



The Voice of Truth



September 2, 2012

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 surveillance!

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 conscious of this as you plan and proceed in your daily affairs? God sees and reads us constantly! "Hell and destruction are before the Lord: how much more then the hearts of the children of men?" (Proverbs 15:11). Man becomes utterly 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 out-

ward 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 conscious 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 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.

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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! ♦

After The "Amen" Is Said ...

By Jarrod Jacobs

I am sure we are familiar with the saying, "They left the building just as soon as the 'amen' was said." This is just an exaggerated way of saying that a person left worship (which is usually concluded with a prayer) as soon as they could without staying and visiting with others afterward.

This little saying, however, got me to thinking about our responses to private and public prayers. Put simply, what do you (I) do after the "amen" is said? In other words, after we have prayed, what do we do next? In order to develop our thoughts, let us begin by dissecting the content of most prayers offered today and then make some applications.

The Content Of Our Prayers

As we begin, let me hasten to say that I recognize there are specific prayers that are offered for specific occasions. However, for the purpose of this article, we will be speaking in broad terms in order to emphasize a point. Generally speaking, we find the content of most public and private prayers to be similar. Generally, there is something said concerning God and His majesty, love and mercy, etc. (**Matt. 6:9; Acts 4:24-25; Dan. 9:4**) There is praise offered to God's love and sacrifice in sending His Son to die on the cross. (**Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:8**). Too, most prayers include a petition to heal those who are ill physically (**Jas. 5:15a**). This is right, proper, and Scriptural. There may also be petitions for those traveling as well as for those ill spiritually. During our prayers, we often pray for the spreading of the gospel in our local area and world-wide (**I Thess. 3:1**). Men will petition God for His guidance and providential hand (**I Cor. 10:13; II Tim. 4:17-18**). In many prayers, asking God's help for our country and her leaders will be included (**I Tim. 2:1-3**). Again, I am speaking in broad terms, so in addition to these, other points may be included in an individual's prayer. However, this is enough to make our point.

These Prayers Are Scriptural.

My mention of prayers in this broad sense is not to be critical. Certainly, such prayers are Scriptural, and in the

case of public prayers, brethren are leading the congregation in a prayer to God for which we can all say, "Amen." However, is this the end of the matter? Do we simply offer prayers to God and then stand back to watch God do whatever it is that He is going to do? Are we put here on earth just to give God our "wish list" like He is some kind of "genie"? What do we do after the "amen" is said? This, my friend, is where the rubber meets the road!

Action Is Needed After The "Amen" Is Said!

There is an old saying which goes like this: "Pray as though everything depended upon God. Work as though everything depended upon you." After the "amen" is said, are we active in our spiritual work? If not, why not? We need to understand that offering prayers for self and others is a valuable thing, but it is only part of our work before God as Christians.

For example, after we pray for the sick, we need to be active in doing what we can to help the sick in their time of need. Jesus commended folks who were "doers" (**Matt. 7:21-23**)! In connection with this, do we remember Christ's commendation to those who visited (action!) Him when He was "sick" (**Matt. 25:36**)?

Again, after we pray for those who are ill spiritually, what are we doing to then take the opportunity to see to it that they do not die in their sins? Yes, let us pray for their softened heart and for God's longsuffering (**II Pet. 3:9, 15**), but we ourselves need to be active in trying to win them back! This is the purpose and point of such passages as **Galatians 6:1** and **James 5:19-20**. After the "amen" is said, are we living these passages?

After praying for the spread of the gospel, are we then active in taking the gospel to our friends and family? Are we active in inviting people to our worship services or inviting them to a Bible study in our home (**II Tim. 2:2**)? How about being the person instrumental in getting the preacher and sinner together, as Andrew and Philip did (**Jn. 1:40-42, 45**)? We can also be active in getting Bible

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material in the hands of those that need it. Parents, our work of teaching does not end with prayers. Rather, we need to be active in making sure our children know the truth that we know. God expected such work from parents in the Old Testament (**Deut. 6:7-9**), and expects the same from parents today (**Eph. 6:4; Titus 2:3-5**; etc.). Yes, our work can take many forms, but the point is we need to be active after praying!

One passage that best sums up our actions after the "amen" is said is **James 2:14-26**. James reminds us that being a Christian is more than merely saying the words. We must be active in our deeds! Often, we look to **James 2** as a passage which shows our denominational friends that we are not saved by "faith only" because faith without works is dead. This is true and ought to be preached from the mountaintops (**v. 17, 20, 24, 26**). At the same time, let us remember that James was not writing a letter to denominational people. He was writing to Christians! Christians need to remember that "faith without works is dead"! Therefore, while we need to be praying for others, after the "amen" is said, let's get to WORK!! (**I Jn. 3:18**)

Some Things Only God Can Do.

This study might cause some to reflect on prayer and realize that there are some things only God can do, i.e., forgive us of sins. Yes, when Christians repent and ask God for forgiveness of sins in prayer, John, by inspiration, has promised, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (**I Jn. 1:9**; See also: **Acts 8:22**).

In this situation, some may ask how we can be "active" after the "amen" is said when God has promised to forgive Christians when we repent and pray? One thing we can do after we have repented and asked God to forgive us, is to then be active in resolving to not fall for those same temptations anymore. The Bible says we must resist the devil (**Jas. 4:7**), and we do this by not yielding to his temptations (**Jas. 1:14-15**). God has made sure we have a way to escape temptation (**I Cor. 10:13**). Therefore, let us be active in looking for this escape! These are the kinds of things we can do after having asked for God's forgiveness and after the "amen" is said!

Another thing God does is extend mercy and patience to man for another day (**I Pet. 3:9, 15**). Man cannot add days to his life or anything of the sort. What we can do, however, is be active in making the most of the time we have (**Heb. 3:15**)! We can glorify God in our bodies (**I Cor. 6:20**). We can learn "to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (**Ps. 90:12**). We can take advantage of the day we have and not boast of tomorrow (**Prov. 27:1**), thinking we have more time "in the future."

Conclusion

Let us pray to God for our needs and wants, for help for others, and for the well-being of our country, brethren, family, and self. Then, let us be active in the work the Lord has given us to do! (**Rev. 22:14; Matt. 7:21; Acts 10:34-35**) Friend, what are you doing after the "amen" is said??

Credit: The Old Paths - 8/26/2012 ♦

THE SIN OF DOING NOTHING

He made no mistakes and took no wrong roads;
 He never fumbled the ball;
 He never went down beneath the load.
 He lost no hard fights in defense of the right;
 He never bled with his back to the wall.
 He never fell faint in his climb to the light;
 He simply did nothing at all.
 So death came nigh, for life slipped away,
 And he feared for the Judgment Hall.
 When they asked him why, he said with sigh:
 "I simply did nothing at all."
 So, God will pardon your blunders, my friend,
 And regard with pity your fall.
 But the one big sin that surely means Hell,
 Is simply to do nothing at all. ♦

The Form of the New Testament By Bob West

"Why isn't the New Testament written in legal form; i.e., broken down into encyclopedic categories and lists? Instead, it contains much historical, biographical and personal material. Yet we are asked to believe that this is God's law for us today. How can this be?"

The above paragraph sets forth a question which we believe is legitimate and needs to be carefully considered.

As a point of fact, some of the New Testament does have catalogs or lists of things both right and wrong (see **Galatians 5; 1 Corinthians 6; Ephesians 4-6; Colossians 3-4;** etc.). Therefore, the negative effect of the question is somewhat mitigated. Our remarks will be directed to the bulk of the New Testament - why it should indeed be considered as our law and standard of authority.

Consider what would be lost to us if the New Testament consisted only of categorized lists of "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not's":

1. The personality of the speakers. Specific statements in legal form tell us very little about the law-giver. We may conclude that the author of a law forbidding stealing held stealing in abhorrence. Beyond that we are left in the dark. But not so in the New Testament. When Jesus laid down the law that we should "love one another," His inspired biographies reveal how He lived this law every day of His life. This serves to give a moral force to the law which would not otherwise be possible. Much of the "non-legal" portions of the gospel set forth the sinlessness or holiness of Christ. Man is more inclined to heed the precepts of a righteous law-giver than those of evil-doers.

Therefore, the scriptures which tell of the holiness of our Lord do not distract from the authority of the New Testament. On the contrary, such accounts establish its authority!

2. Corroborative Material. The historical statements in the New Testament regarding rulers, customs and events, are necessary in that they furnish corroborative evidence for the accuracy of the gospel. The accounts of the miracles were given for the stated purpose of creating confidence in Jesus (**John 20:30-31**). That which serves to confirm a document surely cannot be cited as evidence against its authority.

3. Illustrative Material. Laws become exceedingly difficult to apply when dealing with complex situations. However, Jesus cut through this problem by demonstrating the truth in stories, illustrations, and parables. He couched the underlying law in language that only the hard of heart would fail to understand. Truths taught in "doctrinal passages" are exemplified in such historical books as Acts. The New Testament is thus made meaningful and alive for those who will recognize it.

There may be other considerations that should be added. But a New Testament without the above material is unthinkable. *"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable..." (2 Timothy 3:16)*. Every word in the New Testament is there by God's design. Therefore, an encyclopedic catalog of laws would be far inferior to what we have now—God's living law for mankind.

Credit: www.moodychurchofchrist.com ♦

Sin will take you farther than you
Ever wanted to go.
Keep you longer than you ever wanted
To stay and cost you
More than you ever wanted to pay. ♦

About the Hillcrest church of Christ

Evangelist: Jimmy Pettigrew

How to Contact Us	Our Address	Schedule of Assembly
<p>Telephone: (920)499-5677 E-mail: hillcrestcofc@live.com</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;">   </div>	<p>1621 Hillcrest Drive Green Bay, WI 54313</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<p>Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm*</p> <p style="font-size: small; text-align: center;">*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month</p>

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