

Pleasant Valley
Church of Christ

3317 Amidon
Wichita KS 67204
(316) 838-4195
www.letjesusleadus.org

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Classes 9:30 am
Worship 10:30 am
Evening 6:00 pm

Wednesday

Classes 7:30 pm

The Pleasant Valley Church of Christ is a non-denominational group of believers who are committed to following Jesus in our attitudes, our relationships, and our worship. If you want the same thing in your life, please contact us. We'd like to help.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from the New King James Version Bible, Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Wings



"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles" (Isaiah 40:31)

October 18, 2009

Truth and testimony

by David King

"The first to plead his case seems just, until another comes and examines him" (Prov. 18:17).

Late in King David's reign, his son Absalom led a rebellion against his father. The rebellion was so strong that David and his loyal followers were forced to retreat from Jerusalem. In the midst of the confusion, David received word that a close friend, Mephibosheth, had deserted him and was seeking to seize the throne. Without seeking any corroborating evidence, David promised the messenger, Ziba — Mephibosheth's servant — all the possessions of the traitor once the revolt was put down (2 Sam. 16:4).

The rebellion was eventually crushed, and David returned to his throne. Only then did he discover that the crippled Mephibosheth had been framed by his greedy servant and left to his fate. But the damage had been done; David had given his word to the slanderous servant. Mephibosheth showed his true character by not challenging the judgment; having his friend safely back was sufficient for him (19:24-30).

There is a lesson in this incident for those who will see it: An innocent man was unjustly punished, and a scoundrel unfairly rewarded, because a king in his haste forgot the age-old principle that **there are two sides to every story**.

Ziba's testimony was an outright lie, motivated by covetousness. Certainly there is plenty of that kind of dishonesty around. But the greater danger arises from critics who unconsciously twist the truth. "Every man's way is

right in his own eyes" (Prov. 21:2), and an accuser may honestly believe that his case is a just one. Even though there is no intention of deceiving others, however, he may be deceiving himself. His testimony may omit information that he considers trivial or inconsequential. Or he may doctor borderline evidence — in his favor, of course. Such subtle differences between the truth and what the accuser **thinks** is the truth can adversely affect the judge's decision.

Realizing this, every system of jurisprudence that strives to be fair recognizes the right of the accused to face his accuser before the bar of justice. If the truth can be determined at all, it will be determined when both sides in a dispute have an opportunity to present their cases and cross-examine each other. This principle is not limited to judges and juries. A preacher or elder seeking to help a couple work through marital problems, or a manager who must restore harmony among feuding employees, or a parent trying to settle a squabble among the kids — all of these must take care to examine both sides before they render judgment. (This principle also explains why gossip is condemned as such a destructive evil. It is nothing more than telling only one side of a story, with the victim having no opportunity to defend himself.)

David's hasty judgment hurt a friend and rewarded a scoundrel. We can avoid similar mistakes in our decisions, if we refuse to choose sides in a conflict until we have had opportunity to examine **all** the facts.