

THE BIBLE VIEW

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Theme: Testimony

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He Says He's a Soldier

Bill Brinkworth

"You're sure you're a soldier?" I queried.

"Yes, sir," quipped the slovenly dressed young man in civilian clothes.

"Where's your uniform?"

"Well," he explained, "I don't wanna be like everyone else. I never even bought one."

"Hmm," I scratched my head. "If you're a soldier, certainly you must have read the soldiers' training manual."

"No, never read it at all."

"You're a soldier, don't have a uniform, and never even read the training manual?" I was really perplexed now.

"Certainly, you've attended boot camp?"

"No, never had the time. I always had something to do when the Army wanted me to go."

“And you’re sure you’re a United States Army soldier?”

“Yes, sir. I’m very proud to serve my country. Whenever they need me, they can count on me,” was his proud answer.

“I’m a little confused. You say you’re a soldier but never wore the uniform, read any procedure manuals, or attended training. Did you ever fight in any battles?”

“Oh, no. They wouldn’t let me because I never attended boot camp. But when they have a war, I’ll be there.”

“Hmmm.” I just had to ask, “Well, what makes you so sure you’re a soldier?”

“I must admit, it seems strange that I haven’t done things most soldiers do. But, you see, my father was in the service. His father was also in the Army, and I believe even his father was. So everyone just knows I’m a soldier, too.”

This fictitious scenario is echoed thousands of times through a similar testimony of professing Christians. They claim they are a child of God, but do not think, believe, dress, or behave like one. They never read God’s training manual, the Bible, never faithfully attend church, and are not observed doing anything spiritual. They are in the battle and have lost, but they do not know it has even started.

God's Word clearly teaches one way to be saved. It is not my method or yours that will get one into Heaven. It is His Heaven, and there is only one way there; His way.

That way is to know we are sinners, as Romans 3:23 clarifies: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" Because of our sin, none of us has pleased God, and an eternal punishment awaits them. Romans 6:23 states: "For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

There is good news, however. Although we are sinners and heading for Hell, Christ died for our sins and paid for them (Romans 5:8). The proper way to get to Heaven is to accept His payment for all our iniquities. After believing that, we have God's promise that we will go to Heaven: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved (Romans 10:13)." That is God's way to be with Him forever.

Being a Christian will soon be a public affair. People will see that the Holy Spirit has made some changes in one's life. Family and friends will see moral practices replacing old wicked routines and habits. It will be evident where the Christian will be on Sunday. His Bible will also no longer be dusty.

It will no longer be a guessing game to determine if one is a Christian when one is genuinely saved. The changes in his life and lifestyle will make it clear that he is "born again." He will be proud to be enlisted in God's army and

will make it evident by looking and acting like a real Christian soldier.

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” *Matthew 5:16*

What Others See

Bill Brinkworth

One of the most valuable assets a Christian can have is his testimony. What others think of him is often what they see him do, how he reacts in certain situations, and how they believe a Christian should live (although their view may not always be accurate). Paul gave some advice in Ephesians 4 on how to preserve that testimony. Some of his advice included:

- Do not live like the rest of the world and put the wrong value on things that are really unimportant (Eph. 4:17-18).
- Do not lust after things of this world and be consumed with greed for them (Eph. 4:19).
- Do not let your conversation with others be about lust for this world's things (Eph. 4:22).
- Live a righteous life and strive to be a good example (Eph. 4:24).
- Let your conversation be honest and do not lie (Eph. 4:25).
- If you get angry, get it right with those involved before the sun goes down (Eph. 4:26).

- Do not get close to sin and allow the devil to destroy your testimony (Eph. 4:27).
- Do not steal, but work hard for what you want (Eph. 4:28).
- Be careful of the words you utter, making sure what you say helps others (Eph. 4:29).
- Do not sadden the indwelling Holy Spirit by sinning (Eph. 4:30).
- Do not allow the sins of bitterness, violence, anger, and evil speaking to be part of your life (Eph. 4:31).
- Be kind to others (Eph. 4:32).

As hard as we try, some will always see our example as wrong, no matter how we adhere to the above advice and other godly principles. Although it is impossible to please all the people all the time, we have a responsibility to have the best testimony possible.

Our example is not so much about what others think about us, but what others think about Christ by our example. We are often all the unsaved will ever see about Christ. Will they determine they do not want to be a Christian because of what they observed in our behavior, or will they consider being one because of how we live our lives?

“Your walk talks louder than your talk talks.”

“It Will Always Shine!”

Author Unknown

A traveler once visiting the lighthouse at Calais said to the keeper, “What if one of your lights should go out at night?”

“Never! Impossible!” he exclaimed. “Sir, yonder are the ships sailing to all parts of the world. If tonight one of my burners went out, in six months, I would hear from America, or India, saying that on such a night, the lights at Calais lighthouse gave no warning, and some vessel had been wrecked. Lives could be lost because of my neglect. Ah sir, I sometimes feel, when I look upon my lights, as if the eyes of the entire world are fixed upon me. Go out! Burn dim? Never! Impossible!”

What a lesson that man’s commitment and fervor should be to the Christian! The Christian must remember he is a spiritual lighthouse for the world to observe. Let then his “light” be full, bright, and clear. The moment he neglects it and leaves his “lamps” untrimmed, some poor soul, struggling amid the waves of temptation, for lack of a beacon of example to light his way, may be dashed upon the rocks of destruction.

“I have ever deemed it more honorable and more profitable to set a good example than to follow a bad one.” — *Thomas Jefferson*