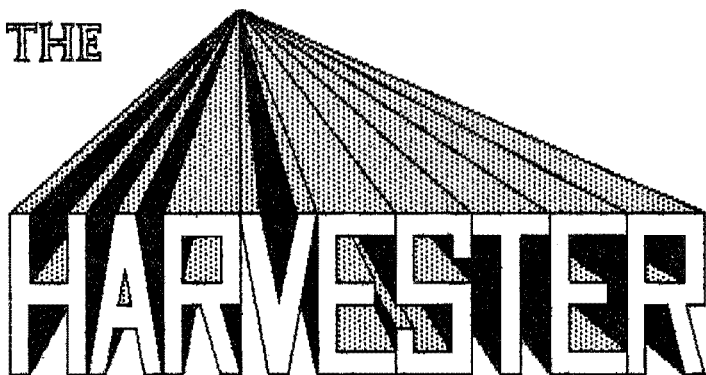


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"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." [Luke 10:2]

SEPTEMBER 1996

No. 129

"O MAN OF GOD"

If someone were to ask us, "Are you a man of God?", how would we answer? Some would say yes and some would say no. But others would answer that question with another one: How can you tell if you are a man of God? What characteristics would you look for?

Perhaps the passage in 1 Timothy 6:11-19 can best help us. Here the apostle Paul shows there are four distinguishing points used to tell if a person truly is a man of God: by what he flees from, by what he follows after, by what he fights for, and by what he is faithful to. As we discuss each one of these, let us examine our lives accordingly and determine whether we are 'men of God'.

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FORWARD AND
ADDRESS CORRECTION

First of all, a man of God is known by what he flees from -- evil. *"But thou, O man of God, flee these things"* (1 Tim. 6:11). He flees from the *"love of money"* as Paul was discussing in the previous verse. The man of God will not covet after material things neither can he be bought with a price like Judas or Balaam (Num. 22) were.

A man of God will flee from sins of fornication. Again Paul warns, *"Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body"* (1 Cor., 6:18). There are too many sexual temptations in the world today: television, VCR movies, X-rated theaters, pornographic magazines, the computer internet, and so forth. But God's man will flee these things just as Joseph fled from his danger in immediate fashion (Gen. 39)!

Also, a man of God will flee from idolatry. *"Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry"* (1 Cor. 10:14). *"Little children, keep yourselves from idols"* (1 Jn. 5:21). This seems like easy and simple advice, yet part of the downfall of the great King Solomon involved idolatry (1 Ki. 11:4-8). Is there anything in our lives that keep us from worshipping God? That is exactly what an idol is -- anything that turns us away from our heavenly Father. The man of God will not get involved with false gods.

Paul tells us the second way that a man of God can be recognized is by what he follows after. Naturally he pursues after the things of God. *"... and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness"* (1 Tim. 6:11). As an example, the man of God will go after charity or love (1 Cor. 14:1 & 2 Tim. 2:22). He realizes the power of godly love (1 Cor. 13) and that he must

follow after love through his actions and not just with words. *"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth"* (1 Jn. 3:18).

The man of God follows after good things. *"Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God; but he that doeth evil hath not seen God"* (3 Jn. 11). Also, the man of God will not be the kind who stirs up trouble and strife but follows after peace. *"Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another"* (Rom. 14:19).

The third mark of a man of God is seen by what he fights for. Paul points this out in 1 Tim. 6:12. *"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."* Paul certainly knew this was an important ingredient in the man of God because he himself was involved in many spiritual battles. He fought for the faith in Christ when he responded to Felix (Acts 24:14-15) and Agrippa (Acts 26:21-23). To the very end Paul claimed, *"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith"* (2 Tim. 4:7).

A man of God will fight to obtain a crown of life. *"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing"* (2 Tim. 4:8). In like manner Paul wrote a stirring passage in Ephesians 6:10-17 about how God's men will put on the *"whole armor of God"* and fight for the Lord against all *"spiritual wickedness in high places."*

THE HARVESTER is a monthly publication intended to encourage all men everywhere to become laborers into God's harvest (Lk. 10:2). This paper is mailed free of charge to anyone who wishes to receive it. Please submit name, address, and all correspondence to:

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The fourth way to tell if a person is a man of God is by what he is faithful to or by what he trusts in. *"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy"* (1 Tim. 6:17). The man of God is clearly known by what he is faithful to: God.

The man of God trusts in his Almighty Creator. His hope is set on none other. *"This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation. For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe"* (1 Tim. 4:9, 10).

Next, the man of God is faithful to his spouse. Paul described the beautiful relationship between Christ and His church in Ephesians 5:22-33 and compared it to the relationship between a husband and wife. Both must love each other and be faithful to each other in order for the marriage to prosper. If a man of God cannot remain faithful to his spouse, then how can he be faithful to God whom he has not seen (1 Jn. 4:20)?

Finally, the man of God will be faithful to the point of dying for that faith. To the church at

Smyrna, John wrote: *"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life"* (Rev. 2:10). Notice that this is not referring to the duration of our faith, but to the intensity of it! The man of God will be faithful *"unto death."*

So can we answer the question, "Are you a man of God"? It should be easy now that we know what constitutes such a person. The man of God will flee from the love of money, fornication and idolatry. The man of God will follow after charity (love), that which is good and peace. The man of God will fight for Truth and faith, for a crown of life and for the Lord. And the man of God is faithful to God, to his spouse and to the point of death.

RAY McMANUS

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. In what two cities did Jeroboam locate the two golden calves he had made for worship?
2. As the Israelites prepared to leave Mt. Sinai for the promised land, why did God refuse to travel in their midst?
3. How many times should one warn a divisive person?
4. If you fear the Lord and shun evil, what does Proverbs promise it will bring to your body?

5. What book of the New Testament is referred to in Acts as *"the former treatise"*?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH . . .

and remember last month's questions?

1. At the age of ninety-nine Abram's name was changed by God to what? **ABRAHAM** (Gen. 17:1,5)

2. From what country did Solomon bring Hiram, a worker in brass who was to make temple furnishings? **TYRE** (1 Ki. 7:13)

3. When Mary of Bethany rose quickly and left the house, where did the Jews think she had gone? **TO LAZARUS' GRAVE TO WEEP** (Jn. 11:31)

4. As recorded in the book of Revelation, there was a war in heaven between two foes; can you name them? **MICHAEL AND HIS ANGELS AGAINST THE DRAGON AND HIS ANGELS** (Rev. 12:7)

5. What did Jael use to kill Sisera, commander of the Canaanite army? **A NAIL AND A HAMMER** (Judg. 4:21)

CHRISTIANITY VERSUS MILITARY SERVICE

As Christians we cannot conscientiously take part in any form of military service. Our convictions are based upon a number of scriptures in God's Word. God requires that we be submissive citizens of our country, but if our country requires us to do that which violates His Will, we must obey God rather than our government (Acts 4:19; Acts 5:29). Following are some of the reasons for objecting to military service, whether combatant or non-combatant.

1. God is supreme authority. We must submit to Him above all others, including Government (Acts 4:19; Acts 5:29; Matt. 22:37; see also Matt. 22:21).

2. The Christian is forbidden to war after the flesh (2 Cor. 10:3-4).

3. Christianity allows no hatred or physical retaliation (Gal. 5:14; Rom. 12:17-21; Rom. 13:9). Rather, we are commanded to love (Rom. 13:8-10). We cannot seek vengeance ourselves (Rom. 12:19).

4. We cannot conscientiously be a part of, be yoked to, nor have fellowship with a body such as the military, which functions through violent physical force and bloodshed (2 Cor. 6:14-18; Eph. 5:11).

5. As Christians, we are commanded to assemble with fellow Christians for scriptural worship. In the military, we would be denied this right (Heb. 10:25; 1 Cor. 11:18-26; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2).

In view of the foregoing biblical principles, Christians cannot engage in carnal warfare or military service for any reason or in any form. Instead, Christians should desire to be recognized as peace loving creatures of God.

-- SELECTED --

Some folks say they love the Lord,
And we wonder if they mean it;
For if they've ever served the Lord,
No one has ever seen it.

GOSPEL MEETINGS

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
Sept. 2 - 6	Oak Grove Church Liberty, KY	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
Sept. 6 - 8	Fayetteville Rd. Church Atlanta, GA	Wilbur Bass (Auburn, AL)
Sept. 16 - 20	Lily Church near London, KY	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
Sept. 20 - 22	Lake City, GA 7:30pm E.S.T.	Harry Cobb (Wedowee, AL)
Sept. 23 - 27	Mt. Zion Church Crab Orchard, KY	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
Sept. 27 - 29	Louisville, KY	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)

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WHERE DOES THE TIME GO?

There are 168 hours in every week. These 168 hours are used up as follows:

40 hours work
56 hours sleep
7 hours eating
7 hours traveling, dressing, bathing, etc.
10 hours shopping, gardening, business, etc.
21 hours watching TV, reading, sports,
other recreation

HOW DO WE SPEND THE OTHER 27 HOURS IN THE WEEK?

*"Redeeming the time,
because the days are evil." (Eph. 5:16)*