

The Vincennes Voice

"...The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight..." (Matt. 3:3)
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GREAT LESSONS FROM THE PEN OF HOSEA

Larry R. Ping II

The book of Hosea is one from which we can draw many valuable lessons. Those teachings include...

1) GOD'S USE OF EXAMPLES. During the days of Hosea, the people of God had committed "spiritual adultery." They had gone after other gods, and left the One and Only God behind. Thus, God instructed Hosea to select and marry a woman known for prostitution (Hos. 1:2-3). God indeed does have a plan for all He does and how He does it. Jesus similarly taught in the New Testament when teaching in parables.

2) GOD'S LOVE AND MERCY. Even though His people left Him, God, in time, was willing to offer a second chance. This was taught by example once again. Hosea's wife, Gomer, left him and went to others. Yet, Hosea lovingly took her back (Hos. 3:3). God has always been willing to offer these opportunities to His people. One needs not read very far

into the Bible to see this fact.

3) GOD'S REQUIREMENT OF HIS PEOPLE NEEDING KNOWLEDGE. Though the offer for another opportunity was afforded, some refused to take it. One of the bigger culprits for such was clearly stated in Hosea 4:6, "*My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.*" God calls upon His people to know His will (Eph. 5:17). Paul earlier told the Ephesians, "*Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ*" (Eph. 3:4). It then becomes vital and essential for us to "*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth*" (II Tim. 2:15). Not doing so will lead to the same destructive end as God's people of Hosea's time.

4) GOD HAS BEEN VERY CLEAR. DISOBEDIENCE BRINGS DEVASTATING CONSEQUENCES. Some of God's people through the ages seemed to think they could please God and escape His wrath even though they were not obedient. Unfortunately, those sorts of people are still around. It cannot be clearer than the pen of Paul, who said God will exact "*vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel*" (II Thess. 1:8). Peter posed an excellent question on this subject when asking, "*For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear*" (I Pet. 4:17-18)?

May we use these texts of the Old Testament to our advantage and learn from them (Rom. 15:4; I Cor. 10:11). How are you doing with this?

TURNING THE WORLD UPSIDE DOWN

Larry R. Ping II

In Acts 17:1-9, Paul was in the midst of helping find and establish a local church of God's people in Thessalonica. While there, he, Jason and others were accused of having "*turned the world upside down*" (Acts 17:6). It was the teaching of God's Word that had this city in such an uproar. By the way, when was the last time Vincennes, or your city was turned upside down? Here are a few ways in which we can turn this city upside down! Are you ready?

1) By Preaching And Teaching Only God's Word. Everything in the world of religion revolves around what is being taught. Do you ever wonder why this country is so permissive of such things as abortion, homosexuality, open adultery or foul language, to name a few? Because we have drifted so far away from God and His Word! When we start to "*Preach the word*" (II Tim. 4:2) the way it is meant to be taught, you then will start seeing a resistance unlike no other. When we start catering

to those who have "*itching ears*" (II Tim. 4:3), it is then there is no difference drawn, and consequently no reason for the world to be turned upside down as it was in Thessalonica.

2) By Living Like A Faithful Christian. Our influence is immeasurable and powerful. Paul penned that "*none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself*" (Rom. 14:7). That is, we cannot live or die, without being an influence on someone else. When you begin to talk like a Christian, dress like a Christian and act like a Christian, it will be noticed! It is at this point when questions will be asked of you and your family. When you teach yourself and your family that worship services is more important than anything else going on, it will be noticed! When something is being done that should not be, and something is said, it will be noticed. When we get to a point in our life when nothing is being noticed, we do have

a problem. We are to "*Love not the world*" (I Jn. 2:15-17). When we love the world enough to act like it, why would the people of the world be as upset as they were in Thessalonica? This is why the apostle penned, "*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God*" (Rom. 12:1-2).

3) By Being Consistent. Doing something only once will most likely not cause another to feel as though their world has been tuned upside down. Consistency and diligence is the key. Remember, "*But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*" (Heb. 11:6). Whose world have you turned upside down lately?

FIRST CITY CHURCH OF CHRIST

MEETING AT HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS

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MEETING TIMES (EST)

SUNDAY

Bible Study – 10:00 am

Worship – 11:00 am & 3:00 pm

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study – 7:00 pm