutters and water carriers for all the congregation, as the rulers had promised them" (**Joshua 9:21**).

"Social media" may not be completely responsible for bad decisions or agreements people make, but rather the lack of diligence in determining the whole truth.

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~"Effective leadership is not about making speeches or being liked; Leadership is defined by results not attributes."

~PETER DRUCKER

~Moderation in temper is always a virtue; but moderation in principle is always a vice."

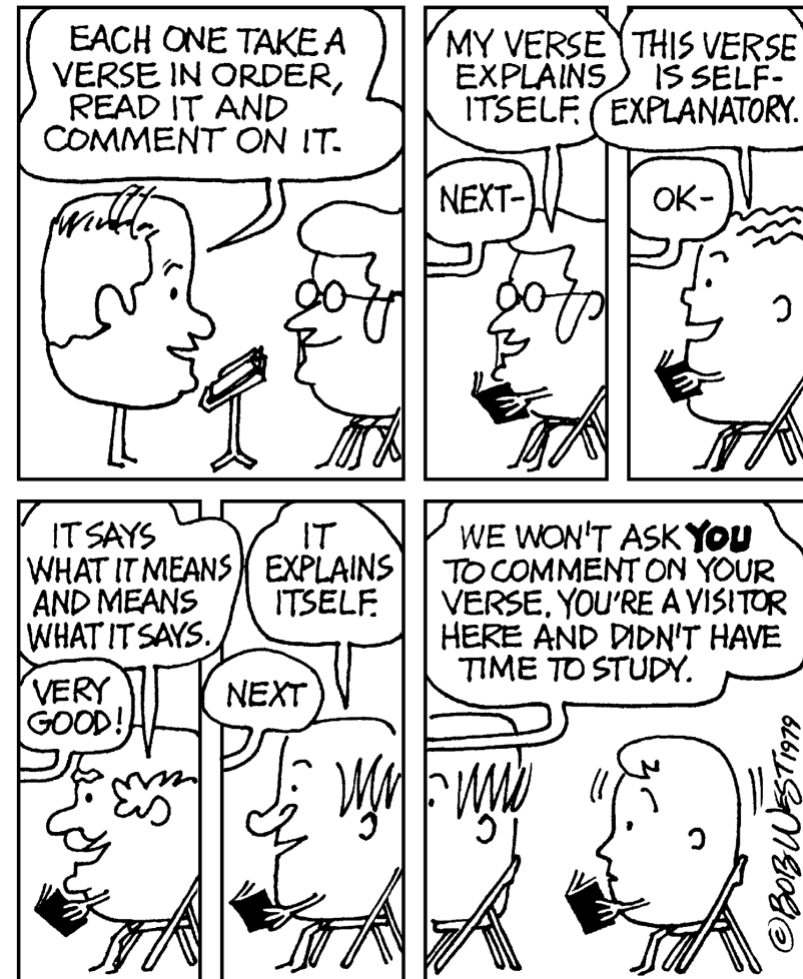
~THOMAS PAINE

~The test of a student is not how much he knows, but how much he wants to know."

~ALICE WELLINGTON ROLLINS

THEOPHILUS

Bible Commentary



Worship of Entertainment

There is no doubt that the man we know as Neil Postman described serious problems in modern culture in his insightful 1985 book *Amusing Ourselves to Death*. His thesis was that public discourse has been reshaped to such an extent by television and entertainment that thoughtful discourse is missing. Show business hype has affected advertising, politics, and religion. Postman's conclusion is that none of these changes have made for improvement.

In our entertainment-oriented culture, many churches find themselves trying to outdo themselves with more and more elaborate additions to worship. What began as special music by a choir becomes a full orchestra with professional soloists. A dramatic reading necessitates a full Broadway stage production. And as long as those who come to worship enjoy what is offered, anything goes. The expectation is that sermons will be shorter, wittier, and more uplifting. Anything in worship that cannot be "jazzed up" must be abandoned as boring-and there is nothing worse than being boring, we are led to believe.

The problem with this entertainment orientation is that the very object of worship is forgotten. God is the audience in worship. Jesus told the Samaritan woman that ignorant worship was unacceptable to God, even though it may have been sincere or enjoyable. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (**John 4:24**). To worship God in spirit and truth means that worship must be from the heart, not just outward acts, and that it must be done in exact obedience to God's commands. The worship must be directed to Him, not to the whims of the worshipers.

God's regulations for worship as set out in the New Testament are neither boring nor out of date. They are God-centered, while entertainment is man-centered. Cultural relevance is important-thus many churches are implementing modern technology such as projection systems to enhance sermons, and there is nothing

wrong with the worshiper enjoying worship. God intended for worship to bless His children, but when worship is merely window dressing for an entertainment performance, it cannot please God. The apostle warned, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God" (**2 John 1:9**). Paul condemned things that "have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship" (**Colossians 2:23**). "Self-imposed worship" is that worship fashioned after man's desires.

Bob Pritchard

Bulletin Gold

15 Things Husbands and Wives Need to Eliminate from Their Vocabularies

by Kevin Rhodes

1. **Insults**
2. **"Shut up!"**
3. **The silent treatment**
4. **Rolling your eyes**
5. **"I told you so!"**
6. **Yelling**
7. **Disagreements in front of others**
8. **References to past problems**
9. **Lying**
10. **"Divorce"**
11. **Nagging or complaining**
12. **Universal negative statements**
13. **Hurtful sarcasm**
14. **Unkind comparisons**
15. **Anything said disrespectfully**