

Sermons

New Testament

Mark

14:53-59

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Text: Mk. 14:56 -- "For many bore false witness against him, and their witness did not agree,"

Theme: False Testimony Against Christ.

Proposition: False testimony against Jesus always disproves itself.

Sources: Revised Standard Version of the
New Testament

Masterpieces of Religious Verse, No. 616

Places and dates preached:

Crawston & Kemmerer, Wyo., 3/4/57
Camp Cook, Wyo., Post Office,
9 Dec. - 1957

Chesterdale, Behan, Wyo., March 7, '54

Wheatland, Wyo., March 27, 1957 A.M.

Grace, Cheyenne, Wyo., First Church, May 26, '57

Cheyenne Bible School, Cheyenne, May 10, '57

ments in interracial relations."

Within a ten-year period thirty-one new churches were established, serving a dozen racial and interracial groups. At least six new churches are now being erected. The Advance for Christ and His Church has furnished some funds, but members of the local congregations are giving generously for their own and their neighbors' needs. They have adopted two objectives of their own, in addition to those of the Advance, "the pattern of habitual attendance at the services of worship" and "a doubling of membership in three years" through emphasis upon and training in evangelism. These Christians of Hawaii are witnessing for Christ today just as those described in I John 1:3:

That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

Introduction:

1. When I was a student in college it was the custom, though against the rules, to engage in hazing the freshmen. One freshman had been particularly defiant of the upper classmen, and so a group of sophomores, of which I was one, decided to scare him badly, though not actually to hurt him. In the activity that followed the sophomores were reported to the faculty. The faculty had a committee to interview each accused, and the interviewing was done one by one. The testimony of several agreed, but that of others was different from this group and from any other. Call in the differing ones a second time the faculty committee confronted them with the testimony of those agreeing. Thus confronted with the truth, those bearing false witness admitted the truth.

2. In our Scripture we have a somewhat similar situation, though it deals with a much more serious matter. Jesus had been arrested and was brought for trial before



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a council consisting of priests, elders and scribes, the leaders and high powers in the Jewish religion of that day, a religion which had much power over men's lives. Seeking testimony against him, the council heard many people give testimony, only to have it prove false because it did not agree with that of others. The text expresses it thus: "For many bore false witness against him, and their witness did not agree."

3. The first incident, that of the college boys, shows how false testimony usually disproves itself by its inconsistencies. The Scriptural incident emphasizes the thought which we are considering here, that false testimony against Jesus always disproves itself.

1. Through consideration of some aspects of false witness it can be DEMONstrated that false witness against Jesus always disproves itself.



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1. False witnessing is associated with other evil.

A. In Victor Hugo's novel "Toilers of the Sea," Sieur Clubin was in charge of a ferry or steamer which ran from one of the islands in the English Channel to the port of St. Malo in France, making a weekly round trip. At the time of the story he is represented as having held this position for several years. He had a reputation for truthfulness, dependability and honesty. Yet, within himself, in his heart as we say, he was a rascal and a scoundrel. Hugo shows him as having carefully built up a reputation of good virtue in order to be put in a place of trust where he would have the chance to steal a fortune and then get away. His act of honesty and dependability was an act which in reality galled upon him terrifically! His opportunity for his one supremely wicked act comes, and to perform it he lies, steals, is an accessory to a murder, and willfully wrecks his ship to his superior's loss and the danger of passengers. But just when it seems that



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he is in a position to vanish with his large, ill-gained fortune, and at the same time be known as a hero, he meets his death; a death which results in a few months in bringing to light what he really is.

b. In Mt. 15:19 we find these words: "For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander." The moral of the story of Siewr Clubin in "Toilers of the Sea," is the same as that given in this Scripture verse. Both show that false witness, or telling lies, come from an evil heart and are usually associated with many other evils.

c. As we study the Scripture records of the trials of Jesus we find again and again that those who accused him of evil, who brought false witness against him, had other wrong traits and motives in their lives. His teaching opposed their evil in some manner. Their false witness, however, was discredited and shown for what it was partly by the very nature of their lives.



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2. False witness against Jesus is often unintentional, and sometimes even with good motives, and yet still harmful to Him and disproving of itself.

a. In recent story which I either heard over the radio or read in a popular magazine, a girl from a very small Nebraska town worked in a Hollywood, Cal., movie studio office. She was one of those rare ones in Hollywood who was under no delusion that she could act. Through a series of events she came in contact with the studio head, a much-desired bachelor. He found her charming, partly because of her lack of aspiration toward acting, partly because she was from a place adjacent to his original home, and also because of other characteristics which attract young men to young ladies. The girl's friend and room mate, however, thought the friendship between office worker and boss of the studio offered a wonderful opportunity for her friend to get started as an actress. Accordingly, she told a tall tale, a falsehood, to the director to the effect that the pretty miss from Nebraska



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was really a talented actress. He felt that he had been deceived by the girl from near his old hometown and the friendship, or romance, nearly ended. That the well-intentioned lie didn't break up the relationship between girl and man was because other proof came showing the Nebraska girl to be in reality what he thought her to be, and not an aspiring actress after all. However, the false witness of a friend, however good the motive, did bring harm.

b. All through the ministry of Jesus many of those close to Him failed to understand Him and His true mission. At one time the mother of 2 of His disciples asked that her sons might sit on His right hand in His Kingdom, showing that false witness had been borne to her of His work. Many honored Him on Palm Sunday as a king, and yet in that honor brought Him attention which resulted in His crucifixion because it was thought He wished to bring an earthly kingdom by overcoming the then-existing government. Many other incidents throughout His earthly



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life illustrate how well-intentioned false witness, or even entirely innocent false witness, brought Him harm and always was disproved by events.

c. Today, too, well-intentioned or innocent false witness brings harm to Jesus and is disproved by Scripture, events, or other means. Some churches teach that marriage bonds hold fast in eternity, but in Mt. 22:30 Jesus Himself is quoted as saying "For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven." Such well-intentioned false witness attracts many people, to the harm of keeping them from understanding the real meaning of Christ's teaching. Some churches stress their particular denomination or group as being the only way of salvation; yet in Jn. 3:16 the emphasis is "whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."

3. False witness against Jesus does disprove itself when brought up against the facts.



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It does not matter whether that witness is of evil hearts or from good intentions, if it is false it harms Him and is itself disproven eventually.

II. It is well to look, too, at the opposite of this truth and see that true witness of Jesus aids Him and is proven in Scripture.

1. In Scripture we find many events to prove this.

a. He healed one person, and after that the report, or witness, of his activities brought larger crowds of sick to Him. Once the press was so thick that one daring group let their patient down to Him through a hole in the roof.

b. He taught such inspiring, interesting and helpful matter that the report, or witness of His teaching caused multitudes to come to hear Him. On one occasion He was tired, and to escape the multitude in order to rest He went up on a mountain. But the crowd in its eagerness to learn from Him went to Him. He could not refuse



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to accommodate this evidence of faith, and there followed the Sermon on the Mount.

c. Because of the true report given by many concerning Jesus He was able to extend his ministry of healing and preaching and teaching to thousands whom He might not otherwise have reached.

2. It is true today that good and true witness of Jesus helps Him and is proven by circumstances.

Conclusion:

1. This poem by Ada Jackson brings home something of what we are trying to emphasize:

Pilate, Pilate, wash your hands,
Cry "What is Truth?" again.
None asks or cares, these wiser days,
Nor fears so small a stain.



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Peter, Peter, save your skin,
Then, futile, weep your shame.
No one will notice. After all
We have done the same.

Judas, Judas, hang yourself.
How many times is this?
The Lesson's yet to learn. We still
Betray Him with a kiss.

Jesus, Jesus, nailed on high,
Christ Whom the nations praise,
Which is the Cross that tore thee most--
Golgotha's or today's?

2. False testimony, false witness, against Jesus disproves itself always, but in the doing of it much harm and pain can be done, even as false witness brought His crucifixion once.

3. However, on the affirmative side to give a challenge and a program of action for Christians, it is true that by true witness for Him we can serve Him and bring



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proof of the greatest of all realities --
salvation in Christ Jesus.



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