

WALKING IN WISDOM (**Colossians 4:5**) Number #20

John T. Polk II, Editor

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

Email responses may be sent to: TychicusTruths@johnpolkll.com

Distracted By Details by John T Polk II

The Pharisees dwelt on details rather than Scriptures; they washed the outside, but not the inside “of the cup and dish” (**Luke 11:37-40**); they prejudged characters, but not convictions (**Luke 7:36-50**); they condemned everyone as major offenders, except for themselves (**Luke 18:9-14; Luke 7:28-30**).

Jesus condemned Pharisees when He said:

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier *matters* of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!” (**Matthew 23:23-24**)

They swallowed “a camel” (unclean to Jews, **Leviticus 11:4**) by straining out a “gnat” to keep from being “unclean” in their own eyes. Thus, they had overlooked far more important matters that involved their own hearts: “**justice and mercy and faith.**”

God had said so through the prophet Micah: “He has shown you, O man, what *is* good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?” (**Micah 6:8**) “**Justice**” is the sense of fairness which applies the Law of God to all, including ourselves; “**mercy**” is the sense of empathy which motivates us to help with physical and spiritual burdens; “**faith**” is the conviction of heart that sustains us through this life of serving God. Jesus did not minimize the miniscule, but condemned ignoring the “**weightier matters.**”

This obsession with “details” has caused many a conflicted soul.

Take this test:

1. What is your focus on Calvary: the thief on the cross, or Jesus

Christ’s sacrifice (**2 Corinthians 5:18-21**)?

2. Is church attendance about increasing the numbers of warm (or not so warm!) bodies at each service, or considering: “... One another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching” (**Hebrews 10:24-25**)?
3. Can there be a “strong, sound sermon” without mechanically adding a mantra of “5 steps” right at the end of it (before you answer, maybe you ought to re-read all of the sermons of Peter and Paul in the New Testament)?
4. What is more important in a worship service: proper air conditioning/ heating, padded seats, and entertained children OR approaching the presence of God Almighty with sacrifices (**Psalms 95:1-2; 1 Peter 2:4-5**)?
5. Singing “psalms and hymns and spiritual songs” (**Ephesians 5:19**) on key and in harmony, or: “... By Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name” (**Hebrews 13:15**)?
6. Giving “on the first *day* of the week” according to a pledge for a church budget/IRS Income Tax, OR “Let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper” (**1 Corinthians 16:2**)?
7. Has worship assembly become a tiresome chore or are we: “... Renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him” (**Colossians 3:10**)?

Jesus Christ has already given His judgment about Pharisees.

“Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit” (**Psalms 51:12**).

Published in the *Gospel Gleaner*, February 2013

~~~*"No man will make a great leader who wants to do it all himself or get all the credit for doing it."*

~~~~~ANDREW CARNEGIE

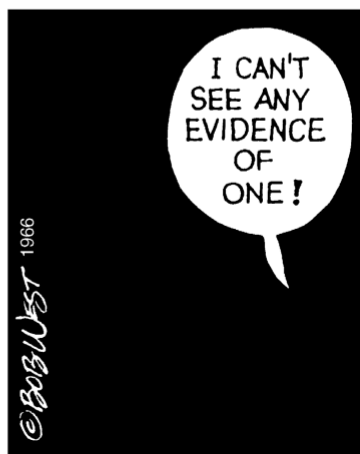
~~~*"I hope I shall possess firmness and virtue enough to maintain what I consider the most enviable of all titles, the character of an honest an."* ~~~~~GEORGE WASHINGTON

~~~*"I prefer peace. But if trouble must come, let it come in my time, so that my children can live in peace."*

~~~~~THOMAS PAINE

## THEOPHILUS

Some Love Darkness



By Dan Jenkins

## Motivation of False Teachers

It is not true that all who claim to be working for the Lord are godly. Because the Holy Spirit guided the apostles and prophets, we have the totality of the very spiritual truth in the Bible (John 16:13; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). It is the measuring rod to be used to identify false teachers. The Bible warns against the presence of false teachers, those who do not preach exactly what He revealed (Matt. 7:15, 21-23).

When the church began, one of the grave problems it faced was the Judaizing teachers. They were Jews who became part of the church then tried to force Gentile Christians to keep the Old Testament law, especially to be circumcised. Paul described these false teachers in the letter he wrote to the churches in Galatia. In that epistle he describes what motivated these teachers. To understand this motivation gives us insight into what motivates false teachers today.

**False teachers wanted to look good to others.** They were binding circumcision, and Paul described one of the reasons they did this. "They desire to make a good showing in the flesh (6:12). They were more concerned about how they looked to others rather than how they looked to Christ.

**False teachers wanted to avoid criticism and persecution.** Paul said, "They compel you to be circumcised only

that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ" (6:12). As you read the divine history of the early church you will see the source of the persecution as it began. We tend to think that the Roman government persecuted the church, but it came from the Jews. As Paul went from city to city it was that nation who used every possible means to keep the church from spreading. The Judaizing teachers wanted to avoid this grave problem and compromised the truth about how Gentiles could be saved. In doing this they sought to appease the anger of the Jews. Preaching the truth often brings problems, but we must never let criticism from others keep us from doing right.

**False teachers wanted to use their followers in boasting and to thereby advance themselves in the eyes of others.** Paul said, "They desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh (6:13). False teachers often have more regard for the praise of men than for the glory of Christ.

**True teachers have one motivation and that totally involves Christ and Him crucified.** Paul said, "God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (6:14). True teachers do not seek to call attention to themselves, boasting of what they have done for the Lord. False teachers are in our world, and their motivation has changed very little from those in the first century.

*"And THESE WORDS which I command you today shall be IN YOUR HEART. You shall TEACH THEM DILIGENTLY to your children, and shall TALK OF THEM when you SIT IN YOUR HOUSE, when you WALK by the way, when you LIE DOWN, and when you RISE UP." - GOD via Moses, Deuteronomy 6:6-7*

