

Psm. 11:3

Baptists For Liberty

Prov. 29:2

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” Galatians 5:1

NEWS LETTER

Issue #26

November 2014

Monthly Verse: *“This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.”~ Joshua 1:8*

“Knock, Knock Who’s there? Jesus.”

By Bro. Billy Holbrook

Jesus is speaking to the church at Laodicea and said, “...and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind and naked.” It seems kinda odd to me that a group of people could be in such a state that they didn’t know they were all these things. Jesus said that this church thought they were rich, and increased with goods, and had need of nothing. Could a whole church get into such a place spiritually and be unaware of their condition? It’s obvious from the Word of God that it can. It’s kinda scary to me that we could think that we’re doing really good and actually we’re doing really bad. If you would continue to read this account in Revelation 3 you find out what the greatest problem was that this church had. Their problem? Jesus was not there! He is at the door, knocking and saying, “If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.”

It’s amazing that Jesus can get on the outside of a church and nobody even knew He was gone. They had become so comfortable with all their materialism, and had become so satisfied with this world that they were able to assemble for worship and leave Jesus outside. No matter how great we may think we are doing, if we don’t have Jesus then we are poor and have nothing. The great news? No matter what everybody else is doing if we as individuals want Jesus in our life He is willing to come in to us and commune with us. So, we can’t blame anybody but ourselves if Jesus is outside knocking.

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Sermon: "Are We Living Up To The Name?"

by Bro. Troy McGahan



Intro: One of the things a person wants to leave is a legacy. A legacy is something that you want others to remember you by. It may be an inheritance for your children, an endowment to some charity or perhaps even some property for future generations in your family. One of the great legacies you hear of people leaving behind is something even a pauper can have. That would be his name. You hear of people speaking about some who have great riches and wealth but, they have a sorry name. Yet others who have nothing monetarily leave behind a great testimony of integrity, kindness, and love!!!!

So let us consider this legacy when it comes to the name that is conferred all too commonly today and that is the name Christian.

I. The origins of the name Christian.

A. This is a word used three times in the NT.

B. Acts 11:26 and when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.

1) This is the first place the word Christians is used in the Word of God.

2) This was not a term that was given as a compliment.

a. Remember at this time Christianity was mocked and hated by the masses.

b. Stephen was stoned to death because of his following Christ.

C. Acts 26:28 Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.

1) Can you hear the mocking of Agrippa?

D. 1 Pet 4:16 Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

1) The only time this word is used positively is in the event of suffering.

E. The word literally translated means "follower of Christ"

II. Making application to the name today.

A. Many have the idea that being saved makes you a Christian.

B. You can be saved and not be a Christian.

C. If you are not living a life of obedience to God's Commands you are not a Christian.

D. If you are living a life of selfishness you are not a Christian.

E. If you never concern yourself if something is God's will or not then you are not a Christian!!!!!!

Editorial: Joshua Chapter One

by Sis. Joanna Works

Our verse of the month this month come from the book of Joshua chapter one verse eight, it reads: *"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."*

Our main thought this month is on good success. What does that mean, and how do we obtain it? Dear brothers & sisters, I believe this verse spells it out rather plainly. The rest of this chapter, as all passages of scriptures, has quite a few good gems to read, so for your consideration & edification here is all 18 verses of Joshua chapter one.

1 Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying,
2 Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.

3 Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.

4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast.

5 There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

6 Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swear unto their fathers to give them.

7 Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.

8 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

9 Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

10 Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying,

11 Pass through the host, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; for within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which the LORD your God giveth you to possess it.

12 And to the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, spake Joshua, saying,

13 Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, The LORD your God hath given you rest, and hath given you this land.

14 Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle, shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side Jordan; but ye shall pass before your brethren armed, all the mighty men of valour, and help them;

15 Until the LORD have given your brethren rest, as he hath given you, and they also have possessed the land which the LORD your God giveth them: then ye shall return unto the land of your possession, and enjoy it, which Moses the LORD'S servant gave you on this side Jordan toward the sunrising.

16 And they answered Joshua, saying, All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us, we will go.

17 According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee: only the LORD thy God be with thee, as he was with Moses.

18 Whosoever he be that doth rebel against thy commandment, and will not hearken unto thy words in all that thou commandest him, he shall be put to death: only be strong and of a good courage.

"Q & A With Julie Borowski"

by Sis. Joanna Works

Julie Borowski, also known online as "The Token Libertarian Girl" is a popular online political commentator who started out making simple youtube videos in her bedroom. I stumbled upon her youtube channel back in 2012 when she only had a few videos posted. Now days she has about 96 videos posted, 59,693 subscribers to her youtube channel, 105,813 "likes" on her Face Book page. So I was pretty happy to be able to chat with her on Face Book this month to discuss her political growth.

You've made mention of your conservative republican up bringing in your videos before, what had the biggest effect in changing your political views?

Growing up, I thought there were only two options: liberal or conservative. I knew I wasn't a liberal. I've always admired entrepreneurs and hated the government getting in their way. Therefore, I identified as a conservative and embraced the Republican Party. However, I started to have doubts about the wars that were waged during George W. Bush's administration. I began asking: What was being accomplished? How much taxpayer dollars were they costing? How many innocent lives were being lost? Around this time, I discovered the word "libertarian" on an online forum. I had never seen the word before so I googled it. I was surprised to learn that there were people who were pro-free markets and against unnecessary war.

Where you very politically active when you where younger & neoconservative, did you ever go to rallies or even thought to make videos for a cause back then?

Not really. I became a libertarian at 15. I had strong opinions but I never attended political rallies or anything. I made video skits for fun when I was younger but nothing to do with politics. I was a huge supporter of Bob Dole though... when I was 8. I also remember having a debate on whether it was the right choice to bomb Hiroshima and Nagasaki in my 9th grade social studies class. I argued in favor of the murder of over a hundred thousand innocent civilians...

That's why when people ask me: "Don't you think it's a lost cause to try to reach ___?" I say no. Because if I can have a change of heart/brain, anyone can.

What videos or books did you find most helpful when you where first discovering libertarianism?

I'd say the books that I found most helpful when first discovering libertarianism were Economics in One Lesson by Henry Hazlitt and The Law by Frederic Bastiat. YouTube wasn't around when I first became a libertarian. But I remember the early Ron Paul videos on YouTube helped me express my views better such as those from Rachel Mills and Jack Hunter.

What would you recommend to someone who is interested in knowing what libratarianism is but has only heard of the word being thrown around on Fox News?

The Internet is a great source for learning more about libertarianism.

There are tons of libertarian resources. Do your own research and see what you think.

What was the hardest neoconservative issue for you to see differently?

Foreign policy. Like many people, I was angry after 9/11. I wanted revenge and I still think those feelings are understandable. Unfortunately, though, I became too trusting of politicians in Washington. In the aftermath of those tragic events, I was willing to support any war that any politician talked about. For example, the Iraq War. I was gung ho. Now, looking back, I have to ask: how was that connected to 9/11? These days, I'm much more likely to question politicians and their motives. I refuse to allow them to use the troops like pawns on a chess board for their own self interests.

Still being quite young when you became a small "l" libertarian, did it effect your family relations, what was the biggest challenge for you?

I don't think it did too much. The biggest challenge was probably the whole legalization of drugs thing. Because when you come out in favor of legalized weed when you're a teenager, people will often assume you just want to smoke weed legally. So, probably the hardest was convincing the family that I wasn't actually a stoner and I wasn't hiding drugs in my room.

Do you still consider yourself conservative in some way?

Not a political conservative. In some ways though, I'm pretty old fashioned. I don't see that as a bad thing.

What do you think of the Libertarian Party?

I have voted for Libertarian Party candidates before but I don't consider myself to be a member of the party.

How and why did you ever decide to make youtube videos about libertarianism?

I've been a supporter of Ron Paul since 2007. I watched a lot of YouTube videos created by grassroots Ron Paul supporters but I was hesitant about putting myself out there. I finally started to just do it after a presidential debate in 2011. Like usual, Ron Paul was only given a couple minutes of debate time. I found this to be super frustrating and decided to make a video about my thoughts on the debate. I thought I'd probably only put out a couple of videos supporting Ron Paul and that would be it. But I've been making videos for three years now and I'm starting to find my niche.

You have been making political videos for about three years now, how has being the "Token Libertarian Girl" changed your life? Did you drop that moniker completely?

I called my channel Token Libertarian Girl because honestly, I was afraid to use my own name. I thought the videos were awkward. I didn't want a couple videos I made when I was 22 to haunt me every time a potential employer googled my name or something years down the line. Since then though, I think I'm way more comfortable being in front of the camera so I'm fine with people just calling me by my name instead of a moniker.

The videos have changed my life because they have given me opportunities that I've never thought possible. I've been on TV because

of them. I've gotten a chance to speak at conferences and travel to states I've never been. I've had people reach out to me whom I never thought would ever give me the time of day.

What has been your favorite event you have been to and why?

It would be hard to choose because there have been a lot of events and people have worked hard to plan them. One of the coolest things has been seeing the growth at the International Students for Liberty Conference. The first ISFLC that I attended was in 2010 with a couple hundred people, I believe. At the 2014 conference, there were over a thousand people and I think they're expecting even more in 2015.

What have you learned from this experience? Has it changed your mind on any issues?

A lot of what I have learned is how to make videos people actually want to watch. You can't be boring. You have to entertain the audience or they will click off of the video. Also in that regard, I've learned that it's okay to be yourself. I remember when I first started in the political world, I thought it was necessary to be super serious and a matter of fact. But no matter how serious I tried to be, I would get comments saying: "aww, how adorable." That's just what happens when you look very young and talk kind of funny. So, overtime, I began to embrace that. No sense of fighting that losing battle. And that's when I started to really get an audience.

What I've also learned is that tone matters. As my audience has grown and more people are watching who aren't libertarians, I've realized that it's important to not turn off people. That seems like such common sense but it's so important.

You've made a few videos challenging feminist claims such as the wage gap or war on women. Do you think feminist ever have good points or have ever served a good purpose?

Sure, I tend to agree with some things that individualist feminists say. I still won't put that label on myself though.

What are your thoughts on the results of the midterm elections?

Eh. I know it was a big win for Republicans but I'm unsure if it was a big win for liberty. I guess we'll see. I was supporting a few liberty candidates that ultimately lost. Though, I'm hoping that the Republican takeover of the Senate means finally we'll get a vote on Audit the Fed. That would be a step in the right direction.

What are the important news stories that may not be receiving much attention right now, what are the stories that are getting more attention then they should, why do people focus so much on those stories instead of the more important ones?

Kim K's butt. I think people are focused on the unimportant stories because it enables them to escape their lives. It's fun. It's simple. The important news is often depressing. It can be complicated. It's not fun to know that the dollar's value is plummeting because of the Fed's overprinting. Or to know innocent people are being killed by U.S. military drones. Or that the NSA is reading our emails. Sometimes, news like that can make you feel helpless. Some people would prefer not to know because they aren't sure if they can even do anything to stop it. I understand this and I've tried to talk about the important news in a different way.

BFL has a very particular religious focus & target audience, what message would you like to share with our readers about libertarianism or any issue near & dear to your heart?

Maybe a little weird, but something that is near and dear to my heart is dogs. One issue that I really care about is stopping the government from

banning breeds of dogs. Government officials are taking away family pets and killing them because of breed specific legislation. It's horrible and I'd like to spread more awareness about it. You can learn more at: <http://stopbsl.org/>.

You can find Julie at all the usual social hotspot-

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/JulieBorowski>

YouTube: <http://youtube.com/TokenLibertarianGirl>

Blog: <http://julieborowski.wordpress.com/>

Instagram: http://instagram.com/julie_borowski/

I highly recommend checking her videos out for some humors political commentary.

"I Quit!!!!!"

(please read before you jump to conclusions)

by Bro. Troy McGahan

I am so tired of all the fussing that goes on among "brethren". Don't get me wrong, I am not so naive as to think there will not be honest to goodness disagreements among God's people. There will always be those who differ on different issues such as A-Mill vss Pre-mill; Dress; Total Sovereignty vss limited sovereignty (like that even makes sense); qualifications of the ministry; etc, etc. I am not saying that we should not stand for our convictions. I just wished everyone could just get over things when there is a disagreement. I am not so arrogant as to think God could not show me I am wrong on a particular subject. However, until God shows me that I am wrong (in his Word not the court of popular opinion), then I must continue on as I have been lead and taught in His Word.

In the time I have been in the ministry I have found that many brethren who scream the loudest about we need to love one another and give each other liberty are the first ones to try to bully others into holding their position. This has made me to step back and to take a deep breath as I shout to the mountaintops, "I QUIT!!!!!!!"

I QUIT!!!!.....

- 1) Trying to be the Spirit of God for everyone else. God is better at convincing one of error than I am. If God has not done it then I certainly am not better able than he. While I am to preach the truth in love, I must give God room to do His work.
- 2) Fellowshiping with those who have a negative spirit. If you got a bad spirit I don't want it. I will treat such brethren as if they have H1N1.
- 3) Pastoring other Churches. I have not the time or energy to straighten out other Churches. I have a hard enough time trying to stay out of the ditch myself and being the example I should be for the flock God has made me overseer of.
- 4) Worrying about what others think about me. I have a responsibility to serve God and him alone. If I am following "Fully after the Lord" I will not have time to worry what anyone else thinks of me.
- 5) Putting my own selfish desires before God's plan and purpose for my life. My foremost desire is to honor God in my life.

This is one time I feel great about being a quitter. I hope you will be a quitter too:-)

November Blitz: Underlined texts are links to news stories from various sources. If reading this as a printout you can find the links to these stories on our home page. <http://baptistsforliberty.weebly.com> or <http://baptistsforliberty.weebly.com/news-blitz-archive>

Life In The U.S.

(Local & State news stories)

Nov. 3rd [“Cop Facing Felony Theft Charges For Stealing Explicit Photos”](#)

Nov. 4th [“Oregon mother says she threw her six-year-old from bridge”](#)

Nov. 5th [“90-Year-Old WW2 Vet, 2 Christian Pastors Facing Jail Time for Feeding the Homeless”](#)

Nov. 6th [““101 Reasons” Documents Liberty In New Hampshire”](#)

Nov. 7th [“2 IL Veterans Force 102 Corrupt Officials to Resign, Place Entire Local Board Under Citizen’s Arrest”](#)
[“California could release up to 10,000 nonviolent offenders”](#)

Nov. 10th [“Morales Exposes Child Protective Services’ Legal Kidnapping in New Book”](#)
(short article & audio 18 minute long interview)

[“Judge Approves Detroit’s “Grand Bargain” to End Bankruptcy”](#)

Nov. 11th [“Air Force Vet Wakes Up in Federal Prison on Veterans Day”](#)

Nov. 19th [“How Individuals Are Winning Locally to Make You Freer”](#)
[“When the Rustlers Wear Badges”](#)
[“Control Freaks”](#)

Nov. 20th [“Taxi Union Flexes Its Muscle, Shuts Down San Francisco International Airport”](#)

Nov. 21st [“Forced to Sell Abortion Drugs? Pharmacists in Court to Challenge Washington Law”](#)
[“New Orleans City Council Passes Resolution Honoring Planned Parenthood Abortion Biz”](#)

Nov. 24th [“Ill-conceived WA. State Background Check Initiative Already Causing Absurd Outcomes”](#)

Nov. 25th [“FSU Shooting Should Have Been Prevented, & Could Have Been Stopped”](#)
[“Oregon Sex Conference Targets Children as Young as 11 Using Your Tax Dollars”](#)
[“New Mexico Abortion Facility Uses Semantics to Illegally Sidestep Zoning Law”](#)
[“Ferguson: Grand Jury Does Not Indict Officer Wilson in Brown Case”](#)

Nov. 28th [“Nashville Police Chief Refuses to Crack Down on Ferguson Protesters, No Violence Ensues”](#)

U.S. Economy

Nov. 7th [“JP Morgan Chase Whistleblower Reveals Bank and Fed Cover-Up of Fraud”](#)

Nov. 11th [“New Jersey, New York, California out the Back Door in Tax Ranking”](#)

Nov. 13th [“Citibank Set Free to Hand Over Argentina’s Debt Payments”](#)

Nov. 14th [“The Keynesian Anti-Gold Clamor—Another Contrarian Indicator”](#)

Nov. 17th [“Black Friday Protests Planned at Walmart”](#)

Nov. 18th [“Striking Workers Plan to Spoil Walmart’s Black Friday”](#)

Nov. 23rd [“How Government Officials are Using Bank Regulations to Shutdown Industries”](#)

Nov. 25th [“Austrian Economists Look Beyond the Fatal Conceit”](#)
[“Mark Skousen: Production Drives Economies, Not Consumption”](#)

Nov. 26th [“How Economists Transformed the World as You Know It”](#)

Elections

Nov. 3rd [“Videos of Wisconsin GOP candidate allegedly making racist comments not to be released”](#)

Nov. 4th [““Lazy” Postal Employee Throws Out Hundreds of Republican Mailers”](#)
[“Face of Southern Politics Changing Despite What the Race-Baiters Think”](#)
[“AG Holder Sends Poll Watchers to 18 States”](#)

Nov. 5th [“One Party Monopoly in America”](#)
[“New Hampshire’s Liberty Candidates Flourish As Establishment Picks Fizzle”](#)
[“GOP Midterm Victories: The GOP’s Plan and Path”](#)

Nov. 6th [“The Dangers Lurking in the Upcoming Lame Duck Congress”](#)

Nov. 9th [“2014 Elections, Why This Year Marked “Victories” for Libertarian and Third Party Candidates”](#)

Nov. 10th [“End Partisanship Files Appeal in NJ Lawsuit Seeking Equal Voter Rights”](#)

Nov. 11th [“New Colorado State Rep. Infuriates Establishment”](#)

Elections (continued)

Nov. 20th [“Public Comment Sought in FEC Petition to Force CPD to Include ONE more Candidate in Presidential Debates”](#)
[“Constitution Party Nominee for Alaska Legislature, Polled Almost Twice as Many Votes as the Democratic Nominee”](#)

Misc. U.S. Politics

Nov. 3rd [“States Assert Sovereignty in Defense of Second Amendment”](#)
[“Defiant Ebola-Quarantine Nurse Was CDC Intel Operative”](#)
[“More Doctors Refusing ObamaCare Patients”](#)

Nov. 4th [“Midterm Elections Determine Marijuana Legalization in Several States”](#)
[“Pastors Preaching Politics: Still No Word From IRS”](#)

Nov. 5th [“From Marijuana to GMOs to Fracking – Results of the Midterm Elections”](#)

Nov. 7th [“Essential Immigration Reform”](#)

Nov. 10th [“New Appeal Offers More Controversy Over ObamaCare”](#)

Nov. 11th [“Labyrinth of Bureaucracy No Way to Honor Veterans”](#)

Nov. 13th [“Obama’s “Net Neutrality” Rules: Threat to Free Speech”](#)

Nov. 17th [“Why Silence on Most Important Victory in 2014 Elections?”](#)

Nov. 19th [“Rubio, Ryan Working on ObamaCare Alternative, Hoping for 2015 Vote”](#)

Nov. 20th [“Anti-Gun Group Freaks Out as Texas Considers Becoming 45th Open Carry State”](#)
[“West Virginia AG Leads 21 States In Amicus Brief Supporting Citizens’ RKBA”](#)

Nov. 21st [“Federal Judge Rules Against California’s Bid to Delay End of Gun Waiting Periods”](#)
[“Is Obama “The Emperor” After Unilateral Immigration Action?”](#)

Nov. 24th [“Stop Taking Advantage Of Gun Owners, Dead Or Alive!”](#)

Science & Technology

Nov. 5th [“Fracking Mythbusters”](#)

Nov. 18th [“White House Unveils \\$100B “Climate” Schemes, Mocks Congress”](#)

Nov. 19th [“Record Cold as Obama’s “Warming” Decrees Endanger Power Grid”](#)

U.S. Surveillance & Security

Nov. 6th [“Redacted ATF Gunrunning Documents Hint At Secret Surveillance Tactics”](#)

Nov. 7th [“FBI Admits Agent Impersonated Journalist”](#)

Nov. 9th [“FBI Covertly Requests Backdoor Access to Electronic Data Through Procedural Rule Change”](#)

Nov. 10th [“The Devil’s Bargain: The Illusion of a Trouble-Free Existence in the American Police State”](#)
[“Police Wish List Reportedly Being Used to Train Cops on What to Seize from Drug Suspects”](#)
[“President Obama wants internet to be considered a utility”](#)

Nov. 11th [“U.S. Postal Service Explains Data Breach to Employees with Simplified Handout”](#)

Nov. 14th [“Federal Marshals Engage in Widespread Phone Surveillance Via Airplane”](#)

Nov. 15th [“USPS Bemoans Massive Data Breach But Continues Surveillance Program”](#)

Nov. 20th [“The Arsenal Of Destruction: The History Of Policing In America: An Introduction”](#)

U.S. Foreign Policy & Foreign Relations

Nov. 3rd [“Al-Qaeda Linked Group Reportedly Seizes US-Donated Weapons from Moderate Syrian Rebels”](#)
[“Russian Hacking Threatens U.S. National Security”](#)

Nov. 7th [“Obama Sends Letter to Iran’s Leader Suggesting Anti-ISIS Cooperation”](#)
[“US to Double Number of Ground Troops in Iraq”](#)
[“With No Embargo, What Would Castro Do?”](#)

Nov. 12th [“Do Overseas Military Base](#)

[Closures Mean a Shrinking U.S. Empire?”](#)

Nov. 13th [“Obama Offers Extended Visas to Chinese at APEC Summit”](#)
[“Hefty Losses Cause US Shipper to Close Door on Puerto Rico”](#)

Nov. 16th [“CFR’s Max Boot Sees Elections as Mandate for More War”](#)

Nov. 19th [“As The “Sanctions War” Heats Up, Will Putin Play His ‘Gold Card’?”](#)
[“IRGC commander: nuclear deal no retreat from ‘values’”](#)
[“Russia invades Ukraine. Again. And again. And yet again ... using Saddam’s WMD”](#)

Nov. 20th [“Media Using Obama Admin. Deceptive Definition To Describe “Militants” Killed By Drone Strike”](#)

Nov. 21st [“The JFK assassination, Cuba policy and Operation Mongoose”](#)

Nov. 22nd [“ISIS – FIGHTING THE MODERN WAHABIS”](#)

Nov. 24th [“Pressured by Obama Administration, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel Quits”](#)
[“ISIS Origins Traced to U.S. Prison in Iraq”](#)
[“Obama Secretly Authorizes U.S. Combat Extension of Afghan War”](#)

Nov. 25th [“Malarkey on the Potomac Five Bedrock Washington Assumptions That Are Hot Air”](#)
[“Obama’s Capitulation To The Neocons—— Twice In One Day”](#)

The Middle East

Nov. 10th [“Police shooting of Arab Israeli youth could ignite Israel”](#)

Nov. 19th [“Israel Considering Relaxing Gun Laws Following Synagogue Attack”](#)
[“Security expert: Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis ‘gasping for breath’ \(Egyptian internal strife\)”](#)
[“Yemen’s Houthis proxy, not ally for Iran”](#)
[“A false Messiah: Turkey’s negative role in the Middle East”](#)

Nov. 20th [“Ma’alot Massacre. Israel, 15 May 1974”](#)
[“Islamic State in Sinai poses threat to Hamas”](#)

Nov. 24th [“Baghdadi vs. Zawahri: battle for global jihad”](#)

Nov. 29th [“Outrage in Egypt After Judge Clears Ex-President Mubarak of Murder Charges”](#)

“For my strength is made perfect in weakness.”~ 2 Corinthians 12:9

A primary qualification for serving God with any amount of success, and for doing God’s work well and triumphantly, is a sense of our own weakness. When God’s warrior marches forth to battle, strong in his own might, when he boasts, “I know that I shall conquer, my own right arm and my conquering sword shall get unto me the victory,” defeat is not far distant. God will not go forth with that man who marches in his own strength. He who reckoneth on victory thus has reckoned wrongly, for “it is not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.” They who go forth to fight, boasting of their prowess, shall return with their gay banners trailed in the dust, and their armour stained with disgrace. Those who serve God must serve him in his own way, and in his strength, or he will never accept their service. That which man doth, unaided by divine strength, God can never own. The mere fruits of the earth he casteth away; he will only reap that corn, the seed of which was sown from heaven, watered by grace, and ripened by the sun of divine love. God will empty out all that thou hast before he will put his own into thee; he will first clean out thy granaries before he will fill them with the finest of the wheat. The river of God is full of water; but not one drop of it flows from earthly springs. God will have no strength used in his battles but the strength which he himself imparts. Are you mourning over your own weakness? Take courage, for there must be a consciousness of weakness before the Lord will give thee victory. Your emptiness is but the preparation for your being filled, and your casting down is but the making ready for your lifting up.

“When I am weak then am I strong, Grace is my shield and Christ my song.”

~ by Charles Spurgeon~

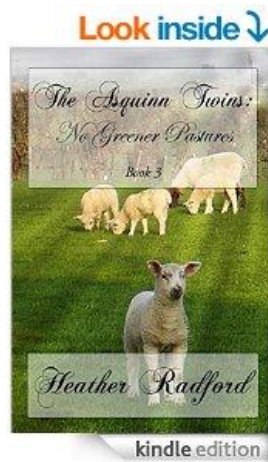
A quick Word from

Sis. Grace Brooks

PSALMS 23

- 1) *The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want*
- 2) *He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.*
- 3) *He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.*
- 4) *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and they staff, they comfort me.*
- 5) *Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.*
- 6) *Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.*

The Asquinn Twins: No Greener Pastures are based on verse 2. All three Y/A books are great Christian, character-building books.



You can order these books at Amazon.com

The Asquinn Twins Series

Grace Brooks is the author of A Dog For Keeps, a book published in Canada by Nelsen (Canada) and Charlesbridge in the United States. She was born in Kirkland Lake, Ontario, but the hamlet where she grew up, Sesekinika, will always be in her heart.

Michael Keith Finch- A correctional officer who lives in Waco, Texas: "The Asquinn Twins Series could be used by anyone in charge of youth in any way as a manual.

"These books are so good they ought to be on the bookshelves of every Christian bookstore and in the library of every Christian home.

"I can search endless hours for Christian literature on bookshelves but not find such high caliber Christian literature as Brooks writes."

<http://meettheasquinnfamily.blogspot.com>

The Western World (Canada, Europe, & Australia)

- Nov. 4th ["Natural Gas Deal Underscores Russia-EU Convergence"](#)
- Nov. 6th ["British Spy Chief Claims Internet Services Aid Terrorists, Need More Monitoring"](#)
- Nov. 8th ["EDDY CHEVVY," GORBY, AND THE FALL OF THE WALL"](#)
- Nov. 17th ["Podemos Sell Chavista Snake Oil to Spain"](#)
- Nov. 22nd ["Russia Changes Law to Allow Guns for Self Defense?"](#)
- Nov. 25th ["All eyes should now be focused on the Swiss voters"](#)

U.N. News & Globalization

- Nov. 1st ["United Nations General Assembly condemns U.S. Cuba embargo"](#)
- Nov. 3rd ["51 OECD Countries Sign Tax Evasion Treaty"](#)
- Nov. 4th ["IMF Boss Lobbies U.S. Congress for More Money, Power"](#)
- Nov. 8th ["Merry Christmas: UN Declares Arms Trade Treaty to Go Into Effect Dec. 24"](#)
- Nov. 12th ["The United Nations Grabs for Internet Control \(Video\)"](#)
- Nov. 13th ["UN Outraged After More U.S. States Nullify Global Pot Regime"](#)
- Nov. 14th ["Activists Rally to Stop Obama's 'Free Trade' Schemes"](#)
- Nov. 15th ["UN Denies Using Kenyan Vaccination Program for Population Control"](#)
- Nov. 17th ["Venezuelan Court Won't Bow to UN Call for Leopoldo López Release"](#)
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["Austrian Economists Put Their Heads Together for Crisis Solutions"](#)
- Nov. 22nd ["Libya Then and Now: An Overview of NATO's Handiwork"](#)
- Nov. 25th ["Globalists Use Putin as Foil to Push TTIP U.S.-EU Merger"](#)
["Pope Francis Insists State Welfare Is the Answer to World Hunger"](#)

Neighbors to the South (Mexico & South America)

- Nov. 5th ["Is There a 'New Path to Liberty' for Latin America?"](#)
- Nov. 7th ["Venezuela Plans 'Merry Christmas' through Strict Price Controls"](#)
- Nov. 12th ["While We Celebrate World Freedom Day, New Walls Encircle Us"](#)
- Nov. 13th ["Old-Fashioned Communism Alive and Well in Venezuela's Ration Card"](#)
- Nov. 14th ["Peru's Most Wanted Gangster Captured after 4 Months on the Run"](#)
["Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Life in Cuba"](#)
- Nov. 17th ["A Berlin Wall Moment Beckons for the Americas"](#)
- Nov. 19th ["A Peek Behind the Curtain of a Latin-American Dictatorship"](#)
["Leopoldo López: Latin America's Number One Enemy of the State"](#)
- Nov. 20th ["Puerto Rico Resorts to Gas Tax amid Crippling Debt"](#)
- Nov. 21st ["Axel Kaiser: 'In a Society of Slaves, There Will Never Be Progress'"](#)
["Surveyed Oil Executives Slam Latin-American Investment Climate"](#)
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["Chilean Teachers on Strike over Bachelet's Education Reform"](#)
- Nov. 25th ["Maduro Unleashes 45 New Laws as Decree Powers Expire"](#)
- Nov. 26th ["Defying Dangers, Venezuelans Call for Constituent Assembly"](#)
["Party Infighting in Venezuela Could Force Maduro's Exit"](#)

The World At Large (Africa & Asia, etc.)

- Nov. 20th ["China's Communist Party Reaffirms Marxism, Maoism, Atheism"](#)
- Nov. 25th ["Belgian Mining Company Accused of Lying About Bulldozing People's Houses in the Congo"](#)
- Nov. 28th ["Bombings at a Mosque in Northern Nigeria Kill Dozens of Worshipers During Afternoon Prayers"](#)

“The LORD Is Great!”

by Bro. Dr. M. J. Seymour, Sr.

“Sing unto the LORD, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people. For the LORD *is* great, and greatly to be praised: he *is* to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the nations *are* idols: but the LORD made the heavens.” (Ps. 96:2-5)

Man created *designer* gods come and go, and they are as fleeting as the erratic imaginations of reprobated men. They create images that cater to their demented fancies and lusts as natural brute beast. No hope brings desperation and that conjured up out of desperation gives birth to demons of hell masquerading as gods of ecstasy.

Thanks be unto the living LORD, Creator of the heavens and the earth, we have hope beyond measure! We have no need to fabricate some imaginary god scraped out of some hallucination of men’s evil minds. We have not created our God; praise His Name, our God has created us. Therefore, sing ye redeemed of the LORD; sing praises unto His Holy Name!!! Let not a day fade away without the sacrifices of thanksgiving leaving our lips heaven bound. Sing, O Brethren, Sing of His wondrous salvation through the blood of His blessed son Jesus! Fill His ears with sweet melodies of Hallelujahs!

With joy unspeakable speak aloud of His marvelous glory. It is written: “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,” full of grace and truth.” (Jn. 1:14) O, the all-consuming glory of the Living God of all creation as He plunges “my sins” into the blood of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. We need no other god, for what piece of wood, stone, or imagination could be sufficient to this matchless grace. Who could soar us upward on the Spirit’s wings in the majesty of white robes of righteousness? None but Thee, O LORD, none but Thee! May our tongues cleave to the roof of our mouths if our hearts and lips forget the graciousness of our God, and if we cease to praise Him for so great a salvation!

“Exhortation To Christian Action”

by Bro. Cecil Fayard



Ephesians 4:17-24

INTRO: “Lights, camera, action.” It amazes me how much time, energy, and sweat a good actor will put into his career: up early, home late. Memorizing lines, studying the historical setting of the film. He’s on the set whether it be the hot boiling desert or at the North Pole. When the director cries, “Lights, camera, action,” he

wants to be ready. He wants to get his part right.

Ephesians 4:17-24 deals with our actions as Christians. It amazes me how little time, energy, and sweat most Christians put into their walk with God. The cry of the modern Christian is, “Sunday is the only day I have to rest.” Memorizing Scripture and doing an in depth study of the Word is out!

If it’s too cold, he can’t come to church. If it’s too hot, he can’t come to church. Any excuse for missing church will do. Just as actors are given direction as to what they are to do and not to do, the believer is also given negatives and positives to go by. We are to put off certain practices and adopt others.

Actors not only study their parts, they do them. The Bible is to be studied and obeyed, put into action: “Faith without works is dead.”

I. VSS. 17-19, THE NEGATIVE PAGAN PATTERN

A. Vs. 17, “Therefore” points us back to all that Christ has done for the believer: His death, burial, and resurrection.

Because of all that Christ has done for us, here is what we are to do for our Savior.

1. “Testify in the Lord.” This is not Paul, the preacher’s opinion, it is the Word of God.

2. “Walk not as other Gentiles walk...” Here is one of the negatives of the Christian life. Folks don’t want to hear about negatives in our upbeat self-confident world; but friends, there are some negatives in the Christian walk. A battery has a negative and a positive post; it takes both for it to work.

a. We are not to imitate the life of the unregenerate.

b. Because of the Christian’s high calling, he is to live in such a way that the body of Christ would be strengthened.

c. Behave yourself! That’s what Paul is saying.

Don’t act like a heathen when you are saved.

d. The Christian is to lay aside or put off his former way of life.

e. As a Christian, do not walk with or imitate your present evil surroundings.

f. “Walk” is an action verb. Your actions are to be godly, not ungodly.

3. “In the vanity of their mind.”

a. The lost do not think like Christians. They are concerned about empty things that are of no significance.

1.) Christians have repented; they have had a change of mind. They no longer run and romp with the heathen (I Pet 4:4).

2.) When a man is saved, his uplook and his outlook is changed.

b. “Vanity” means futile and empty.

1.) They seek happiness and end up

disappointed, barren, and frustrated.

2.) “Vanity” is pursuing and not achieving, blossoming and bearing no fruit (Ecc.

1:7-8; 3:9).

3.) “Their mind or intellect is fruitless. It produces naught that can satisfy” (Hendriksen 209). Only in Christ do we find fulfilment (John 10:10).

c. The Greeks prided themselves as being intellectuals; but with respect to spiritual truth, their minds were empty. They had no capacity to make moral decisions much like our godless judges today (Rom. 1:21-25).

B. Vs. 18, The emptiness and futility of the Gentile mind is a product of a darkened understanding and alienation from God.

1. “Having the understanding darkened. . .” They dwell in darkness, and darkness dwells in them.

a. Their ancestors before them had rejected

God's light, and now they were rejecting God's general revelation in nature and conscience. The result of this rejection is pictured in Rom. 1:18-21. We are in the shape we are today because of the rejection of truth by generations of ungodly preachers and teachers.

b. The intellectual "thinks he is enlightened because he rejects the Bible and believes the latest philosophies, when in reality he is in the dark" (Wiersbe 108).

2. "Being alienated from the life of God..."

a. The lost are alienated or estranged from "the life of God," separated from God as the source of eternal life.

b. The saved were once far off, alienated, from God; but are now made nigh by the blood (2:12-13).

3. "Through the ignorance that is in them. . ." They are alienated because of their ignorance of God. To reject the Bible is showing your ignorance. (Psa 53:1)

4. "Because of the blindness of their heart."

a. II Cor. 4:3-6 tells us that Satan has blinded the minds of the unsaved. Satan does not want the unsaved to see the Gospel.

b. Their eyes are blinded so that they cannot see, and their minds are darkened so that they cannot think straight about moral or spiritual business.

c. The Greek word for heart in this verse is *porosis* which means to petrify, to be callous, as hard as marble, hardened to the point of no feeling.

C. Vs. 19, "Past feeling" means without pain.

1. They had become so hard, so callused that their conscience no longer condemned them for their sins. They became insensible to God's voice and truth.

2. "Given. . . over to lasciviousness" means:

a. They abandoned themselves to sensuality, a life without personal standards or social approval.

b. The literature of the time in which this was written was deeply immoral. Origin states that, "when the people of his day committed adultery and whoredom, they did not regard themselves as violating good manners" (Hendriksen 211).

3. "To work all uncleanness with greediness." We could read this, "For the greedy practice in every type of impurity. The unlawful desire for things that belong to others such as their innocence."

a. The greedy person overreaches. He wishes to have more than his due. His greed for sensuality controls him.

b. He disregards all the rights, practices, and feelings of others. This is where the rapists and child molesters come from.

c. He goes beyond what is respectable; and by doing so, he is digging his own grave.

II. VSS. 20-24, THE POSITIVE CHRISTIAN PATTERN

A. Vs. 20-21, The people to whom Paul was speaking belong to a different category. This has been the case ever since they were saved.

1. "You did not learn Christ so you could go on living as the lost."

a. To learn Christ is more than learning about Him.

b. To learn Christ is to believe the life changing message of the Gospel.

2. To learn about someone means to read about or hear about them. To learn someone is to have a personal relationship with them.

B. Vs. 22, Paul tells those to whom he is writing how they ought to act in light of their faith in Christ.

1. The idea given here is that of taking off old, dirty, worn out garments, and putting on new, fresh, clean clothes.

2. The old way of life is to be put off. The old way of life is corrupt, and it just gets worse and worse as man pursues the lusts of the flesh.

C. Vs. 23, You cannot have a victorious Christian life without a renewed mind (Rom. 12:1-2).

1. Prov. 23:7 says, "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." You are what you eat, and you are what you think.

2. Put down your filthy books and magazines and be renewed. Use the principle of replacement; replace the evil with the good!

D. Vs. 24, In the place of the old man (vs 22), we are to put on the new man.

1. The old man is empty and desires the deceitful life of heathenish.

2. The new man is a new way of life, a life of fullness, righteousness, and holiness. From an old empty futile philosophy of life, we come to a new way of life, the abundant life (John 10:10).

CONCLUSION: The new man represents a new way of life.

Believers are new people in Christ and can no longer live like the unregenerate (II Cor. 5:17).

Max Anders says:

"God specializes in taking broken lives and making them whole

In taking aimless lives and giving them direction,

In taking meaningless lives and giving them purpose,

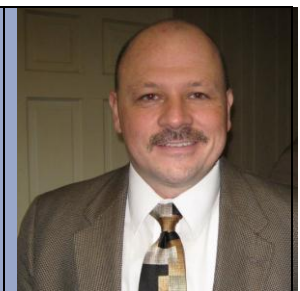
in taking hateful lives and filling them with love,

in taking sad lives and giving them joy,

in taking harried lives and giving them peace.

As we walk the new way. . . . in the light of Christ's love. . . . what people see on the outside begins to look more like the transformed self on the inside" (121).

"The Forgotten Command" by Bro. Jeff Short



And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. ~ Luke 12:15

Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. ~ Hebrews 13:5

The Bible's blessed life, as presented in Psalm 127, 128, and the brighter passages of Ecclesiastes, is ordinarily plain and dull by today's

standards. The happy man there counts his blessings as the people that surround his table and share in the fruits of his hands' labor.

The culture around us contrasts this image sharply with an insatiable desire for more, bigger, and better. Americans have a tendency to scale up. If we find something good, then we want to mass-produce it, package it, and sell it. The idea of smaller or simpler hardly ever occurs or appeals to us. Our education and entertainments all tell us to dream big, have big ideas, big goals, big visions, etc.

This thinking thrives not only in the secular purview, but it pervades the churches as well. Of course, we add, "for God" to the end of the world's message. "Dream big for God. Have big ideas for God." So forth and so on.

We are not content with small, simple, and quiet. We have to go big, surely, to honor God. We have an idea; then we name it. We promote it and expand it. We cast the largest vision we can and try to get others on board.

This thinking has produced a lot of discouragement in pastors and missionaries. They are pressured and made to feel guilty if their works are too small, or aren't gaining quickly enough. Many young preachers are discouraged if they are not soon the pastors of large churches with high nickel and nose counts. Perhaps some leave pastorates they should have stayed in because they thought promotion was the sure sign of God's blessing.

When this thinking holds sway in the pulpit, it produces a lot of restlessness and discontent in the pews. Discontent is also known by another name: unthankfulness.

Is the Bible consistent in this view?

Let's ask this question another way. Is the simple life view that is blessed in the Old Testament consistent with the commands of the New Testament? Is the dream big philosophy consistent with the New Testament?

Much is made of disciples being called and leaving fishing nets and tax tables behind to itinerate through Galilee and surrounding areas. That's big. That has traction. That's the sort of thing to get us moving. But we seldom hear about a different command that Jesus also gave.

The first half of Mark 5 tells of Jesus casting a legion of devils out of the man who spent his time running around naked among the tombs. After the demons were expelled, the man was clothed and in his right mind at the feet of Jesus (Mark 5:15). When Jesus went to depart, the man wanted to go with Him. Jesus would not permit it, but rather gave him the command we have forgotten.

Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. - Mark 5:19

Go home. Go tell your friends. That's not very big. That doesn't sound very good in a fundraising letter. How do you make a poster out of that? Yet that is what Jesus told him to do. God certainly does call some to extraordinarily big works, but that is not most. He requires a steward to be faithful, not famous.

Is the command in Mark 5:19 an isolated incident? Is it the exception? Is it consistent with other New Testament commands? The command to go home is very much in line with other commands concerning the Christian life. Consider:

And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of

nothing. - 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12

For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread. - 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12

Let him that stole steal no more:but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. - Ephesians 4:28

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. - 1 Timothy 2:1-2

Those don't seem like very radical directives. The reality is that we need to be content and earnestly faithful where God has placed us (Ecclesiastes 9:10). The Lord may be pleased to enlarge your borders and bring you into a bigger room, but that is His work and not our's (Psalm 75:5-7).

Missionary quote

I encountered a statement along this line of thought from James Fraser who was a pioneer missionary among the Lisu people of southwestern China in the early part of the 20th century. Fraser's life could hardly be called dull and ordinary, yet he didn't see it as better than the more mundane. He prized faithfulness wherever God has placed us. He felt God had placed him among the Lisu and he should be faithful there, but he did not despise nor chide the engineer, shopkeeper, or homemaker so long as they were being faithful.

I have included the quote below. It is a little long, but it is good. It's probably not the sort of thing we are use to hearing and especially from a missionary, so it is all the more worthwhile.

It has come home to me very forcibly of late that it matters little what the work is in which we are engaged; so long as God has put it into our hands, the faithful doing of it is of no greater importance in one case than in another.

The plain truth is that the Scriptures never teach us to wait for opportunities of service, but to serve in just the things that lie next to our hands.

The temptation I have often had to contend with is persistent under many forms: "If only I were in such and such a position," for example, "shouldn't I be able to do a great work? Yes, I am only studying engineering at present, but when I am in training for missionary work, things will be different and more helpful." Or "I am just in preparation at present, taking Bible courses and so on, but when I get out to China my work will begin." "Yes, I have left home now, but I am only on the voyage, you know; when I am really in China, I shall have a splendid chance of service." Or, "well, here in the training home, all my time must be given to language study—how can I do missionary work? But when I am settled down in my station and able to speak freely opportunities will be unlimited."

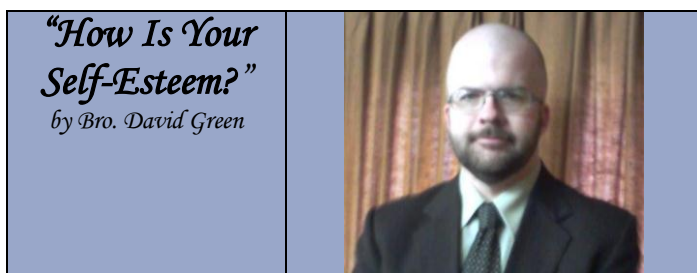
It is all IF and WHEN. I believe the devil is fond of those conjunctions. I have today to a limited extent, the opportunities to which he has been putting me off (not that I have always yielded to these temptations), but far from helping me to be faithful in the use of them, he now turns quite a different face. The plain truth is that the Scriptures never teach us to wait for opportunities of service, but to serve in just the things that lie next to our hands. The Lord bids us work, watch and pray, but Satan suggests, wait until a good opportunity for working, watching and praying presents itself—and needless to say, this opportunity is always

in the future. Since the things that lie in our immediate path have been ordered of God, who shall say that one kind of work is more important and sacred than another? I believe that it is no more necessary to be faithful (one says it reverently) in preaching the gospel than in washing up dishes in the scullery. I am no more doing the Lord's work in giving the word of life to the Chinese than you are, for example, in wrapping up a parcel to send to the tailor. It is not for us, in any case, to choose our work. And if God has chosen it for us, hadn't we better go straight ahead and do it, without waiting for anything greater, better or nobler? Since the things that lie in our immediate path have been ordered of God, who shall say that one kind of work is more important and sacred than another?

We often say, "I am looking forward to this, that or the other. Have we any right to be so dissatisfied with our present condition, which God has ordained for us, that we hanker after something in the future? I can hardly see that we have. There is one great exception—we are to look forward with earnest expectation to the coming of the Lord. But we have to be patient even in this. To look for our Savior's appearing is a very different thing from hankering after enjoyments of which we hope to partake some time ahead.

Why should I, in the hot, close, rainy season at Tengyueh, long for the dry months when things are more pleasant all round? Didn't God intend me to put up with the discomforts of heat and mildew? Why should I look forward to the time when I shall be able to speak Chinese more freely? Didn't God intend me to serve an apprenticeship in learning the language? Why should I look forward to a little more time for myself, for reading, etc.? Though it is the most natural thing in the world to have such thoughts, I feel that they are not at all scriptural. There is more of the flesh about them than the spirit. They seem to be inconsistent with the peace of God which, it is promised, shall guard our hearts and our thoughts through Christ Jesus. The apostle Paul said that he had "learned," in whatsoever state he was, "therein to be content," implying that he had reached that attitude through discipline. I suppose it must be so with all of us: the natural tendency is to be always straining after something in the future. 1

Notes: Taylor, Geraldine (2012-03-31). Behind the Ranges: The Life Changing Story of J.O. Fraser (Kindle Locations 368-397). OMF International. Kindle Edition.



Introduction

Matthew 22:36-40 *"Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."*

Society in general and the public school system in particular of our day and age always wants to talk about having a "good self-esteem." They brain wash kids into believing that self is #1, and we need to look at ourselves as such. This has brought about the selfish attitude that people of our day and age have.

As I work in the public, I have noticed that parents do not discipline their children correctly and kids will get what they want when they want it because if they don't, then their self-esteem will be lessened. Yet, what does the Bible say?

Our text is a good starting point. Notice, when our Lord gave the two great commandments of the law, He spoke of loving God with all our heart, soul, and mind and loving our neighbor as our self. There was no third commandment to love self, for He knows we already do. It is human nature. Following these two commandments is "against nature" and therefore, God must make them commandments.

II. God is #1

Genesis 1:1

Notice, "*In the beginning, God...*" There was no man anywhere to be found, only God. He did not need man to exist. In eternity past, there were no humans, no humanistic ideals, and no man to try to tell God what to do. God was perfectly fine without man.

III. We are nothing

Psalms 8:3-4

A consideration of the heavens in the light of the fact that God has created them, will result in the realization that everything the world teaches about self-esteem is wrong.

A. **The Bible Does Not Teach A Self-Exalting Gospel**

II Corinthians 10:12-18

The gospel that saves is a self-denying gospel. The world wants a gospel that says "I did it." But the true gospel says "He did it."

Isaiah 64:6

At our very best, we are filthy rags!

B. **Christ Never Taught His Followers To Think Highly of Themselves**

Matthew 16:24-25

Our Lord says that there must be self-denial in following Him. A true follower of Christ will "say no to self, no to worldly pleasures that satisfy self, and yes to the things that glorify our Lord."

Luke 14:26

If any man will be the disciple of Christ, he must deny all...even his own life. All these things are hard, but for human nature, self-denial is hardest.

C. The Bible, Nowhere Teaches This Self-Exalting Idea Found Today

Ephesians 4:2

This verse is the exact opposite of what people are taught today. The Bible teaches humility!

Colossians 3:2

Christians should clothe themselves in humility.

I Corinthians 13:2

Advocates of the self-esteem system teach that we are nothing until we learn to love ourselves. The Bible teaches we are nothing until we love others.

Romans 12:3

We are commanded not to think of ourselves more highly than what we ought to think. If we do, we are disobeying God's word. This disobedience causes more trouble in churches, families, and society in

general than we could imagine. If people were more humble, then there would be fewer problems!

IV. Conclusion

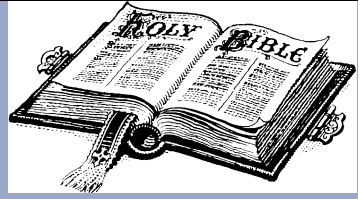
James 4:10

Humility does lead to esteem...The right kind of it, from the Lord!

Luke 18:9-14

We do not need to “toot our own horn,” but we better be humble. Selfishness and pride are of the Devil, but humbleness is what we need to be.

Historical Marker: “Speeches: Woe” by Sis. Joanna Works



My sister has a book that I enjoy barrowing from time to time; *“Speeches that Changed the World: the stories and transcripts of the moments that made history”* published by Smith-Davies. While I don’t agree with all of their commentaries it is an interesting book. Many of the “speeches” have a religious significant in fact the first two are from the Bible, Moses giving the law in Exodus 20:1-17 & Jesus’ Sermon On The Mount, Matthew chapters 5-7. Undoubtedly these portions of scriptures have had enormous effects on world history. To quote *“Speeches that Changed the World”*; “For many people the sayings of Jesus, gathered together in the Sermon on the Mount, represent the essence of Christianity – what Jesus teaches.”

There is another message that Jesus delivered later in his ministry, not long before he was crucified. I’m not sure that it has formal title such as the Sermon On the Mount, however it is found in Matthew chapter 23.

In the previous chapter Jesus has been answering questions by Pharisees in another bid to trip him up. One had asked about paying taxes another which commandment was the greatest. Jesus then asked them a question; *“While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.”* (Matthew 22:41-46)

Thus chapter 22 ends, chapter 23 begins *“1 Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, 2 Saying The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat:”*

I’d just like to draw our attention to this passage of scripture. I cannot imagine where to begin to measure in some way the effects this sermon has had on history and the world, no doubt it has been significant!

There are quite a few commentaries on this passage, I’m not going to try to reinvent the wheel on this.

Matthew chapter Twenty-Three

1 Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples,
2 Saying The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat:
3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.
4 For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them

on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

5 But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,

6 And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,

7 And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.

8 But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.

9 And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.

10 Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.

11 But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

12 And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

13 But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

14 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows’ houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

15 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

16 Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor!

17 Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?

18 And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.

19 Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?

20 Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon.

21 And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein.

22 And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.

23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

24 Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

25 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

26 Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness.

28 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

29 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,

30 And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.

31 Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.

32 Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.

33 Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

34 Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city:

35 That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth,

from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

"Praise the Lord & Give Thanks"

by Bro. Stephen McCool Sr.



I Thessalonians 5:16, 17, & 18

"Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ concerning you."

Praise the Lord! Praise Him continually! Give Him praise for all things!

Paul tells us here to give thanks for everything. Not just the good but also the bad. We should praise our Lord while going through trials. We should praise Him for the many blessings He has given us. "In everything give thanks".

Remember everything that happens to us is God's will. Nothing happens to us that He does not know about. Nothing happens to us that is not in His perfect will and plan. All things are to His glory, not ours, but His.

"Pray without ceasing". Pray continually. Without ceasing. Our whole lives should be spent in prayer to our Heavenly Father. Without prayer we have no relationship with our Holy Father. We miss out on so much when we fail to pray. Just a short prayer in the morning or at night or over a meal will not suffice. We must be in continual pray with our Father. Never ceasing in praise to Him.

"Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ concerning you."

"Is God a Failure? The Bible Reveals God is Not a Failure"

by Bro. Curtis A. Pugh



First of all consider that God has revealed Himself as the "Almighty God" some 57 times in both the Old and New Testaments. Either "Almighty God" is indeed "all mighty" - i.e. all-powerful - or He is not. The Bible teaches that He is. Consider the following passages.

Daniel wrote, ". . . he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise and knowledge to them that know understanding." (Dan. 2:21).

King Nebuchadnezzar learned that God ". . . liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion and his kingdom is from generation to generation: And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" (Dan. 4:34, 35).

Job said, "If he cut off, and shut up, or gather together, then who can hinder him?" (Job. 11:10). He also said, "Behold he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again: he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening" (Job 12:14). Along the same line, in the New Testament Paul wrote, ". . . For who hath resisted his will?" (Rom. 9:19).

By the prophet Isaiah God said, ". . . I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient time the things that are not yet done, saying my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isa. 46:9, 10).

Jesus taught that God is in control of all things when He said concerning sparrows, ". . . one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father" (Matt. 10:29). Note that Jesus did not say 'without your Father knowing about it', but simply, "without your Father." This clearly means that God is in control even of the details of natural life.

The New Testament preacher Peter, speaking of Christ, said, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge [margin: "foreordination"] of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23). The apostles testified that God was in control even when wicked men crucified Jesus. They ". . . were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done" (Acts 4:28).

James said, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15:18).

Paul wrote concerning God, that he, ". . . worketh all things after the counsel of his own will" (Eph. 1:11).

John heard people in Heaven saying, ". . . Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth" (Rev. 19:6).

To these verses could be added many others which demonstrate that God does as He pleases and that no one is able to resist His power or hinder the progress of His plan.

Every honest person must admit that the Bible teaches that God is in control of all things as the foregoing Scriptures clearly indicate. If God is not in control of all things, He cannot be really in control at all. All miracles set before us the fact that God is able to do as He pleases and is not subject to what we call natural laws. The very concept of prophecy must mean that God is in control of all things else He would not be able to accurately foretell future events. If the Bible teaches anything, it teaches that God has a plan and the ability to carry out that plan!

One would think that all professing Christians would glory in these great truths concerning God. Surely every professing Christian should rejoice that God is in control rather than Satan or mere man for that matter. Yet this is not the case.

POPULAR PREACHING MAKES GOD A FAILURE

Without considering the consequences of such a system of belief, most professing Christians today have adopted a theology which makes God a failure! Historically, this system was first taught by Thomas Aquinas among the Catholics and is known as Thomism. Later, among some

Protestants these ideas were popularized by James Arminius and others. Today they are known by the term Arminianism (not to be confused with Armenia). This free will system of doctrine is the tie that binds Catholicism and Protestantism together -- and in our day a host of nominal Baptists who also have fallen prey to it.

By carelessness in Bible study on the part of many -- and evident wresting of the Scriptures on the part of some -- many professing Christians now claim to worship a god who is a failure! Often these people slander the Bible by saying it contains two contradictory lines of teaching which cannot be reconciled. They may claim to believe in a sovereign God, but at the same time think mankind has a "free will" by which he can resist God and hinder His working. Thus, they take the Thomist/Arminian view and promote free-willism. (Nowhere does the Bible teach that man's will is free from his depraved nature!)

This free will system of doctrine sets forth a god who is a wimp. He loves everybody (in spite of clear Bible teaching that God has set His love only on His elect people). The god of this theological system is trying to save everybody, but cannot because they will not let him. Therefore this god is a failure!

Most often, adherents to this Catholic system of theology deny vehemently that they teach that their god is a failure. However, occasionally one of their preachers will say in words or substance, "God has done everything He can do to save you. The rest is up to you". Or perhaps their preaching takes the slant that you must "let God" do this or that in your life. If you do not "let God" He cannot accomplish His purpose in your life, according to the god-is-a-failure theory.

As further proof, we quote one prominent "Baptist" (BBF) preacher of some years ago as representative of this Thomist/Arminian view. He wrote, ". . . hell is a ghastly monument to the failure of the Triune God to save the multitudes who are there . . . sinners go to hell because God Almighty couldn't save them! He did all He could. He failed." [Noel Smith, "Universal Atonement," Defender Magazine, Springfield, MO., U.S.A., December, 1956].

RESULTS OF THE VIEW THAT GOD IS A FAILURE

Does it make any difference what people believe in this matter? We insist that it does make a difference what you believe and that your understanding of God is important! Consider these vital areas of doctrine and practice which are results of the evil notion that God is a failure.

1. God is dishonored.

"The Lord God Omnipotent", is reduced to a trying-but-failing deity. God said to ancient Israel, ". . . thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself . . ." (Psa. 50:21). This system of doctrine that makes God a failure makes God like man!

Man, who can hinder God's plan by exercising his "free will", is elevated to near godhood. God, on the other hand, is lowered in men's opinion by this doctrinal scheme.

2. God's Word is contradicted.

Scriptures which teach the all-powerfulness of God are contradicted by those who promote the idea that God is a failure. The concept of God's sovereignty set forth in those verses quoted earlier in this tract, plus many others, are meaningless if God is trying to save everybody. If God wills and desires to save all and is trying God cannot be at the same time both a sovereign God and a failure!

3. Christians are insecure.

If men can by their decision resist God and thwart His plan to save them, why can they not after being saved remove themselves from being a Christian? If an act of the human will is what causes one to be born again, then surely an act of the human will can cause such a person to be

finally lost. Besides, if God cannot save all those He wants to save, what right do we have to think that He can keep those who have come to Him? If God is a failure at one thing, who is to say He is not a failure at another -- even at all He attempts?

4. Lost people are caused to have a low regard of God.

Instead of viewing God as the gracious, all-powerful supreme creator and sustainer of all things who is to be revered and worshipped, God is reduced to being a beggar. Rather than preaching the Word of God with authority and expecting the Holy Spirit to regenerate sinners as the Word goes forth, preachers beg, wheedle, and cajole people to try and get them to "get saved" (an unscriptural phrase). What thinking person, saved or lost, will respect a "god" who cannot do all that he wants to do? Who would worship a "god" that must beg and whine in an effort to gain the allegiance of His creatures?

5. The gospel and the new birth are perverted.

Those who cannot believe that God elected some to salvation before the foundation of the world will not believe that He also wrote their names in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4; Rev. 17:18). Or else they claim that God "looked down through time" and saw that a certain individual would believe and on the basis of "foreseen faith" elected that one. This is totally contrary to the principle of election. Election has nothing to do with works, either actual or foreseen (Romans 9:11-16). In Romans 11:5, 6 we read that "the election of grace" cannot in any manner be mixed with works. "Works" (making a decision, exercising the human will, etc.), and "grace" (the new birth as a sovereign act of God) are opposite in nature and cannot be mixed without changing the basic nature of each one. Those who insist that God tries to save all men, but fails to save more than He saves, have changed the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Instead of believing that a Christian is someone to whom and for whom God has done something, they teach that a Christian is someone who has done something. He or she has "decided" for Christ.

Instead of being a glorious announcement of what Jesus Christ has accomplished on behalf of His people (Matt. 1:21), the gospel has been changed into a works message. Some tell the lost that they must be baptized in order to be born again. This is works for salvation. Others tell the lost that they must "make a decision for Jesus", or that they must "pray the sinner's prayer", or that they must "invite Jesus into their heart", or "walk the aisle", or whatever deed may be in vogue at the time. This, too, is salvation by works. (All the foregoing quotes which some preachers use are unscriptural ideas and phrases! Check it out in your Bible! No apostle or New Testament preacher ever "invited" people to "come forward and be saved"). Doing anything in order to be born again is salvation by works, whether it is "be baptized", "pray", "come forward", "make a decision", or "believe"!

The Bible teaches that the new birth is a matter of God's will, not man's will! John told us the reason some received the Lord when He was on the earth: they ". . . were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:13). God said, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy" (Rom. 9:15, 16).

The God-is-a-failure folks have missed the very picture Jesus used. Nicodemus needed to be "born again" (John 3:7). In the birth event it is the mother who goes into labor, not the baby! No doctor ever expected the baby to "do something" in order to be born! The baby is passive in birth. Popular preaching has it backwards. Today hearers are told to "do something" if they wish to be born again. Thus the gospel of the free grace of God is perverted into a religion of works.

Search the Scriptures! Believe the Bible! God is sovereign in all things - even in the matter of the new birth! ". . . who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast

thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, Even us, whom he hath called . . ." (Rom. 9:20-24).

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"Plumb Line"

by Bro. Todd Bryant



"Thus He showed me: Behold, the Lord stood on a wall made with a plumb line, with a plumb line in His hand. And the LORD said to me, 'Amos, what do you see?' And I said, 'A plumb line.' Then the Lord said: 'Behold, I am setting a plumb line In the midst of My people Israel; I will not pass by them anymore'" - Amos 7:7-8

The picture painted here is simple enough for us. God's standard does not waver to the right or left. He is righteous and always will be. He doesn't change (Malachi 3:6) because He has no need to change. God's standard for man remains consistent. Whether men believe it or not, all will be judged by God and the standard will be a righteous one.

Those familiar with carpentry know the importance of a plumb line. Carpenters use the plumb line to make sure that walls and foundations are even and right. Without the plumb, a building may not have right angles in the corners. The use of a plumb line makes sure that the building is quality. God's use of a plumb line shows how perfect God's judgment is.

By what standard will man be judged? Simply, we will be judged by God's righteous standard. Many wrongly believe that they are working themselves into favor with God by keeping the 10 commandments, in their mind. However, Galatians 3:10 says, "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them'"

Judgment is not about your good outweighing your bad. James 2:10 says, "For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all". If you have broken the law once, you are condemned. If we are honest, we know we have all broken it numerous times. But, once makes you guilty. So, nobody reading this will make it into Heaven based on your works. It's impossible. The Law is too strict. The plumb line does not waver!

So, what are we, as humans, to do? Certainly, God's standard is not changing. It is as consistent today as it has always been. The world's standards may have dropped, but God's have not. Wonderfully, God "has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all

by raising Him from the dead" (Acts 17:31). Simply enough, the lost will be judged by the Law and will be condemned to eternal punishment. Believer's sins were paid for by Jesus at Calvary. Therefore, we will be declared righteous at the judgment.

Do you trust in Christ alone today? He is certainly man's only hope because the plumb line still describes the standard! If you are trusting in your works, you are not plumb.

"Nickels and Noses"

by Bro. Milburn Cockrell
(1941-2002)



Note: This is available as a track for free distribution by the Berea Baptist Church, P. O. Box 39, Mantachie, Miss. 38855 Order as many as you can prayerfully use. We reserve the right to limit quantity as our supply is limited. These are printed as the Lord through His people make them possible.

Through pride King Hezekiah showed all his wealth to the ambassadors of Babylon. II Kings 20:13 says: "And Hezekiah hearkened unto them, and skewed them all the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his Armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah skewed them not." For this act of pride he was divinely judged (II Kings 14:14-19). The sin of Hezekiah led to the Babylonian Captivity. Hezekiah's problem, in a manner of speaking, was that he wanted to impress the people from Babylon with how many nickels he had.

King David was moved by Satan to number Israel: "And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel. And David said to Joab and to the rulers of the people, Go, number Israel from Beer-sheba even to Dan; and bring the number of them to me, that I may know it" (I Chron. 21:1-2). This was done through the pride of David's heart to impress other nations with his great army. It showed he was trusting the arm of the flesh more than God. In a manner of speaking, David wanted to know how many noses he had. For his folly and vain glory a plague was sent on Israel which resulted in the death of seventy thousand people (I Chron. 21 14).

One would glean from these two passages of Scripture that God does not care as much about nickels and noses as men do. Carnal men glory in such things as nickels and noses. We live in a time of big meetings, big churches, big church buildings, big preachers, and big church budgets. The failure or success of a church and its pastor is judged by the number of nickels and noses that they have. In all too many cases, there is seen in this more Satanic pride than spiritual piety.

WHAT PEOPLE WANT TO SEE

The first thing most religious folks look for when they visit a church is the record board, which reveals how many nickels and noses that a church has. If they fail to see a record board, they are frustrated and confused. They may assume that the church has gone hardshell or into apostasy. Much distressed, they will cry out, "What is your attendance and offering in this church?"

As a pastor for over thirty years I have many times been asked this question, and, no doubt, I will be asked it many more times if I live. Never has anyone ever asked me such questions as the following: "Are your services spiritual?" "Is Christ real to your people?" "Are your

members hearing the whole counsel of God?" "Are your people growing in grace and in the knowledge of Christ?" "Is there a spirit of unity and love in your church?" Evidently, these things are not important to modern-day religionists, who judge religious success by worldly standards--nickels and noses. I just wish one single time that a person would ask about something other than nickels and noses!

When you have a revival in your church and people ask about your services they will always ask: "How many additions did you have?" Never do they ask; "Did the evangelist preach the truth?" or "Was Christ glorified?" Evangelists for revivals are usually chosen by the crowds they can draw and the number of additions they can get by nook or crook. Today everything centers around nickels and noses. Pastors are hired and fired on this basis. Missionaries are supported or not supported by this criterion. Sunday school teachers are put in or out on this standard. People seem to forget that it was Satan who invented nickels and noses in the days of King David.

NICKELS, NOSES, AND GOD

The God of Heaven is independent of nickels and noses. Consider Acts 17:24-25: "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." God does not need any thing or any person. He is perfectly happy in and of Himself. He is not dependent upon men or angels to accomplish His sovereign will.

God may accomplish His work with few or many, according to His sovereign pleasure. Jonathan told a young man in Israel: ". . .for there is no restraint to the LORD to save by many or by few" (I Sam. 14:6). Omnipotence can accomplish His will by the few and feeble. The Almighty can make a thousand "flee at the rebuke of one" (Isa. 30:17). It would seem that the Lord takes pleasure in using the feeble and few in the Bible. When Gideon went out to fight against the Midianites, the Lord said to him: "The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me" (Judg. 7:2). Gideon started out with 32,000 men and ended up with 300! Jehovah intended to have all the praise for the victory of Israel over the Midianites.

The Prophet Elijah went up against 850 prophets of Baal I and the groves (I Kings 18:19). Look what God did with the Israelites who "were the fewest of all people" (Deut. 7:7). Jesus Christ took "a few small fishes" (Mark 8:9) and fed 4,000 people. Even in the matter of eternal salvation "many are called, but few are chosen" (Matt. 22:14). This is so "no flesh shall glory in his presence" (I Cor. 1:29) and that all might "glory in the Lord" (I Cor. 1:31).

THE EFFECT OF THIS ON OUR CHURCHES

1. The philosophy of nickels and noses has drastically changed our churches for the worse. In the craze for nickels and noses churches have replaced preachers and pastors with puppeteers and pranksters. The gospel of Christ has been superseded by gimmicks, gum, gadgets, and games. Psychology has taken the place of Holy Spirit conviction. The faith has been displaced for finance, fun, and foolishness. Church discipline has been relegated to the background in order to swell the size of the church with religious hypocrites who might give a little money to the church now and then.

2. This syndrome has filled our churches with unconverted persons. We have far more churchianity than Christianity. The only change some church members made since joining the church was from wet to dry clothes following their baptism. Many church members are white-washed, but they are not blood washed. Their names are upon the church roll, but they are not found in the Lamb's book of life. Many have been reformed, but they have not been re-born. Many have been confirmed, but they have not been converted to Christ. There are so many lost

people in our churches until you cannot tell the difference between a church member and the unconverted. The reason is because there is no difference. Both are headed to Hell as fast as time can carry them!

3. It has produced icy services and cold, callous, complacent church members. Look at the average church! They have their robed choir, their cut and dried program, and their intellectual preaching. They have a beautiful edifice. They have all the organization and rituals one could ask for, but in most cases it is Spiritless! We have never faced such in our generation. We have form without reality; we have organization without power; profession without possession. We have a form of godliness without the power of it. We have religion without life.

4. It has caused pastors to spend more time worrying with goats than feeding the sheep. The pastor nowadays must provide a spiritual diet for people who have no spiritual appetite. Like Ezekiel of old (Ezek. 37:1-10), he must preach to dead, dry bones, but without the blessings which Ezekiel experienced. These dry, dead bones can't hear, yet the pastor must keep preaching and pretend someone is listening. These dry, dead bones do not grow in grace, for the dead do not grow. These baptized bones are in no way sensitive to the appeals made to them from the Scriptures by the pastor. Deep down each pastor knows most members do not enjoy Bible preaching. They merely pretend to enjoy what they really detest. They watch the clock on Sunday morning, hoping the pastor will preach a short sermon so they can soon go home and do what they really enjoy. In the average church there is constant wrangling, gossiping, backbiting, lying about each other, and a constant uproar among the members. One might well get the impression that about the only place people can't get along is in the church. It takes nine-tenths of the pastor's time trying to keep them pacified and trying to keep the church together. He is busy running from one church member to the other trying to soothe people whose "feelings have been hurt." The pastor is no longer a powerful, plain preacher but a polite, polished politician! This is because our churches are cursed with contentious cliques, fighting factions, and petty partisanism.

5. The nickels and noses racket has made some habitual hypocrites in our churches. Church members say they enjoy going to church, but a large percentage can't get to church services on time. It is almost impossible to get up in time to come to Sunday school. They hate their job with its hard work and long hours. But, strange as it may seem, they have no problem going to work at 7:00 a.m. five days a week, but they can't bring themselves to make it to church at 10:00 a.m. Supposedly, it is possible to consistently get up and do what is disliked, but it is impossible to get up and do what is liked!

6. This idea has given us the gimmick gospel. Most church members want to be entertained instead of instructed in the Word of God. They have far more delight in the gospel of amusement than the gospel of the atonement. Gospel celebrities must be brought in to entertain these worldly church members. These members love to hear these clerical comedians who mix a few verses of Scripture with a large amount of humor. Special singing groups must be brought in too. These have the same dress, music, hair style, and manners of any rock and roll group. Our church services nowadays have become a carefully produced theatrical production for the delight of carnal Christians and religious rascals. The only difference between this entertainment and that in the local nightclub is that it has a religious flavor! But they say it must be done to get nickels and noses!

7. The vain thinking has killed the spirit of revival in our churches. Our revivals have been turned into campaigns to get members into the church who will help with the church budget so the older members can waste more of their money on worldly things. Near the end of the church year the pastor begins to think about his annual report, and as a result, he puts on a week or two of special services. I say special services for it has been so long since most churches have had real revivals until they don't even know what one is like.

We do not have time to wait upon the Lord to send a revival any more. Most of the time a church announces that it is going to have a revival beginning one Sunday and closing on Friday night. The evangelist comes and tries to imitate some big evangelist in his methods to induce people to come into the church. From what goes on one might think that Christ is only where the preacher is, and that responding to his proposition is part of the process of becoming a Christian. Multitudes are being deceived by this method. Children, when very young, are being led by this practice to think such is the way of salvation. Churches ignore the scriptural way to have a revival. They plan a series of meetings. The evangelist comes. The meeting is well advertised in the community. But we neglect the most important thing, the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. The results--sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. We can plan our big meetings, get our big crowds, get our big preacher, organize our members, but unless the Spirit of God is present, it will be in vain!

In the average revival meeting there may be emotions stirred up, a confession of a few sins, a cleaning up of lives, and folks coming to some great religious experience. But, as a rule, sinners are not broken and brought to repentance. Generally speaking, the emotions of people are aroused by intellectual oratory, but as soon as the emotions die away, they settle down in a worse condition than they were in before. It seems that the evangelist took the revival and the converts home with him!

8. It has made people look down on small churches. Preachers politic for the large churches which have a lot of nickels and noses. They will compromise their principles and preach almost any heresy to get a big church. Whenever a preacher is called to one he says to his wife: "Dear, you pack while I pray about the matter." This proves that we have more faithless mercenaries than faithful ministers. Some preachers will not even consider a small church which has a few nickels and noses. They look down on little churches and despise them as being feeble and few. Church members like big churches so they can hide out in the crowd and have no responsibilities. They like the upper class in society. Such churches have skilled politicians as pastors who do not offend their many nickels and noses. With such a large crowd on Sunday morning a family can miss to go fishing almost without being noticed. After all, they reason, God blesses big in big churches!

While there are some exceptions, most big churches are worldly churches. They have high carnality and low spirituality. Truth is very scarce in such fashionable churches because the Word of God has been compromised to keep nickels and noses. These churches are more like social clubs than spiritual centers. Christ has departed from these Laodicean churches (Rev. 3:14-22). All that keeps the people in such liberal organizations is their love for social prestige.

When we speak about big and little churches we speak after the manner of men. We are viewing churches from the standpoint of nickels and noses. With God there are no big and little churches. To Him they are all "the churches of Christ" (Rom. 16:16), "the churches of God" (I Cor. 11:16), and "the body of Christ" (I Cor. 12:27). The biggest religious thing on earth is a local church, regardless of its size. Men and ministers would do well not to despise "the church of God" (I Cor. 11:22) because it does not have 25,000 members and cover a city block.

9. It has discouraged many God-called men. Often young preachers, and some who are older, try to judge their ministry by Billy Graham, or Jerry Falwell, or some other big-time preacher. Since they can't measure up to these men they think they are failures, and they go through life grieved due to their little success. This robs them of much of their usefulness and tends to hinder their ministry. Preacher brethren, God does not require that we be successful. He does not require that we pastor a church with 10,000 members which has 3,000 additions each year. The Lord requires only that we be faithful (I Cor. 4:2). He demands that we

"preach the word" (II Tim. 4:2) and be faithful to declare "all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27).

RESULTS NOT OUR BUSINESS

Preaching the gospel to every creature is our business. Making disciples is our business. But we can't save sinners. Salvation is of the Lord (Jon. 2:9). Only God can regenerate a dead sinner (John 1:13). We can plant and water, but God must give the increase.

In I Corinthians 3:5-7 Paul wrote: "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man. I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." Paul had planted the Lord's vineyard at Corinth, and Apollos followed him and watered it. The increase in both cases came from God.

The idea in these verses is taken from a farmer who grows a crop from seed sown in his field. It is vain for a farmer to sow his seed and irrigate his fields unless God shall give it life. There is no living principle in the seed, nor in the water, nor in the soil. God only can quicken the germ in the seed and make it live. Surely God does use the seed, the water, and the soil, but the life is still from God. But let us remember that God made the seed, the water, and the soil, and the farmer used only what he had received from God.

The same is true with those who sow gospel seeds in the hearts of men. The power is not in the naked Word, nor in the preacher, nor in the heart which hears it. The power to save sinners resides in God. The gospel is the power of God, but it has no power without God. The sower of gospel seeds uses only what God has made and given to him. His success or failure is determined by God. Even Paul and Apollos could have had no success unless God gave them the increase. Don't deify ministers or put them in the place of God. The human instrument is nothing in comparison with God.

God is sovereign in adding to His churches: "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47). "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased him" (I Cor. 12:18). Our business is to be a planter or a waterer. It is God's business to add to His church. Concern for nickels and noses must not cause us to use unlawful means to add to the Lord's church. We do not need to get the Lord out of an embarrassing situation as some suppose. But some like Abraham cannot wait upon God to add to His church, so they help Him out a bit. The result is Ishmaelites in our churches! Please do not take this truth too far. God does not make seed germinate and grow unless it is sown and watered. The Lord of the harvest blesses the faithful use of the means of grace. Some today are afraid to preach to sinners lest they get some of the non-elect saved--as if such were possible. They are so opposed to the false philosophy of nickels and noses that they fear to have any nickels and noses. They are afraid if someone is saved that their friends will think they have embraced Arminianism! To these do-nothing preachers and churches I would point out that where there is faithful sowing and watering God gives the increase. The Lord does add the saved to His church. The Lord does not add the saved to dead churches--just to living ones!

"He was very sorrowful: for he was very rich"

by Bro. Jeff Short

"And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich." ~ [Luke 18:23](#)

Matthew, Mark, and Luke each relay an account of the exchange between the rich young ruler and Jesus. They each gauged his reaction to Jesus' words the same way:

"he went away sorrowful" ([Matthew 19:22](#))

"he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved" ([Mark 10:22](#))

"he was very sorrowful" ([Luke 18:23](#))

His reaction is interesting, but to see why, we need to flesh out his character from the accounts. The most obvious fact about him is his wealth. Matthew and Mark reported that **"he had great possessions."** Luke added that **"he was very rich."** The words here indicate an abundance of possessions, meaning the number of them was a great number. He owned many more things than the average person in his community.

The next fact is that he was a man of morality and integrity, or at least appeared to be. He seemed to have a good reputation, which is not exactly the same as being worthy of the reputation. He responded to Jesus' statement of the commandments by saying he had kept them from his **"youth."** I believe it's safe to conclude he probably lived a careful life concerning the laws and customs of the Jews, though he missed the point of Jesus' words. Nevertheless, he had a good standing among the people of his day.

Luke reports the next fact that this man was a **"ruler"** ([Luke 18:18](#)). The word indicates a magistrate. He was a ruler among the Jews, some sort of civil magistrate. In addition to his wealth and good standing, he had power and influence. The people honored him. He was a public figure.

Matthew adds to his profile that he was a **"young man"** ([Matthew 19:20](#)). It is hard to put an exact age on him. Given his accomplishments, he was at least an adult. His reference to his youth in response to Jesus was probably a reference to his early childhood. To our modern way of thinking, we would put him somewhere between 18 to 35 years old. That's probably not a bad assumption.

The importance is not in his exact age but in the fact he was young. With a normal life expectancy, he had many, many years ahead of him, and many years of health and strength. Jesus was not telling an old man to sell his stuff and give Him the last couple of years remaining of his life. He was telling a young man to do this, and it grieved him to hear it.

Now we come back to his reaction. He was sad, sorrowful. The words indicate a great sorrow, an exceeding or heavy grief. This man was deeply saddened by Jesus' words. His reaction is very interesting when you consider the alternatives. Why was he not angered? Why was he not offended, or insulted? Why was he sad?

He could have stormed off thinking that Jesus really was mad and didn't know what He was talking about. He could have thought to himself, "How dare Jesus try to tell me how to live my life. Who does He think He is? Who does He think He is talking to?" He could have thought Jesus had publicly humiliated him by suggesting he was not "perfect." It could have been an affront to him for Jesus to tell him to give up everything and become a poor, wayfaring disciple. Instead of any of that, he was sad. Why?

Sorrow was an appropriate response if his request was genuine. If he only wanted praise from Jesus for his assumed perfection, he would have been very angry and insulted by Jesus' words. If he was only

curious, it could have been possible that he would have been indifferent to Jesus' words. If he was being deceptive in hopes of humiliating or exposing Jesus as a false teacher, he would have been angered by what happened. If, on the other hand, he did have a sense that something was missing and truly wanted to know the way to eternal life, sorrow was appropriate. He was sad that he could not do what had to be done to gain what he truly desired.

I believe the young ruler was sincere and there are a few reasons for that in the text. We can find sincerity when we take the account as a whole and then look at some of the parts. Mark wrote of how this man came **"running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life"** ([Mark 10:17](#)). His approach suggests an urgency that is consistent with sincerity. He knelt before Jesus and addressed him very respectfully with his question. It could be supposed that he was mocking or even just being courteous, but when kept in context, his manner suggests genuineness.

Another indicator of his sincerity is how Jesus responded to him. Mark wrote, **"Then Jesus beholding him loved him"** ([Mark 10:21](#)). I cannot think of any time in the Gospels that this is said of Jesus about the rulers, Pharisees, or Sadducees that came to Him with sinister motives. His manner and words were pointed, harsh, and enigmatic. Jesus had compassion on this young ruler.

The other indicator is the young man's reaction. It was the very words of Jesus that brought sorrow and heaviness to him:

"But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful" ([Matthew 19:22](#))

"And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved" ([Mark 10:22](#))

"And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful" ([Luke 18:23](#))

He was grieved that eternal life would cost more than he could pay. It saddened him that eternal life would not be his because he could not do what was required. His sorrow reveals that he believed Jesus and he was wounded by what He said. Of himself, he could not pay the cost.

Men of the world will give up everything and suffer much to buy a few more moments of life on this corrupted, painful earth, but they will not do the same for eternal life. They gain the whole world and lose their soul. They save their life and find they have lost it.

This man had won life's lottery. He was rich. Most men would choose riches if they could have nothing else. He was also powerful. He was also young. Men are striving, grasping, and selling their soul today to be in the same position. Some few get there and cannot let go their idols. But multitudes more are nowhere near this man's status and yet they don't find it any easier to turn from their idols to the living God.

We don't know what became of this man, but it is a hopeful sign that he was grieved. He discovered the paradox of eternal life—it cannot be bought and paid for like a commodity, yet it comes with a great cost. When Jesus afterward spoke of the difficulty of rich men going to Heaven, He explained that He meant it was **"impossible"** ([Matthew 19:26](#); [Mark 10:27](#); [Luke 18:27](#)). It is only by the grace and power of God that our hearts can be turned to the true treasure of Heaven and earth—Jesus Christ.

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