

– Continued from page 1 –

your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:13-16). Faithful Christians are salt flavoring the earth and light shining in darkness. Specifically, it is the works done by Jesus’ followers that cause outsiders to begin glorifying God.

When the works and words of a Christian do not align, that hypocrisy is evident to observers in the world. Paul admonished, *“You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? You who say, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law? For ‘the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you,’ as it is written*” (Romans 2:21-24). Inconsistency between a believer’s lifestyle and professed faith not only reduces effectiveness at making disciples, but does the opposite, and in a drastic way; a Christian’s hypocrisy causes others to *“blaspheme,”* meaning to vilify or reproach the name of God. Causing others to blaspheme is a frequent concern in the New Testament (1st Timothy 6:1; Titus 2:5; 2nd Peter 2:2).

It is wise to know the Scripture. Apollos helped disciples and publicly refuted opponents because he was *“mighty in the Scriptures”* (Acts 18:24), able to *“show from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ”* (28). Philip converted the Ethiopian eunuch because the man asked about a specific reading (Acts 8:30-34) and *“Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him”* (35). Generic assertions about Scripture and professions of faith in Christ are worthless without the ability to prove the claims from the inspired text.

Peter commanded, *“Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear”* (1st Peter 3:15). No soldier’s defense is complete which lacks a sword and the *“sword of the Spirit is the word of God”* (Ephesians 6:17), so saints are required to be able to wield the sword, God’s word, in defense of hope. If it is Scripture that completes us (2nd Timothy 3:16-17), it is Scripture we must know (2nd Timothy 2:15)!

It is wise to pray. Jesus commanded, *“Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest”* (Luke 10:2) and Paul requested, *“Pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified”* (2nd Thessalonians 3:1). The apostle also said, *“Continue earnestly in*

– Continued on page 3 –

A LOGICAL ARGUMENT FOR LITERAL DAYS OF CREATION

Dave Miller

The *“days”* of Creation:

1. Are defined as an *“evening”* and a *“morning”* (Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31),
2. Are preceded by cardinal/ordinal numbers (Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31),
3. Are characterized by alternating periods of *“day”/“light”* and *“night”/“darkness”* (Genesis 1:3-5),
4. Are mentioned alongside *“years”* (1:14),
5. Require symbiotic relationships among species created on separate *“days”* (e.g., yucca plant/yucca moth; Emerald Wasp/cockroach; Leafcutter ant and fungus; etc.),
6. Entailed the creation of man and woman *“from the beginning of the creation”* (Mark 10:6) who then witnessed the things God created *“since the creation of the world”* (Romans 1:20),
7. Are identified by God/Moses as *“six days”* followed by *the “seventh day”* as the day of Sabbath rest (Exodus 20:11).

Therefore, the *“days”* of Creation were literal, 24-hour days.

– Continued from page 2 –

prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains, that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak” (Colossians 4:2-3). Anything worth doing is worth praying about.

It is wise to invite. When Peter arrived at Cornelius’s house, *“Cornelius was waiting for them, and had called together his relatives and close friends”* (Acts 10:24). Philip told Nathaniel about Jesus and invited him, saying, *“Come and see”* (John 1:46). The woman of Sychar told her neighbors, *“Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?”* (John 4:29). Upright behavior and scriptural awareness won’t bring many to Christ without the accompaniment of a simple invitation to study or come to church.

It is wise to debate. Stephen disputed with the synagogue of the freedmen (Acts 6:9). Saul *“confounded the Jews who delt in*

– Continued on page 4 –

"WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?"

ACTS 16:30

LEARN THE GOSPEL

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

CONFESS CHRIST

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 3:19; 17:30

BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

"THE ASSEMBLING OF OURSELVES TOGETHER"

HEBREWS 10:24-25

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Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

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Seekers Welcome.

Members Expected.

– Continued from page 2 –
Damascus" (9:22) and disputed with the Hellenists of Jerusalem (9:29). Apollos *"refuted the Jews publicly"* (18:28). Christ's disciples must be willing to take a public stand for His doctrine. That's what it means to *"contend earnestly for the faith"* (Jude 3).

It is wise to preach publicly. Paul *"reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and with the Gentile worshipers, and in the marketplace daily with those who happened to be there"* (Acts 17:17). Wherever there are accessible public forums, whether parks and such or social media and the like, that is where the word needs to be heard.

Conclusion. None of this is extraordinary. Don't be a hypocrite. Study thoroughly. Pray often. Invite folks enthusiastically. Dispute falsehood where it's found. And get the word out in public. Somewhere, somehow, fruit will be born, even if it can't be seen right away. *"I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase"* (1st Corinthians 3:6-7).

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 46

NOVEMBER 17TH, 2024

WISE TO WIN SOULS

Bryan Matthew Dockens

"The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who wins souls is wise" (Proverbs 11:30). Wisdom is necessary to be a soul winner and Christians are commanded to make disciples just as the apostles were commanded to (Matthew 28:19-20). Churches sometimes invite alleged evangelism experts to conduct seminars on special techniques that can be used to convert people. However, Jesus taught, *"The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground, and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how"* (Mark 4:26-27). Since the man who sows the seed, which is the word of God (4:14), is unaware **how** it grows, then there are no spectacular methods for converting people; all the innovations man can come up with ought to be set aside. The wisdom to win souls is a very simple, straightforward process that will be evident from Scripture.

It is wise to set a worthy example. Christ preached, *"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify"*

– Continued on page 2 –

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