

THE GREENWOOD BULLETIN

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The Valley of Vision

By An Unknown Puritan

Lord, high and holy,
meek and lowly, Thou hast
brought me to the valley of
vision, where I live in the depths,
but see Thee in the heights;
hemmed in by mountains of sin,
I behold Thy glory.

Let me learn by paradox
that the way down is the way up,
that to be low is to be high, that
the broken heart is the healed
heart, that the contrite spirit is
the rejoicing spirit, that the
repenting soul is the victorious
soul, that to have nothing is to
possess all, that to bear the
cross is to wear the crown, that
to give is to receive, that the
valley is the place of vision.

Lord, in the daytime
stars can be seen from deepest
wells, and the deeper the wells
the brighter thy stars shine; let
me find Thy light in my darkness,
Thy life in my death, Thy joy

in my sorrow, Thy grace in my
sin, Thy riches in my poverty,
Thy glory in my valley.

Confessions I Never expect to Hear

By Bobby Witherington

"Lord, I don't worship
You because I have things to do
which have greater appeal to
me."

"I seldom attend
because, frankly, I care nothing
for the church and am not too
concerned whither it lives or
dies."

"I don't read the Bible
because I'm disinterested in it."

"I use profanity because
I'm too irreverent to care, too
ignorant to employ better words,
and too disrespectful of my
fellowman to bother."

I gossip because I enjoy
the sadistic pleasure of building
myself up while tearing
somebody else down."

"I don't do personal work
because I don't know enough

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myself; I'm too indifferent to
learn, and don't really care
whether my fellow man is saved
or lost."

I give very little to the
church because I am covetous
and haven't learned to put the
Lord first."

"I wear immodest
clothing because I am worldly
minded and like the kind of
attention I attract."

"The reason I let
'hypocrites in the church' keep
me away is because I'm so
hypocritical myself that I want to
appear righteous while refusing
to do right."

"Lord, I'm miserable
because I have too much Bible
knowledge in me to be content in
sin, and too much sin in me to
be happy following the Bible."
As stated in the title, I never
expect to hear the above
confessions. However, if the
truth were known I doubt not but
that the **real reasons** behind
most excuses affecting our
disservice to God are listed
above. All of us, even those of
us who may think that we stand,
should **"take heed"** lest we fall
(1 Corinthians 10:12), but I
would especially urge those who
frequently make excuses for not
worshipping and serving to

**"Examine yourselves, whether
ye be in the faith"**
(2 Corinthians 13:5).

**Why cannot life's big
problems come when we are
twenty and know everything?**

One

Selected Thought

One moment can change a

day.

One day can change a life.

One life can change the world.

Is This Our Problem?

A Selected Thought

If you read history, you
will find that the Christians who
did most for the present world
were those who thought most of
the next. It is since Christians
have largely ceased to think of
the other world that they have
become ineffective in this
world.

Paper Bait, Paper Mouse

By Bob West

You have probably
heard the story of the fellow who
was out of cheese, so he baited
the mouse trap with a picture of

a piece of cheese. The next morning the trap was sprung, having captured a *picture* of a mouse!

This reminds me of the efforts made by religious teachers (including some of my brethren), who try to attract souls to Christ without the real gospel. Instead, they substitute recreation, entertainment, and other social events in the hope of drawing large numbers who can then be "trapped" into becoming Christians. At least two things are wrong with this practice.

First of all, reaching the lost is not some kind of trapping expedition where the quarry is the unsuspecting sinner, who must be "baited" or "suckered" into accepting the Gospel.. While it is true that Jesus wants His disciples to be "fishers of men" (**Matthew 4:19**), most of the fishing done in that area had to do with nets, not fancy and deceptive baits. Jesus said, "Go and preach." He did not authorize us to sneak up on or entrap sinners.

In the second place, the real, unadulterated gospel is the only means God has given us to attract sinners. It alone is the

"power of God unto salvation" (**Romans 1:16**). The knowledge of God is, according to our Master, sufficient to draw sinners to Christ (**John 6:44-45**). The use of some phony, worldly "bait" will, like the story above, result in snaring phony, worldly converts. We still reap what we sow. Sowing carnality is not likely to bring forth spirituality.

If we are faithful and diligent in forthrightly proclaiming the gospel to the lost, those with good and honest hearts will receive the word with gladness and be saved. Those who reject it cannot be saved by worldly means. This is God's original, simple, and effective plan for reaching mankind. Who are we to suggest that we can improve upon the Divine plan by using the world's methods. We need to be satisfied with God's provisions which are more than adequate to accomplish His purposes.
