

# SLIDELL CHURCH OF CHRIST

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October 11, 2015

## Preacher's Point

By Dan Schillinger



### Where Does the Truth Lie? (Part 1)

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

- Proverbs 18:17, Holman Christian Standard Bible

Anyone can sound reasonable, when he or she speaks first and personally presses for their own cause. The absence of contrary facts or counter opinions, and their emotional and fervent appeals, can give credence to most any claim. Anything sounds good in a vacuum. But all propositions must be tried by opposing arguments to prove their validity. The learned apostle Paul wisely wrote, ***Prove all things; hold fast that which is good*** (I Thess 5:21).

Politicians are notorious for their spin, extravagant claims, and moving sound bites. But their promises of prosperity should be exposed to public debate and the harsh reality of facts. Trial lawyers make a good living by exposing lies of the guilty and false testimony through contrary witnesses, expert opinions, and validation of evidence. A rich man's conceit causes him to overstate matters that the wise poor can often detect (Pr 28:11).

Are you sure you are right in a dispute? Do you have an idea you want to pursue? Are you sure a proposition is valid? Are you confused by a testimony that does not match experience? Have you heard arguments you knew were wrong but sounded right? Here is a rule to remember: every cause should be scrutinized hard for validity and truthfulness.



**The Word of God!**

**Today's Sermons**

**a.m. "Four Images of Power"**

**James 1:26, 3:2-12**

**p.m. "Does God Play Favorites?"**

**Matthew 20:1-16**

The Holy Spirit's intent in this proverb is to teach a young man wise discretion when judging accusations, declarations, and propositions. This is wisdom--the power of right judgment! Truth can withstand intense examination, but most causes are not truth. Challenging unsubstantiated claims will often expose them as false and frivolous. ***The simple believe anything, but the prudent give thought to their steps.*** (Pr 14:15, NIV). Skepticism trumps optimism.

Wise people prove all things. They do not care about only one side of any argument. Several common expressions imply this proverb, such as conflict of interests, emotionally involved, third party involvement, arm's length transaction, cross-examination, devil's advocate, and so forth. Good legal systems are designed to make sure both sides of an argument are heard and that both sides may cross-examine the other side's witnesses.

## *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 thanksgiving.**

### *Upcoming Sermon Series*

Beginning later this month, the elders are planning to begin a Sunday morning sermon series on discerning God's will as it pertains to matters of marriage, divorce and remarriage. Dan will present the first lesson but the elders will preach most of the remaining sermons.

### *Fall Festival Fellowship*

On the last Sunday of this month (Oct. 25) we will have a congregational potluck in our Fellowship Hall immediately following our morning service. Please bring a dish or two if you can, but all are invited anyway! If you have any questions, see Dorsie Jones.

### **"REMEMBER IN PRAYER**

**&**

### **ENCOURAGE"**



With Visits, Calls, & Cards

**Patricia Fowler** (sister of Reneitha Dean) - passed away last month battling stage-four lung cancer. She was a member at the West Looxahoma church of Christ in Senatobia, MS.

**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) - growing 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") - recently hospitalized with fluid congestion in his heart.

**Dwight Jones** - still healing very well following his recent prostate removal surgery. He is out and about quire a bit, but not yet returned to work.

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

**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.

**Anna Jones** (Mr. Dale's daughter) -hospitalized briefly two weeks ago for an unexplained loss of vision in one eye.

**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** - for success and healing through the process of receiving his long-awaited bone marrow transplant.

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

**Jessica Fowler** (Jesse and Shirley's grand-daughter, a resident of Lockport, LA) - has some vexing problems besetting her.

**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) - George asks that we pray for him that he will stay focused on enlisting in the U.S. Army next month.

**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!**

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

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

### *What Narratives Are Not*

1. Old Testament narratives NOT just stories about people who lived in Old Testament times. They are first and foremost stories about what God did to and through those people. In contrast to human narratives, the Bible is composed especially of divine narratives. Characters, events, developments, plot and story climaxes all occur, but behind these, God is the supreme "protagonist" or leading decisive character in all narratives.
2. Old Testament narratives are not allegories or stories filled with hidden meanings, though certain aspects may be difficult to grasp. The ways that God works in history, the ways he influences human actions and implements his own will through human beings (sometimes contrary to people's own desire; cf. Genesis 50:20) are not always comprehensible to us (Romans 11:33). We are often not told precisely all that God did in a certain situation that caused it to happen the way the Old Testament reports it. And even when we *are* told what he did, we are not always told *how* or *why* he did it.

In other words, narratives do not answer all our questions about a given issue. They are limited in their focus, and give us only one part of the overall picture of what God is doing in history. We have to learn to be satisfied with that limited understanding, and restrain our curiosity at many points, or else we will end up trying to read between the lines so much that we end up reading *into* stories things that are not there, making allegories of what are in fact historical accounts. As is the case with parables, narratives can be abused in this manner.

Reading *into* stories is what happens when people identify supernatural events in the biblical narratives as the result of such things as the intervention of unidentified flying objects, or time machines from centuries future to our own, or supposed ancient secret scientific discoveries since lost to human knowledge. The Bible itself

does not say *how* God did most of the miraculous things he brought to pass. But some folks' insatiable curiosity can drive them to accept absurd and farfetched explanations.

3. Old Testament narratives do not always teach directly. They emphasize God's nature and revelation in special ways that legal or doctrinal portions of the Bible never can. Knowledge sometimes comes better and affects behavior more permanently when it results from being involved in something. As you follow closely the action of Old Testament narratives, you naturally become involved vicariously, as you do in reading any story, no matter how much its participants differ from you and no matter how different their circumstances are. Narratives thus give you a kind of "hands on" knowledge of God's work in his world, and though this knowledge is secondary rather than primary, it is nevertheless a real knowledge that can help shape your behavior.

If you are a Christian, the Old Testament is your spiritual history. The promises and calling of God to Israel are your historical promises and calling (Galatians 3:29).

Although the Old Testament narratives do not necessarily teach directly, they often illustrate what is taught directly elsewhere. This represents an implicit kind of teaching, which in cooperation with the corresponding explicit teachings of Scripture, is highly effective in generating the sort of learning experience for us that the Holy Spirit desires. For example, in the narrative of David's adultery with Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11) you will not find any such statement as, "In committing adultery and murder David did wrong." You are expected to know that adultery and murder are wrong, because this has already been taught explicitly in the Bible (Exodus 20:13, 14). The narrative illustrates the harm caused by these sins in the personal life of King David and his ability to rule.

The narrative does not systematically teach about adultery and could not be used as the sole basis for such teaching. But as one illustration of the effects of adultery in a particular case, it conveys a powerful message that can imprint itself on the mind of the careful reader in a way that direct, categorical teaching might not do.

4. Each individual narrative or episode within a narrative does not necessarily have a moral all its own. Narratives cannot be interpreted as if every statement, every event, every description could, independently of the others, have a special message for the reader. In fact, even in fairly lengthy narratives all the component parts of the narrative can work together to impress upon the reader a single major point. There is an overall drift or movement to a narrative, a kind of superstructure that makes the point, usually a single point.

In this way, narratives are analogous to parables in that the whole unit gives the message, not the separate individual parts. The punch, the effect, the impact, and the persuasiveness--all come from the entire sequence of the events related. Many individual elements combine to constitute the narrative and to provide God's revelation via the narrative. To try to find significance for each single bit of data or each single event in the narrative will not work. You have to evaluate the narrative as a unit.

(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**

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