

You Can Smash The Barometer, But You Can't Stop The Storm

November 11, 2007

Several years ago I read in a sermon outline book about a preacher by the name of Gayle Oler who published a story in his weekly religious paper regarding a business man on Long Island who received an expensive barometer in the mail. While examining the instrument he noticed that the needle seemed to be broken as it was pointing far over to one side. He shook it, but to no avail, the instrument still didn't seem to be working. In disgust he called in his secretary, dictated a letter to the manufacturer expressing how incensed he was about receiving a costly barometer that didn't work. He sent the barometer back and awaited a letter of apology along with a new barometer that was useful.

That afternoon at four o'clock the winds began blowing at incredible speeds and the rains descended at an alarming rate. In just a short amount of time much of Long Island was destroyed by a torrential storm. Then the man remembered the arrival of the barometer earlier that morning. What he thought was a faulty instrument was actually a fully functional tool that gave an accurate warning of the inevitable storm that would unleash its destructive force upon multitudes of people. Both ignorance and preconceived notions resulted in him not heeding to the warning signs. Though he had plenty of time for making preparations he didn't have the foresight to give attention to the sound alert from the barometer's pressure gauge that had nearly bottomed out, indicating that a destructive storm was looming.

Today people ignore the warning signs that are given by various teachers, preachers, religious papers, friends, and loved ones, regarding one's spiritual condition. Noah, a preacher of righteousness, warned the people living in disobedience (1 Peter 3:19-20). The prophets of old repeatedly warned of Israel's demise should they continue to rebel against God by their idolatrous, covetous, and profligate living. Judah received ample warning by a number of messengers that if they refused to repent from their wickedness there would be a time when God's wrath would be unleashed upon them and they would become captives by a foreign and ungodly nation. John the immerser was sent by God to deliver the gospel to a people who needed salvation; he was to prepare them for the coming Messiah and to bear witness of that Light (Christ) so people would no longer walk in darkness (sin). But like those in the days of Noah, Israel, and Judah, there were those in the days of John who rejected the counsel

of God by refusing to obey John's baptism (Luke 7:30). The Lord also preached the good news of salvation and the coming of the kingdom, and there were people who failed to heed his warnings and accept His blessings by their obedience to His divine will. In the days of the apostles in the first century, there were those both in and out of the church who refused to listen to the Lord's ambassadors.

One today can ignore his responsibilities toward God, he can spurn the invitation to do right, he may choose to follow the path of least resistance and ignore being rebuked and admonished by the scriptures, but that won't change the inevitable. He will still be accountable on judgment day for what he has and has not done in his life (2 Corinthians 5:10). When the radio alarm wakes a person up at five in the morning he can silence it by a number of options. He can turn the volume down, turn the alarm off, or destroy the clock altogether; but it will still be five o'clock in the morning! He may not like the sound it makes, or the volume in which it is sounded, he may even dislike the timing for when he is summoned to get up; but it is still five o'clock in the morning! The second coming of Jesus is certain (2 Peter 3:9-11), the judgment is sure (Hebrews 9:27), and to refuse obedience will not prevent either from happening. One may not like the person who sounds the alarm, his volume, how he says it, or even his timing; but that won't change the fact that the Lord is coming again, and He will judge the world (Acts 17:31). Are you ready? Are you prepared to stand before the judgment bar of God? Is there something amiss in your life? Are you negligent in your duties? Are you shirking responsibilities? Are you harboring ill will toward others? Are you unfaithful to Him? Whatever is keeping you from living right and being in fellowship with the Lord you need to change it before it's too late. You can smash the barometer but you can't stop the storm!

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