



# SOUND WORDS

“Hold the pattern of sound words which thou hast heard from me, in faith and love which is in Christ.” (2Tim. 1:13)

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## A LITTLE LEAVEN

Paul in writing to the church at Corinth in chapter 5 talks with them about the danger of letting sin go unchecked in the local congregation. In an age of political correctness, it is often the challenge of faithful brethren to heed what Paul taught.

The context of the statement “know ye not that a little leaven leavens the whole lump” is a brother who has been allowed to operate among the brethren without any discipline. He is a fornicator (having his father’s wife). He evidently is still attending and it seems no one is holding him accountable for his ungodly behavior. Paul sharply rebukes the brethren at Corinth for not loving the man’s soul. He commands them (by the Holy Spirit) to withdraw themselves from this man so that he might be ashamed. They are told that when one is a Christian, we have a responsibility to hold him to a higher standard of accountability than those in the world. It is the clear responsibility of these brethren to withdraw fellowship from this brother. The withdrawal of fellowship (delivering to Satan) is to entail refusal to engage in social interaction (with such a one do not eat). This brother is to feel keenly the rejection of his brethren towards his ungodly life. They are further instructed not to account him as an enemy but to entreat him as a brother. If he is willing to talk and try to resolve his soul’s condition, the brethren are to be there for him. Otherwise there is to be a rejecting of all social contact with him until he repents.

Paul indicates to them that if they continue on the path they are on that the entire congregation will be infected with sin. Failure to deal with sin and the sinner results in all getting the idea they can do as they please without any consequences. If a person can get away with fornication, then what in the world would give brethren a basis for withdrawal for anything else? Paul is clear: follow the command of God and do it quickly because this brother’s soul is in peril.

Too many have come to believe that discipline of unfaithful brethren is “mean.” They equate it with being judgmental and hypocritical. The Hebrew writer tells us that chastisement is a tool used freely by those who truly love. He also hastens to tell us that no chastisement seems good to the person receiving it at the time, but later it produces good fruit. He tells us that the Lord loves us enough to chasten us. We should love our brethren the same way. If you have sin in your “local congregation,” do not let the leaven of sin fester. Obey God! ---SWA---

## News & Notes

**Baptism**-Steven Godwin was baptized into Christ on May 11, 2008. We are thrilled to welcome him into the family of God and look forward to watching and helping him grow in the Lord.

**Sickness**-Ronnie Gandy continues to fight Parkinson’s disease. Buddy is faithfully standing by her with love. Martha Beck is continuing to fight several infections, and Leonard is doing what he can to look after her with love. Ed Stacey is in West Florida hospital on the fourth floor ICU. He was taken in with chest pains and tests are still being run. Keep all of these in your prayers

**Sympathy**-Bea Baston suffered the loss of her twin sister recently, and our hearts go out to her in her time of loss.

**Gospel Meeting**-Our gospel meeting with Connie Adams is fast approaching. Bring your friends and loved ones to the meeting and attend every service.

**Work List**- Check the bulletin board and see if there is anything on the work list that you can do. Check with Mark Godwin as he is the coordinator.

**Stan in Gospel Meeting**-Stan and Carla will be with the brethren at Pine Lane in Birmingham, Alabama, the week of June 8-13 for a gospel meeting. They will be staying with Terry and Ann Benton. Keep this effort in your prayers.

**Support Changes**-The elders contacted Jim Bell and Gardiner Hall and informed them that we can no longer afford their support. Please keep these men in our prayers as they labor in the gospel. Pray that their work will be prosperous as it stays in keeping with the “old paths.”

**Withdrawal**- It saddened us to have to withdraw from Caleb Emerson. We pray that he will repent and make things right. Keep on working with him and encouraging him to do what is right.

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## Her Price Is Far Above Rubies

The wise man learned some valuable lessons from his mother, and God inspired him in writing them down in Proverbs 31:10- “who can find a virtuous woman for her price is far above rubies.” She has warned him not to go after strange women and also not to engage in drinking. She also taught him to stand up for those less fortunate than himself. I believe she was one of the virtuous women described in the last verses of the chapter.

The value of a godly woman is priceless. No price can be placed on the woman who truly loved her husband, her children, and the Lord. We often give these types of women too little praise.

I heard an interview of a couple who had been married 70 years and when they asked the man what the secret of his enduring love for his wife was, he replied: “she simply makes me a better man.” What a tribute! Many men can say the same. I personally can make that claim. I tell people all the time that if they want to meet the best part of me to go meet Carla. She is the true complement to me, and I would be lost without her.

In an age when young men are encouraged to go after the externals in choosing a wife, it is notable that God’s advice through Lemuel is to choose a woman that loves the Lord and one who will be dedicated to her husband and children. The age of the stay-at-home mom is returning, in my opinion, as I see more and more women who are tired of the rat race of juggling a business career and also being the homemaker they should be.

Children need momma. They need her to be there for them, and they need her to nurture them. They also need dad at home with them to give them the proper guidance and security in life. God’s arrangement for the home is superlative to any plan of man. God has ordained that the man be the main breadwinner, but it is true in Proverbs 31:13-16 that the virtuous woman is also able to bring in an income. She has many skills and her husband is not threatened by her abilities but rather feels proud she possesses these talents. Many women are much better at budgeting and bookkeeping than men. If she is able to work outside the home without sacrificing her duties at home, she should not be made to feel guilty about it. Some men would do well to recognize these abilities if they exist and not be too proud to let the wife handle the books and bills. Many couples are in trouble financially due to mismanagement of funds on the part of the husband or due to the inability of both husband and wife to live within their means. Being good

stewards of our finances demands that we adjust our level of living so as to be able to comply with God’s arrangement in the home. Emergencies may arise but let us all strive to help take the pressure off of one another financially by learning to do without some things if necessary. Paul said he “knew how to be abased and how to abound.” With the current gas prices, many couples are learning just how much they are able to cut and still live comfortably. We simply do not “need” to have everything we “want.”

The woman of Proverbs 31 is described as one who will do her husband good and not evil (v.12) all the days of his life. He is honored in the gates when he sits among others (due in large part to the manner in which she guides her house).

The response of a godly man towards a woman like this is to love her and appreciate her properly. A truly godly man will cherish a wife like this and will not let a day go by without telling her how much he loves and appreciates her. In Ephesians 5:25, husbands are commanded to “love your wives as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it.” While a husband is bound to love his wife in this manner, regardless of what kind of woman she is, a godly woman makes this command a lot easier when she conducts herself as a worthy woman.

There is a movement in the religious world to expand the role of women in public worship. Many Catholics are calling for the ordination of women as “priests.” The denominational world is becoming more and more accepting of women preachers. Even among some brethren we hear rumblings that women should be included as song leaders, announcement makers, and in service at the Lord’s Table. Truly the women’s liberation movement has entered into the thought processes of many who claim to be Christians. Truly godly women have no desire to pervert God’s order in these matters. I have spoken to many women who are perfectly happy to have men preachers. One only needs to see the amount of labor and stress many women teachers go through in preparing to speak to other women or children, to see God’s wisdom in giving men the lead in public worship. The godly woman of Proverbs 31 is not one who is a self-promoter. She considers the elevation and progress of her husband a validation of who she is.

Older women need to be teaching younger women to follow the model of Proverbs 31:10-31. To all those ladies who are holding this model as their example, we praise you for your dedication to God’s ways. If you are the husband of a woman who is striving to be this type of woman, then let her know how much you love and appreciate her. Thank God for women whose price is far above rubies for without them many of us would be nothing. ---SWA---