

Light and Life

Though They Call

“When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called My son. As they called them, so they turned from My face; they sacrificed to the Baals, and burned incense to carved images” (Is. 11:1-2). God’s deliverance of Israel from Egyptian slavery was an event continually referenced by later generations to illustrate God’s grace. The lesson ought to have been that Israel should be faithful to God because of God’s faithfulness to them. However, the majority of the nation responded to God’s grace with idolatry.

God continued, “I taught Ephraim to walk, taking them by their arms; but they did not know that I healed them. I drew them with gentle cords, with bands of love, and I was to them as those who take the yoke from their neck. I stooped and fed them. He shall not return to the land of Egypt; but the Assyrian shall be his king, because they refused to repent. And the sword shall slash in his cities, devour his districts, and consume them, because of their own counsels. My people are bent on backsliding from Me. Though they call to the Most High, none at all exalt Him” (Is. 11:3-7).

God had done so much for Ephraim, yet Ephraim was willfully blind to the blessings they received. God did not have to do anything for them, yet He stooped down from His throne to provide them with what they needed. If it weren’t for God, they would have still been slaves, but God delivered them and even taught them to walk on their own.

Yet, after all of this, the people of Ephraim would only pay God lip service! They called to Him, but did not exalt Him! Therefore, God would not deliver them back to the Egyptians – but this time to Assyria! Ephraim needed to learn to appreciate what it meant to be led by God’s hand. Let’s learn from Ephraim to appreciate our blessings from God, and respond with total allegiance!

- Sam Bunyard

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story doesn’t remember the critics. It remembers the one who withstood criticism to accomplish something great.

Especially today in our modern hypersensitive social-media-driven world, a servant will have more fans and critics than ever. The keys are: 1) don’t let praise go to your head, and 2) don’t let critics get into your head. Be so invested in your craft that you don’t have time to listen to the naysayers – no time for negativity.

Remember, as godly servants you are serving the Lord, not the critics. You’re too busy helping others secure their future with the Lord. Personally, if I would have listened to the naysayers and critics, I would have stopped preaching a long time ago. I am constantly reminded that I work for the Lord, not brethren. I work **with** brethren but not **for** them. Working for the Lord is a higher calling.

I want to encourage you to never let the opinion of others define you and your future. Your identity

doesn’t come from what the world says about you. It comes from God – from when He created you. Your work, service, and mission are too important to allow others to define your destiny.

No matter what anyone says, just show up and do the Lord’s work.

If people praise you, show up and do the Lord’s work.

If people criticize you, show up and do the Lord’s work.

If no one even notices you, show up and do the Lord’s work.

Just keep showing up, doing the Lord’s work, and serving to help others be like Him.

- Rickie Jenkins

“...having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God’s will, than for doing evil.”

- 1 Pe 3:16-17

ASSEMBLY TIMES

Sunday

Morning Bible Class 9:30
Morning Assembly 10:30
Evening Assembly 5:00

Wednesday

Evening Bible Class 6:30

DOWNTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST

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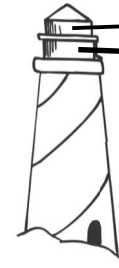
It's not complicated –
serve your King!

ELDERS:

Otis Hardin
Perry Johnson
Ken Parker
Alan Revier
GW Walsh

DEACONS:

TJ Burleson
Scott Hale
Jason Hill
Chris Johnson
Brock McKeel
Randy Potter
Tim Roberts
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DOWNTOWN GOSPEL BEACON

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Ignore the Critics; Do the Work

Critics seem to be the flavor of the day. Anybody with little skill and little sense can be a critic and be good at it too. We don't have to look too far or too long to find fault.

Servants don't serve because they want recognition. They serve because there is something they must do, build, create, transform, and change. They serve because it's who they are and what they're meant to do. However, with service comes scrutiny, praise, critics, and attacks. A servant could find a cure for cancer, and they would still find people that would criticize them for it. There was even once a servant who transformed the world by

feeding the hungry, healing the sick, and loving the unlovable, and yet He was killed for it.

If you are a servant, don't be surprised if you are attacked. In fact, expect to be attacked. Godly service doesn't mean you won't be criticized. It means you have the grit and belief to overcome it. Godly servants don't lead in a tranquil sea of positivity, but through the storms of adversity and negativity.

Being a servant is knowing that the critics will criticize you while still saying what needs to be said and doing what needs to be done. His-

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FAMILY NEWS

PRAYER LIST –

Preachers we support: Japan, Philippines, Vietnam, Canada, Mexico, Peru, & U.S.

Sick: KFletcher, Swims, JMarshall, RStarr, MiBader, JTerrell, ACorder

Shut-ins: BPennington, SCole, SWiese, VCarter, KHeiligenthal, AHopper

Military: Kyler Sullins, Sean Potter

WEDNESDAY NIGHT SERIES – From Jan to Feb the elders (auditorium) and Warren & Sam (H.S.) will teach “Making My Family a Godly Family”.

SENTENCE SERMON – “Don't let praise go to your head, and don't let the critics get into your head.” - Rickie Jenkins