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“Neither Give Heed to Fables...”

Fred Nowell

Each of us would eagerly wait for the bell to ring as we endured the meagerly “hum drum” lessons of our fifth and sixth grade teachers. In instant the bell would ring, we were all out the door and on the playground to hear the adventures of “*Super Tiger*.” I have to tell you, there was something very special and intriguing about Super Tiger. He was the brainchild of one of my dearest childhood friends, Arthur “Tiger” St. Jacques. Tiger was the nickname his father had given him, and it fit him very well. Huddled around in a circle, we would hear of the heroic acts of Super Tiger as he took on giants and any other obstacle that would get in his way. Arthur had the uncanny ability to make up the story as he went and he would hold our attention and keep us in stitches as he would cause us all to laugh until our guts hurt. Through all these years, the memory of those fables on the playground of the Bessie C. Rowell School still live on in the minds of all those who were privileged to be a part of that small group of “Super Tiger” believers.

The apostle Paul told the church of Corinth as he spoke in that great chapter concerning love, “*When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things*” (1 Cor 13:11). Paul would later tell Timothy, his young son in the faith, “*charge some that they teach no other doctrine, Neither give heed to fables...*” (1 Tim 1:3-4). Fables have their place, but that place is not in the area of religion. I suppose that this is why Paul would continue to reaffirm to his young preachers (Timothy and Titus) the need to keep teaching, preaching and living according to sound doctrine. Paul gives warning saying, “*Neither give heed to fables...refuse profane and old wives' fables*” (1 Tim 1:4,7), knowing that some would “*turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables*” (2 Tim 4:4). Titus was encouraged by Paul to rebuke sharply those opposed to the truth (God's Word, Jn 17:17) that they might be “*sound in the faith; not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men, that turn from the truth*” (Tit 1:13-14).

As Paul was waiting for Timothy and Silas to join him in Athens, ***“his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry”*** (Acts 17:16). Much like our cities of today, Athens was filled with people that worshiped as they desired and to whom they desired. Among the many altars to every known god, Paul found one with the inscription, “TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.” Ignorantly these people set up altars to every known and unknown god. Paul took this opportunity to preach unto them the true God of all that is – the God they did now know (Acts 17:23ff).

As little kids, we fully understood that our superhero was not real. We knew that Super Tiger's “6-barrel shotgun” would not be enough to fight off the evil giant from the confines of the sugar bowl (I can't believe I still remember these stories so well!). Religiously, there are many people that have been fed fables – fictitious teaching that will bring one's soul to a very sad ending. Let us all take the inspired advice of Paul to ***“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”*** (2 Tim 2:15). Each of us will answer to God for all we do in this life (2 Cor 5:10). May we have Jesus stand with us to confess our name before the father (Mt 10:32-33).