

*In
search
of*

Truth and Right

Tim Henderson, Editor

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"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things." Phil. 4:8 (NASB-U)

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Christ**

Necessary Realignments

By: Steven Harper

One morning you get in your car and head out to work, just like any other day, except this time you notice the car seems to be pulling to the right. You find an open space on the freeway that is long enough to try it out and, sure enough, when you let go of the steering wheel to see what happens, it is as you suspected. You put it out of your head for the day until you head home from work and it once again makes itself evident. You swing by the tire and wheel garage and see if they can squeeze you in because you have owned automobiles long enough to know that when your wheels are out of alignment, it can make for trouble. They get you in and when you get in your car afterwards, you can tell right away that it has been corrected and it is working as it should.

How or why it got out of alignment can be varied, but it is obvious when an automobile needs a realignment. We may not notice, at first, because we are simply not paying close enough attention to the car and the signals it sends that tell us something is out of alignment. Maybe we notice **something** is different, but the error is so small at first that it often takes time to be obvious. Sometimes, though, a big enough pothole will put it so much out of alignment that you notice immediately. However it happens, if it is left uncorrected, it puts unnecessary stress on the steering system and could lead to an accident. And as much as you don't like paying for "little things" like that, it is necessary for the safe operation of the automobile. You bite the bullet and get it done because you know that if you ignore it, it won't go away, but only cause more trouble and then other things on the car will begin to be affected negatively. Though it may not have been noticeable at first, when it was corrected, you knew it was right.

On a grander and much more serious scale, we may have heard in recent news about **troop realignment**. This happens when military leaders [or politicians who often have no business interfering] decide that they need to pull troops out of one region or one conflict to put somewhere else they deem more important, if but for a short time. Sometimes it is a permanent withdrawal from one region because they are no longer needed there, but it may be that they are needed elsewhere immediately and they may return to the original position when the more important issue is resolved.

TIMES OF SERVICES	
SUNDAY	
Bible Classes*	10:00 AM
AM Worship	10:45 AM
PM Worship	6:30 PM
WEDNESDAY	
Bible Classes*	7:00 PM
(* Bible Classes for All Ages)	

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Most often, these troop realignments are to shore up an area where a real—or even **perceived**—threat exists. Troops may be taken from one area where there has been little fighting to another area where it is believed more are needed; if they are outnumbered or face heavier resistance than anticipated, more may be moved in to try to accomplish victory and reduce losses. In such cases, a realignment is necessary to achieve victory and unless this is done, one may face certain defeat at the hands of the enemy. This is no time for hesitation, second-guessing, or playing politics because lives are on the line and the outcome could literally change the world.

While both of these subjects [troops and automobiles] may affect us, let's shift gears for a minute and address an even more important—and necessary—realignment.

Joe was raised in a family who diligently followed God and strove to serve and worship in the way God and Christ had established. All his younger years, Joe's parents diligently brought him to the worship of the local church and made sure he went to all the Bible classes. When he was young, Joe was always excited about Bible classes and was proud to be able to memorize Scripture and say the books of the Bible in order. He looked forward to Bible classes because, as a young boy, he wanted nothing more than to please his parents and he could see that loving God meant a lot to them. He knew that they would be happy when he loved God and His word, too. When Joe became a Christian, he was overjoyed. So were his parents.

But something changed. Joe got older [as we all do] and he began to let the things of the world distract him from his love of God and His word. His friends did not follow God and many of them even ridiculed the idea that anyone **would**, and they seemed to be having more fun than he did. He noticed that the most popular kids were the ones who drank alcohol and did drugs and he felt left out of most everything that his friends were doing. When they went to parties on Saturday night, he was resting so he could be alert for Bible class on Sunday morning. Joe began to dislike Bible classes and worship because of what it caused him to miss [or at least what he **thought** he missed]. When he was old enough, Joe got a job that demanded he work Sundays and it wasn't long before he didn't really miss Bible classes and worship at all. Before long, Joe was not working anymore on Sundays, but since he had missed so often already, he thought nothing now of going out with his friends on Saturday nights and Joe began doing all the things his friends were doing. Pleasing his parents was obviously no longer his motivation, so Joe did whatever he wanted.

Then, during one of these parties, a friend died because he drank too much during one of the "chugging" contests. Joe was stunned. When he awoke the next morning, Joe started thinking that could have been **him** and he started shaking uncontrollably. He got down on his knees and fervently prayed for forgiveness and resolved to make a necessary realignment of his priorities, his loves, and his life. God would once again be first in his life. Joe began studying his Bible once again (**2 Tim. 2:15**) and he started putting God's ways first (**Matt. 6:33**) in all that he did. His parents saw the change in Joe and realized they, too, needed to make God a higher priority in their own lives and asked Joe to forgive them for not showing him a better example. Joe and his parents rededicated their lives to God and made some necessary realignments in their lives. It was difficult at first and people wondered what was going on, but they persisted and it was not long before their changes made a definite impact on the local church and on all their friends.

They began an earnest Bible study to see what else needed changing in their lives, knowing it was what could effect the necessary corrections (**2 Tim. 3:16**). They noticed that some of their brethren in the local congregation seemed to be "going through the motions" rather than a desire to honor and exalt and serve God. They also noticed that the church, as a whole, was **not really doing anything**. Oh, they met regularly for Bible classes and worship, but they all went home and didn't do much else but prepare for the next Sunday. Joe and his parents began to think there was much more to serving God than this and they began talking to their brethren in an effort to get them to see what they saw and to make some much-needed and long-overdue changes. They wanted the church to be making a difference in the community.

The elders recognized the truths of what Joe and his parents were saying and they saw they should be motivating the members to do more than just merely show up at the building. They began

classes on how to teach our neighbors and how to answer difficult questions; they set up classes for new converts to strengthen them in the faith; they were more diligent about addressing lax attendance and motivating the members by their own example of visible work that was being done in the community. Before long, with some necessary realignments, they had Bible classes that challenged the students and lessons that gave spiritual food to those of all levels of maturity.

It wasn't long before these necessary changes caused growth of that church, just like God said would happen (**Eph. 4:12-16**).

Imagine that.



From the Editor's Desk:

"I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead." Revelation 3:1
"And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account." Hebrews 4:13

Luther E. Smith, a professor at Emory University, in a speech to students about living honestly, said, "Faking it' for a class session is one thing, but it's so easy to find ourselves making 'faking it' a lifestyle. We 'fake it' with others. We 'fake it' with God. This summer I saw a bumper sticker that said: 'Jesus is coming. Look busy!'" (From **Chronicle of Higher Education**, Oct. 11, 1996).

Remember, *"the eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good."* (Proverbs 15:3) There is no faking it with Him. Let us all be genuine servants of God. ~~TRH~~

News N Notes

- **Keep in mind our booth at the Brooke County Fair**—September 7,8,9—we will need help staffing the booth, please plan now to help.
- **Gospel Meeting—October 14-19 with Jarrod Jacobs.**

Please remember these in your prayers:

- **Blake Swanson**, Dorothy Lancaster's grandson, is in the hospital at Morgantown dealing with fluid from his brain.
- **Amanda Dowdy** in her recovery.
- **Mabel Fleming** continues to have problems getting around and we must not forget **Joyce Coen** who is taking care of Amanda and Mabel.
- **Terry Smith, Jr.**, Terry and Lora Smith's son as he receives treatment for cancer
- **Blake Headen**, Alberta's husband as he continues to deal with cancer treatments
- **Vicki Renshaw** recovering from a broken foot
- Terry Smith's brother **George** is scheduled for surgery Sept. 7th
- **Ed and Marie Roberts**, Ed with kidney stones and Marie's continued recovery from a broken back, also remember Ed's father, **Jim Roberts**.
- **Faith Kress**, Linda Marshall's niece
- **Dorothy Sams**, Linda's mother
- **Ila Marshall**, Harold Marshall's mother
- **Cary and Grace Lancaster**

Nursing Home:

- Hazel Carroll
- Pauline Sellers

Shut-ins:

- Rhea Henthorn
- Ethel Mahan
- Josephine Clow
- Mabel Fleming
- Pauline Midcap