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# Words of Truth

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## What A Shame

By: Brian A. Yeager

How often could you use the phrase, “what a shame”? I find that it applies often in all areas of this life. The way people dress immodestly is shameful (Proverbs 7:10). The way people talk is often shameful (Ecclesiastes 5:3). Many people behave in a manner that humiliates them. To add to their shamefulness, many who act in shameful ways do not even care that they’ve acted this way (Jeremiah 6:15). In regard to people of the world, we should know that they’re going to behave shamefully (Proverbs 13:5; cf. I John 5:19). However, greater things are expected of us who have obeyed the Gospel of Christ and claim to be His disciples.

As Christians, much is expected of us. In short, we’re expected to perfect holiness in the fear of God (II Corinthians 7:1). The path of the just is to be as a shining light (Proverbs 4:18). When Paul wrote to Timothy and Titus, he told them to be a pattern of good works for others to follow (I Timothy 4:12 and Titus 2:7). Christians are to be a light unto the world so that people can see our good works, which are supposed to bring glory to God (Matthew 5:14-16). That is the short, very general (meaning we’ve not covered any of the many details), answer of what is expected of us.

While being a light and an example are often taught and supposedly understood, many so-called “Christians” bring shame upon our Lord and His body. Many so-called “Christians” fall very short of being an example or bringing glory to God. Many fall short of what is expected of them. As I sit and write this article, I have a recent event in mind whereupon I hope to bring some lessons. Today (the day when I am writing this article), I spoke with a woman who identified herself as the wife of a Gospel preacher who had died several years ago. She was calling to find out if the congregation here in El Paso is sound or not. As this story starts out it sounds good, right? We’re certainly expected to test our supposed “brethren” to be sure that they are sound in the faith (I John 4:1).

I was hopeful that her asking questions about the congregation here would mean that we were going to have a spiritual discussion. I was wrong. After nearly thirty minutes of meaningless discussion, her only question about the congregation here was whether or not we had “children’s classes”. In this discussion I asked this question: “What biblical questions do you have about the congregation here?” Each time I asked that question, she told me another story about her husband that had little to nothing to do with her soundness or even her husband’s faithfulness.

When I got off of the phone with this lady, after several failed attempts to teach some things to her, I sat back and thought about a couple of things. First, I thought about how this older supposed “sister in Christ” should be ashamed to have little knowledge of the Scriptures (by her own admission). Secondly, I thought of the shame she brought to her husband and the congregations she has been with in how little teaching she had received. Let’s take these points and reflect upon them ourselves.

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## **Is It Shame Or Glory That Our Actions Bring Upon God And Our Brethren?**

The Scriptures teach us a principle wherein we have to understand that whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required (Luke 12:48). If you are a member of the congregation here at Sunrise Acres, you've been given much. We have biblical discussions multiple times per week that draw much more than milk from the word of God. Therefore, you have no reason to be behind on your Scriptural knowledge (Hebrews 5:12-6:3). The congregation here has and has had godly people that serve as examples of what we all should be. Therefore, we have no reason to say that we need to be shown how to live a godly life (Philippians 3:17). Here at Sunrise, we have the support system of strong brethren to count on if we become spiritually weak. Therefore, we have no reason to say we are struggling by ourselves (I Thessalonians 5:14).

With no excuses to be made, we have to reflect upon our actions and/or lack of actions asking ourselves whether or not what we're doing is a good reflection of who we are. Rightfully, people should judge us based upon what we say, what we do, and the fruit we bring forth (Matthew 7:20 and James 3:13). If you were in a discussion with someone about what a sound congregation is or is not, how would that discussion affect what others think about you? If they'd think you're ignorant, whose fault is that? Would God be glorified by your ignorance? Would the congregation here at Sunrise look good or look bad based upon what your discussions with others about the Scriptures sound like?

Brethren, we must reflect upon these things. When you thought of the "preacher's wife" you likely and rightfully were disappointed in what I wrote about her. You'd think a wife of a preacher would care more about sound doctrine than whether or not a congregation has children's classes. The Bible teaches us to care about what is taught (Romans 16:17-18, I Timothy 1:3-7, I Timothy 6:3-5, and II John 9-11), not about "children's classes". It is not that a preacher's wife has some expectation of knowledge; it is that an older woman in the faith should have grown more than this woman has (Titus 2:3-5). The fact that she was the wife of a preacher only matters in that you would think she should have seen enough from her husband (cf. II Timothy 4:1-5) to know better than to just be concerned about trivial matters with no spiritual significance. This woman brought shame upon her Lord, her husband, and the congregations she has been apart of. How do you measure up to her?

As Christians, related to preachers or not, we're all expected to be able to discuss the Scriptures (Colossians 4:6 and I Peter 3:15). As Christians, we're all supposed to grow to a level wherein we can identify truth from error through studying the word of God (Acts 17:10-11 and II Timothy 2:14-26). As Christians, we should never leave a discussion where someone is able to conclude that our Scriptural knowledge is shamefully lacking!

### **Conclusion**

We certainly could have addressed many things in this study that we did not. Time and space have gotten away from me here. Thus, I will trust that you can be greater than the "preacher's wife" and take this study into your own hands to make applications in your life that we have not made in this study (Psalms 4:4, Psalms 119:59, Lamentations 3:40, and II Corinthians 13:5). I will conclude with a question we must all ask ourselves: "Are my actions shameful or do they glorify my Lord?"