



ISSUE

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February 27, 2022

Faithful Sayings

BULLETIN OF
THE OL-
SEN PARK
CHURCH OF
CHRIST

Services

Sunday: 9:00 AM

9:30 AM

10:30 AM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Patrick Ledbetter

Brady McAlister

Jeff Nunn

Deacons:

Ben Hight

Blake McAlister

Walker McAnear

Sam Nunn

Lance Purcell

Justin Smiley

Trevor Yontz

Evangelist:

Kyle Pope

God's Noblemen

By Chuck Durham

The Greek word *eugenēs* is translated by the English word “noble” It is a compound word combining the terms “well” (*eu-*) and “born” (*-genēs* from *ginomai*; Eng. words “genesis,” “generate,” “genetics,” etc.). From Homer onwards it was used of “noblemen, those of noble descent. . . *blue-bloods*, high-born society” as we say. Jesus’s parable in Luke 19:12 begins with this word: **“A certain nobleman (*eugenēs*) went into a far country.”**

Luke uses it in a curious way in Acts 17:11 to describe the people in Berea in their attitude toward God and the things preached by the Apostle Paul. **“Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thesalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true”** (NIV). Noblemen are so noted because of their ancestry, wealth, power, etc.

God, however, says the truly “high-born” ones are of a decidedly different character than the world venerates.

What Makes One “Noble-Minded”?

The text says the Bereans were “**noble-minded**” because they received the word with “**great eagerness**” (NIV) or, “**with all readiness**” (NKJV). The word means “willing, ready, with alacrity.” They were hungry for the word. They devoured it

readily and sought it earnestly. Why? Because they were hungry; and hunger depends on how “full” or “empty” one is.

In the recent movie, *Avatar*, the spiritual leader of the native people responds to Jake Sully’s request to be taught their ways: “We have tried to teach the sky-people our ways with no success. It’s hard to fill a cup that’s already full.” If we will come to God to be taught by Him, then we must come with an empty vessel, needing spiritual food to fill it! We must “**hunger and thirst for righteousness**” (Matt. 5:6). We must come in humility, knowing we are spiritually bankrupt. We must come with broken spirits and torn hearts (Matt. 5:3).

How poor is “**poor in spirit**” (Matt. 5:3)? The root word means “to crouch, to cringe.” This is not “poor, but I’m able to get by.” No, this is the grinding poverty of Lazarus in Luke 16 who waits outside the rich man’s gate to be fed with the crumbs that fell from his table. It is one who knows he is bereft

A photograph of a sunset over a field with trees. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm orange glow. The trees are silhouetted against the bright sky.

Olsen Park Church of Christ

of any redeeming qualities; having made such a mess of life by his addiction to sin that he can only be cured through the gracious intervention of God!

The NCV says the Bereans were **“willing to listen.”** The HCSB translates *eugenēs* as **“open-minded.”** The danger with all of us is that we already have our minds made up. I’m not saying we have no convictions that some things are beyond any doubt. I am saying we must keep an open mind to search what is being said against the Scriptures. Maybe, just maybe, what we have always held so dear isn’t so! Are we willing to at least give an openminded look at the teaching that goes against what we have always believed? Are we infallible? Have we ever changed our minds on any subject before?

The Haughtiness of the Pharisees

The haughtiness of the Pharisees declared, **“Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed in Him?”** Their minds were made up, but Nicodemus wisely reminded them, **“Does our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing?”** (John 7:45-52). We need the spirit of Apollos, who was willing to heed the teaching of Aquila and Priscilla, and thereby changed, bringing himself

in line with the truth he heard. And the Jewish believers who heard Peter’s explanation for why he entered Cornelius’s house and taught the gospel to Gentiles, became silent, and glorified God for the **“complete”** truth they came to believe (Acts 11:18). This is the essence of **“noble-minded”** in God’s eyes!

The text says the Bereans tested what Paul was preaching by searching the Scriptures to find out if it was so. This is the *cautious* mind that must be possessed alongside the *open* mind (we can be so open-minded that our brains fall out!). We must measure the words spoken to us by the standard of the written word. Jesus



constantly admonished His hearers by the question, **“Have you not read?”** (Matt. 12:3, 5). He was saying to his audience, “Look at the standard; understand what it says; and measure what you believe and practice against it.”

Some will never care to measure anything they do or believe by the Scriptures. For such, there is no hope. Others will use false standards of measurement: “I can’t go against my family”; “What does my preacher think, or my church teach?” To such souls, the writings of God take second-place as **“They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God”** (John 12:43). Only a few are *noble* in God’s eyes—those who seek His word with zeal; who receive it with eagerness; and measure all by **“It is written”** (Matt. 4:4, et al.).

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We are so glad that you joined us today.
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