

# The Brown Street Beacon

*"...Shine out among them like beacon lights,*

*holding out to them the Word of Life" (Phil 2:15-16)*



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## Don't Give up on God

**W**e are living in a world that is ever changing. The older among us will testify of the changes that have transformed our society. The cost of living has greatly increased, as well as the wages a man receives for a days work. Negative things such as crime and drugs are on the rise year by year. Morals have changed considerably since the 40s, 50s and 60s. At one time fornication was a forbidden act, but now it is, not only accepted in most circles, but considered to be cool. In fact, some think that pre-marital sex is not only healthy, but the best way to make sure a potential marriage partner is really a suitable match for them.

Certainly morals have changed in our society over the years. It can be seen in the speech, action, and even appearance of most today. Along with these different changes has come a change in attitude towards God. People are generally less interested in spiritual things now than they were in past years. This has affected the growth of the church. The gospel has not lost any of its power, but as has always been the case, it only changes those who will hear with open ears and honest hearts. Since there are fewer of those kinds of people today, there are naturally less converts.

While there have been many changes over the years, there has been one constant since the beginning of time—God. God does not change. He is immutable. Therefore, He can always be trusted. His love, kindness, and providential care, are the same now as they have always been. Fashions change from year to year, but God remains the same. If any people on earth should realize this truth, it should be those of us who belong to Him. God will never turn his back on us. Surely we should never lose sight of this fact. Even when things seems to be going poorly for us, God is in our corner. We should never give up on Him!

If there is something that all mankind has in common, it is problems. Everyone has suffered at one time or another. We all experience good times and bad times. This is true of Christians, as well as non-Christians. God has not put a miraculous force field around us so that we do not suffer. We, too, must endure the ups and downs of life. In fact, because we are persecuted by those who are not Christians, we, in some ways, suffer even more than they do. Jesus once said, "...in the world ye shall have tribulation..." (John 16:33). Why do we suffer persecution at times? It is because those in darkness hate those in the light, and as long as we allow our light to shine, some folks in the world are going to be upset (John 3:19, 20).

Not only do we experience trouble by those who believe not, we are exposed to the every day trials of life. Remember the thorn in the flesh that Paul had to bear. We all have thorns in the flesh. We have problems that relate to finances. We have family problems at times. We experience problems with school mates or co-workers. We have health problems. Some Christians are unemployed,

some are in unhappy marriages, and the list could go on and on. The point of it is this—difficulties of life are common to those in and out of the body of Christ.

There is something (Someone), however, that the Christian has that the infidel does not. The Christian has God to turn to in times of trouble. Listen to the words of the Hebrews writer: “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:16). This is a spiritual blessing that we have in Christ; a birthright possessed by those who can call God Father because they have been adopted by Him. Approaching God’s throne in prayer when we are experiencing problems is an alternative to giving up on God. Remember, God loves us, and He can always be trusted. He will help us bear our burdens if we will turn to Him (1 Peter 5:7). Surely God is saddened when one of His children is in need and does not come to Him for help. Yet this happens all too often because some are not rooted in the faith (Matthew 13:20, 21).

We must realize that God will not give up on us, but if we give up on Him, we can not count on Him attending to our needs (Matthew 6:33). We have a biblical example in what we call the parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32). The prodigal son left his father and found himself in a desperate situation. His father, even though he surely did not want his son to suffer, could not help his son as long as he was in a far away country. It was not until the boy realized that his father could relieve his suffering, and he went home, that his needs were attended to. The application is simple. If we leave our Father by giving up on Him and putting our trust in the world, we will find ourselves in a dire situation. However, if we remain with God, or come back to Him after leaving, our needs will be supplied, and our sufferings will often be relieved. And even if our problems do not immediately go away, we can trust God to be by our side, and to comfort us by the scriptures. Paul said, “Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.”

*Don*

## Not That Book of Daniel

J.S. Smith  
(Woodmont Beacon)

**O**n the same day that we learned singer Kanye West would appear on the cover of Rolling Stone magazine posed like Jesus with a crown of thorns, NBC announced that its controversial show about an Episcopalian priest would go on indefinite hiatus (read: cancellation).

The Book of Daniel focused on the priest who had imaginary conversations with Jesus, who according to the scriptwriters is very tolerant of sin. Daniel’s daughter sells marijuana and his son fornicates with a church elder’s daughter. His brother-in-law embezzles church funds and his sister-in-law is—well, let’s just say that she’s rather promiscuous as well. 7<sup>th</sup> Heaven, this isn’t. To the mind of the average left coast television producer, that’s what church is like. Just as sinful as the outside world, only dishonest and deluded about it.

Seven NBC affiliates refused to air the offensive program which was seen by so few people that it wasn’t worth fighting for. Advertising boycotts are sometimes powerful, but a bad show doesn’t need too much help getting canceled.

Perhaps, though, hypocrisy in the church is an issue that needs to be addressed, even if the program did so more out of mockery than genuine concern. It is not unheard of for professing disciples to fall into such evils as drug and alcohol use, promiscuity and dishonesty. "If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part, he is blasphemed, but on your part, he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters" (1 Peter 4:14-15).

It is persecution on an impersonal level when Christians are portrayed as mind-numbed fools or gross hypocrites, but "all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12). If that portrayal, however, becomes accurate, what can a disciple do but repent and reform? "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it" (Romans 6:1-2)?

Let every Christian be aware that when you let down your guard and indulge the very appetites that Christ died to destroy, you are lending force and validity to the infidel's arguments in shows like The Book of Daniel. Your indulgence makes you a blemish and "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you" (Romans 2:24).