

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

The Whole Counsel Of God

By Bobby K. Thompson

“Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God” (Acts 20:26-27). The counsel of God is what God has given for man to obey that he might be pleasing in His sight. It involves the commandments and precepts which the Holy Spirit directed the apostles to speak and deliver unto men. The counsel of God is made known unto men through the preaching of God’s word. ***“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things”*** (Rom. 10:13-15). In his farewell address to the Ephesian elders, Paul reminded them, that due to his not shunning to declare the whole counsel of God, he was free from the blood of all men. There is no way to be classified as a faithful gospel preacher when one refuses or refrains to preach on all subjects revealed in the scriptures. Paul admonished Timothy to ***“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine”*** (2 Tim. 4:2). Was Timothy to conclude that he had the prerogative of choosing what topics or subjects to preach while refusing to preach on others? Preaching the word involves preaching the whole counsel of God on all subjects which affect the souls of men. Cornelius had the right view when he told Peter, ***“Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God”*** (Acts 10:33). Whatever God had for Peter to preach, Cornelius was eager to know so that he and his household might obey God’s commandments to be saved. If a person has faith in God, why should he not want to hear the whole counsel of God? When one refuses the whole counsel of God, he is definitely deceiving himself.

We need to realize that the whole counsel of God constitutes many subjects. A certain amount of time is to be involved in preaching the whole counsel of God. I recall hearing brethren pray for me in gospel meetings that I might preach the whole counsel of God in the sermon that night. That would have been a lengthy sermon that no one would have liked to endure. The person praying no doubt had in mind that what I preached on that occasion would be true to the counsel of God. Over a period of time, all of God’s counsel should be preached by those who are faithful preachers of God’s word. To say the least, there is never a time to refuse to preach what God says in the scriptures concerning any subject. Congregations need a wholesome diet of the whole counsel of God. I believe this is not being offered in many congregations today, and members do not really want to know what the truth is on many subjects. They view the church as nothing more than a social club providing entertainment for them. Good sound gospel preaching disturbs them and they don’t want to hear anything which might be disturbing. ***“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables”*** (2 Tim. 4:3-4). If this time hasn’t already come, when they will not endure sound doctrine, I shudder to think what will exist when it does come.

Rather than labor in preaching the whole counsel of God, there are preachers who preach to please their brethren. They do not want to lose their popularity with brethren and churches, so they preach to please rather than to save by preaching the whole counsel of God. Some professed Christians challenge the truth of such a statement. They contend that their preacher has never preached anything that is false teaching! This may be so, but what about what they are not preaching? They hear pleasant sermons that comfort and encourage, and we are not denying that they have a place in the whole counsel of God, but what about other sermons that we need to hear regarding divorce and remarriage, and those regarding worldliness? What about teaching on institutional-

ism and unity in diversity? I made the statement during a gospel meeting that there is a generation in the church today, who hardly know what the issues are all about regarding liberal and conservative churches. It may come to the point of their concluding that it was just some personal issue over which their grandparents failed to agree. The local preacher told me later that it was already happening, as the result of the subjects being ignored from the pulpits. The failure of some preachers is not in what they preach, but what they fail to preach. We need to realize that the whole counsel of God is to be preached and it involves preaching whatever is revealed in the scriptures. Are we preaching and contending for the whole counsel of God? ■

Genesis 1: Literal Days or Long Ages?

By Greg Gwin

The “Day/Age” Theory argues that each of the days in Genesis 1 were actually long ages of time. This, of course, is an attempt to harmonize Biblical teaching of a young earth with the false claims of some scientists who claim our earth and universe are billions of years old. Here are some simple affirmative arguments to prove that the days of creation in Genesis 1 were literal 24 hour days rather than long ages of time:

1) God defined His own terms in Genesis 1:5. **“And God called the light Day and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.”** A period of light followed by a period of darkness constituted a day. Unless someone wants to argue that it stayed light for long periods and then stayed dark for long periods (which, of course, poses huge difficulties), we will have to stand upon this clear statement and conclude that the days really were literal 24 hour days. Furthermore, Genesis 1:14-18 mentions the sun and moon and stars, and says they were made to be **“for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.”** If we are to believe that the days were actually long ages of time, then what were the seasons and years?

2) Romans 1:20 says, **“Since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities - his eternal power and divine nature - have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made”** (NIV). This verse claims that someone has been here to see and understand God’s power ever since the creation of the world. This poses no problem to those of us who believe that man was created within the same actual week that everything else was created. But, those who want to believe that each day represents a long “age” have a problem. If man was created eons after the other elements of creation were formed, then this makes no sense. This line of reasoning is confirmed by Jesus’ own statement in Mark 10:6. **“From the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.”** The day/age theory places man at the end of millions or billions of years of geologic time. In light of these verses, it cannot be true.

3) If the days were actually long “ages”, then we have the wrong chronological order of events. For instance, plants were created on day three, but insects were not created until day five or six. But many plants depend on insects for cross-pollination, etc. How did plants survive for long “ages” without their needed counterparts in the insect world? Other similar problems of chronological order exist that strongly argue against the day/age theory.

We know that this day/age theory is commonly held by many who teach the false doctrine of theistic evolution. It is not true, and is actually an unnecessary attempt to compromise the truths taught in the Bible with the unproven claims of some scientists. They teach that we live in an ancient universe, while in actuality we live in a relatively young universe that was created in six literal days by our omnipotent God. — *College View Church of Christ Bulletin*, August 30, 2015. ■

“6 By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. 7 He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. 8 Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. 9 For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast” (Psalms 33:6-9).

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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