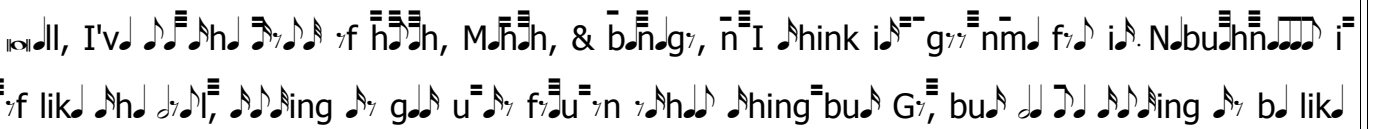


For my **Book Report**, I read *Boyhood and Beyond*. It is probably one of the best books I have ever read. Bob Shultz really did a good job of getting his messages across in a down-to-earth way. He talks about temptation and how to avoid it. He teaches boys how to grow from being a boy to how to become a godly man. His short chapters are easy to digest. One chapter tells about what real manhood is; not whining, not being selfish, and taking responsibilities. He also talks about working hard and not being slothful. He even tells about preparing for your own children. But, of course, I can't tell everything, because if you have not read it, I do not want to spoil it for you! I highly recommend any young man to read this book. Besides being enjoyable to read, it will teach you valuable lessons for every day life.

Why I Think Shadrach Is a Good Name for the Ministry

 I've heard, M...h, & b...g, n...I think i...g...nm...f...i. N...bu...h...i... kin...f...lik...ing...g...u...f...u...n...hing...bu...G...bu...ing...b...lik

Loving the Truth or Believing a Bad Report

“If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man’s religion is worthless.” —James 1:26

This verse is saying that we can dress right, attend church, listen to the right music, and have the right friends, but if our tongue isn’t bridled, then we have a superficial religion. Let’s talk about the rumor mill which is so easily seen, even in Christian circles.

If a bad report is given about a close friend or family member, most of us would quickly jump to their defense. In fact, we would actually doubt whether that report was true until we had verified the facts. Besides, that is what we would want them to do for us! But Jesus said to love our *enemies* as ourselves, not just our friends and family. I read an article recently which really convicted me. It stated that if we have a deceptive heart, then we will believe a bad report as long as it is about someone who we differ with or dislike. In fact, sometimes we are actually looking for bad things about these people, or we are at least glad to hear that they are as bad as we thought they were.

The Holy Spirit convicted me that there were public officials who I had been inwardly gratified to hear a bad report about. Especially around election time, we are feeling passionate about certain values we have, and it becomes clear that some candidates will do our nation and morality great harm. Now that is a fact and true. But what about all the rumors that then circle around in conservative Christian circles about how this liberal candidate did this and then did that? Are we feeling gratification by these things? Have we taken the time to verify the facts before we believe them? If they can’t be verified, then we cannot pass proper judgment on them. It is worse yet when we delight to pass on by email or word of mouth these stories. Just because it is possible or *likely* that something happened doesn’t mean it’s true. This is a subtle form of injustice, and it is not loving our enemies as ourselves.

This can also happen with any acquaintance we know, from friends to family members to church authorities. We are disappointed in some way with them, and then we become very vulnerable and open to any other negative report we hear about them. It can happen with music idols or Hollywood stars whom we may be disgusted with. We’ll believe any bad rumors that we hear, not caring if it’s true or not. Let’s be lovers of the truth, not lovers of our flesh.

Here are some quotes from an article on being lovers of truth. You can see that being a lover of the truth will help us in bridling our tongue.

- Everyone who has seriously tried to tame the tongue has either given up, or has discovered that there is a *deeper* problem than just words. Facts present themselves to us for consideration. If we are holy and blameless, we will consider all the facts fairly *before* we conclude on matters and tell people such decisions. If our heart is sinful and religion worthless, we will be *partial* in our consideration of these facts. The judgment will then *be used* to look at all the facts that *support* the real desire of our hearts, and will at the same time *ignore* all or most of the facts against our wishes.
- [Those defaming the truth] might even appear to be wise and fair men by granting the opposition enough supporting evidence to make it appear to others that they are objective and have thoroughly searched out the matter, and all of the different theories pertaining to it. Things will be said like: “O yeah, I know all about those people.” When this is done, young and ignorant people fall prey to such *experts* who sit in positions of authority.
- There is no place to ride the fence in life. Either we have a heart that welcomes and embraces all truth, no matter what the consequences bring, or we merely *say* this is the case while settling for partial truth.
- All this [avoiding the truth] is strengthened by multitudes doing the same thing (“I know many godly people who believe this way.”). Eventually the individual seeks to justify its method of injustice by all sorts of wisdom. Perhaps they suppose themselves a prophet or boast, “Now, listen young lady, I have been a Christian for twenty-five years!” or “Look, I just don’t have the time to get into these things now. But you know that the Lord will correct us if we are wrong”.....the more they get praise from multitudes doing the same things, the harder it is to really estimate the true condition of one’s heart before God—never mind the truth in the matter.

These quotes are from an article at: www.truthinheart.com —Karin

Witnessing Report by Lee Yoder

Notice: Audio & Video Tapes from the Shadrach Weekend held on December 3–5, 2004 in Muskegon, Michigan are available.

5 Audio tapes for \$12

2 Video tapes for \$10

—postage included.

The message topics:

“In the Name of Jesus,”

“Pop Culture,”

“Suffering,”

“Youth Service.”

God helped in a wonderful way. I believe that you can get some encouragement from these messages. If you are interested, send us a check for the proper amount to the address above, and we will get those to you as soon as we can.

At the last mini-Shadrach, Pastor Don encouraged us to include the word “in Jesus name” in our witnessing. While on my way home, I stopped at a gas station and said to the lady behind the counter something like, “In Jesus name, may you have a wonderful evening.” She said simply in return that she would, but then she surprisingly added “now that you said that.” The name of Jesus truly has such power and wonder. Praise God for His precious name!

Anyone who has watched a little two or three year old child knows that you have to do a lot of correcting. “No, don’t touch that” or “No, don’t do that.” When discipline is administered, it makes the child upset and often leaves them in tears. That’s how it feels with us sometimes when we’re walking with God—it seems we keep doing things wrong over and over, and we get upset over it. But how does the toddler act in the hours/minutes in between chastenings? The pain is soon forgotten, and they again are over a bird they see out the window to help you make dinner. That makes we act when we are being chastened often? In between chastenings, are we moping and dwelling on how awful we are and how impossible it is to obey? What if the toddler did that...all day long? What if he went on and on at “I will never learn!” or “I can’t do anything right!” How much would you enjoy watching them? In the same way, I believe our Father wants us to be enjoying the little things of life betwixt the times of discipline. Thanking him for that little bird out the window, asking him for help in a decision we have to make and resting in the knowledge that He will always be our loving Father. Not stressing over how we have failed. Be like a little child, and say, “No, no, no!” to negativity. —Karin

Like a Little Child