

THE GRASSHOPPER COMPLEX

The title of this article comes from the words of ten of the twelve spies sent by Moses to spy out the land of Canaan. Caleb said, "Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it" (Num. 13:30). But the others, with the exception of Joshua, said, "We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we, And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight" (Num. 13:31, 33). Thus, the grasshopper complex is the mindset that we are too weak to accomplish something, specifically what God has commanded.

Later, under the reign of king Saul, the children of Israel were face to face with the Philistine army. The Philistines had a champion by the name of Goliath, a nine and a half foot giant of a man. When he came out on the battlefield making his challenge, "all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid" (I Sam. 17:24). These soldiers saw themselves as grasshoppers as did those ten spies. However, the young shepherd boy, David, headed out to fight Goliath and defeated him.

The ten spies were right! They considered fighting the giants of the land of Canaan, without the help of God, and certainly they were not capable of defeating them. The soldiers of Saul's army were right!!! They considered a one on one battle with Goliath and they were not up to the task. The difference however was that Joshua, Caleb and David were considering fighting along side of God, knowing that God cannot lose.

Too many in the Lord's church are seeing themselves as grasshoppers, fleeing from the obligations and responsibilities they have as soldiers of Christ because of the fear that they may not be able to accomplish the task. Where is our faith that God will help us? Are we forgetting that the Lord will be with us every step of the way? Jesus said that if we will go and teach, he will be with us always, even unto the end of the world (Matt. 28:20). Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13). The Lord asked Abraham, "Is any thing too hard for the Lord? (Gen. 18:14).

As Christians, we have an obligation to be "labourers together with God" (I Cor. 3:9). Stand firm and tackle the work before us as did Joshua, Caleb and David. You are not a grasshopper!

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LET ALL THINGS BE DONE DECENTLY AND IN ORDER

In the first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, he instructs them concerning the use of spiritual gifts in worship to God. There were men present that could speak in tongues, interpret tongues, heal the sick and prophesy. He speaks specifically about speaking in tongues and prophesying in the assembly in I Corinthians chapter fourteen. Even with the ability of some there to speak in unknown tongues and to prophesy, Paul made it clear that "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints" (I Cor. 14:33), and to "let all things be done decently and in order" (I Cor. 14:40).

When we assemble together, it is to worship God "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). Certainly, at all times we should show respect and reverence for God, but especially at the worship assembly. Over the years most of us have witnessed irreverence and chaos in the worship services at various times. One of the more modern departures from the truth has come in the form of making the worship service some kind of entertainment for the enjoyment of the members, which it is not.

Let us briefly consider some suggestions for making our worship more reverent and more meaningful as God's children.

(1) Come on time if at all possible. Problems come up from time to time that can cause one to be late, but most of the time people are late simply because they didn't start out early enough.

(2) Come early enough to "visit" with the other members before time for the service to begin. Also, after services is a good time to "visit".

(3) Make sure all bathroom and water fountain trips are made prior to coming in to sit down. Again, we realize special situations do arise that might cause one to have to leave out, but not regularly.

(4) Be in your seat before the service time arrives. Five minutes is not too long to sit quietly waiting for the service to begin.

(5) Participate in all avenues of worship. Pray along with the one that is leading the prayer. How can you even say "amen" at the end if you don't know what he prayed? Do your best to sing, following the song leader. Sometimes there may be a song we don't know, but if you don't know it, pay attention so you can learn it. Be at the foot of the cross (in your mind) during the partaking of the Lord's supper, and pay attention to the lesson of the speaker or teacher. And, be serious about your contribution to God. See you at worship services.

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