

DEMISE OF DEPENDABILITY

by Tom Wacaster

The Proverb writer tells us that "Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint" (Proverbs 25:19). A farmer in Tupelo, Oklahoma used to say, "If I had my 'druthers' I think I would prefer A over B." Given a choice between a broken tooth and a foot out of joint, my 'druther' would be neither.

It is a shock to our system when someone upon whom we depend does not follow through on his promise, whether stated or implied. Maybe it is the age in which we live. Lawyers and legal jargon have made it difficult to state our position clearly, and contracts have hidden phrases and clauses which actually negate the whole purpose of the intended contract in the first place. Perhaps it is the wide spread acceptance of relativism that has brought about the demise of dependability. Young minds are taught there is no absolute truth, that it all depends upon how you "define terms." When asked to provide a simple meaning of the word "is," former President William Jefferson Clinton told us, "It depends on what the meaning of the word is, is. If it means is, and never has been, that's one thing. If it means, there is none, that was a completely true statement." When the President of the United States of America has a difficult time defining "is," how can we expect uneducated and impressionable minds to do any better? Without a clear and definitive goal, and a reliable means to reach that goal, most of humanity will slip into the quagmire of immorality and irresponsibility. It is a simple fact that neither an individual nor a nation can long survive in the absence of such noble qualities as integrity, honesty, and dependability. It is also a fact that the demise of dependability will eventually lead to the death of a nation.

But what shocks this scribe is the same demise of dependability among those who are supposed to be children of God. Where is the child of God who so humbly declared allegiance to Jesus Christ when we witnessed his baptism into the body? Where are those once active members who have retired from their jobs and subsequently retired from active participation in the church? What has happened to the desire to travel the road to heaven? to maintain distinctiveness for the Master? to further the cause of Christ in the local congregation? Why is it when members are asked to jump in and lend a helping hand that the better part of the congregation sits in silence? "Let someone else do it," comes the cry. Consequently, "Nobody" heads the list of most signup sheets posted in congregational foyers. Perhaps I am a little naive, but it seems to me that when we enlisted in the Lord's army that we volunteered to forego ALL for the sake of the CAUSE! When someone misses services, or refuses to support the work of the local congregation for selfish purposes, we are witnessing the demise of dependability. Indifference to the furtherance of the soul-saving Gospel is just one more nail in the coffin, and the demise of dependability is almost complete.

Brethren, there is no nation in history that has survived the internal loss of those basic and necessary traits of honesty, integrity, and dependability. The same can be said of congregations that fail to follow through on the promises made to Jesus Christ. And if I read my Bible clear, those congregations and individuals that neglect accepting and fulfilling responsibility are spiritually dead in the sight of God. We are witnessing the demise of dependability all around us. Let's not let it creep into the church as well!!