

The Old Paths

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“Bug Zappers Or Bird Feeders?”

Jarrod Jacobs

The title above may seem strange, but if you read this article to completion, I believe you will see that the question is relevant. I am sure most of our dear readers are familiar with bug zappers. This device contains a light which attracts bugs. As the bugs approach the light, they land on an electric wire which electrocutes them. Who does not like to sit outside on a warm summer evening and watch bugs meet their end in a zapper?

Furthermore, we are getting to the fall and winter seasons in which the birds who do not migrate will be searching for food. Some folks who enjoy watching the birds will set out food so they can watch the birds out their windows. At times, squirrels or other animals try to feed from the bird feeder, but nevertheless, the birds get fed, and people get the pleasure of watching the variety of birds out their window. In fact, many people set their feeders out all year long so they can watch the birds.

Comparisons And Contrasts

We can compare and contrast these two things fairly easily. First, we see that both the light from the bug zapper and the food from the feeder will attract various creatures. The appearance of these things are benign, and both stand ready to accept those who

come to it. The bug zapper is no respecter of persons. If an animal or a man happens to touch the electric wire, they will get a shock, just as bugs do. In like manner, a bird feeder will feed squirrels, or other animals deemed by man as “pests” in addition to the intended birds. It is no respecter of persons.

In contrast, the bug zapper attracts in order to destroy. The bird feeder attracts in order to nourish. No bugs ever left the bug zapper better than when they entered. Yet, the animals attracted to the bird feeder will leave the feeder in better shape than when they approached.

Which Describes Us?

There are those today who are like that bug zapper. They attract folks to them so as to destroy them. No wonder, for you see, Satan is like this! He has deceived folks from the beginning (Gen. 3), and has been determined to destroy men ever since (Jn. 8:44; I Pet. 5:8)! Therefore, it should be no surprise that those who are walking on the “broad way” that leads to destruction (Matt. 7:13-14) are also acting like this. The description of the woman in Proverbs 7 fits well here. The Bible tells us she attracted the naïve man with her “*fair speech*” and “*flattering*” and destroyed him (Prov. 7:21, 23). Just as an insect was attracted to the light and then electrocuted, so also, what seemed so wonderful at first to the young man, resulted in his destruction!

Thus it is today. People intent

on hurting themselves will generally attract others to be like them (Prov. 1:10-19). This is what Korah, Dathan, and Abiram did (Num. 16:1-3). Their destructive message not only hurt them (Num. 16:31-35), but it had attracted many others, and they also were destroyed (Num. 16:41-49). In the New Testament, we are warned of the “*good words and fair speeches*” of the false teachers (Rom. 16:18). We are told that “*many (not a few, JJ) shall follow their pernicious ways*” (II Pet. 2:2). Such people shall be made “*spoil*” or “*merchandise*” as a result of following the harmful false doctrines of men (II Pet. 2:3; Col. 2:4, 8). The end result is that these folks must face “*the wrath of God*” (Eph. 5:6).

In contrast to this, there are those who act like the bird feeder. They attract folks for the purpose of building up and nourishing them (Eph. 4:29b; Col. 4:6). Certainly, Jesus is like this. While on earth, He attracted folks to Him with the salvation message. This message continues to attract people today to be saved (Rom. 1:16). His crucifixion draws men to Him (Jn. 12:32). Furthermore, His gospel is described as “*milk*” and “*meat*” (I Pet. 2:2; Heb. 5:12-14) i.e., nourishment for the souls of men. His words are given for the benefit of man. When folks are attracted to Him, He gives life, not death (Jn. 6:63). None are harmed by God’s word, for there is spiritual benefit for all! (Isa. 55:10-11)

It is this same gospel message that we ought to have on our lips and in our lives (I Pet. 4:11; Col. 3:17). There is a world of lost souls today who will never know about Christ, nor His life-saving word unless we are active in teaching (Mk. 16:15; II Tim. 2:2). No, we do not attract folks to ourselves, but to Him! Jesus said when we let our lights shine, folks will see us and glorify God (Matt. 5:16). This benefits all!

Bold and Fearless Preaching

Terry Benton Hoover, AL

The first preaching was in the difficult circumstances of being personally persecuted by the leaders of the dominant religious leaders of the city of Jerusalem. Read over Acts 4:1-32. We can see in this chapter that bold and fearless preaching was uncompromising to God's solid truth, but it was just such preaching that was needed and it resulted in growth of the church (v. 1-4), while also resulting in persecution (v. 5-21), but the early disciples knew it was worth it, and that persecution was a high honor that identified them with Jesus' rejection and suffering and helped them to love and appreciate Jesus even more than ever. The boldness of Peter and John should be copied by preachers today (v. 19-20). We should not be guided by fear of men but the love of God and conviction that truth is worth living and dying for. If your preaching is not worth the price of being rejected, then your preaching is worthless anyway. But, as preaching boldly grows and becomes openly opposed, it is time to remember that bold, soul-loving and truthful preaching must lean heavily on a rich and deep reliance upon the strength of God. So, the next section (4:23-31) was how the apostles were strengthened in prayer. The result was that they "spoke the word with boldness". Good, solid preaching must lean heavily upon God in prayer, but the content must be "in the name of Jesus" and that means it must be authorized by Jesus in His word. Preaching is not solid unless it is accurate and fully biblical, and preached in love for God and the

souls of those who hear, and strengthened by a preacher's heart prepared in prayer. Let the principles gained from Acts 4 show us the kind of solid Bible preaching we need today. Let us insist on it, and help it along with diligent prayer for those brave enough to take this task in hand.

Editor's Note:

I do not believe I have ever met the author of this article, but he makes a point we all need to appreciate. Regardless of length of days or where we live, we have the ever-present need for bold and fearless preaching like the apostles did. When we no longer have the "stomach" for this kind of preaching, then we have removed ourselves from the preaching that Christ endorses and demands today (II Tim. 4:2). If we have become "squeamish," this is the time to repent and return to your first love while we still have the opportunity!

Brother R.L. Whiteside was correct when he wrote that if we are getting "squeamish" about the preaching of the truth, read the book of Jeremiah. He suggests that reading that book is a good medicine for "what ails you." I agree.

The Church of Christ

By J. C. ROADY, Evangelist
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It was built by divine authority, Christ is the builder. Matt. 16: 13-20. He had all authority. Matt. 28: 18-19. It was given Him because of His obedience to the Father. Phil. 2: 8-11.

It wears a Scriptural name. Rom. 16: 16. 1 Tim. 3: 15. Heb. 12: 22-23.

It has an infallible head. Col. 1: 18. Eph. 1: 22-23. Eph. 5-23.

It has a sure foundation. Eph. 2: 19-22. Acts 4: 11-12. 2 Tim. 2: 19.

It has a complete organization. Col. 2: 9-10. Eph. 3: 10-21.

It has an open door. John 10: 9. John 14:6. Rev. 3: 7.

It has a living Advocate. 1 John 2: 1. Rom. 8: 34. Heb. 7: 25.

It has a perfect guide. THE BIBLE. The reason they take no other guide is because the Bible reveals the mind of God. Its doctrine is holy. Its precepts are binding. It gives light to guide you. It gives food to support you. It gives comfort to all that obey it. It will lead you safely through life and will stand by you in death. Ps. 23. It is given us in life and will be opened at the judgment. Rev. 20: 12. It will make us free. John 8: 32. It will sanctify. John 17: 17. It will give us a home. Acts 20: 32. It is inspired. 2 Tim. 3: 16-17.

If you read it believe it and obey it you will be wise, safe and happy.

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