

View

Viewpoints

Seeking the praise of men?

Rick Warren, author of "The Purpose Driven Life," disavowed his previous support for Prop 8 in an interview with Larry King on CNN. He even said he has "apologized" to his gay friends for his endorsement of the proposition in last November's election.

Now, I'll be frank with you – personally, I could not care less what Rick Warren personally believes. His influence on me is nil; I have not read, nor do I intend to read his books or embrace his version of "the purpose-driven life" (though, no doubt, there is some good advice in the concept).

However, this mega-church preacher is held in high esteem by many in the evangelical world. Yet he is doing what all of these preachers eventually do – kowtow to the politically-correct crowd, trying to win the praise of men instead of God (cf. John 5:44; I Cor. 4:5).

Perhaps his choice as one of *pray-ers* at Obama's inauguration has gone to his head; I don't know. I can't judge anyone's heart. As I Cor. 4:5 says, the end will "disclose the purposes of the heart." Since he's held up as an expert on "purpose," I wonder what purpose is driving the author of "The Purpose Driven Life" to waffle on his support of an amendment that simply solidifies in the state code what the Bible demands?

Zimbabwe

Thanks to everyone who contributed food and medicine and/or time to the Zimbabwe effort. A few ladies packed several boxes Thursday which will be sent to individual members in Zimbabwe in the next few days. The church also sends a sum of money to a man there to buy maize meal, a staple item, for the brethren in one of the churches. The money is enough to feed the entire church for a month, but it is only the basic meal. The medicine and food donated by Folsom Point members supplements the staple food and supplies some necessary nutrients, over-the-counter medica-

The church of Christ

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Sunday Morning Assembly
9:30 AM
Sunday Evening: 5:00 PM
Wednesday Bible Study
7:30 PM

Classes for all ages.
Private classes arranged
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tion and boosts the quality of life of our brethren there.

By the way, I think it is interesting that we have received notes of thanks but not one request for more more money or additional items.

Considering the dire circumstances, the level of content there is amazing.

Keep Running

A magazine recently published a special issue on "Success."

The content is about financial and physical success, but I found the editorial interesting, because it can easily be applied to spiritual success as well.

Here's an excerpt:

"Right now a lot of men who have considered themselves successful are suddenly feeling as if they've fallen behind, perhaps irredeemably so. Many men are dealing with this sudden economic downturn by taking out their frustrations on themselves – working harder, stressing more, and in some cases, simply giving up. Too many of us identify with our self worth with the material trappings of our success, and when the foundation of that success begins to crumble, so do we.

It's a marathon, not a sprint.

Sure, taking the lead in the race feels good, just as eating others dust can put a catch in your throat, but where you are right now is for only right now. Success isn't about always being in the lead; success is about running a good race..."

It's not a sprint, gentlemen.

It's a marathon.

There are two passages that leap to mind as I read this. In Eccl. 9:11, Solomon says,

Again I saw that under the sun the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor bread to the wise, nor riches to the intelligent, nor favor to those with knowledge, but time and chance happen to them all.

The old fable about the turtle and the rabbit (*tortoise and hare*, for you old-timers), illustrates the verse. Life is more about consistent effort than short spurts of enthusiasm.

The passage in the New Testament that comes to mind is Hebrews 12:1-2, where the writer encourages us to "run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus..." When I was in basic training in the Army, I was forced to run 7-8 miles, with weapon at port arms and a 40 lb. pack on my back. At mile

5-6-7, I was so exhausted that I didn't feel I could take another step. But behind me were many men who had fallen by the wayside and were being punished by angry drill instructors for their lack of endurance. I didn't want to be yelled at or otherwise verbally abused, so I kept going. I was glad, when we finally arrived at our destination, that I bore the temporary pain for the long-term gain.

Our spiritual life is like that sometimes. It doesn't look as if we can make it all the way to the end. But we can because God has given us the key to making it – "looking unto Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God."

Jesus is a goal worth running for. He is a goal worth dying for. He has the power and the desire to take us all the way to the end of the line. He wants to save us. He wants us to be in heaven. It's not easy, all the time, but it's worth it.

Just keep running. Don't quit. It's a marathon, not a sprint.

DP