

Living in the “Woulds”

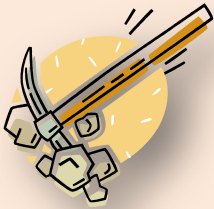
If you had your choice, would you live in the city, suburbs or in the “woulds?” I would like to go for a walk with you in the “woulds.” You will see some interesting things there including three houses where people live.

The first house is the I would if I could house. Its address is John 7:44. The people who live here have evil desires. They wanted to seize Jesus, but His time had not yet come. Think of what man would do if he dared to do it. There are many who follow through with these evil desires, but many more who would if they could if they could get away with it. Man’s heart is capable of things beyond what he actually does. They would if they could. In God’s sight, the desire to do these things means the person is guilty of them. In Matthew 5:28, Jesus said to look with lust on a woman is the same as committing adultery. If a man covets, and desires to steal, but doesn’t follow through, he is still guilty before God. In God’s records, there are a lot more adulterers and murderers than go to jail. God looks at the heart. Have you visited this house? What would you do if you could?

The next house is the I would if I could - but I can’t house. This house is located at Exodus 4:1, 10 where Moses gives excuses why he couldn’t lead Israel. This is the residence of those who excuse their uninvolvedness. “I would if I could, but I can’t.” They may claim unworthiness or humility. “I’d sing but I can’t.” “I’d teach the class, but I can’t.” Many fail to do what God wants them to do because they become lost in the “woulds.” The real truth is that they could if they would, but they won’t. We can do what we should do.

The last house in the “woulds” is the “I would if I could, but I can’t because of inability.” Located at I Thessalonians 2:18, “Wherefore we would have come unto you even I Paul, once and again: but Satan hindered us.” Paul would, but he couldn’t. God understands the heart. This is the best looking house in the “woulds.” If God sees the evil we would if we could, He also sees the good we would if we could.

Paul wanted to go to Thessalonica, but couldn’t. God accepted the desire for good as though it was done. People are sometimes shut into the house. They would come to services if they could, but they can’t, and God knows their heart.

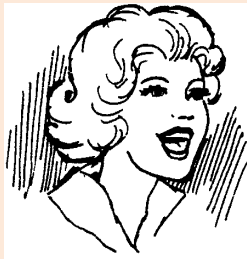


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The Lord commended the widow who gave her mite. He blessed her not for what she could give, but for what she would if she could. In II Corinthians 8:12, "If there is first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what a man hath and not according to that he hath not." What would you do for the Lord if you could? If you can't do what you would, at least do what you can.

We're now at the end of our walk in the "woulds." Let me ask you which house do you live in?



WOMEN WHO WORSHIP - By Dot Davis

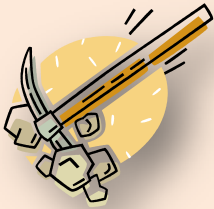
Evaluate Your Expectations - Part 2

"I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shown Thy servant" (Genesis 32:10).

A woman with whom I was speaking expressed her disappointment with God. She enumerated the ways she and her husband had obeyed God and lived for Him. She expected that in return, God would "reward" them by sending certain financial and material benefits their way. She couldn't understand why things weren't turning out as she anticipated they would.

Perhaps you might be shocked at her conclusion. At the time, I thought it sounded reasonable. But as I thought upon her statements later, I saw that such thinking is not according to grace. In essence, putting such a claim upon God is like saying, "I deserve Your blessings. I've earned them!" Although there were occasions in the Old Testament when God would specifically promise reward for performance and give it based on obedience (law), since the work of Christ, the blessings we receive are all of grace. (Granted, some blessings are simply reaping the benefit of obeying God's Word and "sowing to the Spirit," Galatians 6:7-9.)

But now I must acknowledge my own guilt! After the heartbreaking experience of having a child rebel against God and His Word, I angrily said to God, "Is this what I get for being a stay-at-home mom? Is this the outcome we get for obeying Your Word and endeavoring to faithfully teach our children Your ways?" In just a few moments I realized what I was REALLY saying: "God, You owe me!" I was



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demanding His fulfillment of my expectations. Then I had to confess; God doesn't owe me anything. I owe Him everything! It is not only my duty but my expression of love to obey Him. I have no RIGHT to expect anything in return. I see now that I have to evaluate all my expectations. Am I obeying God for my good or His glory?

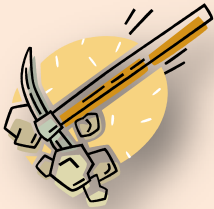
If ever there was a "saint" who, from a human perspective, didn't deserve God's blessings, we might say it was the conniving Jacob. This young man had LOTS of expectations for his life, and he set his course to bring them about himself. But God thwarted his plans and plots, and bestowed His blessings upon Jacob His own way. After many years in God's schoolhouse, with troubles behind and uncertainties ahead, he expressed to the Lord his heartfelt realization in a touching confession: "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which Thou hast shown unto Thy servant (Gen. 32:10)." Jacob had it right. He understood mercy and grace. God didn't owe him; he owed God. He HAD received reward and blessing, just the opposite of what he deserved.

Are you expecting God to reward your obedience according to your plan? God does promise us reward later on in heaven. We are to be faithful now, expecting nothing in return. He has promised to care for us and He will bless us, but not because of anything we have done. They are ALL blessings of His grace.

First Baptist Hosts Conference

Our church will host the Empire State Fellowship's Annual Conference on October 19, 20. It has been several years since we have hosted a conference, and there is much excitement about the privilege of serving the messengers of the churches around the state. Many of our people are involved on the Committee, and will be serving in various jobs. Dr. Gary Anderson, President of Baptist Mid-Missions will be the featured speaker on the theme of "Discipleship." Our church will be doing food service, and providing the special music. We would like to fill the auditorium on Monday night at the 7:00 p.m. service. Many of our conferences are held in places too far to travel to, but this one is in your church. Won't you come?

Dr. Anderson will also speak at the Sunday Services on October 18th. He brings with him many stories of how God is working around the world. You won't want to miss this opportunity.



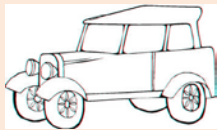
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Annual Covenant Meeting - October 14th

At the time of the anniversary of our church founding, we hold our Annual Covenant Meeting. This old fashioned service focuses on the covenant that church members agree to live by when they become members here at our church. Sometimes we all need to be reminded of our responsibilities not only to the Lord, but to each other. We will read the roll of our members, and the covenant. Prayer will be offered for those who are not present. We will pray and rededicate ourselves to live by the principles of God's Word contained in the covenant. Every member of the church is asked to attend this annual service of rededication.

Valley Classics - October 6th



Dave Lanning, who attends services here at our church, is a gifted musician, and will share his talent with us at our next Valley Classics meeting at noon on October 6th. The monthly luncheons give you an opportunity to invite someone to be exposed to our church, and its people. Invite a neighbor and friend. We do not ask for money, but ask you to sign up a week before the luncheon so we have a number to prepare for. Donations are accepted at the time you sign up in the church office, and a \$3/person will help us meet the expenses.

Quarterly Business Meeting

Our Quarterly Business Meeting will be held on October 21st. Please come and be involved in the business of your church.

On Our Web Site

We have recently added pastor's messages to our web site (fbnv.org). You can hear a message by clicking on Messages. Let others know about our web site.



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Pastor's Desk



We have had a lot of workers here lately. Some guys the other day laid new carpet outside my door. I thought that was nice of them. It smells like new carpet throughout the building. I was thinking about getting new carpet in my penthouse here. How do you think purple shag would look?

Some other guys are building a new bathroom for me. I can't turn around in the other ones, but this new one has a larger door and plenty of turn around space. Pastor says I can't use it though, because it's for handicapped people. He says I'm not a handicapped desk. The new gym equipment has arrived and we'll soon see the new backboards and volleyball set.

Awana got underway for the 51st year here at First Baptist. The kids didn't know where to run because the circle hasn't been painted on the new floor yet.

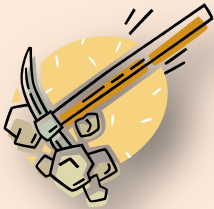
Pastor and Joanie are driving to Florida for a vacation later this month. He says a flat pastor will do the speaking on the two Sundays that he is gone (November 1st and 8th).

Awana Makes Changes

We have made some changes to our Awana Program that meets on Monday nights. While the Spark's Program is the same, the older clubs this year are studying the Armor of God and memorizing together Ephesians 6:10-18. We hope that the revised program will allow more boys and girls to be engaged in Bible learning and memorization.

Membership Class

A new membership class taught by Pastor is underway. It meets following the Sunday Evening Service. Several adults are currently attending. Are you interested in becoming a part of our church family? Join the class and find out more about First Baptist. Join the family.

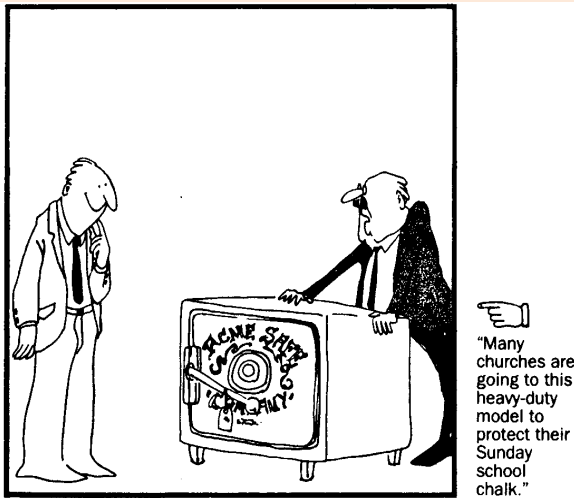


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The Subtle Sins of the Saints

Pastor has begun a new series of messages on Sunday mornings entitled, “The Subtle Sins of the Saints.” He is drawing some ideas from the book, Respectable Sins by Jerry Bridges. The premise is that while the average Christian can identify and avoid some of the “greater” sins, there is a host of subtle sins that he doesn’t really recognize in his own life. We are using our morning message to identify these “lesser” sins and deal with them. Revival comes when God’s people confess their sins and get right with God. Are you guilty of some of these subtle sins? Come on Sundays and find out.



Looking Ahead to Next Month

November 10 -Valley Classics
Speaker, Dave Titus

14 - Jill Ellerson and Dan Smith’s wedding.

26 - Thanksgiving