

BIBLE ROADS

David Halbrook

Part of the evidence for the reliability of Scripture is that it is set in reality. Unlike the Book of Mormon, which is full of people and places unknown to any record of history, many of the people and places cited in Scripture are commonly known and some can be visited. I recently visited a Chicago museum which displayed a Canaanite idol, an entire section devoted to the Hittites (who Bible skeptics once denied ever existed), and replicas of artifacts, one naming the Israelite king Hezekiah and the other picturing the Israelite king Jehu. The Bible setting is human history not human imagination.

The theme of our 2012 Summer Bible Series is **Bible Roads** (July 23-27, 7-8:15 PM, age-grouped classes for ages 2 - Adult). We will study Bible events and the roads on which they occurred. By coming, you and your children (or grandchildren) will better understand the people, places, and personal lessons God intended for us to learn from them. These classes emphasize spiritual learning and education, not entertainment and physical recreation as is common in modern "VBS."

-- *Editor's Note:* After a busy week with our booth at the fair, let's be energized by this opportunity to make known the simplicity of Christ to young and old during our Summer Bible Series. Distribute the rest of our SBS flyers and bring someone with you.

We assemble each Sunday at 10AM, 10:45AM, 5PM & Wednesday at 7PM

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The Exhorter

Acts 11:23 *Exhorted them all... cleave unto the Lord*

Church of Christ--Quail Valley

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KEEP IT SIMPLE

Jarrold Jacobs

The above statement is the "mantra" of a friend of mine. When it comes to the preaching and teaching of God's word, he has told me often, "Keep it simple." This sentiment was impressed upon my mind even further when a sister in Christ told me, "The main problem that high school students have today is not which church to go to, but whether or not to believe in God in the first place." Think about it: This lady has observed that we live in a society that has so pushed God aside that she said she knows high school students who need to be convinced about the very existence of God! A few generations ago, such a thought would be ridiculous; now it is reality!

The sister's observation told me that, yes, my friend is right in saying, "keep it simple" as I preach. Her observation also tells me that I need to be preaching and teaching these "simple" sermons not only to the teenagers, but also to the PARENTS of those teenagers! After all, children are the students of their parents. Therefore, if parents are not exposed to God, the Bible, to truth, etc., then how can we expect their children to know these things? God has placed the responsibility of teaching children with parents (Gen. 18:19; Deut. 6:6-9, 11:18-21; Eph. 6:4; II Tim. 1:5; etc.)! Parents, how are we doing in this area of our lives? Are we spending the time teaching, or are we merely *assuming* that our children know the truth that we have learned?

Furthermore, when I think about the statement, "Keep it simple," I find that this is not an encouragement to make things simplistic, or speak down to people. Rather, it places responsibility on the teacher to make sure things are said in such a way that all those listening can understand. Brethren have said for many years that one does not need to be a "Greek scholar" to go to Heaven. This is true. In like manner, we do not need to have Ph.D.'s in order to understand the Bible! The apostle Paul said, "Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ"

(Eph. 3:4). Jesus encouraged the reading and searching (studying) of Scriptures, for He knew that by so doing, mankind can understand the truth and can follow it (Jn. 5:39, 17:17; Rev. 1:3). Not only did He state this truth to others, but He lived it, Himself (Acts 1:1)! How are we doing with the reading and study of the Scriptures? How are we doing at living what we have learned?

Bear in mind, that when Jesus spoke, “*the common people heard him gladly*” (Mk. 12:37). Those who listened to Jesus were often the “unknowns,” the “rejected,” “the general population,” or the “throng” (ESV). In contrast, the social “elites,” and their ilk did not like Jesus. In fact, they conspired against Him to keep Him from preaching. Their conclusion was that Christ needed to die (Jn. 11:47-53)! After Christ’s death, burial, resurrection, and ascension, the apostles continued preaching His simple message to the “common” folks all over the world (Acts 1:8, ch. 2, etc.). When they preached that simple message, the “elites,” and “educated” people marveled, at their words, noting, “...*they had been with Jesus*” (Acts 4:13).

Therefore, to “keep it simple” means to preach like Jesus and the apostles did. Can we think of any better examples to follow than Christ and His apostles when one today wants to communicate God’s will in the best way? I can’t! When we determine to preach and teach as Christ, then we will “keep it simple” for all people who are searching for the truth. Let no man get so caught up in his own ability and talents that he forgets to “hide behind the cross” when preaching! Keep it simple so that the “common people” can hear the truth, believe it, and obey it! Start at home! Keep it simple!
(http://caneyvillechurchofchrist.com/sermons/?page_id=105 7-15-12)

TO MY FATHERS AND MOTHERS IN THE FAITH

Mitch Davis

Often enough I hear the words of older brethren who reflect upon their younger years in the Lord and wished they had someone to teach and guide them not only during their youthful single days but also during their pioneering days of parenthood. While this is not true of all, there are many in the body of Christ who are following the same path today. While I’m no prophet it is easy to foresee the same words being echoed by yet another generation who will have wished for the very same thing.

This should not have to be wished for. We are given explicit instructions from the Almighty that the older brethren teach and guide the younger in the way of righteousness. Read carefully the apostle Paul’s words to young Titus.

“But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine: that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience; the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things—that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed”
(Titus 2:1-5).

Whether it is parents teaching their young (Ephesians 6:4; 2 Timothy 1:5 & 2 Timothy 3:15) or, as in the case of this article, older brethren teaching younger brethren (Acts 15:39; 1 Timothy 1:2; 3:15) the results of such obedience to the will of God bring forth the following blessings:

1. There is a generation bridge: not a generation gap.
2. The fellowship between these generations is much stronger, making the work of the church more effective.
3. The “stronger” church is better able to gain lost souls as a result of the above two points.

With little imagination this can be accomplished very easily. The older men and women need to spend time with the younger.. no excuses. This may be easier to do with women than men but it can still be (and has been) accomplished. It is a matter of (life-changing?) priority! Because we are to grow in the Lord (Hebrews 5:12ff; 2 Peter 3:18) it is a good opportunity to have Bible studies or time spent conversing about spiritual matters that will promote the spiritual growth. Younger men can be encouraged to be faithful (possibly elders, deacons, or ministers of the gospel). Younger women can be taught how to behave (as noted in Titus 2:4-5). The word of God would definitely be honored!

To my fathers and mothers in the faith I urge you to consider your elementary yet awesome role in the Lord’s kingdom. Teach the younger men and women how they should conduct themselves in the house of God. In so doing the church of the living God, which is the pillar and ground of the truth, moves forward yet another generation as a beacon of light in the midst of a crooked world and wayward brethren.

<http://watchmanmag.com/1999/02/01/the-simple-gospel-to-my-fathers-and-mothers-in-the-faith/>

Editor’s Note: Our Summer Bible Series is one opportunity for these relationships to grow. Find a way to spend time with and encourage those who are young in the faith.