



WORDS FROM *Pastor Randy*

I can still remember the shock that I felt as a young seminary student that Thursday morning after hearing the chapel message. The guest speaker had said that what our churches really needed was to have more members who have the head of a Baptist, the heart of a Pentecostal, and the feet of a Jehovah's Witness. After thinking about that statement for a few years, I've concluded that it wouldn't be a bad combination for any of us!

1. FACTS IN OUR HEAD

Never before has knowing *what* we believe and *why* we believe it been more important than it is today. We are quickly becoming a Biblically illiterate society that is absolutely clueless about what the Bible really teaches. Truth has been lost in a flood of popular opinions and manmade ideologies. Our generation has become far more interested in what we *think* the Bible should teach than what the Bible actually does *teach*.

We must constantly affirm that "absolute truth" does exist and that it can still be found in an inspired, inerrant, infallible book called the Bible. Paul encouraged young Timothy to "*study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth*" (2 Tim. 2:15). Personally, I have never been ashamed to call myself a "Baptist." While I'm grateful that Jesus got me before the Baptists did, I am convinced that the Baptist doctrine is true. It is accurate not because it's "Baptist," but because it's "Biblical." Sound doctrine lines itself up with the standard of truth found in the Word of God.

In a day when the religious world is being bombarded by all kinds of strange doctrinal diversities, the church must guard the foundational facts of our faith at all cost. Far too many congregations have grown to be 3 miles wide while only being 2 inches deep! When Biblical truth is replaced with mere emotionalism and sensationalism, "spiritual shallowness" is the tragic result.

2. FIRE IN OUR HEART

When the Resurrected Christ made His appearance to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, their response was, "*did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us by the way and opened to us the Scriptures?*" (Luke 24:32). Their hearts were set on fire. Their hearts were aglow in His presence.

Vance Havner often said that what all of us need is a good case of "holy heartburn." There's nothing wrong in any of our churches that a HOT HEART for Jesus wouldn't cure!

This fire must not dwindle. The passion must continue. We cannot apathetically mope through our religious forms of motion. There are some things that ought to excite us as the people of God. Someone has wisely observed, "Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm." While the watching world around us may never believe what we believe about Jesus, they must never doubt that we believe it!

3. FORTITUDE IN OUR FEET

It's been suggested that only about 1 out of 15 Jehovah's Witnesses make a convert after "putting in an average of 18 hours a month going door to door and standing on street corners to hand out literature. They devote almost 3500 hours of work to each person who becomes a "convert" to their organization.

While we know the truth can never approve of the religious heresy they promote, we must admire their persistence. While they are going with the wrong message and for all the wrong reasons, they are going!

Jesus sent His followers out. He instructed the early Church to "*go ye therefore*" (Matt 28:19). His mandate has not changed. We must go! There can be no substitute for going!

Perhaps, we will go by praying for, giving to, and supporting others as they go. Yet, we must not shirk our personal responsibility that as we are going about our daily lives, we are to share the greatest good news of Jesus with others. God never called the unsaved world to come to the church. He has called the "Church" to go to the unsaved world.

A little boy returned home announcing to his family that he had prayed to receive Jesus in the service and that Jesus had given him a new heart. His little sister came bouncing into the room saying, "Show me! Show me!" Someone's asking to see what Jesus has done for us. Let's show them!

May 2012 be a year of:

KNOWING . . . with facts in our head!

GLOWING . . . with fire in our heart!

GOING . . . with fortitude in our feet!

Blessing on a wonderful New Year together,
Pastor Randy