

Choose You This Day Whom Ye Will Serve

by Linville Dunaway, Corinth Christian Church

Joshua 24:14-15, “Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

Joshua was talking to the nation of Israel and he spoke plain and straight to them. It was about the most serious subject concerning their relationship with the Almighty God. For all of those years in the wilderness they had obeyed at times and for many times they had grumbled, complained, and even rebelled against God. It was time to enter the promised land and to inherit the blessings that God had promised to Abraham and his descendants. If they were going to serve God then they needed to take it seriously and stop playing at it.

The Lord isn't playing games and to walk with Him we can't play around with our salvation either. We expect God to be there when we call upon him, and to be faithful in his care of us. Doesn't the Lord have the right to expect the same of us?

Shouldn't we be there to serve the Lord when he would have us minister to someone in need? As I have stated before, I say it again, if we were as knowledgeable and faithful in the Lord's work as we are in our jobs and in our pleasure, more would be done in God's work. Too often folks think that coming to church on a Sunday morning and giving the Lord a whole hour is doing a big service. Is it really? Would you be content if the Lord gave as much care and attention to you as you gave to him? Somehow I don't think any of us would be happy with that.

To read the Old Testament is to see that the people of Israel turned away from God and went after the idols of the nations that they came into contact with. They gloried in the flesh and the pleasures of it, even giving the glory of their freedom to the idols. Yet, when troubles came upon them who did they call on to help them? It was not the false gods, but on the God of Israel. This didn't happen only once, but time and time again. Several times God told them to go and call on the gods that they worshipped. They begged God to help them and for a while they obeyed but soon they turned from the Lord again. They didn't know who they wanted to follow in the good times but when things turned bad for them they sure knew who they would call on for help.

People are the same, no matter what time period they live in. Today men do the same as these Israelites of long ago. God is not in their hearts and minds as they seek pleasure in money, sex, drugs, and material things, but when sickness, or

other troubles come, all of a sudden God is remembered. The Lord is promised that the person will obey the will of God and follow the way of righteousness if he will forgive his sins and heal him. Some do follow through, but I have had some to tell me that when things went well that they forgot the Lord again. Some even laughed as they told me this. I wonder if they will laugh when they stand before God in judgment. Some how I don't think they will.

Joshua told the people to fear the Lord. That is very important, for if a person fears the Lord he, or she, will try their best to obey the commandments. When we mention 'the fear of God' we are not talking about being afraid like you would be of some terrible danger. It is what I call a healthy respect and reverence for the God of our salvation. There is a difference in believing in God and fearing God. Many people believe in God, but they don't fear God and make no effort to follow his word. They evidently don't think that the Lord will bring them into judgement or that the God of love would allow them to go to hell.

God, out of love, has made a way for sinful man to receive forgiveness for his sins. That is why Jesus went to the cross and gave his life for mankind. As we go through the years that we have here on earth we choose how we live and the path that we follow. We can follow our fleshly desires and be led by the flesh, or trust in God and walk according to his word. **(1 Peter 2:21)** To walk with Him is life, and to walk after the flesh will lead to death. We, and we alone, must decide which way we will go.

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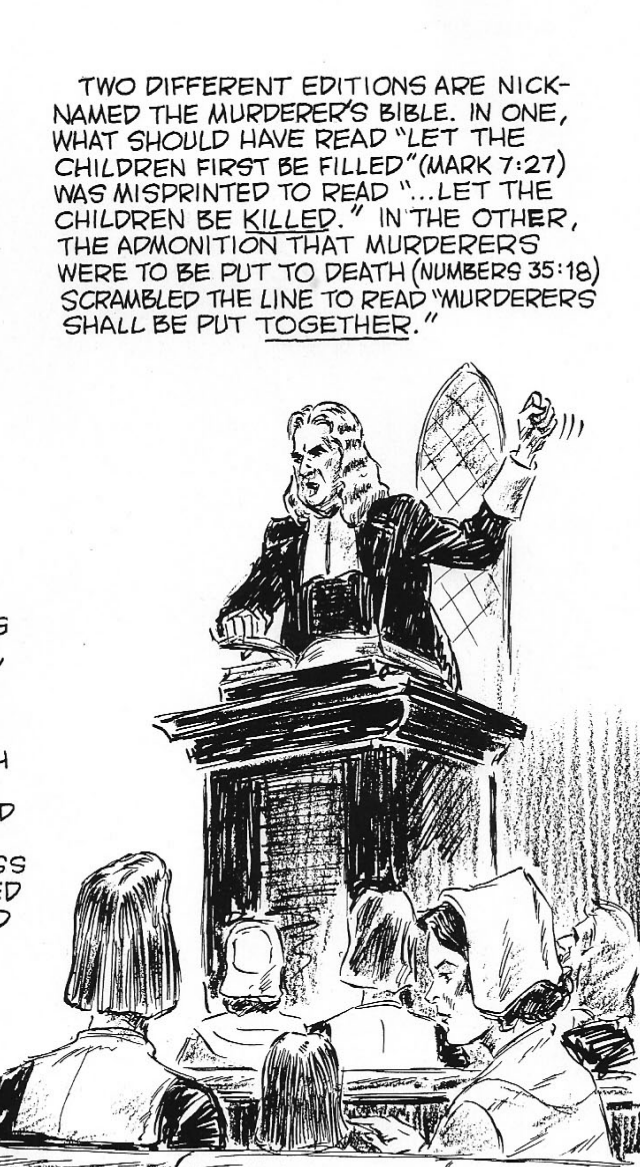
BY JOHN LEHTI

MURDERERS' BIBLES

THE BIBLE IS, AND PROBABLY ALWAYS WILL BE, THE WORLD'S BEST-SELLER! WITH SO MANY MULTIPLE PRINTINGS OVER THE YEARS, IT WAS ALMOST INEVITABLE THAT TYPOGRAPHICAL ERRORS SHOULD OCCUR!



IN 1702, THE OUTRAGED PURITAN MINISTER, COTTON MATHER (1663-1728), PREACHED AGAINST PRINTERS' SHOCKING MISTAKES IN BOSTON'S NORTH CHURCH, WHERE HE WAS PASTOR. MATHER, ONE OF THE FOUNDERS OF YALE COLLEGE, THUNDERED OUT A VERY APPROPRIATE TEXTUAL MISPRINT—PSALM 119:161 WHICH SHOULD HAVE READ, "PRINCES HAVE PERSECUTED ME..." BUT WHICH APPEARED IN THE BIBLE MATHER HELD IN HIS HAND BECAUSE OF A PRINTER'S CARELESS WORK, AS "PRINTERS HAVE PERSECUTED ME..." AND, ACCORDING TO THE REVEREND MATHER, INDEED THEY HAD!



TWO DIFFERENT EDITIONS ARE NICK-NAMED THE MURDERER'S BIBLE. IN ONE, WHAT SHOULD HAVE READ "LET THE CHILDREN FIRST BE FILLED" (MARK 7:27) WAS MISPRINTED TO READ "...LET THE CHILDREN BE KILLED." IN THE OTHER, THE ADMONITION THAT MURDERERS WERE TO BE PUT TO DEATH (NUMBERS 35:18) SCRAMBLED THE LINE TO READ "MURDERERS SHALL BE PUT TOGETHER."

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