

Bold-Faced Liar!

by Raymond Peter DeFabritis

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Dedication

Dedicated to all the men and women of God who out of a pure heart preach and/or teach the Word, not only because of their love for God but also because of their unfeigned love for the saints of God. I thank God for you all!

And to all of them, I say this, *“For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.”* (Hebrews 6:10) Thank you and God bless you!

Introduction

Have you ever played a word game where the moderator would say a word, and the audience would immediately respond with another word? The typical response would usually be a synonym or an antonym, or just any other word that would immediately come to mind.

For example, if the moderator said “dark”, a typical response might be “light”. Or if the moderator said “shine”, a typical response might be “bright”. You get the idea.

Now I would like to suggest the following scenario for such a word game, and that is, if the moderator were to say: “worship”, a response could be “love”. And if the moderator were to say “gratefulness”, a response could be “thanksgiving”. And finally, if the moderator were to say “leaven”, a response could be “sin”.

It is indeed this last example where I chose the word leaven, which I believe would likely be responded to by the word sin, as I mentioned above. This is because we most often associate the word leaven with sin since we tend to recall the scripture in *1 Corinthians 5:6-8* which states,

⁶ Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?

⁷ Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

⁸ *Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*

Nevertheless, not all leaven is bad!

Actually, Jesus uses the term ‘leaven’ in a positive way as He attempts to give us a glimpse of what the kingdom of heaven and of God is like.

Luke 13:18-21 (See also Matthew 13:31-33) reads,

¹⁸ *Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it?*

¹⁹ *It is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.*

²⁰ *And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God?*

²¹ *It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.*

This contrast is indeed consistent with Paul’s teaching on sowing and reaping. (*Galatians 6:7-8*) In one context, if you sow to the flesh, you will of the flesh reap corruption. However, in the opposite context, if you sow to the Spirit, you will of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

By definition, leaven means to penetrate, permeate, alter, transform (change) a mass.

Of course we must also consider the mass or the lump, if you will, lest we forget about the parable of the sower. (*Matthew 13:3, Mark 4:1 & Luke 8:4*)

I want to share with you how both the negative and the positive contexts of ‘leaven’ have clearly made significant differences in my life.

N.B. All scriptural references are from the King James Bible.

What Was Your Sixth Grade Classroom Like?

It was shortly after Labor Day in the fall of 1958 and school was back in session. I had turned 11 years old that previous May and I was now entering the sixth grade at Public School (PS) 68 in the Bronx, NY. I had been attending this school since kindergarten and this would be my last year at this elementary school before entering into junior high the following year.

Mrs. Cochran was the name of our teacher. We were a coed class of about forty students and Mrs. Cochran taught all of our subjects in one classroom. We stayed in that classroom all day for every subject.

Now, Mrs. Cochran had this thing about the West Point Cadet's Honor Code. The Code simply reads that, "***A cadet will not lie, cheat, steal, or tolerate those who do.***"

Being in the same classroom all day, on occasion Mrs. Cochran would have to leave the classroom (I suppose to use the ladies' room), but she would always say, "Okay class, while I am out of the room I want no one talking, and remember I want you to be on the ***honor system***" – meaning that we should behave according to the West Point Cadet's Honor Code.

From the vantage point of Mrs. Cochran's desk, I sat to her left about two-thirds towards the back of the room and about three columns in from the left.

After leaving the room I had every intention of obeying her request of 'no talking' while she was absent. However, immediately after she left the room, the fellow who sat directly in front of me (his name was Raymond Masiero) turned around in his desk and started to fiddle with items on my desk. Well this may not seem to be such a big deal to many people, but I happened to be (and in many ways continue to be) very conscientious about having my personal things kept neat and in order. So, in an attempt to get him to stop pestering me, I told him to leave me alone. He did not leave me alone, and he also said some things to me in the process. Moreover, while I was contending with him, I heard some girls chattering on the opposite side of the classroom.

After a while Mrs. Cochran returned to the classroom and immediately asked the class if anyone had talked, and since we were expected to be on the honor system, she wanted to know who did. So in all honesty, I proceeded to raise

my hand, but as I did so, I looked around the room and no one else had raised their hands, even though there clearly were others who had talked, including Raymond Masiero.

The Dunce!

After Mrs. Cochran saw that I raised my hand and no one else did, she proceeded to have me get up and go into a corner at the rear of the classroom. I had to face the wall and place a dunce cap on my head. (A definition of dunce would be a blockhead, bonehead, knucklehead, nincompoop, ninny, puddinghead, stupid, etc.)

As I faced the wall with the dunce cap on my head, Mrs. Cochran decided that this would be a great opportunity to teach the class the vocabulary word of the day. Using me as the object lesson, she introduced the class to the word ‘ostracize’ (to shun or ignore) and explained that this was what I was experiencing.

I took it all in stride and never tried to explain to her that I wasn’t the only one talking. After all I did indeed talk and was guilty of breaking her rule.

Now several days later, in like fashion, Mrs. Cochran had to leave the classroom, and again she asked the class not to talk while she was away. She also reminded us that we were to be on the ‘honor system’.

No sooner did she leave the room when Raymond Masiero turned around in his desk and started to mess around with the items on my desk, and again I ended up talking to him as I tried to get him to stop. Furthermore, there was some chitter-chatter going on at the other side of the classroom.

Shortly thereafter, Mrs. Cochran entered the room and asked if anyone had talked. Again I raised my hand. No one else did!

“D” in Conduct!

This time Mrs. Cochran decided to write a note to my parents which I was to take home and present it to them. After reading the note, my parents were asked to sign it and then I was to return it to Mrs. Cochran the next school day. This presented me with a major challenge. You see, my father always insisted that I be well behaved while in school. He warned me if I were to get in trouble in school, then when I got home, he would inflict twice the amount of punishment. Well, after reading the note, he signed off on it and then took off his belt and gave me several good whacks on my rear end. Ouch!

Now to some this may appear to have been an overly harsh reaction by my father; that is, the implementation of corporal punishment. I loved my father but I also feared his wrath. There have been some who question this love-fear relationship while even extending it to our relationship with God. They argue, "How can you love someone and fear them at the same time?" I like to answer by explaining that although I suffered many (deserved) whippings by my father throughout my youth, I always returned home. I intuitively knew that my father loved me in spite of the discipline; or may I be bold enough to say because of the discipline.

The scriptures deal with this very subject in a much more elegant way. In *Hebrews 12:5b-13*, we read,

^{5b} ...My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

⁶ For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth (instruct-teach-discipline), and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

⁷ If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

⁸ But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

⁹ Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

¹⁰ For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure (as seemed proper and good to them); but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

¹¹ Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised (trained) thereby.

¹² *Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;*
¹³ *And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.*

May we also remember: “*And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation.*” (Luke 1:50)

Another outcome of having a teacher’s note sent home to my parents was that when it came time for our quarterly report card to be sent home, I was given a grade of “D” in conduct. I don’t know what it’s like today in the modern day educational system, but in my day students were not only graded in Math, English, History, Spelling, etc., but we were also graded in disciplines such as Penmanship, Punctuality, Neatness and Conduct. Needless to say, this was not well received by my parents and although I did not get another whipping (double jeopardy), it did produce a stern reprimand.

Not Again!

As time went by it should come as no surprise that Mrs. Cochran eventually had to leave the room again, and as usual she asked the class to be on the honor system. Surely this was the queue for Raymond Masiero to turn around and begin to harass me which once again resulted in me (and not only me) to resort to talking. Shortly thereafter she returned to the classroom and proceeded to ask if anyone had talked. But this time my response was different. Instead of raising my hand (as I should have), I made the fateful decision to literally sit on my hands. I was determined to not again have to stand facing the corner of the room; not again to have to wear the Dunce cap; not again to experience the ostracizing by the rest of the class; not again having to take a note home to my parents; not again getting a whipping for misbehaving in school; and not again getting a ‘D’ in conduct on my report card.

[I suppose Mrs. Cochran felt victorious that she had finally succeeded in having a class that was totally obedient and honest. I have wondered why, after raising my hand and admitting that I had talked, Mrs. Cochran never questioned as to whom or why I was talking? Perhaps Mrs. Cochran lacked some wisdom concerning this issue, but let me make one thing clear, I was

wrong! There is no justification as to why I lied! I am sure Mrs. Cochran's motives were pure. She is in no way to be blamed!]

Here was the outcome: I quickly learned that if I lied every now and then, this would keep me out of trouble and I wouldn't get spanked.

There may be some who might think that the telling of so-called 'little white lies' could be a cute thing and quite harmless. Well, I'm not sure about that, but I do know one thing: that if telling little white lies goes on long enough and left unchecked, they indeed will develop and grow (like leaven) into a very serious condition.

Indeed, this was the case in my life, because by the time I was 21 years old, I was a full-fledged bold-faced liar! (Remember, these sixth grade events took place 10 years earlier when I was 11 years old.)

By bold-faced, I mean: shameless, brazen, daring, wicked.

In *1 Timothy 4:1-2*, we read:

¹ *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;*

² *Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;*

If you have heard my testimony and/or have read my book, then you will recall that at this point of my life, I was godless. (See "Jesus Won't Forgive Me For The Things That I Have Done!" – ISBN: 978-1-304-30821-4 www.lulu.com). I departed from the faith at the age of 19, and by the age of 21 my conscience was seared to the point where I was speaking many lies in hypocrisy. I say hypocrisy, because if you had asked me if I was a Christian at that time, I would have said yes. Of course, I had no concept of what true Christianity was all about.

You see, liars not only lie to others, but they also lie to themselves!

Consider the quote Jesus made in *Matthew 7:17-18*,

¹⁷ Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

¹⁸ A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

How Would You Like to Buy a Used Car From a Bold-Faced Liar?

Although the subtitle refers to a hypothetical used car transaction (perhaps something that many people can relate to), I would like to describe a verifiable story of how I actually bought and sold a used boat. The story is meant to serve as an example of just how far my character had degenerated since the first time I decided to lie. Of course there were other nefarious areas of my life besides lying that I was involved in. (If you're a sinner, it's uncommon for someone to be bound in only one type of sin.)

“Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.” (Titus 1:15)

My First Boat Ever!

Ever since I was a young boy I have always wanted a boat of my own. I would love to go fishing on Long Island Sound with either my father, my grandfather, my uncles or my friends. I just loved being out on the water having the smell of the salt sea in the air and the thrill of catching fish from a small motor boat. But in every case that I went fishing, it was never in my own boat. I did buy a 5hp Evinrude motor when I was about 18 years old and on occasion I would rent a small row boat to fish by myself or with friends.

Fast forwarding to the spring of 1975 (about 18 months before I got saved), I was 28 years old and living in Lilburn, Georgia. I decided to purchase a used boat from a fellow at work by the name of Jim for \$300. It was a 14-foot white-fiberglass, V-hull Boston-Whaler-type boat with a 25hp Johnson outboard motor. After the boat was delivered to my house, I stored it in one-half of my two-car garage. I registered the boat with the county, obtained liability insurance, did some minor work on the hull, and tested the motor out;

all while sitting in my garage on a boat trailer. Now it was time to take it out on the lake.

It just so happened that my sister and her family were visiting from New York; so I thought that this would be a wonderful opportunity for all of us to spend a day on the lake to have a picnic and boat-ride outing. Since we lived in the northeast suburbs of Atlanta, Lake Lanier was the lake of choice for all our water recreational activities.

So we packed up all of our picnic supplies and headed off to the lake. Shortly after arriving at the lake, while the women and children stayed in the picnic area, my brother-in-law and I launched the boat off of the trailer and into the lake. Then we decided that this would be a good time to take the boat for a ride around the lake. We cranked up the motor and off we went. After riding around for about 30 to 45 minutes, all of a sudden the motor conks out; I mean dead in the water (pardon the pun), totally stopped running. We immediately tried to re-crank the motor, but to no avail. After about 20 minutes we gave up and flagged down a nearby boatman and asked if he would be kind enough to tow us back to shore, which he did. Well that was it for the boating activities that day. For me this really put a damper on the rest of the day's events.

After getting the boat home and putting it back into my garage, I spent the next couple of weeks working on the motor to try and figure out what was wrong. I checked the spark plugs, the carburetor, the fuel lines, etc. After checking everything out, I was able to crank it up again in my garage and everything seemed to be alright. Of course by now my sister and her family went back home, but after a week or so I decided to ask another buddy of mine from work to go on a fishing trip with me. He agreed, and so on one Saturday morning we both got together and drove the boat up to the lake.

We launched the boat into the lake, cranked up the motor and off we went navigating on the lake to find a suitable fishing spot. After about 30 to 45 minutes of boating, all of a sudden the motor stops running. We tried to re-crank the motor, but nothing worked. So again I had to get help in order to be towed backed to shore. The carefully planned fishing day had been ruined. But by now I was extremely aggravated and fed up with this boat and motor. However, instead of deciding to bring the motor to a professional repairman (not wanting to put any more money into this project), I decided

that it was time to get rid of the boat all together. I decided that I was going to sell it and ask for the same amount of money that I had initially paid, that is \$300.

The Transaction!

I posted a 'For Sale' note on the bulletin board at work and it wasn't long before I received a call from a fellow whom we will call Fred (the real name of the person has been changed to protect the identity of the victim). Fred was a well-known and respectable colleague, a retired Air Force Colonel, who had decided to pursue a second career at Bell Labs. He was interested in purchasing my boat and we agreed to meet at my house so that he could look the boat over.

He came to my house one evening after work to check out the boat, and he liked it. Just before closing the deal, as we stood in my garage about three feet apart, he asked me the following question: "Any problems with the motor?" I looked at him eye ball to eye ball and said, "**None whatsoever**". So he handed me a check for \$300, hooked it up to his car, and off he went.

Within a couple of weeks after the transaction, I received a phone call from Fred at work and he told me that he had taken the boat out on the lake (the same lake that I had taken the boat on) and that after about 40 minutes or so, the motor stopped running. He wanted to know if I had experienced anything similar to what he had experienced. I told him that I was sorry he had trouble with the motor, but that I had no idea why he had such a problem. He hung up and we didn't talk about it anymore.

Needless to say, I am now living (more like walking-dead) at one of the lowest points of depravity in my life with no moral compass. I truly had no regard for the pain and grief I brought upon God and my fellow man.

Papa Gets Another Boat!

I took Fred's \$300 and with additional monies I purchased another used boat for which I had paid \$1,200. Now this was a very fine boat. It had a yellow fiberglass twin V-hull equipped with a 40hp Mercury outboard motor. I thoroughly enjoyed that boat and never had any mechanical problems with the motor. This was in the spring of 1976.

Jesus Breaks Every Fetter!

This happened to coincide with my company hiring a new fellow who had joined our group. He was an evangelical Christian who was bold for the Lord. I was assigned to be his assistant and over time he was able to witness to me and share many Biblical scriptures with me. After six months of this (now the fall of 1976) I submitted to the conviction of the Holy Spirit and ended up repenting of my past sins and present sinful lifestyle right in his office within the workplace. [For the details of how I got saved, please see the aforementioned book I wrote, entitled: "Jesus Won't Forgive Me For The Things That I Have Done!" – ISBN: 978-1-304-30821-4 www.lulu.com]

As a result, Jesus mightily manifested Himself to me which led to a profound change of life for me. Within two months of getting saved, my wife and I were enrolled in a Bible school; we consistently attended church services and I was delivered of many vices. Let's just say that I began to benefit from the introduction of the 'good leaven'.

Along with the change of heart experience came a major lifestyle change that engulfed my entire schedule. Continuing to work at a full-time job, our schedule now included attending Bible school four nights per week. My family also attended church services every Sunday morning and evening, plus every Wednesday night.

Up until the time that I was in my third year of Bible school (now the spring of 1979) I had not given any thought about the dishonest boat sale I conducted with Fred. This was the case until on one Sunday evening service, the preacher takes his text from *Luke 19:1-10* and begins to read,

¹ ***And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho.***

² ***And, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.***

³ ***And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press,***

because he was little of stature.

⁴ And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way.

⁵ And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house.

⁶ And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.

⁷ And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.

⁸ And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.

⁹ And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham.

¹⁰ For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

No sooner had the preacher finished reading the scriptures, when the Holy Ghost spoke to me and said, “**You need to give your boat to Fred!**”

[Even though the whole passage ministered to me, it was the specific point of the ‘fourfold’ restoration that pricked my heart. If you recall, I fraudulently received \$300 from Fred for the defective boat that I sold to him, and then I paid \$1,200 for the next boat that I had purchased. Hence the ‘fourfold’ factor.]

Well immediately I broke out into a cold sweat. In my mind I began to rationalize, “Hey, all my sins have been washed away and are under the blood of Jesus.” Of course, yes! Nevertheless, just as I was about to rebuke the devil, my thought process stopped. **I knew better!**

There was no getting around the voice of the Holy Spirit and still remain in good standing with God. After all, do we not now have ‘**a new and living way**’ of doing things. (*Hebrews 10:19-29*)

“...old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” (2 Corinthians 5:17b)

We are ‘lively stones’, not dead clay. (*1 Peter 2:1-5*)

Besides, the letter of the law killeth, but the spirit giveth life. (*2 Corinthians 3:1-6*)

Jesus said in John 6:63: “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”

How many know that Jesus can still speak words to us? And when He does, they are still spirit and they are still life.

Sometimes God requires us to make restitution!

What would you think of a bank robber who is standing before a judge and apologizes for robbing the bank; and then he asks the judge for forgiveness and pleads for mercy; **but he refuses to return the money?**

Restitution!

Definition: Restitution is the act of restoring anything to its rightful owner, or of making good, or of giving an equivalent for any loss, damage, or injury; indemnification.

After hearing the voice of the Lord on that Sunday night, I went home, went to bed, awoke the next morning and drove to work. From the parking lot I walked directly into Fred’s office and told him that I needed to make a confession. I began to explain to him that since the time that I had sold him my boat, I had gotten saved. I continued to explain that Jesus had pricked my conscience about how I defrauded him. I repented to him and asked him to forgive me for lying to him.

I then proceeded to hand him the keys to my boat and told him that I wanted him to have my boat. I said that I would deliver it to wherever he wanted and whenever he wanted.

To my surprise, he said that he did not want my boat. I repeatedly offered him my boat and he continued to refuse my offer. However, he did say that he was glad that I was now telling him the truth. He said that he always suspected that I was lying to him but that he couldn’t prove it. Having made my peace with Fred (and God) I departed from his office. (I have not seen nor spoken to Fred since then; more than 34 years have passed.)

Unintended Consequence?

At that time, within the workplace, we had a small group of men that met during the lunch hour for Bible study and prayer. Of course if anyone had something to share or testify about, then one was certainly free to do so. One day, soon after I had repented to Fred, I decided to share with the group how the Lord clearly spoke to me after hearing the sermon about Zacchaeus and his encounter with Jesus.

After sharing how I told Fred of my conversion, asking for his forgiveness, and then offering him my boat, one of the men in our group felt that what I had done was definitely of the Lord. He was hoping that it would be a great witness to Fred so as to bring him to repentance and draw him unto the Lord. You see, this fellow in our group had just recently learned about an adulterous affair that Fred was having, and the devastating effect that it had had upon his wife. I had no idea! Actually he left his wife and moved out of his home at this point in time. So we all prayed that God would use this act of repentance on my part to somehow impress upon Fred's heart his need for establishing a right relationship with both God and his wife. That was the last time we ever talked about it.

After more than 34 years, I happened to have had a conversation with a dear friend of mine who had just finished reading my first book about my conversion. I told her that since writing my first book a year earlier, that I was about to start writing another book entitled, 'Bold-Faced Liar'. She was pleased to hear that I decided to do so. Then I began to tell her some of the details surrounding the theme of the book and mentioned how I had defrauded Fred when I sold him my boat, and how the Lord required me to repent and offer restitution. She immediately revealed to me that at the time of my dealings with Fred, she was a next door neighbor to him and his wife. Again, I had no idea. So I asked her if she knew if Fred ever gave his heart to the Lord. She said she did not know that, but she did know that he did reconcile with his wife and they were indeed back together. I greatly rejoiced over that. God only knows whether or not our prayers that day were instrumental towards saving Fred's marriage. My prayer now is to hope that Fred's soul is also right with God.

My Last Boat Ever!

After leaving Fred's office that Monday morning, I was satisfied that I had obeyed the Lord, but I was still unsettled in my spirit. Since Fred insisted on not taking my boat, I did not feel comfortable with the idea that I still owned the boat. I felt that it really did not belong to me any longer since the Lord told me to give it to Fred. So I immediately put the boat up for sale with the price tag of \$1,200. Not a penny more nor a penny less! (It was that fourfold thing that captivated me.)

Shortly thereafter, someone offered to buy the boat. His offer was \$1,100. He said that he didn't think it was worth \$1,200. I refused his offer. I was determined to get exactly \$1,200 and that was my final position. He gave in and agreed to the \$1,200. I took the money and gave it all towards the work of the Lord! I never had another boat. As a matter of fact, you could count on one hand the times that I have fished since then. I believed the Lord wanted me to focus on being a fisher of men instead.

Home of The West Point Cadet's Honor Code!

A few months before I started to write this book (the fall of 2013), my wife and I visited my sister and her family in Pearl River, NY. This town happens to be within a 45minute drive to West Point. I expressed to my sister that I would like to visit the campus one more time, since this would probably be the last opportunity I would have to do so. She offered to drive us so that we could enjoy the sights with all of its fall colors. After arriving at the visitor's center we booked a three hour bus tour.

Previously I had been on the campus of West Point only two other times, both while in high school in the spring of 1964 and 1965 respectively. Both times we were invited guests since our track coach would arrange every year for our varsity team to compete against the West Point Plebes in a dual meet. This was a most wonderful experience since we got to spend a whole day with the Plebes and were able to visit various parts of the campus including several athletic venues and some of the prestigious halls of instruction. I particularly remember the experience of eating lunch with the Plebes in the dining hall. Since the Plebes had to eat while sitting at attention and were not

allowed to talk (Mrs. Cochran would be proud) at the dining table, this obviously precluded any private conversations from happening. Nevertheless, the experience was great and I have never forgotten it.

In all honesty, I cannot recall having Mrs. Cochran's fascination with the Cadet's Honor Code on my mind at the time of my high school visits, but I certainly did now on this visit as an adult, and as a servant of the Lord.

Upon entering the gates of the campus, the tour bus first stopped at the non-denominational Protestant cathedral where a magnificent view of the campus from a high vantage point could be seen. One could also appreciate the militarily strategic view of the Hudson River. Once inside we were overwhelmed by the beautiful architecture featuring stained glass windows, choir sections, high altar and lecterns, plus the pipe organ. There was much history that embodied this cathedral.

As the bus worked its way down from the cathedral to the parade field level, the tour guide pointed out the buildings that housed the Catholic church and the Jewish synagogue, but we did not go inside. Once at the parade field level, we departed the bus again and began to stroll through the cemetery where many great historical alumni and other significant personages had been laid to rest.

But way off at one edge of the cemetery stood a small nondescript building which turned out to be the original and sole chapel building on campus. It was explained to us that after the newer and designated houses of worship were built, this small chapel building was scheduled to be demolished. However, since many alumni members protested, the building was spared. Apparently the main reason for its preservation was because of the many supernatural movements of God that had occurred in this chapel as witnessed by past worshippers.

Indeed we did go inside this chapel. It was quite small in comparison to the other houses of worship, and very plain and simple in its architecture. However, the one thing that caught my attention was a Biblical inscription on a plaque that was mounted in the center of the wall directly above the pulpit. Upon it was the following verse,

“Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.”
(Proverbs 14:34)

This thoroughly blessed me; but I could not help reflecting on just how far we as a nation have strayed from such a great heritage. ***“O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!”***
(Deuteronomy 5:29)

Final Word!

On the Sunday night when the Lord spoke to me about my boat, I had been saved for more than two years. Certainly by that time I had read all four gospels. But obviously, the story of Jesus and Zacchaeus did not have the impact that it did that night as I heard it preached for the first time.

There is something about the anointed preaching of the Word of God. Surely there’s a connection to Paul’s statement in **1 Corinthians 1:21b** where he says: **“...it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”** (Hence the motive behind my dedication of this book.)

And not only for salvation, but for the maturing of our faith according to the amount of light we receive as revealed through the holy scriptures. **1 Peter 2:22** says, **“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.”**

Whereas, **“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”** (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Since becoming a Christian, it is safe to say that I have heard literally thousands of sermons. Certainly it is good to sit at the feet of Jesus and to feast from the table set by the Holy Spirit, but there comes a time when we should be doing some of the speaking, teaching, and preaching. [Freely we have received, freely we should give.]

Jesus told His disciples to, “*Go ye therefore and (some have said: ‘As you go’), teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*” (Matthew 28:19-20)

To that end, I don’t like talking just for the sake of talking. This is especially true whether I am addressing the saints of God in a church setting, or open-air preaching to a rebellious group of college students.

Indeed, I almost always relate to Paul’s disposition whenever I preach, teach, witness, testify, study, pray (privately or publicly), or meditate, and that is,

¹ *And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.*

² *For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*

³ *And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.*

⁴ *And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:*

⁵ *That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. (1 Corinthians 2:1-5)*

I can say that I enjoy humor and/or a clean-cut joke just as much as the next person. However, you will be hard pressed to find me standing before a congregation of saints and start to tell jokes. If and when I get the opportunity to speak to God’s people, I consider it to be God’s time and His audience. I am not going to waste His time (with all that has to be said concerning living a life for God in an untoward world and generation) by telling jokes.

2 Corinthians 5:11 reads, “Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.” That is, to persuade men to get serious about the things of God towards living a life in Christ, all with unending eternal consequences. This will require a team effort!

And the team that God has assembled is described in *Ephesians 4:11-12*,

¹¹ *And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists;*

and some, pastors and teachers;

¹² For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

No one man has all the answers! That is why God gave us a five-fold ministry, not a one-fold ministry. A sports team may have a superstar on it, but no game is ever won without participation of the other team members. You can't put four players on a basketball court and expect to win the game against a team having all five players.

No More Lying!

Psalm 34:7-22

⁷ The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

⁸ O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.

⁹ O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him.

¹⁰ The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing.

¹¹ Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD.

¹² What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good?

¹³ Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.

¹⁴ Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.

¹⁵ The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.

¹⁶ The face of the LORD is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

¹⁷ The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.

¹⁸ The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

¹⁹ Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.

²⁰ He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.

²¹ Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be

desolate.

²² *The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.*

O may the Lord Jesus perhaps one day say of me (us), such as He spoke of Nathanael, “*Behold an Israelite (Christian) indeed, in whom is no guile!*” (*John 1:47*)

Amen!

Appendix

Consider the Parable of the Sower according to *Matthew 13:1-23*, *Mark 4:1-25* and *Luke 8:1-18*.

Upon what type of ground shall our good leaven be hid?

Matthew 13: 1-23

- ¹ *The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side.*
- ² *And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.*
- ³ *And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow;*
- ⁴ *And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:*
- ⁵ *Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:*
- ⁶ *And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.*
- ⁷ *And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:*
- ⁸ *But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.*
- ⁹ *Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.*
- ¹⁰ *And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?*
- ¹¹ *He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.*
- ¹² *For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.*
- ¹³ *Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.*
- ¹⁴ *And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:*
- ¹⁵ *For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.*
- ¹⁶ *But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.*
- ¹⁷ *For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.*
- ¹⁸ *Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.*
- ¹⁹ *When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.*

²⁰ *But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;*

²¹ *Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.*

²² *He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.*

²³ *But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.*

Mark 4:1-25

¹ *And he began again to teach by the sea side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land.*

² *And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine,*

³ *Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow:*

⁴ *And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.*

⁵ *And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth:*

⁶ *But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.*

⁷ *And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.*

⁸ *And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.*

⁹ *And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.*

¹⁰ *And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable.*

¹¹ *And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables:*

¹² *That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.*

¹³ *And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?*

¹⁴ *The sower soweth the word.*

¹⁵ *And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.*

¹⁶ *And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness;*

¹⁷ *And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.*

¹⁸ *And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word,*

¹⁹ *And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.*

²⁰ *And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.*

²¹ *And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick?*

²² *For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad.*

²³ *If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.*

²⁴ *And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given.*

²⁵ *For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.*

Luke 8:1-18

¹ *And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him,*

² *And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils,*

³ *And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.*

⁴ *And when much people were gathered together, and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable:*

⁵ *A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way*

side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it.

⁶ And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture.

⁷ And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it.

⁸ And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

⁹ And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be?

¹⁰ And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

¹¹ Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

¹² Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.

¹³ They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.

¹⁴ And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.

¹⁵ But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

¹⁶ No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light.

¹⁷ For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad.

¹⁸ Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.