

# The BEACON



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## HOME

"Next Sunday you are going to talk about heaven." This was the opening sentence of a letter, written by an elderly man to a preacher that had announced his sermon topic for the next week. "I am interested in that land, the letter continued, because I have a clear title to a bit of property there and have had it for over fifty years. I didn't buy it. It was given to me by the Landlord for a little work I have been doing for Him. I do not care to sell it. As a matter of fact, the title is nontransferable. It is not just a vacant lot. For over half a century I have been sending materials out of which the greatest Architect and Builder of the universe has been building a home for me. It will never need remodeling or repair, for He has assured me it will suit me perfectly, and will never grow old and decay. I have never seen it but I can trust Him to keep His promise.

Termites can never undermine it the foundation for it rests on the Rock of Ages. Fire can never destroy it, floods cannot wash it away. I will need no bolts or locks, for no vicious person can be where my home is.

My home is almost complete now, almost ready for me to move in. There is a foyer where I can await my eternal possession. I have no fear of being rejected. There is a deep valley of shadows between me and the place to which I am going. I cannot reach my home without passing through this dark valley. I am not afraid because my best Friend, my future Landlord went through this valley long ago. I have His promise in printed form that He will never leave me alone. He will be with me as I walk this dark valley. Preacher, I hope to hear your sermon next Sunday, but I am not sure that I will. My ticket to that home has no date marked for the journey. I am not worried though. You see. I have learned to enjoy spirituality down here through the years and so I have been ready to go over there for some time. Why, I do not even have to pack a bag. I would like to hear you speak precious words of Truth, but if I am not there, you'll know I have been called home." (submitted, selected and adapted).

(May we follow this example and love serving Him here, so we can live with Him there!)

---SWA---

# THE STRANGER

A few months before I was born, my Dad met a stranger who was new to our small Tennessee town. From the beginning, Dad was fascinated with this enchanting newcomer, and soon invited him to live with our family. The stranger was quickly accepted and was around to welcome me into the world a few months later. As I grew up I never questioned his place in our family. In my young mind each member had a special niche. My brother, Bill, five years my senior, was my example. Fran, my younger sister, gave me an opportunity to play "big brother" and to develop the art of teasing. My parents were complementary instructors-Mom taught me to love the Word of God and Dad taught me to obey it. But the stranger was our storyteller. He could weave the most fascinating tales. Adventures, mysteries, and comedies were daily conversations. He would hold our whole family spell-bound for hours each evening. If I wanted to know about politics, history, science, he knew it all. He knew the past, understood the present, and seemingly could predict the future. The pictures he could draw were so life-like that I would often laugh or cry as I watched him. He was like a friend to the whole family. He took Dad, Bill and me to our first major league baseball game. He was always encouraging us to see movies and he even made arrangements to introduce us to several movie stars. The stranger was an incessant talker. Dad didn't seem to mind but sometimes Mom would quietly get up- while the rest of us were enthralled with one of his stories- go to her room, read her Bible and pray. I wonder now if she ever prayed the stranger would leave. You see, my Dad ruled our household with certain moral convictions. But this stranger never felt obligated to honor them. Profanity, for example, was never allowed in our house - not from us, our friends, or adults. Our longtime visitor, however, used many four letter words that burned our ears and made our Dad squirm. To my knowledge the stranger was never confronted. My Dad was a teetotaler who didn't permit alcohol in his home - not even for cooking. But the stranger felt like we needed exposure and enlightened us to other ways of life. He offered us beer and other alcoholic beverages often. He made cigarettes look tasty, cigars manly, snuff cool, and pipes distinguished. He talked freely (much too freely) about sex. His comments were sometimes blatant, sometimes suggestive, and generally embarrassing. I know now that this stranger influenced many of my early concepts of man-woman relationships. As I look back, I believe it was by the grace of God that this stranger did not influence us more. Time after time, he opposed the values of my parents. Yet, he seldom was rebuked and never asked to leave. Many years have passed since the stranger moved in with the young family on Morningside Drive. He is not nearly so intriguing to my Dad as he was in those early years. But if you were to walk into my parents den today, you would still see him sitting over in a corner, waiting for someone to listen to him talk and watch him draw his pictures. His name? We always just called him T.V. >>Keith Currie<<

Note: I wonder how many of us are affected negatively by this same stranger? How many services does he cause Christians to miss? How many people does he influence to commit fornication? How many marriages does he break up? How many children does he steal away from parents? How many young families feel threatened by him? How much sin does he glamorize? He is a dangerous companion! We must all regulate him carefully or he will destroy us! Remember! "evil companionships corrupt good morals" (1 Cor. 15:33). When television runs your life, it is time to control it or get it out of your life. ---SWA--

## **“Abstain from all appearance of evil”**

In a period of loose and sagging morals, Satan provides many rationalizations for improper behavior. Those who would be faithful must not be "ignorant" of his "devices" (2 Cor. 2:11). Wrong is always wrong, despite our effort to justify and excuse our actions. "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the good and the bad" (Prov.15:13) The honorable purpose does not justify a dishonorable deed. The end does not justify the means (1 Jn. 3:4; 5:17). It will comfort you little on the day of Judgment to know others did things worse than you did. Sin is a transgression of the law (read Rom. 6:23 & Prov. 24:9). The conscience can be trained to accept wrongdoing. Paul was this way, but he was condemned. Remember Gal. 6:7! The world does not set the standard for the Christian! The Bible says, "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil" (Ex. 32:3). The Christian should "enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it and pass away" (Prov. 4:4-5). "Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil" (1Thess. 5:21-22).

---Donald Townsley---

## **ARE YOU BITTER ?**

In Ephesians 4:31 Paul says, "let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice." Paul makes it very plain that if one is to "put on the new man: in Christ Jesus he must put these things away. However, it is not uncommon to find those who claim to be members of the body of Christ who continue to manifest bitterness toward others (maybe even toward their brethren in Christ or members of their own family). I wonder if these people have stopped to consider the price they pay for such behavior? First of all, they are depriving themselves of a happy and enjoyable life. I have never seen a person who harbored bitterness in his heart that was not miserable. Their whole life seems to be centered on ways to show bitterness toward the one who "did them wrong". Whether the wrong is real or imagined, one must put away this bitterness if he wants to be right in God's sight. People who are bitter often suffer sorrow and regret over lost chances. I recently read a letter from a woman who was encouraging all who were involved in family feuds to mend them.

# DOES YOUR FAMILY?

1. Read the Bible together, daily.
2. Eat dinner together 7 days in a row.
3. Listen to your children tell about their day, and then tell about yours.
4. Turn off the TV and play family games.
5. Pray for one another daily.
6. One evening a week, have as "family night"
7. Write the children (or parents) a note of appreciation.
8. Help one another with household chores.
9. Verbalize your love each day.
10. Express confidence in one another.

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**The church at Newton funds The Word & The Sword TV show on WHKY14 Hickory.  
It airs the first and third Tuesdays of each month 8PM – 10PM.**

**Tune in and call with your biblical questions.**

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## **GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION FOR ALL MANKIND**

**Hear the gospel-** Romans 10:17

**Believe (faith)-** Romans 10:10; Heb. 11:6; Gal. 3:26

**Repent of sins-** Acts 2:38; 17:30

**Confess Jesus as the son of God-** Acts 8:37-39; Rom. 10:10

**Be Baptized (immersed in water) for remission of sins-**

Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:27; Acts 22:16; Mark 16:16; 1 Pet. 3:21; Rom. 6:4-6

**Result: You will be saved and the Lord will add you to His Church (Acts 2:47).  
Then, you will be a Christian and expected to serve God faithfully until death  
(Rev. 2:10).**

**➤ Your soul is important to us ◀**

**If you would like to set up a study, or if we can help you in any way,  
please contact us.**

**We meet at 656 St. James Ch. Rd. in Newton,  
NC  
Join Us**

**Sunday  
Bible Study - 9:30 AM  
Worship – 11:00 AM**

**Wednesday  
Bible Study – 7:00 PM**

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