



Preparing Souls To Serve The Lord

Volume XXIV

March 2004

Number 8

STUDENTS EXPRESS APPRECIATION TO SCHOOL

January 26, 2004

*Jackie Stearsman, Director
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Brother Jackie,

To you, Brian, the Board of Directors, and all of the other faculty members, we the full time students would like to extend our gratitude for the time and effort that you all put forth in guiding us to become preachers and evangelists in service of God and His kingdom. We daily see the concern and love that you all have for the Truth of His word. And we are both grateful for that love and the opportunity that we have to study under your guidance. Our hope and prayer is that we can go on to share that love with others and bring more to the kingdom.

We know that we can never repay the love that God has for man, nor the opportunity that He has given us to study and learn His will through the direction of the Florida School of Preaching. We realize the gift we have to come to this school with no tuition and books at cost. How the school has helped most of us to raise the support to maintain our physical needs, so that we can be full time students, and only concern ourselves with the learning of God's will and the furtherance of the Gospel. Though we can never repay that gift, we hope to always remember and be dedicated to serving Him by showing others the way to serve God and how to be pleasing to Him, so that they also can receive salvation of their souls.

We hope that you will receive this small token from us and put it toward the cost of the lectureship and operation of the school. May we never forget the debt we owe to the Lord, as well as to the Florida School of Preaching.

Sincerely and in Christian Love

/s/ Full time students, Spring semester, 2004.

[Financial Contribution Was Enclosed.]

Is The Idea Of God Nonsensical?

[The following material is from our local paper in Lakeland, Florida. I would like for you to read it and then to reflect with me on some of the assertions made. The text, absence the author's name, is between the lined section, Editor.]

The Ledger, Monday, January 12, 2004

Idea of God Nonsensical

Referring to the Religion section of Jan. 4, no matter how much is written about God, it seems the concept has many problems. It's obvious many devastating circumstances occur in nature where there is no escape.

As for testing of faith (Job), why inflict inhumane acts on defenseless beings? Natural events cannot be avoided; however, to create humans who perpetrate horrific crimes against innocent persons is not my idea of a worthy "god."

Situations of child rape, starvation, deformities, mental illness and others are not reasonable if there is an intelligent creator. Some things we bring on ourselves; others, intrude on our lives.

The idea that God gave Pat Robertson insight on election results favoring George Bush is beyond comprehension considering how any more crucial matters need attention. (Hearing or imagining voices is a symptom of mental illness.)

There is often bias by those studying existence or nonexistence of a God. Points can be made either way, depending on intention of those seeking. Whether there is a god or other force, it makes no sense that there are so many versions and origins, with disagreement among those who think they have access to the one true god.

[Author's name withheld, JMS]

Reflections

1. God/god idea

The assertions about the idea of God does not follow from the evidence provided by the confused writer.

If there is confusion with an idea, does this mean that an idea has no reality? Does what the writer terms "devastating circumstance" negate God or the idea of God?

If confusion over an idea means that the idea is nonsensical, then medical science is nonsensical.

Because a person makes an assertion about God (god) does not make it true.

Either there is a God or there is not a God. Even if a

person denies the one true God of the Bible, that same person has a term that is reasonable to formulate a denial.

Note the writer uses the term "god" a number of times, and asserts that it is a nonsensical idea!?

If it is a nonsensical idea, am I expected to understand the writer? Why write or print nonsense?

2. Natural Disasters

It is true that natural disasters happen in our world. The writer, and all, need to understand the purpose of our world.

The writer does not have a means of understanding the world around us without the Bible.

Given the teaching of the Bible, there is a purpose in the world being as it is. The Book of Job provides insight into this world, does it not?

James states that we should consider the total story of

The Harvester

Published Monthly
Florida School of Preaching
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TRAINING PREACHERS SINCE 1969

Job, and when we do God will be shown to be a God of mercy (James 5:11). Read carefully the following quotations from the Book of Job:

“For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man. He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword. He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain” (Job 33:14-19).

“He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light. Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, To bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living” (Job 33:28-30).

“He delivereth the poor in his affliction, and openeth their ears in oppression” (Job 36:15).

“Deck thyself now with majesty and excellency; and array thyself with glory and beauty. Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath: and behold every one that is proud, and abase him. Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place. Hide them in the dust together; and bind their faces in secret. Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee” (Job 40:10-14).

God has designed this world to awaken man to his

mortality, and prepare man for immortality. How would you improve on this?

3. Nature of Man

God chose to make a free moral agent. You can not have a free moral agent without that being having the potential of good or evil.

Define man, and try and make your definition objective and true. Does your idea of man have a means of demonstrating that it is the correct idea? Does your view of man harmonize with reality—man as he actually is, or is your ideas as you imagine man should be?

When you modify man into your mold, how does he fit into the real world?

4. Good and Evil

Our writer has no means of providing an objective definition of good and evil without the Bible. What is good? What is evil? Why is a given act good or evil? Who is to say that your choices are good and mine are evil?

As you read what I am writing, you are either agreeing with me or you are not agreeing with me. My statements are either true or they are not true. Which is it, and why?

Is good and evil only personal likes or dislikes? If this is all that is meant by good and evil, then, there is no real evil and good, and no one can condemn the actions of another as evil.

What standard does our writer use to accuse “god” (a nonsensical idea) of evil?

5. Pat Robertson

Because a person

(religious or otherwise) makes an assertion does not make it true. The assertion is either true or it is not true.

Neither Pat Robertson nor any other person is receiving direct revelations today—political or otherwise. To claim to receive direct revelations today is to deny the teaching of the Bible.

There was a time, when the Bible was being produced, that God gave direct revelation. When the Bible was completed these special revelations ceased (John 14:26; 16:13; 2 Tim. 3:15-17).

Any assertion made by Mr. Robertson will be true if it harmonizes with the total teaching of the Bible. It is false when it does not harmonize with the total teaching of the Bible.

The religion Pat Robertson promotes is not in harmony with the teaching of the Bible (1 Cor. 14:37-38; Gal. 1:6-10).

Gene Burgett Report

Brian Kenyon and I made our yearly pilgrimage to the Freed-Hardeman Lectures in early February. As per tradition, we once again enjoyed the hospitality of Jim and Karen Davis, Brian’s in-laws, who allowed us to stay in their home for the week. Jim is a shepherd of the church in Finger, Tennessee. We worshiped with the Finger church during our stay and Brian preached during the morning assembly.

There was one significant change in tradition, Amber, Brian’s wife, accompanied us.

Amber stayed with the Florida School of Preaching display and did a wonderful job seeing to the sale of our lectureship books, CDs, and study notes.

Our lectureship books have been received with much enthusiasm. We are running low on our 2002 lectureship book, *Do You Understand Worship?*, and our most recent volume, *Do You Understand the Grace of God?* (2004 lectures) had the highest sale of any in the series so far during the week of the Florida School of Preaching Lectures.

The record-setting pace continued during the Freed-Hardeman Lectures. We sold more literature during the FHU lectures than any previous year. Our new CD has been especially well received and accounts for a

lot of our sales. This comes as no surprise. For \$25.00 one can purchase a CD containing the Florida School of Preaching Lectureship books from the years 2000 through 2004. Included on the CD is Adobe Reader 6.0, allowing the user to do word and phrase searches as well as cut and paste functions. Plus, for a small fee, the CD may be returned along with the receipt and we will upgrade it to include the 2005 lectureship book next year. Many people found this a bargain too good to pass-up, and we sold the entire supply of CDs we took with us to FHU.

Many computer users will undoubtedly be interested in visiting the Florida School of Preaching web page (www.fsop.net), where the audio

portion of all four days of our 2004 lectures is now available.

While in Tennessee we were asked why we bring the Florida School of Preaching display to the lectureship of a Christian university. One very important reason is the opportunity it provides to make our lectureship books and other materials available to people that might not otherwise be aware of them. We do this because we believe in the materials we publish. The Florida School of Preaching does not exist merely to perpetuate itself. This institution exists to serve the churches of Christ. And, one of the ways we can serve the brotherhood is by making sound material available on timely subjects.

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