

The Lakeview Lamp

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." – Psalm 119:105

Oct 18

2009

A View from the Pulpit

James P. Needham

When I preach there are some who say,
They could listen to me all day.
Others think I preach too long,
Or, that I go about it wrong.

Some say my sermon's deep.
Others say I put them to sleep.
Some say I hold them spellbound,
Others squirm, and just look around.

Some call me an orator.
Others say I'm a perfect bore.
Some think I've too much fight.
Others think I preach just right.

Some affirm I'm much too bold.
Others say I'm much too old.
Some folks feel I've met success.
Others say my work's a mess!

Some have said my pay's too low,
As they observe the pace I go.
Others assert my salary's peak
Is far too high for three hours a week!

From all of this it's plain to see,
That as a preacher, I'm up a tree!
I can't please men of such discord,
So, I'll just try to please the Lord!



Preacher's point – While the poem obviously focuses on a preacher, we all need to make pleasing God our main ambition or goal in life (**2 Cor 5:9**). *"For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ"* (**Gal 1:10**).

Make No Provision

Frank Himmel

How do we win the fight against fleshly lusts? Several answers come to mind. Pray. Fill your heart with God's word. Fill your time with spiritually beneficial activities. Associate with people who will influence you for good. In **Romans 13:14** Paul identifies another key: "*But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.*"

To make provision for something is to think ahead, to make plans, to provide opportunities. Paul's word literally means forethought. Its other occurrence is in **Acts 24:2**, where the lawyer Tertullus praised Felix, the governor, because through his "providence" beneficial reforms were occurring throughout the land.

Obviously, making no provision for the flesh requires that we not plan ways of fulfilling illegitimate carnal lusts. But it goes beyond that. It requires that we think ahead and, when possible, avoid even the opportunity for such conduct. Here is the principle in action.

Teens, when you are planning a date, *make no provision for fleshly lusts*. Do not go to movies that glorify sensuality and fornication, and thereby arouse desire. Stay away from dances for the same reason. Be selective about parties; skip those where alcohol is featured. Avoid dark, lonely sites that provide the occasion for unchaste behavior.

Parents, when arranging your homes, *make no provision for fleshly lusts*. It may make me unpopular in some circles to say so, but when you allow your kids to have televisions, phones, and internet-connected computers in their bedrooms, you are providing a world of possibilities for wrong conduct.

Families, when you are purchasing in-home entertainment, *make no provision for fleshly lusts*. If you don't subscribe to cable or satellite channels which air nudity and "adult" content, there will be no opportunity for any family member to watch it. If you refuse to listen to profanity, you will be much less likely to speak it.

Shoppers, when you are choosing your clothes, *make no provision for fleshly lusts*. Plenty of modest choices exist for those concerned about such things. Err on the side of caution. Don't underestimate the appeal of exposed or accentuated flesh.

Brethren, when you place membership at a congregation, *make no*

News and Notes

Members:

- * John Moore has been diagnosed with a severely strained quad muscle.
- * Sarah Neighbours had a cyst burst recently.
- * Ame White has had an upset stomach and in general does not feel well.

Friends and Family:

- * Michael Read, **Cotton and Nancy's son, is back out of the hospital after** having pneumonia. He is scheduled for three chemo treatments on his head.
- * Laura and Ryan Smith were both baptized recently.

Absent: None known.

New Reports: None known.

provision for fleshly lusts. Realize up front that you won't always get your way, that others may be more talented than you, that we are all working together for the same cause. Remind yourself of that often and give thanks for your brethren.

If you want to know what this last point is doing here, read Paul's illustrations of fleshly conduct in **Romans 13:13**. Let's not deceive ourselves into thinking that strife, jealousy, and bickering are any less carnal or any less sinful than drunkenness or fornication. No matter the sin, *make no provision for fleshly lusts.*



*“Open my eyes, that I may behold
wonderful things from Your law.” –*

Psalm 119:18