

SLIDELL CHURCH OF CHRIST

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October 25, 2015

Preacher's Point

By *Dan Schillinger*



Where Does the Truth Lie? (Part 3 of 3)

The first to state his case seems right until another comes and cross-examines him.

- Proverbs 18:17, Holman Christian Standard Bible

The wise prove all things. They ignore claims until proven by careful research, contrary witnesses, diligent inquisition, or cross-examination. Do not press a new idea, controversy, or opinion without first exposing it to challenges and questions by wise counselors or opponents. When arguing a matter, honestly give the counter position as well. If you preach or teach God's word, include objections to your teaching so as to instruct hearers, buttress the truth, and silence adversaries.

Jesus Christ has a cause--the greatest in history: God's glory, salvation of his chosen ones, and the declaration of truth. He was first in his cause, and he opened it to full view of critics and enemies (Jn 18:19-21; 3:1-3; 7:26; 8:2; Mat 4:23; Lu 19:47; Ac 10:36-42). Because of his impeccable honesty and righteousness, no one could prove a single argument against him (Mark 14:55-59). His righteousness condemned them, even as it did the railing thief nearby.

Therefore, he is the Faithful and True Witness (Rev 3:14; 1:5; 19:11). You may fully believe him and his cause, for it is the purest and most preci-

Today's Preaching Schedule

Today we begin a new sermon series on discerning God's will as it pertains to matters of marriage, divorce and remarriage.

a.m. *"The Holy Spirit's Original Intent"*

1 Corinthians 5:9-11; Proverbs 18:17

Just after noon-time congregational potluck:

Opportunity for discussion and reflection on the morning message.

There will be no evening service today at the regular time of 5:00 p.m.

ous you will ever hear or need. Throw all your contrary or doubting arguments and thoughts out. **Run** to him by faith and believe every word from him and about him in the scriptures. You will never be ashamed or confounded, world without end (Is 45:17; Rom 10:11; 1 Pet 2:6). Amen.

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*Welcome Visitors!*

**We are pleased to have the opportunity to welcome you to our service. We think you will find our congregation family to be one that enthusiastically embraces newcomers and warmly welcomes them into our fellowship. We hope you feel right at home as you join us in worship, praise and thanks-giving.**

## *New Sermon Series*

### *Starts Today!*

Beginning today, at the elders' direction we are beginning a new Sunday morning sermon series on discerning God's will as it pertains to matters of marriage, divorce and remarriage. Dan is presenting the first lesson today, but the elders are planning to preach most of the remaining sermons themselves.

## *Fall Festival Fellowship*

### *Today!*

Today we are having a congregational potluck in our Fellowship Hall immediately following our morning service. All are invited! Immediately following this time of fellowship we will all have opportunity for discussion and reflection on the morning message. Consequently, there will be no evening service today at the regular time of 5:00 p.m.

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“REMEMBER IN PRAYER & ENCOURAGE”



With Visits, Calls, & Cards

The family of Tom Kendrick (Linda Cheri's older brother) - who passed away Friday evening following a recent illness in Orlando, Florida.

Dan Alderete - former member here, has moved to his father's hometown of San Antonio, where he is hospitalized with two newly discovered malignant and inoperable brain tumors. Doctors give him no more than a year to live.

Larry Covington (co-worker of Dorsie's) - hospitalized in an ICU in Jackson, MS with breathing difficulties and low oxygen.

Ronald Molina (Gerald's brother, in E. Tennessee) - diagnosed with prostate cancer.

Akram & Martha Mustafa (Nayla's parents) - have travelled to his hometown of Ramallah, Palestine, for business during a time of heightened Israeli-Palestinian violence and tensions. Pray for their safety and that they will soon be able to conclude their business and return home to Slidell

Roger Whitley (in-law of the Moragnes) - suffering from emphysema in North Carolina..

Angel Mangus (of Houston, TX, niece of Carl Mangus) - afflicted with inoperable stage 4 brain cancer.

Jase Roig (premature infant son of Colton Roig) - gaining weight and showing some signs of good development, though he is still afflicted with an arachnoid cyst in his brain, and cardiac openings that have not yet healed.

Marie Peterson - recovering at home form recent surgery.

Tod Grabert - recovering at home in Lafourche Parish from serious back surgery last week.

Walter Acker, Jr. (“Butch”) - suffering chest pains and has been recently been hospitalized .

Kathy Mathern (Bridget Carter's mother) - recovering well in Metairie following recent knee surgery.

Dwight Jones - returned to work last Monday as he continues his recent recovery from surgery..

Mildred Tymkiw - continuing her recovery at her daughter's home here in Slidell from complications following her recent heart-valve surgery. Her doctors think she has a prolonged period ahead of her before attaining full recovery.

Jerry Kimbrough (former member here, now at the church of Christ at S. Baton Rouge) - diagnosed with cancer in his eye, and will be undergoing chemotherapy soon.

Shirley Ervin - thanksgiving that she is healing following recent neck surgery and is striving now to return to normal activity levels.

Stephanie Smith (sister of Kevin Cox) - needs

surgery for her right shoulder, but a calcium deficiency won't permit this now.

Margaret Schillinger - experiencing some limited relief from her recent knee-pain flare-up.

Fairie Roig - also has a recent flare-up of pain in her right knee.

Zach Steele - supposed to be currently cancer-free, but suffering from deficient white blood cell production in his bone marrow.

Rosa Nuñez (good friend of the Vargas family) - having serious painful health problems.

Jessica Fowler (Jesse and Shirley's granddaughter, a resident of Lockport, LA) - facing severe personal problems.

Terri Jones - pray that she'll come to feel better through her negative phases in her Epstein-Barr disorder.

Dale Epperley - awaiting a new prosthesis that will relieve the pain and inflammation in his leg.

Gerald Molina - still seeing doctors for spinal stenosis.

Sharon Honoré (sister of Anita, and a member at the Crowder Blvd. church) - has advanced breast cancer.

Clara Leonard - overall pain continues to subside somewhat, though her ankle bothers her now.

Bobby Leonard - awaiting test results from his recent appointment with a kidney specialist.

Devon Nelson (Roig's grandson) - pray for him that he will stay focused on enlisting in the U.S. Army November 3.

Marisol Vargas - left last week for her parents' home in Costa Rica, for at least a month to care for her mother, Maria Aurelia Alsaro, who is afflicted with two infections. Pray for Robert too, as he gets by in her absence

Pray for all who are travelling.

Pray for Latino evangelism in our area.

Pray for our elders: Courtney Cheri, Dwight Jones and Gerald Molina.

Pray for President Obama and all our elected officials.

Pray for our men and women in our armed forces, both here and abroad!

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***The Old Testament Narratives:
Their Proper Use (continued)***

Adapted from Fee & Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* (3rd edition)

Principles for Interpreting Narratives

The Joseph Narrative

This is the large block of narrative material from chapters 37 and 39-50 of the Book of Genesis. In reading those chapters we see that Joseph is the central human character at nearly every point. Unfairly jailed, Joseph rose to inmate-administrator. Why? The Bible leaves no doubt: ***"The LORD was with Joseph, and showed him steadfast love; he gave him favor"*** (39:21 NRSV; cf. v. 23).

- The inspired narrator is leaving no room for doubt as to the hero of the story or the moral of the story. God is the hero. And the moral is that God was with Joseph. If you seek to learn from this Joseph narrative, and you try to find a hero other than God, who will it be? Will it be Jacob, who shows favoritism among his own children? Will it be Potiphar or his wife, both unfair to Joseph? Will it be the unnamed Egyptian jailer? Will it be Joseph himself, the over confident self-centered young man who seems to get into trouble so easily? If you choose any of these, you are sure to misplace the emphasis of the narrative, thus drawing attention away from God's sovereign guidance and manipulation of events.

Many preachers and teachers make the mistake of looking for a self-contained lesson for living in each event in Joseph's life. So they come up with conclusions like, "Don't tell your dreams to others, lest you get in big trouble for it," or "Even slaves can get ahead if they pay attention to their administrative skills," or "You'll be better off in

jail if you get some business experience before being arrested,” or “Foreigners rise faster in positions of authority than natives do.”

In other words, if you look for something that Joseph was or did that Christians today are supposed to imitate in order to receive a blessing, you will not find any such thing in the narrative. The narrative is telling you what God did with an unlikely candidate for success. It does not contain any rules for getting ahead in business or life in general. Joseph goes from bad to worse, and is in jail for many years before God (not Joseph) arranges his release.

The various details of the smaller narratives that make up the Joseph narrative as a whole, do not, in fact, point to anything intrinsic about Joseph or anything exemplary about his actions. This includes events like Joseph’s release from prison, because of his God-given skills at interpreting dreams (Genesis 40, 41), and his exaltation to power and the opportunity to help his family during the famine (Genesis 41-50). You will look in vain for any other moral than the one the Bible itself supplies: **“God was with Joseph.”** The entire process of Joseph’s fall and rise to power was God’s doing. Even his brothers’ evil intent toward him was used in God’s strategy. As Joseph him-self says to his brothers: **“Am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.”** (50:19, 20).

The entire chain of events and smaller narratives making up the larger compound Joseph narrative are thus part of a greater narrative still: God’s plan for Israel as a nation, and for the preservation of Canaanites, Egyptians and others with them during this time of famine. Egypt was the place where God built up and multiplied his people, preparing them for the exodus and conquest that he, God, would use to give them the land of Canaan as he had promised to Abraham.

Joseph’s life style, personal qualities, or actions do not tell us anything from which general moral principles may be derived. If you think you have found any, you are finding what you want to find in the text; you are not interpreting the text.

Joseph himself is eventually granted the ability

to recognize that God has brought all the events of his life for a greater purpose. Late in life he says to his brothers: **“I am dying, but God will surely visit you, and bring you up out of this land to the land which he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.”** (Genesis 59:24) The focus is on God. He can accomplish what he wills. Using such unlikely vehicles as Joseph, his family, and the pharaoh, God preserved many people and began to create for himself a special people. That is where we find the moral of the story, focusing on God’s graciousness and providence, and leading us to be respectful of his ways and confident in his provision.

(to be continued)

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Our Leaders!

Elders

**Dwight Jones
Courtney Cheri
Gerald Molina**

Preacher

Dan Schillinger

Deacons

**Jesse Fowler
James Richardson
Hector Urbina**

Our Services

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| <i>Sunday Morning Bible Class</i> | 9:30 a.m. |
| <i>Sunday Morning Worship</i> | 10:30 a.m. |
| <i>Sunday Evening Worship</i> | 5:00 p.m. |
| <i>Wednesday Evening Bible Class</i> | 7:00 p.m. |
| <i>Stitches of Love</i> | Tuesday 9:30 a.m. |