

American Decency Association

PO Box 202, Fremont, MI 49412 231-924-4050 www.americandecency.org

Encouraging Christians to guard their hearts

April 2010

Truth Engagement



One of the most striking aspects of life in America today is that so many people have had an encounter with gospel truth at some point in their lives. ...

Yet what also stands out are the numbers of people who began with the gospel, apparently accepted these biblical truths, and yet somehow lost their way. They never matured into the fullness of biblical understanding.

It is true, of course, that we are to expect quite varied responses both to the gospel message and to the consequences of it in people's lives. How else are we to understand the parable of the sower (Matt. 13-3-8; Mark 4:3-8, 14-20; Luke 8:5-8; 11-15)?

In this parable Jesus speaks of three different kinds of responses we see in the church to the gospel seed.

Some receive the Christian message in the shallow soil of their hearts, but beneath it there is only impenetrable rock. The plant dies as a result. ...

There is a second kind of person in the parable who has brushed up against the gospel They appear to be more serious than the first kind, whose momentary allegiance to Christ results in nothing. They are the ones who have heard the Word, who do not reject it, and in whom it apparently takes root. It does not strike rock. Nevertheless, "their fruit does not mature" (Luke 8:14). Why is this? The seed falls on ground that has not been cleared well. The weeds are not immediately evident, but soon they make their presence known. When they do, they kill off the small plant that is struggling for life. What are these weeds? They are "the cares and riches and pleasures of life" (8:14).

In the West we have not the slightest inkling that, in reveling in affluence as we do, we are playing with fire. This affluence so

easily becomes an alternative Way, Truth, and Life, a counterfeit gospel Unfortunately, *la dolce vita* [the good life] is not itself satisfying, not in an enduring way. It tends to make us shallow, self-absorbed people who give ourselves to chasing what is superficial by way of styles, fads, and what is pleasurable ...

There is a third category. It is made up of those who not only hear the Word but also "hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience" (Luke 8:15). ...

In fact, there is nothing quite so cheering, so invigorating, as to be with people like this. They are people whose eyes are wide open to the shadows and pains of life, but they also live on another plane. ... The Word entered not only the surface of their lives but also the soil beneath it. The tangled roots of the weeds have been pulled out of this soil so that the seed grows into a strong plant.

Taken from *The Courage to Be Protestant*, by David F. Wells. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company - 2008

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No Little People

by Bill Johnson



Recently I attended the funeral of Pauline Brake, aged 92, who passed away March 17. The Lord allowed her to linger in frailty and illness at a care center for more years than she would have ever dreamed possible, being such a warrior and laborer for the Lord. Yet, she had so many good years of faithful, simple, strong Christian service!

In this day of big names, notoriety, instant fame, national attention, there is also the diminishment of the significance of the small, the seemingly insignificant, those living godly lives right where they are.

Pauline didn't just sign petitions. She picked them up. Made copies of them. Circulated them. She stood staunchly for life, decency, godliness. She spoke up and spoke out, writing letters vigorously and regularly to politicians, advertisers, letters to the editor.

I met this lady when I was 39 years old in 1985. She would have been 67 years old then. I met her at a little anti-pornography group meeting that was in its initial stages determining the course of this newly forming group. That fledgling group was to ultimately become this ministry.

Pauline was a feisty saint of God. She truly hated sin and how Satan used pornography to deceive and destroy people.

She loved the Lord dearly, that was obvious. She was burdened by the spiritual lethargy that was already so prevalent in that day.

At her funeral last week, one of the things that she was remembered for was her intense love for children and for sharing the Gospel faithfully over many years to them. She held a Child Evangelism Fellowship class in her home weekly for many years. In later years of her service, she bought a van and filled that van to overflowing with children, carting them to her home to tell them about Jesus and to disciple them in the Word that they would know Him and bring glory and honor to His name.

The late Francis Schaeffer stated it this way in his book *No Little People*. *"The people who receive praise from the Lord Jesus will not in every case be the people who hold leadership in this life. There will be many persons who were sticks of wood that stayed close to God and were quiet before Him, and were used in power by Him in a place which looks small to man.*

... Only one thing is important: to be consecrated persons in God's place for us, at each moment. Those who think of themselves as little people in little places, if committed to Christ and living under His Lordship in the whole of life, may by God's grace, change the flow of our generation. ..."

Oh that there were more Paulines around, whose rock solid faith inspired me and many others.

Many of us need to quit seeking the things of this world and seek Him daily, asking God to help us refocus upon His will, letting Him lead into yielding to Him. If that means a lower place, take that place.

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