



# The Voice Of Truth

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## Hillcrest church of Christ

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### God Is Watching

By Jimmy Pettigrew

For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil (1 Peter 3:12). The "righteous" are the ones over whom God watches in tender care. God is ever watching to bless them. They are here contrasted with them that do evil. God's protection, guardianship, and care are so meaningful for the Christian. God sees all that happens on the earth. We are prone to

accept only that which is visible; and, since we cannot see God watching, we are unmindful of His constant watch!

So, it is difficult for any of us to remember always that there is an all seeing eyes watching our every act at all times. Yet, we're told, The Lord looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth (Psalm 33:13-14). God sees and knows all that takes place in the world. "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Proverbs 15:3). There is no possible way to escape this all seeing eye of God! Job says, "For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings" (Job 34:21).

Since God knows all our goings, we should be aware of this, and live accordingly! We should have the same conviction as Hagar in saying, Thou God seest me (Genesis 16:13). Are you aware of this as you plan and proceed in your daily affairs? God sees and reads us unendingly! "Hell and destruction are before the Lord: how much more then the hearts of the children of men?" (Proverbs 15:11). Man

becomes absolutely foolish in thinking that he can fool God, and hide his sinful behavior! "Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?" (Isaiah 29:15). ". . . and be sure your sin will find you out" (Numbers 32:23). "But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7). Though many of these passages are so well known, yet, how much have they really influenced our personal lives? Are we knowledgeable throughout every day that God is silently observing our deeds and hearing our speech?

We can no more hide from God than could Adam and Eve in the garden. God knew why the prophet (Elijah) was hiding in the cave. Jonah was not hidden from God on the ship, nor yet in the belly of the great fish. Man cannot escape from Him. There is nothing that can hide from God! "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Hebrews 4:13). When Christians are aware that they cannot escape from Him, we should ". . . walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:1-3). Consciously

walking under the surveillance of Almighty God will help:

- 1) A Christian to be an obedient child.
- 2) A Christian to be holy.
- 3) A Christian to be a walking sermon.
- 4) A Christian to be right in God's sight.
- 5) A Christian to be a good steward.
- 6) A Christian to be active in righteousness.
- 7) A Christian to be present at every service.
- 8) A Christian to be one who resists the Devil.
- 9) A Christian to be one who prays
- 10) A Christian to be one who abstains from all appearance of evil.
- 11) A Christian to be a servant.
- 12) A Christian to be giver to the church according to what he makes rather than the amount he has left over.
- 13) A Christian to be present at Sunday morning Bible class than staying home to sleep.
- 14) A Christian to put the Lord's business above any other business.
- 15) A Christian to see his own faults and not just the other fellows.

God is observing all we do, and hearing all we say. Possibly no thought would add more zest to life and give it better direction than knowing that God is near and cares for us. Just remember that God is really watching!

## Why Withdraw?

By Jimmy Pettigrew

Those from whom the church is commanded to withdraw are: the fornicator, covetous, railer, idolater, drunkard, extortioner (1 Corinthians 5:11), the false teacher (Romans 6:17), factious (Titus 3:10), and the disorderly (2 Thessalonians 3:6). Included in the idea of withdrawal is: mark and avoid (Romans 16:17), no company (2 Thessalonians 3:14), rejection (Titus 3:10), and with such not to eat (1 Corinthians 5:11). Paul wrote, Now we command you, brethren, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us (2 Thessalonians 3:6). That is not an optional course of action; it is commanded by the Lord. we must do it!

There are two stated purposes for withdrawing from unfaithful members. The first is, to maintain the purity of the church (1 Corinthians 5:6-7). The Lord desires that His church be a pure church (Ephesians 5:26-27). It is unthinkable that Christ will own His bride (church) if she becomes unchaste, plays the harlot, and has her affections taken away from Him and set on things of the earth. If a congregation permits impure individuals to remain unchastened within its fellowship, it becomes a partaker of their sin and will soon drift out of the favor of the Lord and their candlestick will be removed (Revelation 2:5). Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened . . . Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person (1 Corinthians 5:6-7,13). The church is to be kept pure. For the sake of the other members, the ungodly are to be put away, lest others be contaminated by temptation to do the same things.

The second reason is, to bring the erring brother to repentance by shaming him. When a person is taught and encouraged and admonished, and still will not repent, what more can concerned Christians do? Paul answers: Withdraw . . . have no company with him, to the end that he may be ashamed (2 Thessalonians 3:6,14). Thus, withdrawal is designed to bring him to repentance. If we continue to treat him as before, withdrawing is robbed of its purpose. We must let him know, by our actions and words, that his manner of life is not acceptable to the Lord and that we do not approve of it. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat (1 Corinthians 5:11). If members in the church are guilty of living this way, then loyal saints are not to keep company with them! don't invite them to eat, visit and play games in your home! don't let the world see you condoning such lives in Christ's church! You cannot eat with, play cards with, or keep company with one in the church who is guilty of such sins; this includes the family of one from whom the church has withdrawn.

In other words, the purpose of the withdrawing is to save souls. To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus (1 Corinthians 5:5). Discipline isn't to get rid of or to run off, but to save a soul (James 5:19-20). We are trying to help him, not leave him lost!

When members of the church sin, they are to be warned by loving brethren who are concerned for their souls. If they stubbornly refuse to listen, and persist in sin in spite of repeated warnings, the church must withdraw from them. And all of this is done to save souls: of the one who sins, and of other members of the church. Such action is taken to keep the church pure and faithful (1 Corinthians 5), and that he may be ashamed (2 Thessalonians 3:14).

Withdrawing is a difficult step to take. But eternity is long and hell is hot, and souls are hanging in the balance.