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“The Roof Will Collapse”

Larry Schneider

Growing up, my grandfather always told me that he could not come to church with us because, if he did, “The roof would collapse” on everybody. He told me that he had done many things that made God mad. As a young child, I accepted that and wondered what he had done that was so bad. As I grew older and obeyed the Gospel, I began to study more of God’s Word and the people in the Bible.

I wondered! Had my grandfather committed adultery with a married woman, and then killed her husband in an attempt to cover it up? David did that, but he is remembered as “a man after God’s own heart.” (2 Samuel 11 and 12)

Did my grandfather imprison Christians and have them killed? Saul of Tarsus did that but later became the Apostle Paul. (Acts 22:3-4)

Did he forsake Paul and Barnabas as John Mark did on the first missionary journey? Paul later writes, “Mark is profitable to me for ministry.” (2 Timothy 4:11)

Did my grandfather burn babies to idols and worship idols like King Manasseh did? Yet near the end of his life, he humbled himself and repented. God had mercy on him and delayed judgment. (2 Chronicles 33:1-13)

Was he like the “Prodigal Son” who squandered his money with sinful living and ended up eating slop with the pigs? Yet, it says that he “came to himself” and repented. His father welcomed him home. (Luke 15)

It is not what you have done. It is, “Will you repent?” When you repent and come back to God and obey his commandments, He will always be there. His goodness and His mercy endures forever. (Psalm 100:5, Psalm 103: 17, Ephesians 2:4-5)

“The roof will not collapse” on you. It did not on David, Paul, John Mark, King Manasseh, or the prodigal son. God welcomes His children home when they repent, obey His commandments, and return to Him. Never think that you are so bad that God will not welcome you home. Plainfield, IN church of Christ



To Be, Or Not Be Seen!

Robert F. Turner

Did Jesus contradict himself in the sermon on the mount? He said, Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven (Matt. 5:14,16). But later he said, Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven (6:1-f.).

To be seen of men indicates a self-glorifying motive; doing things with no genuine desire to serve God or other men. This is labeled exactly what it is; i.e., hypocrisy. By such we deceive ourselves most often; perhaps a few others; but never fool God. Hypocrisy is not true **light** in the first place. It has no heavenly reward; only praise of deceived men.

Regarding the first verses, true light **will** shine — that is its nature. If we will concentrate on **being** true lights rather than on **being seen**, the light will make known its presence. It will not be hidden unless we follow a policy of obscurity. But why would any one want to hide his light? A few years back it may have been fear of being called a square. Now it may be a desire to be thought free or uninhibited. But light-hiding usually means we are ashamed of the gospel of Christ, and fear the unpleasant consequences that may come to those who defend and live its principles.

Cowards can find plausible excuses for using the bushel. They show a brotherly deference to prejudice-- a condescending attitude, less than honest. They wish to gradually accustom men to their new idea. They are lovers of peace (where there is no peace). I remember one fellow saying that John lost his head because he lost his head — he failed to use tact and diplomacy. But John's light shone, and continues to shine on us.

Let your light shine means we must live for Christ in open, unashamed fashion. We must reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. We must be primarily interested in pleasing the Lord, not in what men see or think of us.

It will far exceed the effect of debates, radio, TV, and mail outs.



They Have Not All Obeyed

Jamey Hinds

“But they have not all obeyed the gospel.” Romans 10:16

Most people don't seem to understand the call of obedience by God. Denominational concepts of “faith only,” though nowhere found in the NT, are maintained as the truth. The idea seems that the gospel is a message only. Yet, as we see above—and I would encourage reading the entire context of Romans 10—Paul asserts that “they have not all obeyed the gospel.” How would one know? For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?” (Romans 10:16b)

Inherent with the preaching, or declaration of the gospel message is a call from God for obedience to its demands (see 2 Thessalonians 2:14). And maybe here is where some of the misunderstanding comes from—we're not preaching the demands of the gospel as we should. Maybe we're too preoccupied with a therapeutic gospel.

“He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.” (John 3:36) “He learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect, He became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.” (Hebrews 5:8–9)