



Kids Column



"I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish." (Luke 13:3)

Many years ago, at the Portland navy yard a United States ship came in for repairs and fumigation as yellow fever had broken out among its crew during its previous voyage. The ship was thoroughly scraped and repainted and then put into commission again, but it was less than a month at sea when the fever appeared again. It was decided to open the ship and expose the fever spores to a thorough freezing during the winter, as medical men said that the spores could not live in cold weather. In the spring the ship was again painted and refurnished, but the fever appeared again. Then it was realized that, though a noble-looking vessel, death was in it, and it was towed to sea and sunk. So it is with all who have not been born again; they carry within their hearts the seeds of a fatal fever, and unless they are cleansed from it by the blood of Christ, they will one day go down in the sea of the divine wrath. (From *Encyclopedia of Sermon Illustrations*, compiled by David F. Burgess, p. 51)

Do You Really Think You Are the First One to Think of That?

by Greg Gwin

You won't believe my latest invention. I call it the 'internal combustion engine'. I'm very excited about all the possible applications of this unique discovery of mine. What? You mean someone thought of that before me!?! Oh, well, I'll just pursue some other 'new thing'. Everyone would regard a person making such a claim as a true lunatic. How could one possibly imagine to have invented something that has been around for 150 years or more and is known and used throughout the world? We would view that fella with extreme suspicion and caution. Sadly, religious discussions tend to attract this sort of outrageous claim. Frequently we talk to people who suggest that they have come up with something in the Bible that no one ever thought of before. Really? This ancient book has been around for thousands of years, and you want us to believe that you have discovered a truth that no one else ever found? Not likely. The apostle Paul dealt with some folks who "spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing" (Acts 17:21). The problem was, of course, that when he confronted them with the truth they mocked him and discounted his message (vs. 32). The same danger exists today for those who are always looking for "some new thing." Many highly intelligent people have devoted their whole lives to the study of God's Word. Their written discourses are preserved for us to read and research. Within our own lifetimes we have been surrounded by faithful brethren who have diligently applied themselves to the Scriptures. Now, of course, they are not the absolute standard of what is true and right. But we should not quickly discount their scholarship in favor of our own 'latter day' discoveries. Think!



Bible Questions



Who was the author of the book of Revelation?

In our study of the book of Acts, where was the first sermon preached by the apostle Peter?

Gods Plan Of Salvation

Hear Romans 10:17,

Believe John 8:24,

Repent Luke 13:3

Confess Romans 10:9-10,

Baptism Acts 2:38,

Remain Faithful

Revelation 2:10

Seeking Truth

Everyone is welcome to attend.



Service Times

Sunday Morning Bible Study
10:00AM

Sunday Morning Worship 11:00 AM

Wednesday Evening Bible Study
6:00 PM

Awkward Faith

Stacey E. Durham

Is expressing your faith awkward to you? Are you uncomfortable when talking to others about God or spiritual things? Does it feel out of place for you to bow your head in prayer in settings other than the church's assemblies? Would it be strange for you to study the Bible with others outside the assemblies or even with members of your own family?

There may be many Christians who have such feelings about expressing their faith. They have resolved to make Jesus the center of their lives, yet they are not comfortable living out that resolution.

Why is this so? There are several possible reasons. One reason is ignorance. They just don't know what to do or say. Another reason is a lack of confidence. They are afraid of what others will think, and they don't want to feel foolish or make other people feel uncomfortable. A third reason is that they are not in the habit. They just are not accustomed to speaking about the Lord or praying around other people.

Underlying all of these reasons is a basic weakness of faith. Awkward faith is weak faith. This is not stated to be critical or offensive but to help find a solution. "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1). Being assured and convicted about God does not make us awkward, but instead it makes us bold, confident, and courageous.

So then, overcoming awkwardness in faith is a matter of gaining strength. If there is a lack of assurance or conviction, then study the word of God more deeply and become convinced, for "faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Rom. 10:17). Live out that conviction and "be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect" (Rom. 12:2). "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2Pet. 3:18) and be a true doer of the word (Jas. 1:22). Take action to overcome your awkwardness by changing your ways. Breach your self-imposed boundaries in order to expand your comfort zone. Make new habits. Learn how to pray around others. Become accustomed to speaking about the Lord to others, regardless of who they are. Take the first step and make a start.

You can begin with your own family. If you are married, then talk to your spouse about spiritual things if you are not doing so already. Simply read the Bible aloud to one another within your family. Get in the habit of praying together. Just make a start of it, and soon the awkwardness will fade away.

No Christian should feel awkward about faith in Jesus. He is our joy, comfort, and confidence. What should make us feel increasingly awkward is the world, for it is not our home, and we are aliens and strangers here (1Pet. 2:11). If you feel awkward about the world, then you are on the right track, but don't feel awkward about your faith.