

An Honest Answer

From Ronald L. Dart's *Born to Win* Notes

The Bible is an ancient book. It has stood the test of time, and has survived a few attempts to suppress it, or even get rid of it. This book deserves to be approached with awe and respect, even by people who don't believe it. And even more by those who do.

A lady called Ron after she had heard a *Born to Win* program and was very complimentary. She appreciated most his honesty with the Scriptures. He couldn't help wondering if honesty with the Scriptures was all that unusual. As Ron mused on this, he thought that if there is any cause to be less than honest with the Bible, it probably grows out of church or denominational affiliation. This is not intended as a criticism of church membership or affiliation, but when a church publishes a creed, a statement of belief, a doctrinal statement, there is a serious need to defend that creed.

Should you defend your church's creed?

Since these creeds are not word for word from the Bible, there is almost certainly going to be a problem with some passages of

Scripture that, at first blush, don't seem to fit. They may not fit at second blush either, and there may be no small amount of explaining to do—which some unsophisticated soul may declare to be less than honest. This may have been the problem bothering the lady who called Ron. When she asked about a given passage, she was given the denomination's pat answer. What she heard on *Born to Win* was, to her thinking, more honest, though it may have been merely more independent.

Ron doesn't work for or head up a denomination, or church

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organization. So he has no brief to explain the Bible according to this or that creedal confession. Ron realizes he is not always right. He can look back over his path and see mistakes. Since he doesn't insist that you see things

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You Are Making Things Happen. . .

As we reflected on how God has worked at CEM this past year, we focused on quiet aspects of the *Born to Win* ministry in addition to the more noteworthy. We are enormously grateful that God has continued to improve Ron Dart's health and we pray he will soon be back making new broadcasts. But we also realize that *Born to Win* is really about bringing a daily broadcast into your home. Whether you live in the icy north or the rainy west, or anyplace in between, you can turn on the radio and likely catch a *Born to Win* program sometime during the week. That's because *Born to Win* is committed to providing you with what you need to grow deeper in your Christian walk, and you make it happen with your generous contributions. If you can't catch the *Born to Win* broadcast in your area, contact Paula Hughes at 1-888-BIBLE-44 to find a broadcast you or your church can sponsor in your area and make things happen.

Larry S. Watkins Retires

Ron Dart and the Board of Trustees of Christian Educational Ministries announce the retirement of Larry S. Watkins, effective January 14, 2011. We are grateful for Larry's many years of dedicated service.

Larry has been an ordained minister with CEM since 1995, and has worn many hats during his 15 years of employment. He has been business manager, Festival Association Chairman, board member, etc. He was instrumental in developing the Internet streaming of weekly Sabbath sermons and Feast of

Tabernacles services which CEM transmits.

Larry's wife, Kitty, recently retired from Big Sandy ISD, so it was a natural for Larry to follow suit. They have three children and four grandchildren. Larry and Kitty have a genuine love for children. If you see a baby in the room, it will likely be in Larry's arms. He also enjoys working with teens. He started CEM's summer camp and has been its director throughout the years, leaving many young men and women with wonderful memories of the good times they

experienced.

Larry bought a bass boat a few years ago, but has not taken time to put it in the water. We hope he will take advantage of his free time now, and "catch the big one." Larry will be missed at CEM, but we look forward to seeing him and Kitty at Sabbath services and at the Feast every year. We are confident he will continue to be an important member of the Festival Association.

We all wish Larry and Kitty all the happiness in the world and a most enjoyable retirement.

Plan to Volunteer at the 2011 Feast

by Paula Hughes

The Feast of Tabernacles seems so far away, but members of the Festival Association have already made many plans to make the Feast enjoyable for everyone. CEM has reserved the Sevierville Events Center in the Tennessee town of the same name to host the Feast. The scenic and beautiful Smokey Mountains will provide the backdrop for a very special Feast experience.

Discounted rates for spacious accommodations are available at our website, www.borntowin.net. Just click on Feast of Tabernacles 2011 on the home page, and then select "Accommodations" from the tabs that appear.

Volunteers are always needed to help things go smoothly. At the

CEM Feast, you will always find a well-planned schedule of speakers for worship services, inspiring hymns and special music for worship, informative and provocative seminars, fun and exciting YEA classes/seminars for children and teens, as well as a full schedule of enjoyable family activities for everyone. The fun show, or talent night, is always looking for up-and-coming stars to feature. If you have a way with a joke, play an instrument, can act out a skit, or have another talent to showcase, plan to show off that talent this year at the Feast. If your talent lies in a more serious direction, consider making an offering of special music at the Feast this year, or volunteer to

play an instrument on stage to enhance the worship service. If you enjoy children or teens, and feel the calling to reach out to them to help anchor their lives to Christ, our Rock, then why not volunteer to teach or assist with YEA classes or seminars? Or perhaps you could help with the Mothers' Room.

There are many ways to volunteer. Consider sound and equipment help, ushering, staffing the information and registration tables, along with other areas where extra help is always needed. Contact Heather Holmes at holmes_hl@yahoo.com for more information, or to volunteer. Go ahead, do it now. You'll be glad you did!

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his way, hopefully he hasn't done a lot of harm. What he has tried to do is to present the evidence, and get you to take a fresh look at it. Think about it. If you are organizationally or professionally connected, there are sometimes reasons why you tell the truth in a *certain way*. It is not so much that you lie, but even the truth can be told in a way to deceive. In politics, they call that spin. In court, they call it perjury. In church, they call it doctrine.

Religious bias is bound to happen

If you are a Roman Catholic theologian, you can't help but be biased. (Ron would never suggest he has no bias, but his are personal, not organizational.) If you are a Methodist, you can't help but see things from a Methodist point of view. That may sound as if you can never really know where you are, and there is some truth to that. But it may be more important to know who you are than where you are. It is a lot easier to be honest when you have no ax to grind.

Play this game while you watch the news. See how long it takes to determine if the talking head is a Democrat or Republican. Then you can stop listening. You don't stop listening because you disagree; you stop because you already know what he is going to say. He will give you the talking points of the day and tell you what the last talking head from his party said. When you find an exception to this, you want to

listen and hear what that person says.

Patrick Moynihan was an exceptional person and a straight talker. An interviewer would ask him yes or no questions and get yes or no answers. Who does that today? Find that man, because you may want to vote for him.

For most people, it is the same with preachers. If the preacher is a Baptist, you know where you are and what it's all about. Well, sort of. There are several different kinds of Baptists.

What is the Bible to you?

It's really important when you pick up the Bible to treat it honestly. When you hold that handsome, old, leather bound book in your hands, what is it that you hold? No, don't give your pat answer. Don't tell me what your pastor says it is. What is it to you?

One of the first things you notice about the Bible is the collected testimony of the witnesses of God. Here we have real human beings who had close encounters with God and lived to tell their stories. How do we know they are telling the truth?

The first thing you must do is to listen to the testimony. If all you had was one book of the Bible, you might well wonder. It is the weight of all the testimony in the Bible that speaks to this generation as it has to every generation before.

You must read the Book

You can't judge the Bible by

what people say about it without actually reading it. You have to let the Bible say what it says, even when you don't like what it says. And, if you are honest, there are going to be times when you really don't like what it says. If you *really* want to understand the Bible, you have to let it say what it says. And you have to be honest about your own response to it.

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Learn from this message about two strong concepts found throughout the Bible: One is the idea of testimony, and the other is the idea of belief. You will benefit from understanding how you can get lost in a parable if you try to overexplain it. But the meaning of one is clear: "No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money." The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and sneered at Jesus. He said to them. "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God knows your hearts. What is highly valued among men is detestable in God's sight" (Luke 16:13-15 NIV).

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Teens! Plan Now for CEM's 2011 Summer Camp

By Lisa and Chuck Gregor

CEM's Summer Camp planning has begun! We're awaiting finalization of the dates, but we're still planning on camp being the third week of June in Wewoka Woods, Oklahoma! This year's activities promise to be a mixture of old favorites, as well as new and exciting opportunities!

Applications are available at www.borntowin.net. We are looking for enthusiastic campers

from 13 years of age (must turn 13 by the time camp ends) to high school graduation (campers who graduate in May are still eligible to attend camp in June). If you want to make lasting friendships, deepen your relationship with God, and create some wonderful memories, this is your opportunity! Tell your friends to download applications for them, too!

Crying in the Wilderness

Previously written by Ronald L. Dart

Some time ago Ron was reading the second volume of Churchill's history of the Second World War, titled, *Their Finest Hour*. Ron wrote: I was left with the depressing sense that this is far from our finest hour. I had previously read *The Last Lion*, authored by William Manchester. This is a fine biography of Churchill, but as I read the man's own words, his wartime memos and actions, I had a growing appreciation for his leadership—and for the importance of communication in time of war.

Churchill had political opposition in Parliament but, when the bombs started falling, they formed a national unity government in which the participants laid aside party politics for the sake of the nation. As Ron read this biography, his raw admiration for the British people grew. He thought what a difference it would make if our politicians would lay down party politics for the sake of our nation. Ron recommends both of these books as excellent reads.

February's Half-Price Special

Please notice the enclosed flyer. The Book of Daniel is drastically reduced for the month of February to only half-price. You'll not want to miss this fantastic bargain. Ron Dart sheds light on complex and hard-to-understand subjects as Daniel is covered verse by verse. This is offered for a limited time only, so don't delay, call us toll-free at 1-888-BIBLE-44 or use the order form on the back of the flyer.

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Simple honesty instead of self-justification

That line: "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men," goes to the heart of what this CD is about. Simple honesty instead of self-justification.

Every variety of religious experience, every creed, every dogma, is trumped by Moses and the prophets. And, if you won't hear them, you won't hear even if someone rises from the dead and comes to tell you. Jesus' point? You have to read the written testimony. If you can't believe that, you might as well forget the whole thing. And, since the written testimony is vital, it is vital that we be honest in the presentation of it.

This *FREE* message, *An Honest Answer*, is chock-full of vital information to help you detect honesty when explaining and understanding the Bible. Just check the box on the enclosed card and send it back to us. We'll rush your *FREE* CD to you.

*Christian
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*That the man of God may be proficient
and equipped for every good work.*