

TRUTH & LIGHT

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THE HAND THAT TOUCHED THEM

I was listening to a speech given by Ravi Zacharias on Learning How To Do Apologetics in the Twenty-First Century (it can be found on YouTube and HIGHLY recommend giving it a listen), and was moved by an account he gives of the loving service performed by a man in Hawaii in one of the leper colonies. Here is the section of his speech concerning Damien De Veuster, where Ravi makes his point that our efforts towards turning others to Christ must not merely be heard but will have to be seen: “Years ago, my wife and I were visiting Honolulu and I said to her, ‘I’d really love to go to the island of Molokai.’ It’s the world’s tallest sea cliffs, but I wanted to go there for a reason. I’d read the biography of Damien De Veuster, the Belgium missionary who had gone to Molokai to work with the

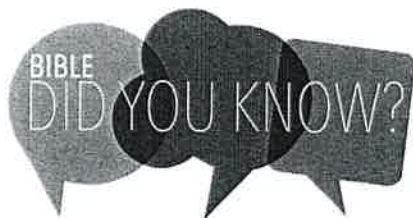
the people in Molokai, the Hawaiians that were sent away there because of leprosy. His brother was commissioned to go, but his brother had suddenly passed away, and so Damien decided he was going to go to take his brother’s place. He really didn’t want to do it, but he loved his brother and felt that commission had to be fulfilled. So he came. He loved the people. He touched them. He embraced them. He built a chapel for them and helped find a cure for them. He spent all of his life there. One morning, he was pouring a kettle of boiling water into a cup and the water swirled out of there and fell onto his bare foot. It took him a moment to realize he couldn’t feel it. He was horrified as to what that intimated. He took some more boiling water, put it gently onto the other foot, and he couldn’t feel it. He knew

what had happened. That morning, he began his sermon in a different line. He always began by saying, 'My fellow believers.' That morning, he began by saying, 'My fellow lepers.' He'd contracted leprosy. So, as my wife and I were being shown around with this story, I came to his grave, and I said to the man showing me around, 'Damien is buried here.' He said, 'No, sir, he was, but the body was exhumed, and the Belgium government asked for him to be brought back.' I said, 'Oh, wow.' He said, 'Yup. He was a hero. But the people in Molokai, the people with leprosy, he taught them to realize, they were not lepers. They were people with leprosy. Even though he referred to himself as a leper, he was referring to it purposely as an outcast. He said you're not a leper; you're a person with leprosy. Always give them the dignity of their person hood. And, so, when they wanted the body back, the people there gathered together and wrote to the Belgium government, 'Please, he loved us, this was his home. Don't take his body back from here.' But they insisted. So they finally said, 'Alright. Will you cut off that right arm or that right hand and bury it here? It's the hand that touched us.' And today in Molokai, in that grave is not his

body, it's the hand that reached out and touched them.'" Mark Twain once wrote, "Kindness is a language the deaf can hear and the blind can see." The Apostle Peter wrote to us, encouraging us to remember that as strangers and aliens who don't belong to this world, it is our other-worldly actions of goodness and kindness which not only convince this world we truly do not belong here, but cause them to marvel and praise God because of the extreme level of kindness demonstrated that people of this world simply do not engage in. "Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul. Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation," 1 Peter 2:11-12. Paul indicated that the true mark of a genuine servant of God was one who was willing to be expendable to the needs of others. "Here for this third time I am ready to come to you, and I will not be a burden to you; for I do not seek what is yours, but you; for children are not responsible to save up for their parents, but parents for their children. I will most gladly spend and be expended for your souls. If I love you

more, am I to be loved less?" 2 Corinthians 12:14-15. When Paul wrote to the Philippians, he indicated the true measure of "strange alien" love and service he was compelled by God to engage in, stating if it were God's will to offer Paul's very life as a drink offering on behalf of furthering their own faith, he would actually rejoice in the very thought of this. "Do all things without grumbling or disputing; so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain. But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with you all. You too, I urge you, rejoice in the same way and share your joy with me," Philippians 2:14-18. When we are tempted to complain and murmur about the level of hardship and burden we sometimes feel is unfairly placed upon us in our service to the Lord, let us remember these thoughts from our brother and Apostle. Let us all be willing to gladly be spent on behalf of one another as well as others for the

sake of demonstrating the true evidence of a divine level of love and goodness dwelling within us. To God be the glory.
– Daniel Ruegg



"Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: 'I am the first and I am the last, and there is no God besides Me. Who is like Me? Let him proclaim and declare it; Yes, let him recount it to Me in order, from the time that I established the ancient nation. And let them declare to them the things that are coming and the events that are going to take place. Do not tremble and do not be afraid; Have I not long since announced it to you and declared it? And you are My witnesses. Is there any God besides Me, or is there any other Rock? I know of none.'"
Isaiah 44:6-8

BIBLE TRIVIA

C H A L L E N G E

DIRECTIONS: After searching through your Bible, circle which answer is correct.

1. _____ filled the heart of Ananias to lie to the Holy Spirit.

- a) Sapphira
- b) Satan
- c) Barnabas
- d) John Mark

2. _____ agreed with her husband to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test.

- a) Mary
- b) Martha
- c) Priscilla
- d) Sapphira

3. People hoped that even Peter's _____ might heal their sick.

- a) Shadow
- b) Robe
- c) Staff
- d) Voice

4. Asked why he disobeyed the Council, Peter said they must obey God rather than _____.

- a) Satan
- b) Demons
- c) Teachers
- d) Men

5. Gamaliel advised if the success of the Apostles were merely of men it would be _____.

- a) Overthrown
- b) Successful
- c) Fast
- d) Slow

6. After being flogged, the Apostles _____ to suffer shame.

- a) Regretted
- b) Mourned
- c) Hated
- d) Rejoiced

7. Concerning the overlooked widows, the Apostles said it was not desirable for them to _____ the word of God to serve tables.

- a) Preach
- b) Study
- c) Neglect
- d) Fulfill

8. When brought before the Council, all saw Stephen's face like the face of _____.

- a) Fear
- b) Angel
- c) Guilt
- d) Worry

9. Stephen accused the Council of _____ the Holy Spirit.

- a) Hating
- b) Blaspheming
- c) Resisting
- d) Denying

10. Witnesses at the stoning of Stephen laid aside their robes at the feet of a young man named _____.

- a) Joey
- b) Josie
- c) Joe
- d) Saul

- 7) C, Acts 6:2
8) B, Acts 6:15
9) C, Acts 7:51
10) D, Acts 7:58
1) B, Reference: Acts 5:3
2) D, Reference: Acts 5:9
3) A, Reference: Acts 5:15
4) D, Reference: Acts 5:29
5) A, Reference: Acts 5:38
6) D, Reference: Acts 5:40-41