

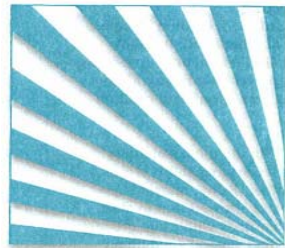
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Inside this issue:

Stuff the Magic Dragon 2

The Leadership Principle of Confrontation 4



Kingdom Business Network

Releasing Supernatural Ministry Into the Marketplace

Am I Too Religious?

By Rod Davis, KBN Director

Once, during an interview, Mahatmas Gandhi, the great leader of the Indian people and devout Hindu, said "I like your Christ...it's the Christians I have problems with."

When I first heard this, it shook my soul, not because the statement is surprising, but that this statement was so...right on! I, as a follower of Jesus, often feel the same way. I have never ceased to be amazed at just how much damage the Body of Christ has done to the *CAUSE* of Christ.

We often, as well meaning Christians (or not so well meaning) do more to drive away the lost multitudes. The church has become weak and ineffective in this country due to it's lack of understanding regarding the Kingdom of God. We do not consider ourselves citizens of the Kingdom, headed by our King, Jesus, as much as we consider ourselves members of our local church or our little sect or denomination. We love to brag about our large crowds, our music or our preachers, but often fail to allow Christ to live forth

through us. God really does not care how many people we bring to church, or how many folks we can proselytize from those "other" denominations as much as how many people will come to Him, because they see something worth wanting, in His people.

It seems our human tendency to feel "superior" often drives our thoughts and words when we promote our little group more than Christ. When our pet doctrines become more prominent than *the cross and Him crucified*, then we are in serious error.

Last year, I was told by a prominent minister, that while he felt that what KBN was doing was a move of God, and cutting edge ministry, he could openly not support it, as it might offend another minister in the area, who did not like the home church that I happened to belong to.

I was flabbergasted, to say the least, that the "other" minister had to come before a move of the Spirit! I will never forget that.

I was struck, while in Belize last month, that there

seemed to be no difference made between the various sects. The Nazarenes, Baptists, Catholics and Pentecostals all embraced myself and Mike Taylor as brothers. There were no questions asked, but that we called on His name. Anything else was just secondary to them. We were just accepted.

All were willing to help and no one questioned what our belief structure was. No one cared how we baptized or whether we were "sanctified", only that we were His servants. It was quite refreshing.

As we strive to overturn the marketplaces of the world with the gospel, let us strive to preach only the gospel, not sectarianism. More importantly let us remember, our lives and behavior are our mightiest preaching tools, and possibly can be our worst attributes as well.

I know many people hurt and turned off to God, by hard-core, hard-shell, religious people who love to criticize others. Let us no longer kill our witness by using religion in place of love to woo others to the King of Kings.



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If you are interested in receiving our newsletter please contact Rod Davis at 304-389-6095 or at rdavis@kbnonline.net. You may also go online at www.kbnonline.net.

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Offering Sacrifices to Stuff the Magic Dragon

By Charles Houdyschell, Jr.

Twenty-one percent (21%) of all pregnancies end in abortion. Abortion has claimed more lives than all wars of this country combined.¹ Some have compared abortion to child sacrifices, such as the offering children to the pagan god called Molech. Interestingly, the demographics bear out a case for this comparison.

The average age of a woman having an abortion is 24.² Her income is likely to be far below the poverty level. On average, she is white though minorities are disproportionately represented. She is also a professed Christian. Generally she is Protestant but often Catholic. More specifically, 43% of the time she is Protestant; 27% of the time she is Catholic; and 13% of the time she is considered to be Born Again Evangelical. If she is a minor, she will, on average, have the abortion either with her parents' approval or at their insistence. While these statistics are certainly noteworthy, the reasons for the abortion are more telling.

Only 7% of abortions have anything to do with fetal abnormalities, health, rape or incest. Of this percentage, 3% relate to fetal abnormalities; 3% are for health reason and only 1% cite rape or incest. The remaining 93% break down as follows: feels unready for responsibility 25%; feels she can't afford the baby 23%; too many family responsibilities 19%; relationship problems 8%; feels she is not mature enough 7%; interference with education or career 4%; other approximately 6%.³

In America half of all pregnancies are unplanned, and out of the unplanned pregnancies 54% ended in abortion. Therefore it is clear that the vast majority of these cases arise out of a desire to avoid facing the consequences of bearing a child, namely an adverse impact upon the lifestyle of the mother. In America the "choice" lies exclusively with the woman. Hence it is fair to say "mother" in this context.

Since so many abortions are a way of preserving one's lifestyle, the pagan god of this analogy would appear to represent the pursuit of happiness. In America this god is held in high esteem through the concept of "inalienable rights." Those of us blessed enough to have been born in the

United States of America are well acquainted with this phrase. However, have we ever stopped to think about its origin?

Wikipedia defines the term "inalienable rights" as a theoretical set of human rights that by their nature cannot be transferred from one person to another. It is interesting to note historically the concept of inalienable rights did not necessarily come from out Judeo-Christian heritage, but again according to Wikipedia, "the idea that certain rights are inalienable was found in early Islamic law and jurisprudence, which denied a ruler 'the right to take away from his subjects certain rights which inhere in his or her person as a human being.' [This is not to say that life or liberty were necessarily considered to be inalienable by Islamic rulers.] Islamic rulers could not take away certain rights from their subjects on the basis that 'they become rights by reason of the fact that they are given to a subject by a law and from a source which no ruler can question or alter.' These ideas may have influenced John Locke's concept of inalienable rights through his attendance of lectures given by Edward Pococke, a professor of Arabic studies."⁴

In the United States, we understand that our "inalienable rights" are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Interestingly, happiness is not the right, rather it is the pursuit thereof, which may never actually end in happiness. Nevertheless, we seem to forget this. Also, somewhere in the back of our minds, we remember from history class that Thomas Jefferson modified the phrase, as John Locke actually had used the term life, liberty and possessions (a.k.a. stuff).⁵ To us, it's all the same: stuff = happiness. We are not happy without our stuff, so stuff and happiness must be the same. Certainly many have given up life and liberty for stuff, so stuff must be the key to happiness. Clearly many are willing to give up the lives of their unborn for stuff. Thus in the context of abortion statistics, it appears clear that an unwanted child's life cannot be allowed to stand in the way of one's pursuit of stuff. In that way, abortion is very much an offering to the god of stuff. For the sake of a name we can call it "Stuff the Magic Dragon" (Stuff). Thus we see that abortion is just

one of many sacrifices made to Stuff.

However, we must not forget that there are other forms of child sacrifice offered to Stuff. An easy form to recognize, is found in the sacrificed relationships with our children. Today 1/3 of all school aged children are considered "latchkey kids," meaning they care for themselves during some part of the day because their parent(s) are working.⁶ The average U.S. workweek is 46 hours with 38% of the workforce working in excess of 50 hours.⁷ Depending on the occupation this number can be much higher. For example a professional or business proprietor may work much longer hours and average 60 or more hours per week. If we are not careful we can lose perspective of why we work. All too often our careers can become the tangible idol by which we pay homage to Stuff or for our kids' stuff. Thus we find ourselves training up our children in the worship of Stuff.

Many of us can't see past our careers. We come to believe that we are only as good as our last deal, last case or the last product we sell. Our self-identity is wrapped up in our career or business. Certainly we have to work. After all isn't this the lot of our life established in Genesis 3:19, where it states "[b]y the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return." Moreover, if we fail to "provide" for our families, does not Paul tell us in 1 Timothy 5:8 that we are worse than infidels? Since we have to work, we so easily forget the Lord's assurance in Matthew 6:25 to "not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear."

In our quest to "provide" we often pursue careers and businesses at the expense of relationships. Parents are not around for the child's first steps, first time riding a bicycle, school events or graduations. Others are not involved in the child's life at all. Those called to teach or work with children become so trapped by work or business that children are not reached. As a result, while the child's physical existence has not been terminated through abortion, his or her destiny may have been killed just the same.

A friend and colleague approaching the end of his very successful career lamented the years of relationship with his children

he had lost to his career. Another individual is one of the best in his profession. An outstanding trial lawyer in his 50s with a large income. He's never been married, has no family, and works non-stop. With the utmost regard for this individual as a professional, I must ask "what is the point?" "Where is the purpose?" "What is the destiny?" I have not found scriptural support for the proposition that we are go around stressed all the time only to die alone with the money we've accumulated being distributed to a handful of people we never knew. In fact we are instructed in Matthew 6:19-20 to "not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal."

That the Lord wants us to prosper is without question. (Psalm 35:27). Yet we seem to forget that this life is not all there is to things. Just as work is a means to an end, this life is a means to our eternity. No amount of riches we amass is going to impress God. The Lord once instructed a man to sell all he had and give it to the poor and follow Him. (Luke 18:22) Yet "when push came to shove" the man could not part with his stuff. When prosperity, or the pursuit thereof displaces our relationships it has become Stuff. "For the **love** of **money** is a root of all evils; it is through this craving that some have been led astray and have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves through with many acute [mental] pangs." 1Timothy 6:10 (AMP).

We must ask ourselves whether we have become consumed in Stuff worship. Many of us have moved into houses in subdivisions on the edge of town that are far beyond anything our parents could have imagined, in either size or cost? When we were children more than one television in a house was a big deal. Now we have at least one set in every room of our house. There are also several in our SUV or mini-van. Let us also not forget about our multiple vehicles, boats, furniture, electronics, gadgets and appliances galore. I have to confess that I paid more for my lawnmower than my parents paid for their house 40 years earlier (albeit not adjusted for inflation). In order to pay for this stuff we find ourselves working constantly. Often both

spouses work non-stop. If we are not working at work, we are hauling kids to sporting events, social activities and other functions or running to and fro trying to keep up with our other activities. All of this is in an effort to conform to the concept that we must fit into the average middle-American lifestyle.

While we smugly mock the Cleavers or the Nelsons, we do our best to copy whatever version of them that is being fed to us these days. Our suburban homes and SUVs are temples of Stuff worship. In the rush to pay for it all and keep up appearances we don't have time to look up, get alone with God or develop the very basic relationships that we must have. We are simply going through the motions of our lifestyle, often reacting and responding to the latest stimulus that just hit us. We feel we are doing well to simply be all the places we are supposed to be. We dare not be different, rather we must conform to the world in this regard.

Many years ago, children's sports had no Sunday games. Now church attendance takes a second or third place to getting the kids to their ball games. This is a sacrifice to Stuff. Our vision of our kids being the perfect kids has become Stuff. We give up a meaningful relationship with God in order to keep our illusion of this part of the perfect middle class lifestyle. Let us not forget what message is sent to the kids about where our priorities should be.

Alas, church attendance can also be as much a part of our "stuff," or illusion of our place in middle-America, as an SUV, big house, boat or ball game. Hence we must also ask whether we have allowed our church attendance to be relegated to more stuff. Do we attend out of a desire to worship God or are we going through the motions out of habit? Do we go to get in God's presence or do we attend so our neighbors will see us exit our house, well dressed and the right time every Sunday morning and our friends will not miss us sitting in our usual spot in church? In other words, are we doing the right thing for the wrong reason? Perhaps, at one time or another, we are all guilty of this.

I once attended a church where it seemed many (if not most) of the people came out of their memory of some deceased loved one. These were wonderful people! Yet, how sad to think

that a person has relegated church to a religious exercise motivated out of a memory of a dead relative rather than an active relationship with the living God. An additional concern is whether we allow our lifestyle to so consume us that we do not allow ourselves to get into God's presence. I can remember as a teenager thinking Sunday night services were extremely long events. Now, it seems there is an emphasis on getting the kids home and letting everyone get ready for the next day's school, commute or agenda. Have our lifestyles so captivated us that we can't enter into God's presence and just get lost for hours on end? Or must we just say that "if God intended for us to worship until 10:00, 11:00 or midnight he would not have created SUV's, subdivisions, long commutes, revolving credit or big screen television?"

If we are so consumed with the pursuit of our ideal lifestyle we fail to develop a meaningful relationship with God or fail to instill in those we are charged with influencing a desire to cultivate one of their own, I submit we have indeed failed no matter how much we achieve. As the Lord said in Matthew 16:26 "[f]or what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" In being so self-absorbed we sacrifice our destiny and the destiny of those around us to Stuff. Therefore I suggest that the next time we see an "abortion kills" bumper sticker on an SUV we take a moment engage in some self-reflection. I would submit that abortion represents a sacrifice of a child's life in order to prevent the mother from having to make personal sacrifices to raise the child. The child is traded to preserve Stuff. However, this same pagan god does not claim only unborn children, it also demands the destiny of the living.

¹<http://www.kingdomoflight.org/abortion-America's%20Wors%20Sin.htm>
<http://www.htmlbible.com/abortstats.htm>

²http://www.thirdway.org/data/product/file/17/demographics_of_abortion.pdf

³<http://www.nrlc.org/abortion/facts/reasonsabortions.html>

⁴http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inalienable_rights

⁵http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Life,_liberty_and_the_pursuit_of_happiness

⁶<http://phoenix.gov/FIRE/keykids.html>

⁷<http://www.libraryspot.com/kenow/workweek.htm>

The Leadership Principle of Confrontation

“A soft answer turns away wrath.” Proverbs 15:1



By John e. Schrock, Businessman

Underline the key concepts found in this principle.

When we are confronted by someone, our natural tendencies are to get defensive and argumentative. It's because we don't want to be proven wrong. To be wrong is considered humbling, and it hurts our pride. So we defend our position even when we know we are wrong or have exaggerated the truth. No one is always right in every situation. Yet, all of us are usually partly right. It is this “partly right” which gets us into trouble. This is why:

1. Since we know we are at least partly right, we open our mouth and freely give our opinions.

2. Once we have spoken our opinions, we are committed to defend our position. It is not easy to admit that we are wrong.

We cannot have good communication without good relationships. Good relationships give us the right to communicate our opinion without conflict. Poor communication destroys relationships, wastes a lot of time and energy, and hinders us in resolving problems.

Yes, we may win the argument, but lose the battle or the point we were trying to make, and possibly lose a friend in the process. When we have disagreements—which we all have—it is not only important to “agree with the adversary quickly” (Matthew 5:25), but equally important to manage and control the tone of our voice. A “soft answer” turns away wrath. When our response is soft and gentle, our opponents point of view. This gives us a chance to continue the discussion. It is

amazing how powerful words are in the hands of those who know how to use them. The words “I'm sorry” are powerful, but when they come from a soft, sensitive tongue, they are disarming. A s-o-f-t s-l- o-w answer is more powerful than tanks and guns.

There are three questions we should ask ourselves before we get into a debate:

1. How enlightened am I on the subject? Don't show a boastful, over confident attitude, but rather downplay your knowledge and maybe they will be surprised.

2. How much control do I have over my emotions? Refuse to let your anger control you, breath deep before you respond on the defense.

3. Do I know when to say, “You may be right!” or “That's an interesting point!”? All good communicators know how to humble themselves. And it's not wrong to say “I don't know” or “I'm not sure.”

The way we use and handle words may determine war or peace, friends or enemies, and failure or success in life. We must remember that it is better to get a part of something than nothing at all. The man who “knows that he knows” does not have to scream or get loud and abrasive. If he does, it may be a sign of his insecurity. It can be very embarrassing to be wrong at the top of our voice.

We can avoid a lot of problems and be more productive by giving soft answers to those who are arrogant and abrasive. When discussions create will respect us and consider our more heat than light, it is time to return a soft answer and let others embarrass them-

selves with their loudness. We should never walk away without establishing a respectful closure.

This principle is part of the one year character development program:

Foundations for Achievement.

Discussion:

How do you usually respond when someone communicates with you in anger or arrogance?

What aspect of the principle challenges you the most?

Measuring up to the plumbline:

How well are you currently applying this principle in your life? (10 being highest, 1 being lowest)

Can you see the value of raising your rating?

Thoughts to Ponder:

The best way to win is to forget to keep score.

For more of these Principles and additional Resources visit

www.lared.org