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Bible Q&A

Seeing what
Jesus Saw

An Unnamed
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The Extent of
Elders' Authority

James, the
Brother of Jesus

The Assumption
of Mary?

Conquering the
Mountain

Not Given to
Wine

15 ways to be
a Real Man

Having
Faithful
Children

THE *Quarterly* Vol. 2 No. 1



ALSO:

The Other Left-Handed Judge:
Jeremiah Black

The Quarterly

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HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Welcome to the second volume of *The Quarterly*! We are excited that the amount of congregations ordering bundles of our magazine has **doubled** since last issue. Please tell your friends and congregations about us. Now on to some of the highlights of this issue.

First, I want to direct your attention to the article by a new contributor, **Kyle Ellison**, about some of the things he endured when leaving his Baptist heritage (and preaching position) behind. Our series on *Shepherding the Flock* continues, with **Mark McWhorter** contributing a look at “Having Faithful Children,” **Scott Crawford** (another new contributor) writing on “Not Given to Wine,” and **Gantt Carter** looking at “The Extent of the Elder’s Authority.”

You’ll also find some fascinating insights (I sure did) from this month’s cover article, by **John Krivak**, on “Gender Simplified.” **Terry Gardner**’s article on Judge Jeremiah Sullivan Black is quite interesting for those interested in American history and religious history in the United States. And make sure you don’t miss **Gerald Cowan**’s entry on “Keeping the Traditions,” with a detailed look at 2 Thessalonians chapter 3.

We’re also trying out a new feature that we’d really like your input on. Denominational doctrines are often mischaracterized (often unintentionally) and misunderstood. So, in an effort to help our readers understand what certain religious groups *really* believe about certain doctrines, we present “Understanding Denominational Doctrines,” with the first installment being about “The Assumption of Mary,” and written by **Stephen Scaggs**.

Add to all those a biblical look at church activities outside of worship (by **David Dean**), a poem on teenagers by **Hunter Hill**, and much, much more—well, that adds up to another great issue of the *Quarterly*!

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THANK YOU SO MUCH!

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The Quarterly

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What do you think?

We are always interested in hearing from our readers about things they would like to see in the Quarterly.

We have a lot of things planned, themes to cover, series to present, topics to delve into—but we would really like to know what *you* want to read.

We've got a great staff of writers, and several contributors who I'm sure can cover just about any topic or theme that you can throw our way.

Please give us your input.

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The Power and Promise *of the Birth of Christ*

AN EDITORIAL

BY BRADLEY S. COBB

The birth of Jesus Christ. Let's just get this out of the way right now. None of us know what day He was bopexelrn, nor are we given any instructions to celebrate His birthday as a religious requirement. But, since once a year even the non-religious people in the United States celebrate a "Christian" holiday, we need to be prepared to take this wonderful opportunity to try to teach them more about Jesus.

There are so many things about Christmas that can be used as jumping-off points for pointing people to the Bible. The tradition of gift-giving hearkens back to the wise men who brought gifts (sharing that tidbit with people is easy, and can lead to further elaboration and discussion). The emphasis on angels in Christmas decorations comes from the many times angels were used in prophesying, promising, and proclaiming the birth of Jesus. As obnoxious and ridiculous as it is, even "the Little Drummer Boy" can be used as a conversation starter with non-Christians during this time.

Using these opportunities to take people to the Bible is in no way endorsing Christmas as Jesus' birthday, or giving our stamp of approval to potential pagan origins of many traditions surrounding the holiday. Instead, it is taking advantage of an opening—an opening that for some people is only there once a year.

With that in mind, consider some extremely important things about the birth of Christ.

It is not to be Ignored

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable..." Did you realize that the birth of Jesus is referenced in the Bible more times than the Lord's Supper is? Think about it. Isaiah 7:14 ("a virgin shall conceive and bear a son..."), Isaiah 9:6-7 ("unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given..."), Micah 5:2 ("Bethlehem..."), Matthew 1, Luke 1, Luke 2, Galatians 4:4, Revelation 12—and those aren't all of them.

God thought the birth of Jesus Christ was so important that He inspired his *prophets* to foretell it. He sent an *angel* to foretell it to Mary. He sent an *angel* to explain it to Joseph. He sent *angels* to proclaim to the shepherds that it had happened. Then He inspired an *apostle* (Matthew) and another *inspired penman* (Luke) to describe the event. He inspired *apostles* (Paul and John) to reference its historicity.

Certainly, something with this much direct involvement of the Father must be important, and shouldn't be ignored or minimized.

It is not the Main Focus

While the birth of Christ should in no way be minimized, it should not be made the main focus of our view of Jesus. People love baby Jesus, because He's cute, He's a baby, He doesn't demand that you take up your cross and follow Him. They're happy to accept baby Jesus, but not so willing to accept what grown-up Jesus asks of them.

It's very important to note that even in most of the passages foretelling, describing, or looking back on the birth of Christ, the birth was not the focus. Look at Isaiah 9:6-7.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Did you notice he mentions the birth, but then spends much more time telling about what this child would do as a *grown-up*? Jesus wasn't the Counsellor as a baby. He was not reigning on the

throne of David as a baby. Those things took place after His death on the cross and ascension to the right hand of the throne of God (Acts 2).

How about Matthew 1:20-21?

But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

Baby Jesus didn't save anyone from their sins. But the salvation that would come *through* Jesus (via His death on the cross) was an essential part of the message of His birth.

If you want to see more, look at what Gabriel says to Mary in Luke 1. Look at Paul's mention of

the birth of Christ in passing as part of the larger plan of God. Look at the very brief allusion to the birth of Christ in Revelation 12, followed by the victory over Satan (which came at the cross) that led to the establishment of the church ("now is come salvation, ...and the kingdom of our God...").

The focus of the life of Jesus of Nazareth all centers around His death, burial, and resurrection (1 Corinthians 15). But in order for those things to take place, He first had to be born. But being born wasn't enough to save souls from sin.

Baby Jesus is an important part of the biblical narrative.

Grown-up Jesus is even more so.

Crucified Jesus is even more than that.

But the resurrected and reigning Jesus—He is where we need to bring people.

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How Can the Days of Creation Be Literal If the Sun Was Not Created Until Day 4?

BY ISAIAH CAESAR BIE

The argument is that Days 1-3 could not have been literal days because the sun was not created until Day 4. Supposedly, the sun is necessary for the day-night cycle. From this, Genesis-critics claim that none of the creation days are literal.

This argument is not new. Some historical research would show that this “problem” was answered centuries ago. The Reformers, such as John Calvin (1509-1564), Martin Luther (1483-1546), and John Wesley (1701-1791), among other creationists, have long realized that God can create light without a secondary source; and the Bible tells us clearly that God created LIGHT, as well as the earth, on the first day. We are told that in the heavenly city, there will be no need for sun or moon, because God’s glory will illuminate it, and the Lamb will be its lamp. (Revelation 21:3). In Genesis, God even defines a day and a night in terms of light or its absence.

Earlier still, many ancient Rabbinic interpreters taught that God created a primordial light independent of the Sun, which came into existence at God’s command, but was later withdrawn and stored up for the righteous in the messianic future. (Jack P. Lewis, “The Days of Creation: An Historical Survey,” JETS 32:449, 1989)

These great exegetes were right not to see this as a problem for the God of the Bible. But modern geokinetic astronomy makes the solution even easier. All it takes to have a day-night cycle is a rotating earth and a light coming from one direction. Thus, we can deduce that the earth was rotating in space relative to the light created on day 1.

This unusual, counter-intuitive order of creation (light before the sun) actually adds a hallmark of authenticity. If the Bible had been the product of later “editors,” they would surely have modified this to fit with their own understanding. Having “day” without the sun would have been generally inconceivable to the ancients.

Having the sun appear after the light would have been very significant to pagan worldviews which tended to worship the sun as the source of all life. God seems to be making it pointedly clear that the sun is secondary to Himself as the source of everything. He doesn’t “need” the sun in order to create life, in contrast to old-earth beliefs.

In fact, early church writers used the literal fourth day creation of the sun as a polemic against paganism (See Theophilus, To Autolycus 2:15, A.D. 181; Basil, Hexaemeron 6:2).

CONQUERING THE MOUNTAIN OR BEING OVERCOME ALONG THE WAY

BY JIM MITCHELL



As is the case with virtually every week on the calendar, the first week of June has its share of significant historical events and achievements. On June 2, 1953, Queen Elizabeth knighted Edmund Hillary for making it to the top of Mt. Everest. Interestingly, George Mallory and Andrew Irvine may have made it to the top of Everest 29 years earlier on June 8, 1924 only to disappear on what some believe may have been their descent from the summit. The possibility that Mallory and Irvine may have been the first to actually reach the top has been an ongoing discussion within the mountain-climbing community ever since. The body of George Mallory was finally discovered on the mountain in 1999. The dry, cold climate of the mountain had preserved the body to the extent that wounds around his waist (from the safety rope that would have connected him with Irvine) were indicative of injuries sustained from a fall.

Over the last several decades, thousands have climbed Mt. Everest at great cost and danger (the oldest climber to make it to the top to date was 80 and the youngest, 13), and over 200 have died in their attempt to reach the top. Because it is virtually impossible to bring down the bodies of those who have perished on the mountainside, author Rachel Nuwer (in a Smithsonian article dated Nov.

18, 2012)¹ wrote “*the living pass the frozen, preserved dead along Everest’s routes so often that many bodies have earned nicknames and serve as trail markers.*” The deceased climbers Nuwer mentions in her article include the following.

“*The body of “Green Boots,” an Indian climber who died in 1996 and is believed to be Tsewang Paljor, lies near a cave that all climbers must pass on their way to the peak. Green Boots now serves as a waypoint marker that climbers use to gauge how near they are to the summit. Green Boots met his end after becoming separated from his party. He sought refuge in a mountain overhang, but to no avail. He sat there shivering in the cold until he died. In 2006, English climber David Sharp joined Green Boots. He stopped in the now-infamous cave to rest. His body eventually froze in place, rendering him unable to move but still alive. Over 40 climbers passed by him as he sat freezing to death. His plight might have been overlooked as passers-by assumed Sharp was the already-dead Green Boots. Eventually, some heard faint moans, real-*

¹ <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/there-are-over-200-bodies-on-mount-everest-and-theyre-used-as-landmarks-146904416/>

ized he was still alive, and, too late, attempted to give him oxygen or help him stand.”

Five years into the conquest of the promised land, Caleb reminded Joshua that forty-five years earlier, “Moses swore on that day, saying, ‘Surely the land where your foot has trodden shall be our inheritance and your children’s forever, because you have wholly followed the Lord my God’ (Josh. 14:9). *“Now therefore, give me this mountain of which the Lord spoke in that day; for you heard in that day how the Anakim² were there, and that the cities were great and fortified. It may be that the Lord will be with me, and shall be able to drive them out as the Lord said”* (14:12).

Caleb’s request was not for something which was easy, but the acceptance of a task fraught with danger. Scaling Mt. Everest is, admittedly, still an extremely dangerous and challenging undertaking. There remains, however, a mountain before humanity which dwarfs Everest by comparison. Climbing a mountain which encompasses mental resolve, emotional highs and lows, and from which (as a spiritual journey) the view from the top is the view into eternity is, in reality, far more significant than scaling the highest mountain on Earth. It is far more dangerous than ascending to the peak of Mt. Everest (since eternal life and death hang in the balance), and brings with it an award greater than any earthly accomplishment.

As each Christian works to climb to the mountain-top in the journey of life, there will be numerous times when our emotional energy is drained and we want to stop and rest along the way. Stopping for too long can spell disaster as we, like the doomed climbers mentioned above, may become immovable – never to return to the task of reaching new heights along our spiritual journey. May we always take to heart Paul’s encouragement to the Christians in Corinth at the end of his discussion of the resurrection. May we be *“always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord”* (I Cor. 15:58b). May we always help each other in our climb to the top!

²The Anakim were war-like people of great stature (referred to as “giants” in scripture) – cf. Deut. 2:10, 21; 9:2.

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Leaving It All Behind

My Story of Becoming a Christian

BY KYLE ELLISON

Leaving behind the faith of the family can be a daunting task, but even more so when preaching in that faith is your only means of financially sustaining yourself, and when it is also the faith that you have known throughout your childhood.

Growing up in the Baptist Church, I spent a great deal of time in study of the scriptures, in digging to find their meaning, and most importantly wrestling to find the authority that I so desperately needed in religion. The truth is, I loved Jesus in my denomination, but my view of scripture, the church, and salvation was being seriously challenged and was about to be radically changed.

At age 15, I preached my first sermon as a Baptist preacher. By age 18, I was a pastor of my very own congregation. I enjoyed opportunities to preach wherever, whenever, but all the while wrestling with two vital issues in my spiritual life: Salvation and Authority.

How is a man saved? By what authority do I practice the things that I practice and preach?

These questions, while refreshing, were terrifying. It was these two questions that would lead me into a life-changing quest to establish God's truth for my life—all while turning my world upside down.

In 2016 I had been at my current Baptist Church as pastor for nearly three years when I became involved with Sarah, a girl whose family were Christians, and who herself was a Christian. *But*, I thought, *surely she couldn't become involved with me, a **Baptist** preacher*. How would she and I reconcile our differences? What would we do in our marriage? How would we raise children? The questions were endless, but greater than these questions were the growing questions I faced regarding the faith of my childhood!

Finally, July 2016 came along, and my faith had reached a tipping point. It was then I told Sarah that I could no longer reconcile or excuse the questions that had plagued me for so long. This Baptist preacher was ready to give everything away so that I might know Christ in the fullness of His glory, and so that I might set aside every man-made doctrine and simply follow Him.

July 22nd, 2016, I was baptized. With water now separating me from the faith I had always espoused, I was left at an impasse—I've been baptized, but I'm also a full-time Baptist preacher. What will I do? I decided that it was time to let my parents know—the parents who knew me as their Baptist preacher son—that I would be leaving their faith in search of pure New Testament Christianity.

I am unsure what gave me the idea that this process of my conversion would go smoothly, but to say it was a false notion would be an *epic* understatement.

As I broke the news to my parents, I could see the life leave them. The division that was about to occur was far greater than I could ever imagine. It came as no surprise that Sarah caught some of the greatest brunt from those who would lash out, criticize, or scold, as they saw her being the agent which convinced this change. But while she was and is a great encourager, it was the Word of God that convinced me! I suppose if some *person* had convinced me, I would have gone back long ago to please those that I love. But when God's Word has settled a matter, then no human on earth can derail that.

So, here I was, just baptized and scheduled to preach in my Baptist Church on Sunday morning, but I knew that was more than I could do. The barrage of phone calls, texts, and emails I would answer from my Baptist counterparts were more than I could handle at times. The division or rift that now existed amongst those closest to me was growing even more, and that only thing I or Sarah could do was stand firm.

On July 24th I called a meeting of the men at the Baptist Church for which I preached, and explained to them that I would be leaving effectively immediately, and I would be doing so because I felt we simply were amiss on some crucial doctrinal points. Looking at me puzzled, one man asked what it was I believed and, so I began to explain. It wasn't long until he knew that I had become a

member of, not a denomination, but simply the church belonging to Christ. While the reception was mixed with some weeping with a broken heart over my departure and others withdrawing fellowship or declaring that I would never preach in a Baptist church again, I knew that greater was the cause of Christ than brand loyalty—and I desired not be *non-denominational*, but entirely *un-denominational*.

Did my decision cost me? You bet. Financially I lost my income as a preacher. Socially I lost some contacts. But Sarah and I have not lost one single thing that God has not made greater! Today I preach full time for the Mt. Olive church of Christ just outside of Birmingham, Alabama, and spend my time laboring in God's Word to convince a lost world to come to Jesus and to show my friends in the denomination I left the way more perfect according to God's Word. I am convinced that following Jesus will cost us something. In fact, it could cost us everything! Knowing this though, I am also convinced that as that songwriter penned, "Heaven will surely be worth it all."



James, the Brother of Jesus

BY BRADLEY S. COBB

James the Non-Believer

James was the son of Joseph and Mary.¹ Jesus was her firstborn, but James was the next-oldest among the brothers.² It's not difficult to imagine that James might have been jealous of Jesus while they were growing up together. Jesus would have been the perfect child, ways obedient, never getting in trouble. That's a difficult act for His brothers to follow.

James first appears in the gospel records as someone who was outside, waiting to talk with his brother, Jesus (Matthew 12:46). At that point in the narrative, we don't know his name yet (or the names of his other brothers), but we do see something that might give us some insight on later events. James and his brothers (and their mother) were waiting outside to talk to Jesus—to talk to their own brother—and Jesus' response was to say that His true family was His disci-

ples (Matthew 12:47-50). Depending on what kind of people James and his brothers were, they could have taken this as an incredible insult.

The tension between James and Jesus shows up shortly before the Feast of Tabernacles. James and his brothers mocked Jesus, telling Him that He needed to go to Jerusalem and do mighty works (even though the Jews there wanted to kill Him). They basically accused Him of being a liar, saying that if He really was able to do these mighty works, He wouldn't be in hiding. But the reason they said these things is because they didn't believe in Him—they didn't believe He was really the Messiah.³ Is it any surprise, then, that Jesus said, "A prophet is not without honor, except in his own country, and **in his own house**"?⁴

James the Believer

If not for a single mention of it by Paul, we would never know for certain how James went from

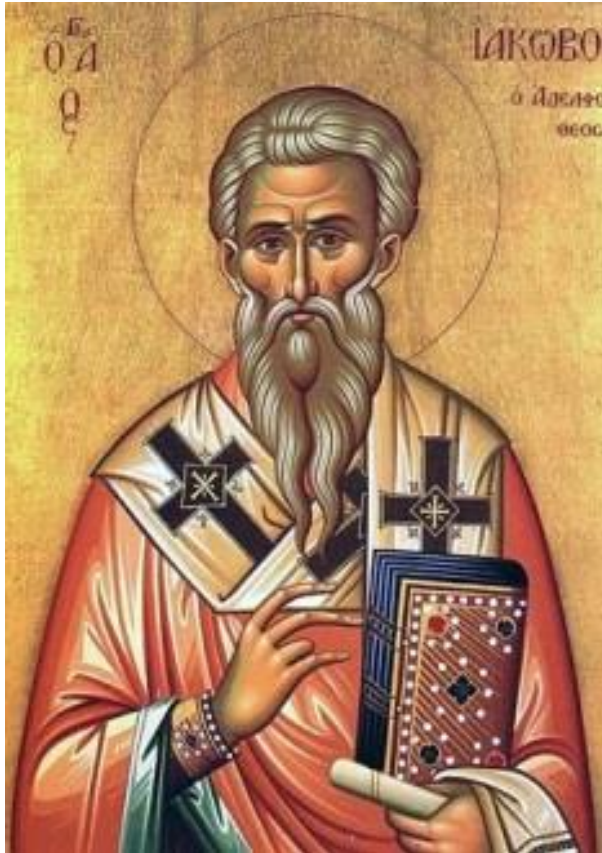
being a scoffing non-believer to one of the foremost disciples of Jesus Christ. Jesus had been taken away by a mob of soldiers and given mock trial after mock trial, and was finally sentenced to die by Pontius Pilate. After being beaten, He was raised up on a cross, and hung there in agony until He finally died. Mary, the mother of Jesus, was there at the cross, watching her Son. But there is nothing said about whether James was there or not.

¹ The Catholic Church goes out of their way to try to deny this. They hold to a false belief in the "perpetual virginity" of Mary, which is proven false by Matthew 1:25. They attempt to say that James, Joses, Judas, and Simon, as well as their sisters, were all children of Joseph from a prior marriage—yet there is nothing in Scripture that would point to the existence of such a marriage. Matthew 13:55-56 calls these four men his "brothers," and the same thing is said of them elsewhere.

² Matthew 13:55-56 lists James first among his brethren, indicating that he was the oldest of the four. It should also be noted that Jesus didn't appear to all four of his brothers after His resurrection, but only to James (1 Corinthians 15:7), who in turn went and told his other brothers. This also points to James being the oldest after Jesus.

³ This is all told in John 7:1-5.

⁴ Matthew 13:57.



But sometime within the next forty days, Jesus—now resurrected—found James and spoke with him.⁵ James must have been in shock, seeing his dead brother standing right in front of him very much alive. He would have seen the nail-prints and the whole in his side where the spear had pierced it. And he would have felt a mixture of amazement, joy, and sorrow. Amazement at seeing someone raised from the dead; joy at knowing his brother was alive again; and sorrow for ever doubting Him in the first place.

There is an ancient work called “the Gospel of the Hebrews”⁶ which records an interesting tradition about James:

*And when the Lord had given the linen cloth to the servant of the priest, he went to James and appeared to him. For James had sworn that he would not eat bread from that hour in which he had drunk the cup of the Lord until he should see Him risen from among them that sleep. And shortly thereafter the Lord said “Bring a table and bread!” He took the bread, blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to James the Just and said to him, “My brother, eat thy bread, for the Son of man is risen from among them that sleep.”*⁷

We’re not given the details of what happened next, but it certainly included a meeting between James and his younger brothers, telling them “We were wrong: Jesus is the Messiah. He has returned.” Then the brothers all went to Jerusalem and met with the disciples prior to the Day of Pentecost.⁸

Somewhere between three to ten years later,⁹ the now-converted James got to meet someone else

who had been an unbeliever, a mocker of Jesus Christ, but who had since been converted by a post-resurrection appearance of the Lord: Saul of Tarsus. What an interesting conversation that must have been! James, Peter, and Paul (and probably Barnabas as well) met together in Jerusalem, and no doubt the three men shared their stories of opposition to Christ (James through mocking and unbelief, Peter through his denial, and Saul through his persecution of Christianity), and of their full conversion by means of seeing the resurrected Christ. It was almost certainly during this 15-day visit of Saul in Jerusalem that James told him about seeing his brother and his Lord raised from the dead.

James the Less

Most writers believe that Mark 15:40 references the apostle known as James, the son of Alphaeus, but there is actually more evidence that the man called “James the less,” or “little James” is James, the brother of Jesus.

First, it is logical to assume, given that he identifies a woman named “Mary” by who her children are, that these children would have already been mentioned at some point in the gospel narrative. One of those children is “James the less.” Thus, we should be able to find someone named “James” earlier in Mark’s gospel account who could be identified with this man.

James, the son of Zebedee, is eliminated because (1) he is always called “the son of Zebedee” and connected with John, whereas “James the less” is connected with Mary and Joses; and (2) Matthew 27:56 shows that the mother of Zebedee’s children is a different woman than “Mary, the mother of James and Joses.”

Second, if we accept the logical assumption that Mark wouldn’t throw in a name at the end of the gospel unless it had been mentioned earlier (or was an important figure), then we have to account for his including the name “Joses.” The “Mary” mentioned in Mark 15:40 is identified by the names of her sons: James the less and Joses. Thus, we should be able to look back in Mark and find

⁵ This specific meeting is not given in detail, but it is one of the events appealed to by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:4-7. Apparently, this event was well-known among the early Christians, for Paul simply states it as evidence, as if his readers had already heard of it at some point.

⁶ The date of this writing is usually placed at the beginning of the second century, though some believe it should be dated around AD 50-60.

⁷ Quoted by Jerome in *De viris Illustribus* 2.

⁸ The brothers of Jesus were mentioned in Acts 1:14.

⁹ Galatians 1:18-19 states that Paul’s visit to Jerusalem, where he saw James and Peter (but no other apostles), took place “after three years.” The general consensus is that this means three years after Paul’s conversion to Christ. However, there is no real consensus on exactly *when* that event took place. Some place Saul’s conversion within a year of Christ’s

resurrection, while others place it seven years later. So, depending on which view one takes, this meeting between James and Saul of Tarsus was somewhere between three and ten years after the Day of Pentecost, or stated another way, between AD 33 and 40.

the name Joses. We find it only once—Mark 6:3, which speaks of “Mary” and her sons “James, and Joses...”

Therefore, if we accept the premise (and we do) that “James the less” must be someone previously mentioned, then so, too, must Joses be someone previously mentioned. The evidence fits perfectly that Mark 15:40 is describing the mother of Jesus, who was also the mother of James and Joses.¹⁰

James the Elder

God did not deem it necessary for us to know when James was made an elder in the church at Jerusalem,¹¹ but by the time fourteen years had passed from James’ meeting with Saul of Tarsus, he was one.¹² He was extremely influential in the church at Jerusalem, being called a “pillar” of equal standing with Peter and John (Galatians 2:9). In fact, after Peter’s angelic rescue from prison, he instructed the disciples to go “tell James” about what happened.¹³ Some trouble had erupted with some Jewish Christians teaching that Gentiles could not be saved without first being circumcised. Saul (now called “Paul”), along with Barnabas,

¹⁰ Compare Matthew 27:56, Mark 15:40, and John 19:25, which put the same group of women together: Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of Jesus, and Mary’s sister, Salome, the mother of Zebedee’s children. It might be inquired, if this is accurate, why isn’t she called “Mary, the mother of Jesus” in Matthew and Mark? It is because John mentions her while Jesus is still alive, whereas Matthew and Mark mention her after His death—thus, they identify her by her then-living children.

¹¹ Epiphanius (*Haeres.*, 78), Chrysostom (*Homilies xi in 1 Corinthians* 7), as well as others, state that James was made an elder by the Lord Jesus Himself. Eusebius agrees in one place, but elsewhere states that he was ordained an elder by the apostles (*Ecclesiastical History*, 2:23). Clement of Alexandria places James at a higher level in the Jerusalem church than even the apostles, suggesting that Peter, James [son of Zebedee], and John “might well have been ambitious” for it (McClintock and Strong’s *Cyclopedia of biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, Vol. 4, page 755).

¹² The Scriptures do not describe how or when elders were first installed in the church. The first mention of elders in the church is in Acts 11:30, and they are portrayed as men who were already seen as the leaders of the church [most likely in Jerusalem]. Since Paul and Barnabas ordained elders in every congregation (Acts 14:23), it would be logical to assume that all the other established congregations (such as Antioch and those congregations outside of Jerusalem) also already had elders at that time as well.

¹³ Acts 12:17. James, the son of Zebedee, had been murdered before Peter’s arrest, eliminating him from possible consideration in this passage.

came to Jerusalem and had a meeting with the “apostles and elders” to discuss the matter.¹⁴ James was one of the “apostles and elders” who was present,¹⁵ and in fact appears to be the one who was supervising the whole proceeding, issuing his “sentence” or “judgment” after hearing Peter, Paul, and Barnabas give their testimony.¹⁶

James’ judgment was that the Gentiles were not to be troubled with keeping any part of the Law of Moses. In accordance with this judgment, James wrote a letter to be sent to the Gentile Christians in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia.¹⁷ It is also at this time that James (along with Peter and John) gave Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, acknowledging that Jesus had commissioned them to go to the Gentiles, while James’ (and Peter and John’s) commission was to the Jews.¹⁸

Sometime afterwards, some men came “from James” to Antioch; and though the circumstances causing this journey is not given,¹⁹ it does point to

¹⁴ Acts 15:1-6.

¹⁵ If one were to argue that James was not an elder, this phrase requires that they place James among the apostles—which very few would be willing to do. He is either one or the other (or both, see 1 Peter 5:1-3).

¹⁶ Acts 15:13-21. It is difficult to see how James could have authority in this meeting without being an apostle of Jesus Christ. There are arguments given that there were only twelve full-fledged apostles of Jesus Christ, yet Matthias was a thirteenth (though admittedly, he replaced Judas) and Paul was definitely not one of the twelve. Paul categorizes James with Peter and John (who were both apostles), and even appears to call James an apostle in Galatians 1:18-19. If the post-resurrection appearance of Jesus Christ to Paul was enough to commission him to be a full-fledged apostle, why could not the same thing be said of James? The office of apostle was a miraculous one (2 Corinthians 12:12), and regardless of how many people filled that role, it was one which ended with the age of miracles—that is, when the Scriptures were completed and Jerusalem was overthrown. See the Appendix in the author’s book *The Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts* for more information regarding the end of miracles.

¹⁷ Though the text does not explicitly state James as the author, there are multiple phrases in that short letter which only appear in one other place in Scripture: the letter known as “James,” which was written by the brother of the Lord. For most commentators, this is sufficient proof that the same man wrote both letters. See the introduction to this author’s book: *Justified by Works: A Study of the Letter from James*.

¹⁸ Galatians 2:7-9.

¹⁹ There is speculation on almost every aspect of Galatians 2:12. Commentators dispute among themselves over whether these “certain men” were really sent by James, or if they were simply men who were in agreement with him, or they just *claimed* to be in agreement with him. They argue over why

James' status as a leader in the Jerusalem church.²⁰ The apostle Paul even appealed to James as a person of authority when writing to the Christians in Corinth: first, as an approved example of a married man being supported by the church;²¹ second, as a reputable person who was a witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ.²²

Several years later, James received a visit from Paul, Timothy, Luke, and several others²³ in order to receive financial aid sent by predominantly Gentile churches for the poor Jewish saints in Jerusalem. James, along with the other elders in Jerusalem, met with them and rejoiced at the great work God was doing through Paul's missionary efforts. However, there was something that James and the other elders needed to talk to Paul about.²⁴ They had heard rumors—as had the other Christians in Jerusalem—that Paul was teaching Jews to forsake the customs of the Law of Moses, specifically cir-

James sent these men (if indeed he actually sent them): was it to make sure Peter was behaving according to the Jewish customs, or to tell the Jewish Christians that they were still obliged to follow the Law of Moses, or any number of other things? They argue over why Peter was scared of them: was it because he was scared of James, or scared of these men who would be upset with him for not following Jewish customs regarding eating with Gentiles, or scared that he—as a Jew—was somehow keeping his national brethren from coming to the truth?

²⁰ Whether these men were actually sent by James or simply *claimed* to be sent by James, the fact remains that the name of James carried such weight that Peter was scared of doing something that would upset him or his emissaries.

²¹ 1 Corinthians 9:1-6. Paul's argument is that he could have demanded that they support him financially, but he didn't. He didn't take advantage of what was proper. He could have commanded them to provide his food and drink; he could have taken a wife and had the church support both of them like the other apostles, the brethren of the Lord [including James], and Peter himself. Thus, Paul appeals to James as one of the many examples of a person who was supported by the church full-time because of his work with the congregation. This matches with 1 Timothy 5:17, where elders have the right to be financially supported.

²² 1 Corinthians 15:4-7. There was no reason to mention James by name unless his name held some level of importance within the church. The fact that his name was well-known to Gentile Christians hundreds of miles from Jerusalem speaks to his importance.

²³ These others are mentioned by name in Acts 20:4. The visit itself is recorded in Acts 21:17-ff,

²⁴ This speech is most often attributed to James alone by commentary writers, but the text attributes it to the entirety of the elders in Jerusalem—potentially hundreds of men. See Acts 21:20-25.

cumcision. James and the elders knew that this wasn't truly the case, but they also knew that something needed to be done to prove to the Jewish Christians that the rumors were false. So, James and the rest of the elders (potentially hundreds of men) asked Paul to purify himself and pay the temple offering for himself and four other Jewish Christians who had taken a vow. This, they were confident, would be sufficient proof to the Christians that Paul still respected the Law of Moses. Unfortunately, some of the Jews who had caused Paul such problems in Asia had come to Jerusalem as well and stirred up the multitude, almost causing Paul's death, and rendering James' suggestion moot.

Many people want to condemn James' actions here, but the evidence doesn't warrant condemnation. The idea that one inspired man (James) and potentially hundreds of other leaders in the church (most of whom probably had miraculous gifts) would ask another inspired man (Paul) to sin—and then that inspired man *agreed* to sin—is despicable and unworthy of serious consideration.²⁵ The fact that, just a few days after these events, Paul testified that he had lived “in all good conscience” up to that point shows that the inspired apostle didn't see anything wrong with the request made by James and the elders in Jerusalem—or else he was lying (Acts 23:1). James and the elders were not asking Paul to reject the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and return to the Old Law; they were asking him to show that he still had respect for the customs of the Jews contained in the Law of Moses (see Acts 21:21).²⁶ In short, James was asking Paul to do

²⁵ Lipscomb states:

They were not under obligations to observe the law; but as they had been accustomed to its observance, they did not at once see that it was incompatible with faith in Christ Jesus. So they continued to observe it. It is probable that they gradually learned that Jesus was the end of the law, and turned from it by degrees, the destruction of Jerusalem likely enforcing the final truth upon them.

²⁶ McGarvey, after noting that this is a “most difficult” section of Acts to explain, said the following:

The truth is, that, up to this time, Paul had written nothing which directly conflicted with the service of the altar, and he did not yet understand the subject correctly. His mind, and those of all the brethren, were as yet in much the same condition on this subject that

something expedient to assist in keeping peace and unity within the Jerusalem church.²⁷

James the Writer

Though there is dispute about when exactly James (whose name is actually *Jacob*²⁸) took up his pen and wrote the letter that bears his name, the

they were before the conversion of Cornelius, in reference to the reception of the uncircumcised into the Church. If we admit that the proposition above quoted from Galatians, affirming that "we are no longer under the law," was, when fully understood, inconsistent with the continuance of the sacrifice, we make his case only the more likely like Peter's in regard to the Gentiles; for he announced propositions, on Pentecost, which were inconsistent with his subsequent course, until he was made to better understand the force of his own words. Peter finally discovered that he was wrong in that matter, and Paul at length discovered that he was wrong, in his connection with the offerings of these Nazarites. Some years later, the whole question concerning the Aaronic priesthood and animal sacrifices was thrust more distinctly upon his mind, and the Holy Spirit made to him a more distinct revelation of the truth upon the subject, and caused him to develop it to the Churches, in Ephesians, Colossians, and especially in Hebrews. In the last-named Epistle, written during his imprisonment in Rome, he exhibited the utter inefficiency of animal sacrifices; the sacrifice of Christ, once for all, as the only sufficient sin-offering; and the abrogation of the Aaronic priesthood by that of Christ, who was now the only high priest and mediator between God and man. After these developments, he could not, for any earthly consideration, have repeated the transaction with the Nazarites; for it would have been to insult the great High Priest over the house of God, by presenting, before a human priest, an offering which could not take away sin, and which would proclaim the insufficiency of the blood of the atonement. We conclude, therefore, that the procedure described in the text was inconsistent with the truth as finally developed by the apostles, but not with so much of it as was then understood by Paul. This conclusion presents but another proof that the Holy Spirit, in leading the apostles "into the truth," did so by a gradual development running through a series of years. (Commentary on Acts, notes on 21:18-26).

²⁷ The same ones who wish to condemn Paul and James for this act of expedience have no problem with Paul's circumcision of Timothy, which was also an act of expedience.

²⁸ In Greek, the name is *Iacobus*, which is the Hebrew name *Jacob* spelled in Greek letters. Some have suggested that the name "James" was used because of King James, but Miles Coverdale, in his translation of 1535, used *Iames*—before King James was even born.

fact remains that he did indeed write.²⁹ In accordance with his status as a leader within the Jewish congregations and his acknowledgement that his mission was to the circumcision, he wrote his letter to Jewish Christians.³⁰

Throughout the Scriptures, James appears as a man who was interested in putting his religion into action. He understood the truth of the gospel, but his focus was on "how do we make this practical?" This is seen in the letter that he wrote in Acts 15, in his request of Paul in Acts 21, and in almost every verse of his epistle. And since judgment from God is based on one's works,³¹ James focuses on teaching his readers about the works to do and works to avoid, emphasizing that "faith without works is dead," and that "by works a man is justified."³²

James, According to Tradition

Hegesippus, a Jew who was converted to Christ in the second century, said that James lived a life of strict adherence to the Law of Moses, and was "held in the highest veneration by the Jews"³³ earning him the nicknamed "James the Just."³⁴ Eusebius, quoting him, said that James' knees were like

²⁹ This letter was written near the end of James' life, sometime between AD 62-67. For a more detailed discussion of the dating of this epistle, see the introduction in *Justified by Works: A Study of the Letter from James* by this author.

³⁰ There are those, such as Guy N. Woods (*A Commentary on the Epistle of James*, pages 16-17, 31-32), who claim it was written to all Christians—Jew and Gentile—but such a view doesn't match up with the fact that James called their meeting place a "synagogue" (James 2:2), or that he wrote to the twelve tribes of the *diaspora* (James 1:1). When these facts are considered along with his Jew-only mission (Galatians 2:9) and his insistence upon keeping the Law of Moses (Acts 21:17-26), it demands that his letter was written to Jews. For more information, see this author's commentary on James.

³¹ See all instances of judgment throughout both testaments, and also consider 2 Corinthians 5:10.

³² James 2:20, 24. Since judgment is made by God on the basis of our works, one must be very cautious before rejecting brethren based exclusively on their beliefs, especially when those beliefs do not affect (1) the plan of salvation, (2) their works [including worship], or (3) anything the Bible connects to salvation. There are those who reject brethren over such things as their interpretation of the book of Revelation, or of their belief regarding how the Holy Spirit indwells a Christian. The Scriptures never state that we will be judged based on our level of theological understanding, but on our works.

³³ Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 2:23. See McClintock and Strong's *Cyclopedia*, Vol. 4, page 755.

³⁴ Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 2.1.2

those of a camel because he spent so much time on them in prayer.³⁵ He also said that James undertook the “government of the Church [universal] along with the apostles.”³⁶ It appears that some outlandish legends grew up around James by the third and fourth centuries, with some writers suggesting that James dressed like the Jewish high priest, and was the only one allowed in the Holy of Holies in the temple.³⁷

Both religious and secular history confirms that James died as a martyr. According to Josephus, the same Annas who tried Jesus³⁸ had a son named Annas who served as the high priest after the death of Festus. Annas was a strict Sadducee, and was “very rigid in judging offenders, above all the rest of the Jews.” When he gained the high priesthood, he decided he had the opportunity to exercise his authority (Festus’ replacement, Albinus, had not yet arrived). He “assembled the Sanhedrin of the judges, and brought before them the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, whose name was James, and some others. And when he [Annas] had formed an accusation against them as breakers of the Law, he delivered them to be stoned.” Many of the Jews were very upset, and contacted Agrippa for help, and appealed to Albinus for aid to stop the dictatorial acts of lawlessness. As a result of Annas’ actions, Albinus promised to “bring him to punishment for what he had done,” and removed him from the office of high priest after just three months.³⁹

Eusebius, quoting Hegesippus, gives a slightly different story:

James, the brother of the Lord, succeeded to the government of the Church in conjunction with the apostles. He has been called the Just by all from the time of our Savior to the present day; for there were many that bore the name of James. He was

holy from his mother’s womb; and he drank no wine nor strong drink, nor did he eat flesh. No razor came upon his head; he did not anoint himself with oil, and he did not use the bath. He alone was permitted to enter into the holy place; for he wore not woolen but linen garments. And he was in the habit of entering alone into the temple, and was frequently found upon his knees begging forgiveness for the people, so that his knees became hard like those of a camel, in consequence of his constantly bending them in his worship of God, and asking forgiveness for the people. Because of his exceeding great justice he was called the Just, and Oblias, which signifies in Greek, ‘Bulwark of the people’ and ‘Justice,’ in accordance with what the prophets declare concerning him.

Now some of the seven sects, which existed among the people and which have been mentioned by me in the Memoirs, asked him, ‘What is the gate of Jesus?’ and he replied that he was the Savior. On account of these words some believed that Jesus is the Christ. But the sects mentioned above did not believe either in a resurrection or in one’s coming to give to every man according to his works. But as many as believed did so on account of James.

Therefore when many even of the rulers believed, there was a commotion among the Jews and Scribes and Pharisees, who said that there was danger that the whole people would be looking for Jesus as the Christ. Coming therefore in a body to James they said, ‘We entreat you, restrain the people; for they are gone astray in regard to Jesus, as if he were the Christ. We entreat you to persuade all that have come to the feast of the Passover concerning Jesus; for we all have confidence in you. For we bear you witness, as do all the people, that you are just, and do not respect persons.

Therefore, persuade the multitude not to be led astray concerning Jesus. For the whole people, and all of us also, have confidence in you. Stand therefore upon the pinnacle of the temple, that from that high position you may be clearly seen, and that your

³⁵ Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 2.23.6

³⁶ McClintock and Strong, *Cyclopedia*, Vol. 4, page 755.

³⁷ Epiphanius, who claims Eusebius and Clement as evidence, stated that James wore the *petalon*, which some argue is the ephod of the high priest, and others state is the golden plate which says JHVH, worn on his turban. See his *Haeres*. 29:4, 78:13. Hegesippus (as quoted by Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 2.23.6) said that he always wore linen clothing (like the high priests) which permitted him access into the “holy place.”

³⁸ John 18:12-23.

³⁹ Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 20.9.1.

words may be readily heard by all the people. For all the tribes, with the Gentiles also, are come together on account of the Passover.’ The aforesaid Scribes and Pharisees therefore placed James upon the pinnacle of the temple, and cried out to him and said: ‘You just one, in whom we ought all to have confidence, forasmuch as the people are led astray after Jesus, the crucified one, declare to us, what is the gate of Jesus.’

And he answered with a loud voice, ‘Why do you ask me concerning Jesus, the Son of Man? He himself sits in heaven at the right hand of the great Power, and is about to come upon the clouds of heaven.’

And when many were fully convinced and gloried in the testimony of James, and said, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David,’ these same Scribes and Pharisees said again to one another, ‘We have done badly in supplying such testimony to Jesus. But let us go up and throw him down, in order that they may be afraid to believe him.’ And they cried out, saying, ‘Oh! oh! the just man is also in error.’ And they fulfilled the Scripture written in Isaiah, ‘Let us take away the just man, because he is troublesome to us: therefore they shall eat the fruit of their doings.’⁴⁰

So they went up and threw down the just man, and said to each other, ‘Let us stone James the Just.’ And they began to stone

him, for he was not killed by the fall; but he turned and knelt down and said, ‘I entreat you, Lord God our Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.’ And while they were thus stoning him one of the priests of the sons of Rechab, the son of the Rechabites, who are mentioned by Jeremiah the prophet, cried out, saying, ‘Stop. What are you doing? The just one prays for you.’

And one of them, who was a fuller, took the club with which he beat out clothes and struck the just man on the head. And thus he suffered martyrdom. And they buried him on the spot, by the temple, and his monument still remains by the temple. He became a true witness, both to Jews and Greeks, that Jesus is the Christ. And immediately Vespasian besieged them.⁴¹

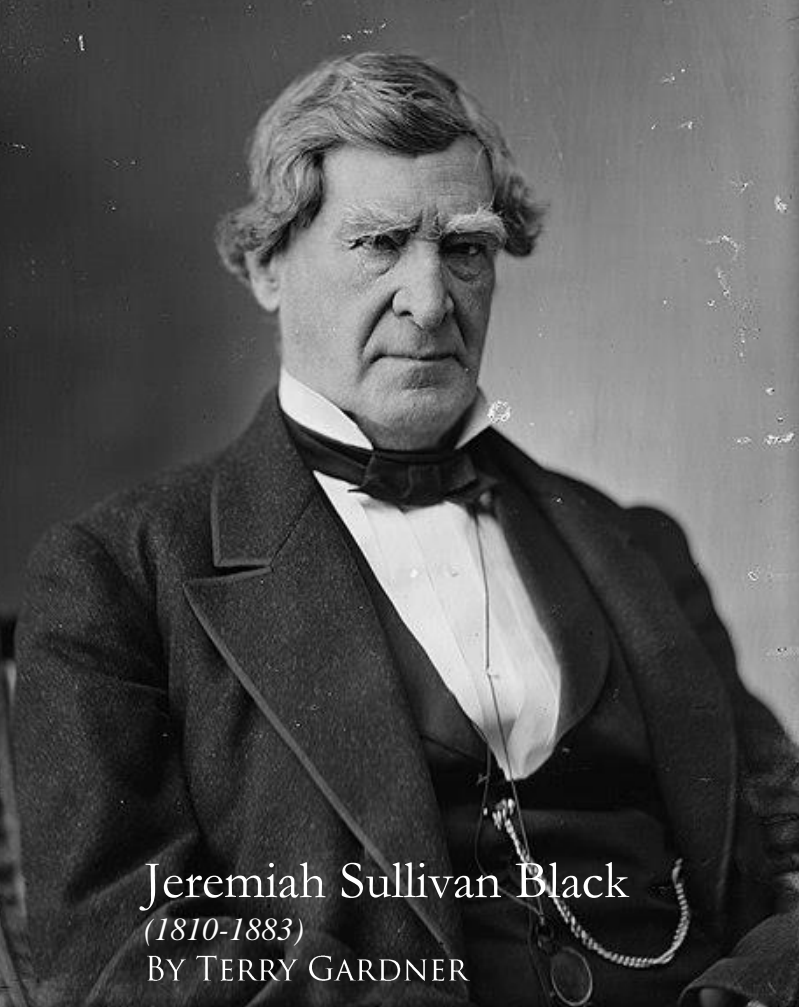
So ends the life of a man who was regarded by some ancient writers as one of the fourteen apostles.⁴²



⁴¹ Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, Book 2, 23:4-18

⁴² *Apostolic Constitutions* 6.14, says “On whose account also we, who are now assembled in one place, — Peter and Andrew; James and John, sons of Zebedee; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus who is surnamed Thaddaeus; and Simon the Canaanite, and Matthias, who instead of Judas was numbered with us; and James the brother of the Lord and bishop of Jerusalem, and Paul the teacher of the Gentiles, the chosen vessel, having all met together, have written to you this Catholic doctrine for the confirmation of you, to whom the oversight of the universal Church is committed...” See also Eusebius’ commentary on Isaiah which states explicitly his belief that James was one of the “official” apostles.

⁴⁰ Isaiah 3:10, LXX.



Jeremiah Sullivan Black
(1810-1883)
BY TERRY GARDNER

Jeremiah Black was born at his father's home-
stead, a place called Pleasant Glades, in Stony
Creek Township, Somerset County, Pennsylvania.
His grandfather was James Black, a man of consid-
erable landed property, a famer and justice of the
peace. His father, Henry Black, also became a jus-
tice of the peace, served as associate judge of the
county for 20 years, was a member of the General
Assembly and a representative in Congress. Henry
Black died in 1841.

Jeremiah attended the "schools of the neigh-
borhood" and was keenly interested in Shakespeare
and the Latin classics. At age 15 he committed the
text of Horace to memory verbatim and translated
it into English prose and then turned it into English
verse of his own creation. Until the day of his death
Jeremiah Black could quote all three versions of
Horace. The four great literary influences on Jere-
miah Black were Horace, Milton, Shakespeare, and
the Bible – these four were the exemplars, which
served as models for his style.

At age 17 Jeremiah entered as a student of law
in the office of Chauncey Forward. Young Black
was described as having a "serious mind, with its
mighty and eager grasp seized and assimilated eve-

rything within reach." He read every book in fa-
ther's house and in the house of his maternal
grandfather, Patrick Sullivan (born on St. Patrick's
day of 1754 in Ireland). Black learned French, and
later in life, Spanish.

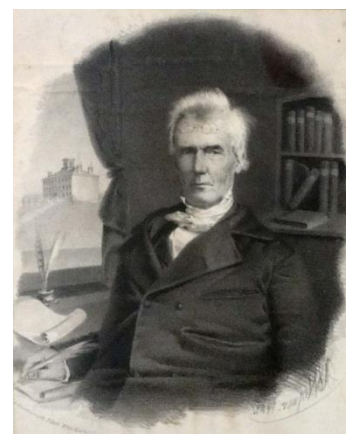
Chauncey Forward was a distinguished attor-
ney and leader of the Democratic Party. Although
Jeremiah's father was a member of the Whig party,
Jeremiah soon was a staunch Democrat and de-
fended that party and its principles "with all the
fervor of strong conviction and passionate attach-
ment" that he could intelligently espouse. Black
was a disciple of Jefferson and a friend of Andrew
Jackson.

Jeremiah was soon in practice with Chauncey
whose oldest daughter, Mary Forward, he had mar-
ried on March 23, 1836. He was also appointed
Deputy Attorney General for the county of Somer-
set. In 1842 Jeremiah Black was appointed Chief
Judge of the Sixteenth Judicial District.

In May of 1843 Jeremiah Black, his wife Mary,
his 7 month old son Henry, a nurse, and Mrs.
Charles Ogle (a widow) drive by wagon to Betha-
ny, Virginia. There they spent time studying the
Bible with Alexander Campbell. At the end of this
visit Black was led out into a small stream and bap-
tized by Campbell. For the rest of his life when
asked to which church he belonged would reply,
"To the sect first called Christians at Antioch."

In 1851 Jeremiah
Black was elected to the
Supreme Court of Penn-
sylvania and became its
Chief Justice.

Attorney David Paul
Brown remarked (circa
early 1850s) on Black's
ability to express himself
writing, "The style of
Judge Black's composi-
tion is unlike any other
with which we are ac-
quainted, if we were asked to say what the chief
merit [is], we should answer, the perfect clearness
in which he exhibits his thoughts—whether right or
wrong, no man can misunderstand him."



Friendship with Alexander Campbell

On the night of December 10, 1857 the main
building of Bethany College burned. Just a few
days later, Campbell, his wife Selina, and their two

daughters, (Virginia and Decima) along with W.K. Pendleton, left for Washington D.C. The family crossed the top of the mountain on “a temporary zig-zag railway, the immense tunnel having fallen in. They put on an extra engine and turned the seats backwards and forwards; it was a fearful time; the night was dark and solemn, and the lights seen below looked far off and like tapers.”

The Campbell family soon reached Washington. On December 22nd Campbell preached in the Baptist meeting house (on the great themes of the Gospel) and President Buchanan attended, as well as some of his cabinet, including Judge Black (with whom the Campbell party stayed) and many members of Congress. After Campbell’s sermon one person remarked, “was not that a roaring sermon?” Two days later on the evening of December 24th the family visited President Buchanan in the White House. “President Buchanan was very courteous and entered into quite a conversation with Mr. Campbell. Pendleton described it as “the free and animated conversation ... of two venerable patriarchs.”

In the Campbell’s personal friend, the gifted Cabinet officer, Judge Black, sure we are, that President Buchanan has at least one large minded and most competent counselor, to whom, not alone in the Department over which he presides, but in every question involving the national interest or honor, he can look with confidence and safety for advice. – W. K. Pendleton in the *Millennial Harbinger* of April 1858.

Judge Black’s Eulogy of Alexander Campbell in 1875

In 1875 Judge Black, a very eloquent speaker, offered this eulogy of Campbell at Bethany, West Virginia, at the dedication of an Italian Marble Bust of Campbell:

As a great preacher, he will be remembered with unqualified admiration by all who had the good fortune to hear him in the prime of his life. The interest, which he excited in a large congregation, can hardly be explained. The first sentence of his discourse ‘drew audience still as death,’ and every word was heard with rapt attention to the close. It did not appear to be eloquence; it was not the enticing words of man’s wis-

dom; the arts of the orator seemed to be inconsistent with the grand simplicity of his character. It was logic, explanation, and argument so clear that everybody followed it without an effort, and all felt that it was raising them to the level of a superior mind. Persuasion sat upon his lips. Prejudice melted away under the easy flow of his elocution. The clinching fact was always in its proper place, and the fine poetic illustration was ever at hand to shed its light over the theme. But all this does not account for the impressiveness of his speeches, and no analysis of them can give any idea of their power.

Attorney General of the United States

On the 7th of March, 1857, President Buchanan appointed Judge Black the Attorney General of the United States. His chief work as Attorney General was on the California Land Claims cases. Later in Buchanan’s administration Black served as the Secretary of State.

Black played an interesting role during Buchanan’s last six months in office. Black (as Secretary of State) was a Democrat, but did not believe that the states should be allowed to secede from the union, but he was also not in favor of the aggressive tactics which Abraham Lincoln later took. When Buchanan was unable to act decisively, Black was there every step of the way. He pushed for reinforcements at Fort Sumter. He pushed for General Winfield Scott (who was in his dotage at this time) to act.

He was nominated to be a Supreme Court justice, but lost in the senate by a single vote. Buchanan wanted to submit Black’s name to replace the soon-to-be-retiring chief justice. However, by the time he nominated him, several southern states had already left the union. Most of those were Democratic, and so those votes were gone. And since Black had argued vigorously for reinforcements in South Carolina, some of the Northerners were opposed to him as well. Thus, the Supreme Court post did not come to fruition.

When Abraham Lincoln came into office, Black was out of a job (but had a hand in selecting his successor) and was broke. So he took a job as the reporter for the U.S. Supreme Court. He stayed

in that role for two years before returning home to focus on a private law practice.

Friendship with James A. Garfield

Judge Black's son, Chauncey, became acquainted with Garfield in 1853 while both were attending the Eclectic Institute in Ohio. In 1862 Chauncey Black met Garfield on the street in Washington and soon introduced him to his father. This began what has been called "one of the most unique of friendships among public men." Black was 21 years Garfield's senior and an intense and radical Democrat. Garfield was fully devoted to the Republican party. However they were both members of the church that was "first called Christians at Antioch." Even in politics their minds often came together. They became so close that on October 27, 1873 Garfield wrote Black, "For many months I have been hungry for the sight of you."



Ex Parte L. P. Milligan

Garfield in Congress resisted some attempts to extend the power of military commissions to try civilians.

On October 5, 1864, (at 4 o'clock in the morning) Lambdin P. Milligan, an lawyer in the northern state of Indiana was accused of being a southern sympathizer, and was arrested by order of Alvin P. Hovey, Major-General, commanding the military district of Indiana. He was taken out, and the men were told, "If he tries anything, shoot him."

On October 21, 1864, Milligan and two other men were "tried" by a military commission convened at Indianapolis on the following charges:

1. "Conspiracy against the government of the United States."
2. "Affording aid and comfort to rebels against the government of the United States."
3. "Inciting insurrection."
4. "Disloyal practices."
5. "Violations of the laws of war."

He was convicted to hang.

The accused objected to the authority of the military to try them, pointing out that they were not members of the military, the civil courts were open, and if they were to be tried at all they had a right to trial by jury in the civil courts. The Military Commission promptly overruled the objections of the accused and promptly convicted all three men, sentencing them to death on May 19, 1865. Judge Black believed these actions by the government were conducted with an awful neglect of the Bill of Rights and its guarantees of a "free and public trial" to all accused persons by "an impartial jury."

Lincoln had, by Executive Order, suspended these constitutional rights shortly after taking office, not just in border states but also gradually throughout the North. Arrested victims were charged with no offense, but merely confined to jail as "prisoners of state." It is conservatively estimated that Lincoln imprisoned at least 38,000 persons without trial in the civil courts. Late in the War, Congress legalized Lincoln's illegal order but required that a list of persons detained by the military must be furnished to Federal Judges. The Federal Judges were authorized to discharge all undicted prisons within twenty days after the next session of the grand jury, but the law was ignored and the victims languished in jail.

Nine days prior to the scheduled execution, a stay was granted and the following questions were certified to the United States Supreme Court:

1. Was Milligan entitled to a writ of *habeas corpus*?
2. Ought Milligan to be discharged?
3. Had the military commission the jurisdiction legally to try and sentence Milligan?

Judge Black took this case *pro bono* (for free) and secured the services of two other famous lawyers of the time: J.E. McDonald and David Dudley Field. However, Black also wanted a leading Republican to argue with case with him—because not only was this a civil rights case, but also a very politically charged case—and his mind turned to his friend, James A. Garfield. Garfield was a Congressman who had resisted some attempts to extend the power of military commissions to try civilians. Here is Garfield's recollection of things:

Here Black came to me, he had seen what I had said in Congress, and asked me if I was willing to say that in argument in the

Supreme Court. “Well,” I said, “it depends upon your case altogether.” He sent me the facts in the case—the record. I read it over and said, “I believe in that doctrine.” Said he, “Young man, you know it is a perilous thing for a young Republican in Congress to say that, and I don’t want you to injure yourself.” Said I, “It don’t make any difference. I believe in English liberty and English law. But,” said I, “Mr. Black I am not a practitioner in the Supreme Court and I never tried a case in my life anywhere.” Said he, “How long ago were you admitted to the bar?” “Just about six years ago.” “That will do,” said he. I had been admitted to the Supreme Court of my state enough years to under the rules of the Supreme Court.

Garfield was admitted to the Supreme Court and immediately entered upon the case. Garfield spoke first to the Court and spoke for two hours. Garfield, who had attained the rank of Major General during the Civil War, made a number of powerful arguments including:

“In Texas, Mississippi, Virginia, and other insurgent States, by order of the Rebel President [not even mentioning the name of Jefferson Davis], the writ of *habeas corpus* was suspended, martial law was declared, the provost-marshals were appointed to exercise military authority. But when civilians, arrested by military authority, petitioned for release by writ of *habeas corpus*, in every case save one the writ was granted, and it was decided that there could be no suspension of the writ or declaration of martial law by the Executive, or by any other than the supreme legislative authority.”

Garfield concluded his argument this way,

“I have shown that Congress undertook to provide for all the necessities which the Rebellion imposed upon the nation; that it provided for the trial of every crime imputed to the petitioners, and pointed out expressly the mode of punishment. There is not a single charge or specification in the petition before you—not a single allegation of crime—that is not expressly provided for in the laws of the United States; and the courts are des-

ignated, before which such offenders may be tried. These courts were open during the trial, and had never been disturbed by the Rebellion. The military Commission on the tenth day of its session withdrew from the room where it had been sitting, that the Circuit Court of the United States might hold its regular term in its own chamber. For the next ten days the Commission occupied, by permission the chamber of the Supreme Court of the State of Indiana, but removed to another hall when the regular term of that court began. This military Commission sat at a place two hundred miles beyond the sound of a hostile gun, in a State that had never felt the touch of martial law—that had never been defiled by the tread of a hostile Rebel foot, except on a remote border, and then but for a day. That State, with all its laws and courts, with all its securities of person rights and privileges, is declared by the opposing counsel to have been completely and absolutely under the control of martial law; that not only the Constitution and laws of Indiana, but the Constitution and laws of the United States, were wholly suspended, so that no writ, injunction, prohibition, or mandate of any District or Circuit Court of the United States, or even of this august tribunal, was of any binding force or authority whatever, except by the permission and at the pleasure of a military commander.”

“Such a doctrine, may it please the court, is too monstrous to be tolerated for a moment; and I trust and believe that, when this cause shall have been heard and considered, it will receive its just and final condemnation. Your decision will mark an era in American history. The just and final settlement of this great question will take a high place among the great achievements, which have immortalized this decade. It will establish forever this truth, of inestimable value to us and to mankind, that a republic can wield the vast enginery of war without breaking down the safeguards of liberty; can suppress insurrection, and put down rebellion, however formidable, without destroying the bulwarks of law; can, by the might of its armed millions, preserve and defend both

nationality and liberty. Victories on the field were of priceless value, for the plucked the life of the republic out of the hands of its enemies; but

‘Peace hath her victories

No less renowned than war,’

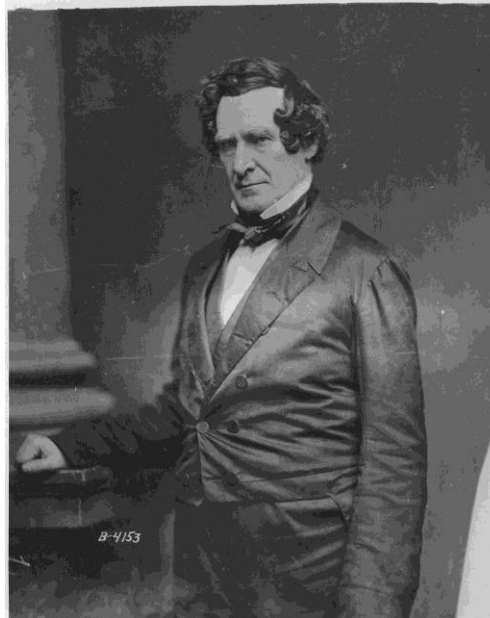
“And if the protection of law shall, but [for] your decision, be extended over every acre of our peaceful territory, you will have rendered the great decision of the century.”

Judge Black added his powerful voice to his young friend Garfield, concluding his two-hour speech this way:

“Between the officers who have a power like this, and the people who are liable to become its victims, there can be no relation except that of master and slave. The master may be kind, and the slave may be contented in his bondage; but the man who can take your life, or restrain your liberty, or despoil you or your property at his discretion, either with his own hands or by means of a hired overseer, owns you, and he can force you to serve him. All you are and all you have, including your wives and children, are his property.”

“If my learned and very good friend, the Attorney-General, had this right of domination over me, I should not be very much frightened, for I should expect him to use it as moderately as any man in all the world; but still I should feel the necessity of being very discreet. He might change in a short time. The thirst for blood is an appetite, which grows by what it feeds upon. We cannot know him by present appearances. Robespierre resigned a country judgeship in early life because he was too tender-hearted to pronounce sentence of death upon a convicted criminal. Caligula passed for a most amiable young gentleman before he was clothed with the imperial purple, and for about eight months afterward. It was Trajan,

I think, who said that absolute power would convert any man into a wild beast, whatever was the original benevolence of his nature. If you decide that the Attorney General holds in his own hands, or shares with others, the power of life and death over us all, I mean to be very cautious in my intercourse with him; and I warn you, the judges whom I am now addressing, to do likewise. Trust not to the gentleness and kindness, which have always marked his behavior heretofore. Keep you distance; be careful how you approach him; for you know not at what moment or by what a trifle you may rouse the sleeping tiger. Remember the injunction of Scripture: “Go not near to the man who hath power to kill; and if thou come unto him, see that thou make no fault, lest he take away thy life presently; for thou goest among snares and walkest upon the battlements of the city.”



“The right of the Executive Government to kill and imprison citizens for political offenses has not been practically claimed in this country, except in cases where commissioned officers of the army were the instruments used. Why should it be confined to them? Why should not naval officers be permitted to share in it? What is the reason that common soldiers and seamen are excluded from all participation in the business? No law has bestowed the

right upon army officers more than upon other persons. If men are to be hung up without that legal trial which the Constitution guarantees to them, why not employee commissions of clergymen, merchants, manufacturers, horse-dealers, butchers, or drovers, to do it? It will not be pretended that military men are better qualified to decide questions of fact or law than other classes of people; for it is known, on the contrary, that they are, as a general rule, least of all

fitted to perform the duties that belong to a judge.”

“The Attorney-General thinks that a proceeding which takes away the lives of citizens without a constitutional trial is a most merciful dispensation. His idea of humanity as well as law is embodied in the bureau of military justice, with all its dark and bloody machinery. For that strange opinion he gives this curious reason: that the duty of the commander-in-chief is to kill, and unless he has this bureau and these commissions he must “butcher” indiscriminately, without mercy or justice. I admit that if the commander-in-chief or any other officer of the Government has the power of an Asiatic king, to butcher the people at pleasure, he ought to have somebody to aid him in selecting his victims, as well as to do the rough work of strangling and shooting. But if my learned friend will only condescend to cast an eye upon the Constitution, he will see at once that all the executive and military officers are completely relieved by the provision that the life of a citizen shall not be taken at all until after legal conviction by a court and jury.”

“You can not help but see that military commissions, if suffered to go on, will be used for most pernicious purposes. I have criticized none of their past proceedings, not made any allusion to their history in the last five years. But what can be the meaning of this effort to maintain them among us? Certainly not to punish actual guilt. All the ends of true justice are attained by the prompt, speedy, impartial trial, which the courts are bound to give. Is there any danger that crime will be winked upon by the judges? Does anybody pretend that courts and juries have less ability to decide upon facts and law than the men who sit in military tribunals? The counsel in this cause will not insult you by even hinting such an opinion. What righteous or just purpose, then, can they serve? None, whatever.”

“But while they are utterly powerless to do even a shadow of good, they will be omnipotent to trample upon innocence, to gage the truth, to silence patriotism, and crush the

liberties of the county. They will always be organized to convict, and the conviction will follow the accusation as surely as night follows the day. The Government, of course, will accuse none before such a commission except those whom it predetermines to ruin and destroy. The accuser can choose the judges, and will certainly select those who are known to be the most ignorant, the most unprincipled, and the most ready to do whatever may please the power which gives them pay, promotion, and plunder. The willing witness can be found as easily as the super serviceable judge. The treacherous spy, and the base informer—those loathsome wretches who do their lying by the job—will stock such a market with abundant perjury, for the authorities that employ them will be bound to protect as well as reward them. A corrupt and tyrannical government, with such an engine at its command, will shock the world with the enormity of its crimes. Plied as it may be by the arts of a malignant priesthood, and urged on by the madness of a raving crowd, it will be worse than the popish plot, or the French revolution—it will be a combination of both, with Fouquier-Tinville¹ on the bench, and Titus Oates² in the witness box. You can save us from this horrible fate. You alone can ‘deliver us from the body of this death.’ To that fearful extent is the destiny of this nation in your hands.”

Needless to say, the Supreme Court unanimously decides in favor of Judge Black and James Garfield. It is from this that Garfield’s reputation as a lawyer is made. He received a number of famous clients. Black frequently tried to get Garfield to enter into a full-time practice of law, but is never successful. However, Black and Garfield would team up again on several other cases.

¹ Antoine Quentin Fouquier-Tinville (1746-1795) was a lawyer and prosecutor during the French Revolution and the Reign of Terror. He was eventually arrested and after a 41-day trial he was guillotined on 7 May 1795.

² Titus Oates (1649-1705) was a clergyman who perjured himself claiming a plot by the Jesuits of the Catholic Church to assassinate Charles II in 1678. Oates’ perjury led to the death of at least 15 innocent men.

In a postscript, Lambdin Milligan sued in civil court for false arrest and the government was represented by Indianapolis attorney Benjamin Harrison. Milligan won the verdict, but only for \$5.

His Continuing Work

As a result of this case, Black became very much in demand as one of the leading lawyers in the nation. Among his clients were President Andrew Johnson, during his impeachment, Samuel Tilden, who won the presidential election in 1876, only to have it stolen by fraud. He was involved in a number of California land cases. In one case, he received as his fee \$180,000 as a result of winning the verdict. He became a very wealthy person by this law practice, but there is one very interesting fact that bears noting. He never put his fee agreements in writing. It was always a verbal agreement. If, after a case, he was stiffed, or paid a smaller amount than agreed, he did not argue, he simply let it go. He believed it wasn't worth fighting about.

His fame led him to argue cases all over the United States. In 1869, on a train south of Louisville, Kentucky, he was sitting with his right arm on the windowsill. A freight train was coming from the opposite direction had something sticking out which caught Black's hand and smashed it and his arm into the windowsill. This piece also ripped through the passenger car, but Black was the only one seriously injured. His arm was broken in seven places between the wrist and elbow; every bone in his hand was broken; and his elbow joint was crushed. The doctors wanted to amputate, but the Judge refused. He finally left the hospital in July of that year, after a seven-week stay. But his right arm was useless for the rest of his life.

He was right handed, and in the days before computers and typewriters, all of the legal briefs had to be written by hand. So, in short order, brother Black taught himself how to write left-handed, to shave left-handed, to do everything he needs to do with his left hand. Within three months, he is back at work. He was one tough man.

Black championed Christianity and had a written debate with the famous atheist, Robert Ingersoll. He served God to the end of his eventful life.

Black's Death

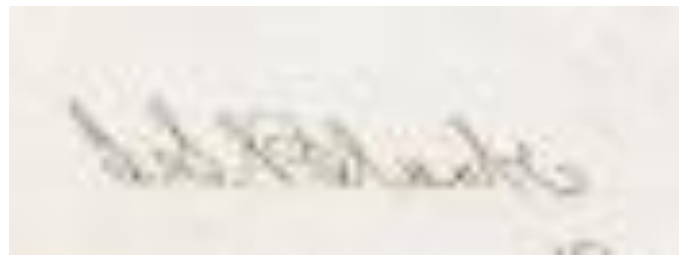
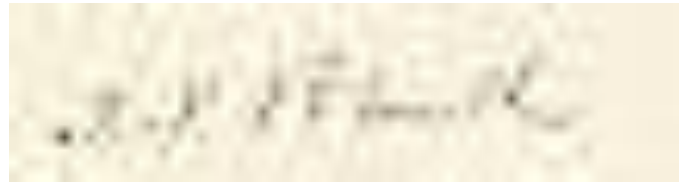
To his wife, Black commented, "How can I fear to cross the dark river when my Father waits for me on the other shore?" Shortly before his

death he prayed, "O Thou beloved and most merciful Father, from whom I had my being and in whom I ever trusted, grant, if it be Thy will, that I no longer suffer this agony, and that I be speedily called home to Thee. And, O God, bless and comfort this, my Mary."

Judge Black passed from this life to the next one at 10 minutes past two o'clock on the morning of Sunday the 19th of August.

Black's son Chauncey wrote of his father:

"It will be unnecessary to inform the reader of the following pages that Jeremiah S. Black was a devout Christian. Fearing nothing else in this world, he went always and humbly in the fear of God. His whole mind and being were saturated with the morality of the Testament of Christ, which, he said, was 'filled with all forms of moral beauty, and radiant with miracles of light.' He was baptized in 1843 by Alexander Campbell, whose eulogy he pronounced upon the unveiling of his statue at Bethany, West Virginia."



[It is difficult to make out, but the top is Black's right-handed signature, the bottom is his left-handed signature.]

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Gender

Simplified

BY JOHN KRIVAK



“Male and female He created them”

Biblical gender could not conceptually be more simple: a mere binary—male and female. This is one case where the introduction of complexity signals a departure from God. What do we mean by complexity? Well, can you say LGBTQIA? Can you add etc., etc., etc. to this alphabet-soup? One of my favorite Proverbs is 18:4 (NASB)—“*The words of a man’s mouth are deep waters; The fountain of wisdom is a bubbling brook.*” Deep waters? Think of complexity, of layers of nuance, of obfuscation, of endless exceptions to the rule. Of course, not all matters can be approached and apprehended with such simplicity in a meaningful and helpful way. But for gender, God offers a two-sizes-fit-all approach. There is the delightfully shallow brook that springs from wisdom. How pleasant does the sound of such simple wisdom reach the ears against the cacophony of the gender-confusion generated by the culture! What a joy in a Scriptural one-liner.

Simple, but not easy!

Now, I am going to insist that the simple binary of male-and-female results in relationship that is most difficult and challenging. Simple yes—yet

hard, tough, and unrelentingly demanding. The reason is simple—this binary combines the absolute polar-opposites of gender! That mix is easily troubled. John Gray described the inherent challenge of combining the two genders by declaring *Men Are From Mars; Women Are From Venus* (HarperCollins, 1992). Forget the banal attempt to see sameness between him and her; it is as though he and she come from different planets! Their brains and thinking are different (see *His Brain, Her Brain* by Walt & Barb Larimore, Zondervan, 2008). We speak different languages (well, even if the same language, our meanings are not shared). And yet, the two must somehow combine for relational success. It may seem counter-intuitive, but conceptual simplicity does not generate relational success that is easy and automatic! Just the opposite! In fact, it would seem that God designed gender to provide the most difficult of challenges. And why might He do that? Well, likely because the challenge can be surmounted only when two meet it with love. This is curriculum. And not just any love will do—but the real, genuine, authentic stuff that gets beyond trite sentimentality and cheap promises. This love requires self-sacrifice, commitment achieved only through pain—love of the highest order. Tell me,

please, if you know some easier way to hold Mars and Venus together?

That is not all. I strongly suspect that God arranged gendered-marriage to prepare us for an even more advanced lesson: a relationship between Heaven and Earth! First the opposite-gendered partners in matrimony and, then, the relational binding of Divine God to human partners—opposites of an even higher order! Both relationships dare us to solve the riddle and find success after combining polar-opposites.¹ The arrangement is simple; the challenge is hard—and this, by design.

Gender: stereotype or archetype?

Jim Baird of Oklahoma Christian University launched a journal in 1995 or 1996 called *Christianity and Contemporary Culture* for which I wrote an article: “Supernatural Curriculum for the Homosexual: A Relational-Dynamic Response to Naturalism” (Volume 2, Issue 1, 1996). The article was built upon the same thesis pursued here: gender is conceptually simple but relationally difficult (several responses printed after the article offer meaningful reflections). I supported my thesis with the findings of Willard F. Harley, Jr. in his bestseller, *His Needs, Her Needs: Building an Affair-Proof Marriage* (Revell, 1986). Harley listened to husbands and wives in a broad survey of their relational needs. The result was a list of the top needs: five for him and another five-item list for her. What is astonishing is that there is no overlap between the two lists²! His needs are not her needs.

What is noteworthy about Gray’s *Mars and Venus* and Harley’s *His Needs, Her Needs* (and God’s *Bible*, for that matter) is that they dared to break a cultural taboo by admitting fundamental gender distinctions. In that day, to speak this way audaciously took aim at the central tenet of feminism. That would surely provoke a backlash from

the cultural “P-A-L-M”—politics, academia, law, and media. There is a form of feminism called “gender-feminism” (see Christina Hoff Sommers, *Who Stole Feminism? How Women Have Betrayed Women*, Simon & Schuster, 1994). Feminism, in its various forms, begins with a complaint by women based upon their historic treatment in the culture. The complaint is valid (just read history). To address this complaint, popular feminist response relegated “gender” to nothing more than a cultural stereotype³: one generation imprints on to the next what it means to be appropriately male or female. This means that gender is not “on the inside” as part of our essential identity, but something tacked on to the outside before we are aware of what this really means. Gender-feminism holds that these stereotypes are nothing but cultural creations, the design of which is to disadvantage one gender before the other. Sommers (p. 16) wrote:

American feminism is currently dominated by a group of women who seek to persuade the public that American women are not the free creatures we think we are. The leaders and theorists of the women’s movement believe that our society is best described as a patriarchy, a “male hegemony,” a “sex/gender system” in which the dominant gender works to keep women cowering and submissive. The feminists who hold this divisive view of our social and political reality believe we are in a gender war, and they are eager to disseminate stories of atrocity that are designed to alert women to their plight. The “gender feminists” (as I shall call them) believe that all our institutions, from the state to the family to the grade schools, perpetuate male dominance. Believing that women are virtually under siege, gender feminists naturally seek recruits to their side of the gender war. They seek support. They seek vindication. They seek ammunition.

To entertain any gender distinction, then, became a first-order sin of “political correctness.” Men and women must be regarded as equal, and by “equal” *undifferentiated sameness* is meant⁴.

¹ And, both relationships are structured as covenants! The reader is encouraged to read “The ‘Nuts-n-Bolts’ of Covenant Relating” in the previous edition of *The Quarterly*. There the instructive interplay of the marriage-covenant with the Christian-covenant is set forth from Eph. 5:21ff. Neither covenant will be successful unless built upon the sort of love that sent Jesus to the Cross.

² The closest correspondence between the two lists seems to be his top-need for “Sexual Fulfillment” and her top-need for “Affection.” However, anyone (and it’s probably a man) who thinks these needs are identical has yet to learn what makes for marital success!

³ Stereotypes exist, of course, such as those created by Hollywood, religions, or universities. Some of these may have nothing to do with authentic masculinity or femininity. True representations of gender support complementary functioning toward relational success.

⁴ Gender distinctions in most animal species are blatantly obvious. It is remarkable, then, that some manifest blindness to such distinctions in humans.

Against the grain of culture, John Gray and Willard Harley each found gender distinctions to be unavoidably real. Perhaps unwittingly, their writings thereby supported the Biblical view that gender is an “archetype” rather than a stereotype. There are certain characteristics of maleness or of femaleness that exist even before the culture leaves its imprint. Those characteristics are “built right in” and suggest different roles for each gender. Being a woman means something different than being a man; a wife is different than a husband; a mother is different than a father. German theologian Werner Neuer, in his book *Man & Woman in Christian Perspective* (Crossway, 1991) describes the archetypal essence of gender this way (pp. 26-27):

A person is a totality of body and soul which cannot be split into a sexual corpse and a sexless psyche. This indivisible unity of the inner and outer life, of soul and body, is a fact which is daily experienced, is demonstrated by science, and is borne witness to by the Bible. Body and soul stand in a very close relationship to each other and mutually influence each other. Since soul and body form an inseparable unity, being male or female characterizes the whole person and not his or her body.

...A person exists only as a man or a woman. A person can never deny his maleness or her femaleness. A person does not just have a male or female body, he is a man or she is a woman....It is therefore incorrect to separate a person's being from their sexuality and to view the person as an essentially sexless intellect to which their sex is attached, not as part of their being, but as something external that is only important for the propagation of the species.⁵

So, as though it were not difficult enough to combine him and her in lovingly successful covenant, this must be achieved within a cultural environment that views gender relations as warfare! Which generates another interesting parallel: our covenant to God through Christ Jesus must also find success in an environment of spiritual warfare.

The goal: complementarity or equality?

The philosophical distinctions between gender-stereotype and gender-archetype have generated opposing camps in the broader Evangelical community. The Council for Biblical Manhood and

Womanhood (<https://cbmw.org/>) sees gender as archetype designed for “complementarity.” Male and female have different gender identity and roles, but—in God’s design—their combination is delightfully fruitful. The Council produced an excellent statement of its views entitled *Recovering Biblical Manhood & Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism* (Crossway, 1991). They also issued doctrinal position statements (available online) in 1987 (the *Danvers Statement*) and in 2017 (the *Nashville Statement*) which seek to articulate a Christian response to the culture.

In stark opposition is the Council for Biblical Equality (cbeinternational.org) which embraces gender-feminism and insists on defining equality as sameness. For example: the current lead article (at time of writing) is “Christian Women and Men Co-leading, Co-serving, Co-equal in Christ” with a man pictured holding a sign that reads, “Preach it, Sister!” This group began also with conservative, Bible-believing Evangelicals and has issued at least one statement summarizing its views.

It seems that those who see gender as a cultural stereotype seek to break categorical restrictions by seeking “sameness.” And those who trace gender to a God-given archetype seek a combining of distinctly different genders that is “complementary.” One side seeks to erase distinctions; the other seeks to preserve these distinctions.

Some would choose an easier path

Jesus subdivided the totality of spiritual strategies into another binary. There is a broad path or there is a narrow path (Matthew 7:13-14; or narrow gate, Luke 17:23-24). People may choose; people *must* choose. The narrow path leads to life, to success, to salvation. The wide path goes to destruction. Most people are heading toward destruction. Travel with cultural mainstream (which the Bible calls “the world”) and that is where it takes you. That path is the easiest to walk—fewer obstacles and easier challenges. That path requires of you a smaller, less costly personal sacrifice.

But the narrow path is tough. First, it is hard to even find it. And it is an uphill climb over major obstacles and through challenges that may be beat only if met with every ounce of strength, every shred of wisdom, every quality of a virtuous heart. Walk this path and your traveling companions will be very few.

⁵ The spelling of “characterizes” was updated from the British spelling.—Editor.

Let it be suggested that the two paths wind through the gender controversy. We have already maintained that complementary heterosexuality is the most difficult combination of gender and presents the strongest challenge—a challenge that demands love. Recalling Harley’s top-five lists for his needs and her needs, it takes complementary couples (male with female) a span of years—if not decades—to figure each other out because they are so different. Typically, partners begin with a confident belief that their gender-opposite shares his or her identical needs—and so they proceed to provide these needs. Then, they are forced to face the failure of their best efforts to please the other, because not only have the real needs gone unaddressed, the real needs remain a mysterious riddle that takes a long time to solve (unless Harley’s book lies at hand to give the shortcut!). The unmet needs bring pain that easily generates strife and conflict, which ever heighten the challenge.

Is there an easier way? Sure. Every other gender-option—and the options offered by culture are multiplying—offers an easier side-step around the rigorous challenge of complementary gender combination⁶. Consider same-sex pairings. Here, partners do not need to figure out how to meet each other’s needs. Those needs are known and understood intuitively, because their needs are identical. The challenge, from the start, is a mere half-step beyond self-love and auto-eroticism. That is relationship without riddle. The Proverbs writer, Agur, in 30:18-19 wrote of four things “*too wonderful for me.*” They are phenomena simply inexplicable through what the eyes take in: “*the way of an eagle in the sky, the way of a snake on a rock, the way of a ship at sea.*” All these activities are sustained by invisible means, and one may only gaze upon each mystery and marvel. All of this leads to the fourth item which is the one of real interest: “*and the way of a man with a young woman.*” There is a riddle out in the open for all to see, yet who can explain

⁶ Some may deny that complementary gender actually is more difficult, since alternatives may face societal disapproval with forms of harassment and oppression with social stigma. First, my concern here is with internal dynamics within relationship; the challenge for heterosexuals is far greater. Second, changes in culture have recently shifted both law and social opinion. In some ways, alternatives to heterosexual norms now are actually given preferential treatment and greater protections. This makes them increasingly easy.

how that relationship works? A Rubik’s Cube is far easier!

If a gender-alternative is easier—what could be wrong with it? Well, if we are right in seeing gender as the curriculum through which love is learned, that achievement will largely or entirely be lost by taking the easy path. Aristotle was right: “*Virtue, like art, constantly deals with what is hard to do, and the harder the task the better the success.*” And if we are right in surmising that the lessons learned from solving the gender-riddle ultimately are the same lessons we need to covenantally relate with God, then the easy path will be deficient in this preparation. In terms set forth by Jesus for going easy: it leads to destruction.

We might illustrate with electronics. Electricity can be harnessed to fulfill many “design functions” if it is forced across “impedance” or “resistance.” Each tiny component on a circuit board gets in the way of easy flow, channeling the power to accomplish the engineer’s design. Without such impedance, there is a “short circuit”—a path to ground with no resistance. Fuses blow. And moreover, the design function will fail. God designed gender with inherent “impedance”—challenge, difficulty, riddle. Any alternative may be easier—but damage will result (Rom. 1:27) and the design function will not be accomplished. The same occurs when the relational challenge of gender is avoided! We do not want to see people hurt by gender-rejection, nor to lose the educational advantage that can be had no other way.

Compassion: facing the challenge of gender

“Be kind. Everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.” It’s a tough, brutal, and lonely world out there. Gender draws one and all into an arena of competition that determines the joyful winners and the sad losers. Hearts are broken here. Few enter the arena as the absolute epitomes of manhood or womanhood. Most enter with deficiencies and are somewhat short of the ideal. Some are so far from it that it seems better to just give up.

Our embrace of gender can make all the difference to people around us, to the people to whom we minister in Jesus’ name. The preaching from our pulpits should draw clear and simple lines. We should be encouragers of those who honor God by embracing manhood or womanhood, motherhood or fatherhood. We should stand up as advocates for marriage and parenting; getting married and having

children really are great gifts from God (for those who can receive them⁷)! We should carefully tend our children's rites of passage from immature confusion into gendered maturity.

The nascent church adopted appropriate cultural expressions of gender through head coverings (1 Cor. 11:1-16) to embody the joyful complementarity of men and women, brothers and sisters, in Christian worship. Even our masculine and feminine voices combine in grateful harmony to the God who created us, male and female. The earliest Christians embraced gender not for purely social reasons (certainly not to subjugate women). They did so because gender expresses profound truth about the essence of God. We are created in God's image (Gen. 1:26); we are created male and female (1:27). Especially, gender is a classroom for developing leaders and followers, for those having authority and those submitted to authority. Such dynamics feature both in the relation of man and woman, and in the relation between Father and Son. It must be the case that these dynamics are required for anyone and everyone who wants to relate successfully with the Creator.

Complementarians hold to gender equality. Men and women are equal, with no superiority or inferiority. However, for us, "equality" does not mean sameness—becoming androgynous, ambiguous in our gender identities. We maintain our equality even while adopting different roles. God has placed the husband over his wife in authority and headship. And yet, she is every bit his equal. This realization should make him the gentle, humble, self-sacrificing leader that God intends. The wife submits to his leading. Yet no one knows better than she that he can boast no superiority to justify this uneven arrangement of equals. It obviously would seem more natural to order equals with horizontal parity; yet God has ordered gender into an unnatural hierarchy (one that, I would argue, is inherently unstable). Why? Well, the same perplexing arrangement is displayed in the triune God! Although equal with God the Father (Phil. 2:6), Jesus put himself in submission to the Father's authority—and yet perfect love binds their fellowship. Can we, males and females together, achieve

⁷ God does not give these gifts to everyone (Matt. 19:10-12). Everyone, however, receives the alternative gift of singleness or celibate living (1 Cor. 7:1-7), whether permanently or temporarily (before or after marriage).

the same loving unity? Only if we embrace the love generated by a crucified self. That love should compel grateful acceptance of our gender assignments and deep appreciation for our gender counterparts. That love should generate our compassion to any suffering gender confusion.

Get used to being described as hateful for taking a binary view. In the world, the gender-confused have two enemies. The first are the culture's advocates who support immoral and sinful lifestyles. They claim compassion because they support easier alternatives, with apparently no concern (or at least no awareness) of the long-term consequences.⁸ Such advocates claim to be sympathetic friends. The second enemy is the "gay-basher" who opposes gender diversity and reacts with loveless cruelty that may become violent. Christians occupy a third category—and we are the true friends. Twin commitments to truth and love (Eph. 4:15) prohibit Christians to join either enemy group. Truth prohibits one; love forbids the other. Positioned as we are, advocates will insist that Christian opposition also marks us with hatred. It's not true (and many of them know this), but get used to being labelled. In plain fact, they only recognize two categories—either you advocate or you are a hater. Our only recourse is to prove them wrong again and again through acts of compassion: *"always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame"* (1 Peter 3:15-16, NASB).

When gender is viewed in pure simplicity, it offers a wide arrangement of lessons that bless us in this life. More importantly, its educational design prepares us for immortality with God.

⁸ Michelle Critella at dailysignal.com/2017/07/03/impediatrician-transgender-ideology-infiltrated-field-produced-large-scale-child-abuse/ notes that although children normally experience gender confusion and escape that confusion by the time they mature into adults, such children are actually being forced to permanently overthrow their gender. She is right to identify this as child abuse.



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How Old? Really?

BY BILL HOWARD

The truly astute words of Henry David Thoreau: “None are so old as those who have outlived enthusiasm.” This is a challenging thought. It’s even more challenging when considered from the perspective of the Christian. It has been stated myriad times that age is just a number; which is correct. There is no escape from counting the milestones that determine our years here on this earth. We often hear the phrase: “you are only as old as you feel or think.” What we feel or think doesn’t alter the fact of aging, but how we think of ourselves is a much greater determining factor in our outlook in response to living. Medical issues aside, it is our *choice* to consider ourselves old at sixty five or young at ninety.

The writer knows a fine Christian lady who is in her nineties and still drives to worship, attends several Bible classes, and still teaches. She is perennially young because she has not outlived her enthusiasm. She finds great joy and satisfaction in exhibiting the ongoing enthusiasm for that which is so important to her. Someone wrote: “Just when the caterpillar thought the world was over, it became a butterfly.” What we need to realize is that it isn’t over until it’s over. There is never a sound reason for our lack of dedication, young or old.

This kind of enthusiasm regrettably seems to be diminishing. We see congregations of the Lord’s church closing their doors for lack of support; we witness Bible study classes with fewer and fewer people attending. It is obvious that not just a few Christians have lost their drive (enthusiasm) when attendance at worship services is apparently on a hit or miss basis. Whatever else beckons us, we can always skip worship. School programs and sports ac-

tivities should never be scheduled on Sundays or Wednesday nights, and if parents had the courage to challenge these, it could be different. Obviously, the parents are not concerned or not willing to deny their children the practices in which their peers participate so they cave in to those schedules. In so doing, we teach our youngsters that this is an acceptable practice.

These truths should cause us to question ourselves. Why has the enthusiasm waned? Is our Savior Jesus Christ now less concerned about saving us from sin? Does the brutal sacrifice on the cross have less meaning today than before? Has the pathway to eternal life in the presence of our God been altered? Are faith and obedience no longer required? Have the scriptures taken on a different meaning with the passing of time? We know this is not correct. Nothing about God’s will for man has been changed since the establishment of his spiritual kingdom on earth, the church, nearly two thousand years ago!

It is not the writer’s intention to be negative, but what is different today? If nothing of God’s word has changed, and there is change, then it must be *we* who have made the changes. Paul wrote:

“I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (Romans 12:1).

The Psalmist said:

“Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing” (Psalm 100:2).

How can we serve in gladness if we have lost our enthusiasm or our faith is lacking? The writer of the

Hebrew letter tells us that “without faith it is impossible to please God” (11:6). James writes:

“Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only” (James 2:24).

We can claim faith, but proof is shown by our obedience.

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 15:58).

The only guarantee of success is sincere dedication with abundant enthusiasm. It is possible for the child of God to fall away and be lost.

“Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it” (Hebrews 4:1).

“Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at

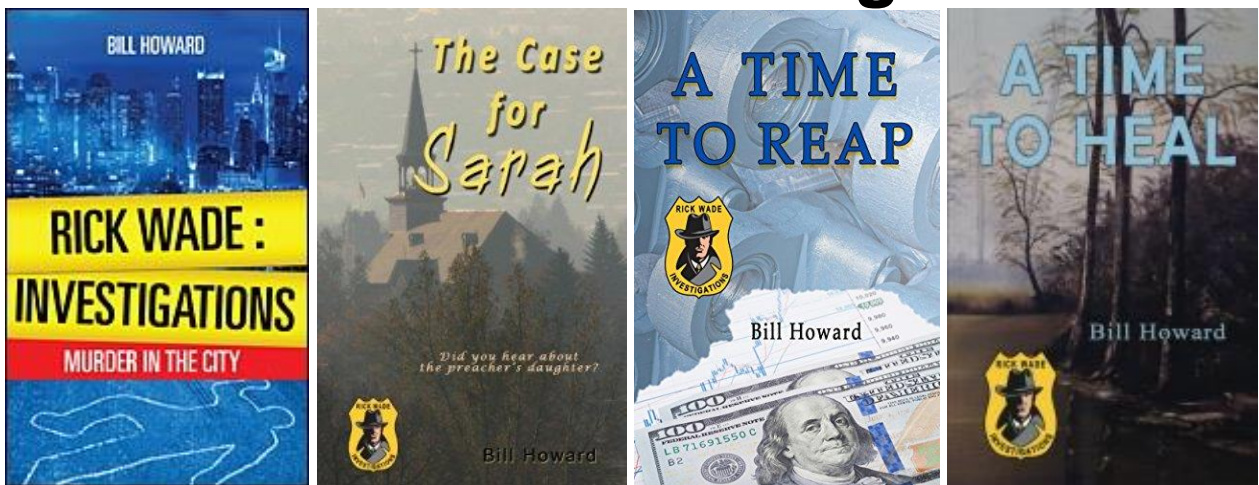
any time we should let them slip” (Hebrews 2:1).

When we sum it up and give sufficient thought, it is apparent that **it is up to us**. Each person will decide about their service to God. God forces nothing. We are creatures of will, and we decide on our course of action. Henry Ward Beecher penned: “Every tomorrow has two handles. We can take hold of it with the handle of anxiety or the handle of faith.” So it is with each of us, we determine each day that God gives us how we intend to use it. How old are we now?

Meditate on these thoughts.

“He gives strength to the weary and to him who lacks might He increases power. Though youths grow weary and tired, and vigorous young men stumble badly, yet those who wait for the Lord will gain strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary” (Isaiah 40:29-31).

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PROVERBS FROM THE WORLD

BY WILLIAM HOWARD

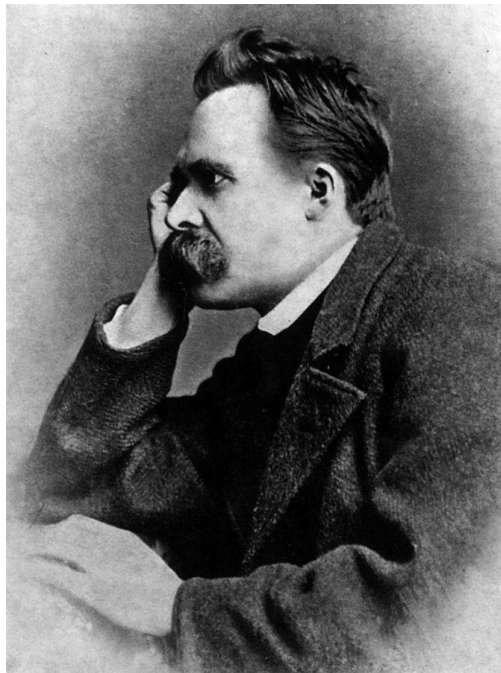
A proverb is a brief saying that gives advice or expresses some belief. The book of Proverbs has discussions of wisdom and folly leading into a collection of the wise sayings of Solomon. The book is inspired and is far more than statements of personal opinion. These sayings are points of truth from God. Here real wisdom is offered for living right. Consider Proverbs 26:28 *A lying tongue hates those who are crushed by it, And a flattering mouth works ruin.* This verse consists of seven Hebrew words. It exposes truth with brevity while comparing two subjects through parallelism. In this case, lying and lucrative flattery are the same. Like all scripture it contains deep insight into its subject. There is nothing good in a lie. The action, the result, the intent, and the disposition are all destructive. The action is deception, the result is ruin, the intent is selfish and the disposition is hatred.

In his book *Beyond Good and Evil*, Friedrich Nietzsche writes the following little maxim, “There is an innocence in lying which is the sign of good faith in a cause.” This is certainly a proverb of the world (Nietzsche would agree with that assessment). What does it mean? Someone who lies for a cause has done what was necessary for that cause. A lie must be judged by the faith one has in a cause. This assumes that one’s cause requires lying to show good faith. Thus, according to Nietzsche, it is noble to lie for what one believes in, and the very thing one believes in will require lying.

There are many problems with this, first: anything can be claimed to be a cause. A liar can justify himself by inventing a good reason for any of his lies. Secondly: anyone who feels the need to lie for their faith needs to rethink their faith. Any cause that demands lies is not worth your time. That which has truth and fact needs no lie. It is solid and sound and will never ask anyone to lie about

it. A faith devoid of truth cannot stand without help from those willing to lie for it. It is odd to think one could be justified in lying as long as there is a sincere motivation to lie. There is nothing sincere about it. There is nothing honest or innocent in lying.

Friedrich Nietzsche may not have known this, but he is not alone. The Quran agrees with him. This concept of justified lying is found in Surah 16:106. It seems that deception is also sanctioned by Mohammed. “Who[ever] disbelieves in Allah



after his belief – save him who is forced thereto and whose heart is still content with Faith – but who finds ease in disbelief: on them is wrath from Allah. Theirs’ will be an awful doom” According to Mohamed you may say anything you like (including the denial of Islam) if you feel pressured to do so. If the threat is real or even imagined you may lie. If the situation requires a lie then you may lie. One is left to deduce that if lying is good in the defense and advancement of a cause then all other actions (murder, theft, drunkenness, etc.) could be justified as well under the same

conditions. This supposed message from Allah in Surah 16 is at odds with the message given by Christ in the entire book of Revelation, “**Be faithful until death.**” But both Mohammed and Nietzsche allow for “necessary” dishonesty in protection of a problematic faith. An institution that prepares its followers to lie has deception at its core. For Nietzsche it is atheism. For Mohammed it is a religion of his own making designed for his own benefit – Islam. If a lying tongue hates those who are crushed by it, then the one who teaches lying must have the same hatred but reaching further. This hatred is directed to those who will hear the lie and also to the believers who are taught to lie. A simple proverb of the world leads us to this: deception as doctrine.

“What If?” and “What Is?”

BY WILLIAM HOWARD

“What if?” asks how something might be.
“What is?” asks for the present state of the thing.

“What if?” is potential.
“What is?” is fact.

“What if?” sets the goal.
“What is?” tells where we are on that path to the goal.

“What if?” imagines a future.
“What is?” sees the present.

“What if?” wants to be reality.
“What is?” shows reality.

“What if?” reflects our desires.
“What is?” reacts to our desires.

“What if?” offers hope.
“What is?” mirrors us.

“What if?” is ideal.
“What is?” may be less than ideal.

“What if?” may never be obtained without effort.
“What is?” describes the effort.

“What if?” is will.
“What is?” is the result of that will.

“What if?” wants because “what is?” lacks.

“What if?” is never done without “what is?”

Regardless of “what if?” there is a final result by the actions of “what is?” “What is?” will describe an eternal conclusion. Depending on that conclusion there may never be another “what if?”

Romans 7:15-20 For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good. But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

Keeping The Traditions

The Importance of the Apostolic Tradition

2 Thessalonians 3:1-18

BY GERALD COWAN

INTRODUCTION:

We often speak of restoring the New Testament church, and some modern preachers scoff at the idea. They ask, “Which ‘church’ would you restore?” They follow on with: “The church at Corinth would not be a good pattern. The church at Jerusalem was hardly exemplary. Every church you can name had its good points, but all of them had some bad points too. So, which church is that you want to restore?”

I have to engage in a little tongue-biting to keep from saying that perhaps willfully obtuse unenlightened and unenlightening people who don’t know or understand the New Testament church should probably not be preaching to anyone. But I am a kinder and gentler man than that, so I simply say, gently and kindly, “We would not want to reproduce any local congregations of the church mentioned in the New Testament, unless it be Smyrna or Philadelphia, about which there are no negative remarks in scripture (see Revelation 2:8-11, 3:7-13). We want to restore the church to the pattern stipulated in the New Testament.” “Oh,” they say, “You are one of those simple-minded persons who thinks that there is a *pattern* in the scripture, and that if the church departs from that pattern God will reject it. Don’t you know that the whole concept of *pattern theology* has been outdated and discredited? It is just a carry-over from the church’s *traditional* approach to things. Tradi-

tionalism has kept the churches of Christ from making any real progress in the religious world, and it is time we put traditions behind us and try to bring the church of Christ into step with forward-thinking progressive churches. We will have to do it if we expect it to survive in this twenty-first century and beyond.” Their argument continues along these lines:

“Christianity must be dynamic, not static. It has to be growing, developing, changing with the times in order to meet the changing needs of the times. If there was ever a pattern for the church, a pattern and plan of salvation, a pattern for worship, a pattern for organizational structure, and so on it would have been only for the first century, during the first years of its formation. But those things could not be expected to fit the church in the world nearly 2,000 years later.” Note: these charges are not a fabrication, a “straw man,” a contrived, fictitious opponent with whom to contend, but are actually being taught orally and in print, in pulpits, classrooms, podcasts, and blogs by many among us. However, I do not intend this essay to be *ad hominem*, against any man or class of men, but rather against a composite error implying and demonstrating rejection of apostolic doctrine and scripture.

Just for the record, so that my personal position is clear: Do I believe the church today must conform to the pattern, the definition and description set forth in various parts of the New Testament? Do I believe God will reject all churches so-called

which refuse to conform? Yes, most emphatically, I do! Do I believe that the individual has some part to play in his own salvation, some requirements to be met, some commands to be obeyed, and that God will refuse to save those who refuse to do their part? Yes, with all my heart, I do! But when saying such things I get a strange look from my forward-thinking brethren. I wish we would stop calling them “brother so-and-so,” or at least address them as erring brothers, brothers who have departed from truth. Why are we no longer willing to say, “Read God’s word and not the sermons and commentaries of popular preachers.”

Anyway, you know the kind of look I’m talking about: the look reserved for the mentally inept and spiritually deficient or the Pharisees – those hypocrites who thought they could become righteous by their own good works. “Poor simpleton,” my critics say. “Haven’t you heard about the love and grace and mercy of God? Love wants to save everybody. Grace finds a way to do it. Mercy does it. If you could just break away from your church traditions, and depend upon the Lord rather than depending on yourself, you could stop condemning everybody who dares to disagree with you. You could find areas of agreement with those who know things you haven’t thought of yet, those who do many things in the name of the Lord you are not willing to do.”

I have an appropriate answer to the “love, grace, and mercy” argument. For the “do it the name of Jesus” ploy too.

Love means you keep the commandments and follow the instructions of the Lord. “*If you love me, keep my commandments*” (John 14:15).

Grace does not mean “God is good to us even when we do not deserve it.” Grace means God offers to do something for us that we need but cannot do for ourselves. Grace is not unconditional; the word of His grace teaches us what we must do and what kind of people we must be in order to be well-pleasing to Him and well-treated by Him. “*Grace ... teaches us to deny ungodliness and live sober, righteous, and godly in the present world*” (Titus 2:11-12).

Faith cannot be omitted from the equation. Faith requires not only hearing and believing God but obeying Him. *Blessed are those who read and hear and do the things written in the book* – the book which reveals the word and will of God

(Luke 11:28, Revelation 1:3). In passages such as Ephesians 2:8-10, *faith* can be defined as making the right and required response to the words and offer of God.

Grace can then be further defined as God’s response to man’s faith. It is by God’s grace *and* or *through* man’s faith that man’s salvation comes. We are thus re-created in Christ Jesus for continuing good works in which we are appointed by God to walk (2:10).

Notice how *faith* and *love* are related – both require doing what the Lord requires and directs. Neither love nor faith justifies offering to God “in the name of Christ” something He has not asked for or indicated He will accept. Love and faith imply obeying from the heart the doctrine given by the Lord (Romans 6:17). Saying “in the name of Jesus” does not justify or sanctify anything for one who does not obey him as Lord, who does not do what God commands (Matthew 7:21-23).

Mercy is more about not getting what you would deserve in justice. Mercy delays the infliction of merited punishment or rejection. But mercy is not an automatic, spontaneous, or unconditional sympathetic response of God to our plight. It has to be sought and requested, and those who are not merciful to others should expect no mercy for themselves from others or from God (James 2:13). Mercy is promised to those who walk faithfully with God. *For those who walk by this rule* (the gospel of Christ that replaced the law of Moses), *peace be upon them, and mercy...*” (Gal. 6:16). *Since one who despised the law of Moses died without mercy....of how much greater punishment is one worthy who treads under foot the Son of God...and shows contempt for the Spirit of grace?*” (Hebrews 10:28-29).

John warned against transgressing or going onward (as “progressives”?) and not abiding in the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9). Paul may have had in mind people who want to keep in step with the progressing world when he wrote to the Thessalonian church. At any rate he provides an inspired answer to those who are departing from apostolic tradition, from the faith once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3). We will proceed now with an exposition of Paul’s words in 2 Thessalonians 3:1-18).

A PRAYER REQUEST FOR THE LORD’S MESSAGE AND MESSENGER. 3:1-2

Paul not only prayed for brethren in the churches everywhere, but he asked them to join him in prayer and to mention him and his co-workers in their prayers to God. He makes two specific prayer requests in this letter. The first has to do with the word of the Lord which he preached (3:1, compare 2:13-14 and also 1 Thessalonians 2:13). “*That it may run*” (have free course) – that it might be preached freely and fully, and be accepted gladly by those who hear it. “*That it may be glorified.*” It is the result, the salvation of obedient hearers, and to the Lord who gave it (compare Acts 13:48).

A second specific request has to do with Paul himself, and others with him who were faithfully preaching the word of the Lord (3:2). “*That we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men.*”

Unreasonable: these are not people devoid of mental ability, unable to look objectively at evidence and come to a rational conclusion. They are people who will not listen to reason, do not use their rational capabilities to think through a thing objectively, and are inclined to react emotionally rather than intellectually.

Wicked: what they do is in opposition to God’s will. It is not a passive badness, but an active and intentional harmfulness. They are malicious and deliberately hurtful, seeking to destroy the truth. Some think Paul was talking about the Judaizers, those who taught that one must become a Jew before he could be a Christian, and that one must obey Moses as well as Christ. Others think he referred only to the unconverted Jews who refused to believe in Christ at all. Unreasonable would certainly apply to them. But wicked? They were not deliberately opposed to God or godliness. Like Paul himself before conversion, they thought they were serving God and being godly in their attitudes and actions (Acts 26:9-11). The principle is generally applicable to all unreasoning and wicked people. This could include Judaizers and renegade Jews, but would not exclude Gentiles. “*Not all men have or keep (the) faith*” (3:2). Some will not come to the faith. They refuse to be converted. But a problem more pressing upon the apostle’s mind: some who become Christians are not faithful. They do not keep the faith (Galatians 1:6-9, 3:10, and 5:3-6).

STABLE FELLOWSHIP IS TO BE SOUGHT AND MAINTAINED. 3:3-5

First there is the Lord’s part (3:3, 5). The faithful Lord will establish you – enable you to stand firmly – if you are also faithful (3:3, 2:17; compare 1 Peter 1:4-5). The Lord will keep you from evil – from the evil one, from evil persons, and from generic evil. Jesus taught us to pray, “*Deliver us from evil*” (Matthew 6:13) and Paul admonishes us to “*Put on the whole armor of God...that you may be able to withstand in the evil day*” (Ephesians 6:13). The Lord guides one properly (3:5a), and works for good with those who follow His calling and fulfill His purposes (Romans 8:28).

There is also the personal part for every Christian and the whole church (3:4-5). Obey what the Lord has commanded through the apostles and evangelists He inspired and entrusted with His words (3:4, 2:13-14; compare 1 Corinthians 2:1-5, 13; Philippians 2:12-13; Acts 2:38, 40).

Notice Paul’s expressed confidence: “*You are doing and will continue to do as we command.*” Because of this he can pray and admonish us to accept and reflect the love of God in our hearts, as He has directed (3:5b), to follow the example of patience set by Christ and wait patiently for Christ, as God directs (3:5c).

APOSTOLIC COMMAND AND EXAMPLE WITH REGARD TO THOSE WHO ARE DISORDERLY. 3:6-15

There is a command to the church: *withdraw yourselves* (3:6). “*We command you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*” (3:6a). It is not, “*We command you as apostles of Christ*” – though that too would be true and binding. Apostles did have authority to speak for Christ (Matthew 28:19-20). But so there is no misunderstanding about the authority for the command, it is *in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ* (compare Acts 2:38). We command *that you withdraw yourselves* (3:6b). This is not excommunication, in which the guilty person is denied contact with Christian people, denied access to communion and other spiritual things, and “put out of the church.” It is not a matter of isolating the guilty person and having nothing more to do with him. Note 3:15, “*Admonish him as a brother,*” as an erring or wayward brother. We will say more about the meaning of *withdraw* when we comment more on 3:14-15.

From whom are they to withdraw? (3:6b). “*From every brother* (every professed Christian member of the church) *who walks disorderly*” (3:6c). This is to be applied by the church to those in the church. There are other principles which apply to those outside the church (1 Corinthians 15:33, Ephesians 5:11, etc.).

Disorderly is from a military term **ATAKTOUS**, and means out of step, not holding one’s proper or assigned place, unruly, not holding to the standard of conduct and doctrine imposed by duly constituted authority. It is improperly taken or allowed to mean “out of step with the forward thinking churches,” or “out of step with others in the congregation.” **It means out of step with the Lord**, not holding faithfully to the Lord’s standard. “*Not according to the tradition received from us*” (3:6d). The word *tradition* does not mean something improper, wrong, or invalid. It simply means something passed along, handed down from one to another.

Paul does not refer here to human tradition, to traditions formulated by and maintained in the churches. Traditions of men can set aside or nullify the Word of God (compare Matthew 15:3, 9 *traditions of men ... commandments of men*). See also Matthew 5:21, 27, 31, 33, 38, and 43 where Jesus said, “*You have heard it said...But I say to you...*” Paul makes it very clear that what he has in mind are the teachings, spoken or written, delivered by the apostles in the name of the Lord, and kept by the people to whom they were delivered – that means passing the same information along to others. Tradition **received from us** – apostles, “*the traditions which have been taught to you, whether by word or by our epistle*” (1 Thessalonians 2:15). The same principle of tradition – handing on to others what one has received from the Lord – is taught in 2 Timothy 1:13; 2:2, 25-26; 4:2-5.

Paul and his co-workers set an example – they lived the truth which they preached to others; they obeyed the commands they imposed upon others (3:7-10). “*We were not ATAKTOUS – we did not behave in a disorderly or unruly way among you. We set an example that you ought to follow*” (3:7). We were not idle, nor did we expect our needs to be supplied without proper effort and recompense

on our own part. So we worked hard day and night to take care of ourselves and not be a burden to any of you (3:8). Not because we had no right to be supported by you. We did it to set an example that you could follow (3:9). When we were with you we gave this command: if any one refuses to work, do not feed him or provide for him – let him not eat at your expense (3:10). Important: it is not if a man *cannot* work. There may be no work available, or he may be incapacitated, unable to work. If one can work and has opportunity to work but refuses to do so, do not provide for him.

Apparently some at Thessalonica had decided to quit working but still expected to be supported and maintained at the expense of others, of the church (3:11-13). “*We hear that some among you are disorderly – ATAKTOUS*. They have left their proper place, broken ranks, and become unruly and uncooperative (3:11a). “*They are not working at all.*” (3:11b). They do nothing to take care of their own needs or the

needs of others – they are idlers. They are busy-bodies (3:11c). As is often the case, those who have no business of their own tend to mind everybody else’s business.

Why had they stopped working? It is an easy inference from the context in the letter: they quit because they thought the return of Christ was imminent, that it would happen very soon. That may have been the excuse, but the text does not say so.

The principle applies in every case: one who refuses to work when he can do so is not to be supported by others. The **PULPIT COMMENTARY** (*in loco*) suggests that “Christian love had opened the hearts of the wealthy to charity, and parasitical tendencies (which are always strong) took advantage of it.” Paul is firm: “*Now we command such persons and exhort them by our Lord Jesus Christ that they work with quietness and supply their own bread*” (3:12-13). “With quietness” means with calm spirits, trusting in the Lord, so that if the Lord returned or did not return, their lives could continue in him, and they would receive his promise eventually and eternally (3:12). Brethren should never grow weary in well-doing, in doing what is right and good, for themselves or others (3:13).

*If one **can** work
and has **opportunity** to work
but **refuses** to do so,
do not provide for him.*

**HOW TO ADMONISH AND RESPOND TO
THE DISORDERLY, THOSE WHO
BREAK RANKS AND WALK IN
DISOBEDIENCE. 3:14-15**

“If anyone does not obey our word by this epistle” (3:14a) is equivalent to, “If anyone does not keep the traditions handed down from the Lord and us, his apostles and evangelists...” It is essential to make the appropriate distinction here. One may fail to keep church traditions and still be acceptable to the Lord. But one cannot fail to keep the traditions which are from the Lord himself and still be acceptable to him (Hebrews 2:3-4). Disobedient ones have not escaped before and should not expect to escape now if they do not adhere to what God commands.

Just because the church has always taught a certain thing in a certain way, etc., does not mean that it is a human or church tradition. The church is supposed to be keeping all the words of the Lord, and not departing from any of them. Just because a church does not do what the Lord says, it does not mean the word of the Lord has been nullified. As Paul says here, those who do not keep the apostolic traditions are out of step with the Lord’s people – they are out of fellowship with the Lord. No matter who else may accept them.

How to withdraw:

Note that person, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed” (3:14b).

Note that person. Identify him and mark him for what he is: a person who has set himself against Christ, and therefore is not acceptable to Christ’s church. This calls for a judgment: is the person faithful, true to the Lord’s word or not? *Have no company* means *have no fellowship*. One must make it clear to the offender that his misdeeds are not acceptable, and that he himself cannot be accepted and approved until correction is made. Fellowship is more than association. Fellowship indicates identity, spiritual equality. It indicates that both are right with the Lord. We are obligated to point out the errors of others, in hope that they will repent and be received into fellowship again (Galatians 6:1-2, Matthew 18:15-20, etc).

Withdraw from (3:6) means hold aloof from, keep your distance, do not give approval or indicate acceptance of the disorderly person, his ways, etc. It does not mean to have no contact, no associ-

ation. How could one admonish a person with whom he refuses to have contact?

Do not look down upon him in contempt, or with feelings of superiority. He is not to be treated as you would treat an enemy, but rather admonished and warned as an erring brother. Make it clear that you want him back in the fellowship, but cannot accept him until his error is corrected (3:15, compare 1 Corinthians 5:1-5 and 2 Corinthians 2:6-11).

**PEACE AND GRACE FROM THE LORD ARE
PROMISED TO THOSE WHO KEEP THE AP-
OSTOLIC TRADITIONS. 3:16-18**

Only the Lord can give true peace (3:16a; compare also John 14:27 and Philippians 4:6-6). Know the Lord; know peace. No Lord, no peace. The peace of Jesus comes through his abiding presence. “The Lord be with you all” (3:16b). “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all” (3:18). Grace is not automatic. It is conditional (Titus 2:11-12). The initial receipt of grace requires obedience to the Lord (2 Corinthians 6:1-2). Do not make a vain response to the grace of God. A *state of grace* must be maintained by faithfulness to God (Galatians 2:20-21, 5:4).

There is a sense in which one must *keep himself in the love of God* too, if he expects to receive God’s full salvation (Jude 20-21, 1 John 3:1-3).

CONCLUSION:

How should we respond to those who question our faith, doubt our motives, and ridicule us for keeping the apostolic traditions? This essay is an effort to demonstrate that. In 1 Peter 3:15-16 Peter says you should sanctify Christ as Lord in your heart and be ready to give an answer – give Christ and his word as your answer – to every person who asks you to explain and justify your hope. Keep your conscience clear; don’t worry about what you may have to suffer from false accusers.

The love of God wants to save everyone. The grace of God makes a way of salvation available to everyone. The mercy of God cancels the consequences of prior sins for those who respond to Him in obedient faith. But the justice of God cannot accept and must reject those who reject His love and grace. So the mercy of God is reserved for those who accept and obey His Son – those who seek and find forgiveness in the blood of Christ. Hopefully that includes you.



Shepherding the Flock:

HAVING FAITHFUL CHILDREN

BY MARK MCWHORTER

“One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?), 1 Timothy 3: 4-5.

“If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.” Titus 1:6.¹

This qualification is one of the requirements that gets the most discussion. The majority of commentators take the position that not all of a man’s children need to be a Christian for him to be appointed or to serve. A minority take the opposite position. And of those, a percentage do not believe the children need to be alive for him to serve. This chapter will look at this qualification and attempt to give an answer.

Different Cultures?

There are some who claim that Paul gave two different qualifications. This is supposedly because the wording is not identical in the two letters. The first answer to such a claim would be Hebrews 13:

8, “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.” If Jesus is the same throughout time, it would be logical to conclude that he is the same for every culture when it came to doctrine. Since Paul told the Romans to mark anyone who taught anything other than the doctrine they had learned, and he stated to the Corinthians that he taught the same thing to everyone, it would seem contradictory for him to have taught differing qualifications for the elder in relation to his children. Therefore, it seems reasonable that ‘children in subjection’ is equivalent to ‘faithful children.’

Must

The word ‘must’ means that what follows is a command. It is something that is necessary. It is not something that can be ignored. Anything that is a ‘must’ is vital to whatever is being discussed or addressed. Rarely do you find someone who equivocates regarding whether an elder can be an embezzler, or a contentious person, or a drunkard, or a brand new Christian. But, when the topic of children arises all kinds of excuses and doubts are brought forth. Whatever the qualification is, it is a ‘must.’ Since it is a ‘must’ it does not make sense that God would have given it with such vagueness that it cannot be known for a certainty. For if God

¹ Unless otherwise stated, all Scripture quotations in this chapter are taken from the King James Version.

lacked specificity and accuracy regarding it, how could anyone know if they were fulfilling it?

In the Greek text for Timothy and Titus, the word ‘must’ is in the singular active present. This means that those things being itemized are something active which the elder is involved in. The elder is putting effort and thought into them. The elder is not simply contemplating and wishing that it was true. He is making sure it is the case. The *present tense* (in Greek) means that it is an ongoing process. He has demonstrated in the past whatever the ‘must’ is, he is presently demonstrating the ‘must,’ and he will continue to demonstrate the ‘must.’ The ‘must’ is not something that he merely showed at some time in the past but now is not. The ‘must’ is not something that he demonstrates at the time of appointment but at some time in the future does not have to demonstrate. If that were the case, then the *perfect tense* would have been used. The perfect would have been used if the man in time past had met the ‘must,’ but no longer did. The imperfect tense would have been used if the man did not have full completion of the ‘must’ and was allowed to continue in action to attain the ‘must.’

Therefore, whatever is being discussed, regarding the children, is a present situation and will have to continue to be a present situation. This means that it is a necessity that the man’s children have been in subjection, are in subjection and will continue to be in subjection. It means that it is a necessity that the man’s children have been faithful, are faithful, and will continue to be faithful. It means that the man’s children are not accused of living a riotous life and are not accused of such in the future. It means that the man has ruled his house well, is ruling his house well, and continues to rule his house well. (Obviously, we are not disqualifying a man who has had shortcomings in the past but overcame those and has now demonstrated a proper life. The same holds true for the children. They may, at a time in the past, fallen short but for a reasonable amount of time since have demonstrated the ‘must.’)

Rules Well

The elder must rule his house. The word ‘rule’ in the Greek is the combination of two words. They mean ‘in front of’ and ‘to stand.’ So the combination means ‘stand in front of.’ It can mean to stand

before in rank or by practice. It means ‘to be over,’ ‘to superintend,’ ‘preside over,’ ‘to care for,’ ‘to aid,’ ‘to be a protector or guardian,’ and ‘to give attention to.’ It is translated in the King James Version as ‘to be over,’ ‘maintain,’ and ‘rule.’ It is found in 1 Timothy 3:12 in reference to deacons. It is used in Romans 12:8, in reference to miraculous gifts. It is used in Titus 3:8, in reference to maintaining good works. In Titus 3:14, Paul instructs Titus to “maintain good works for necessary uses.” Works must be maintained. It is doubtful that Titus and the other Christians read that and concluded that some good works but not all good works had to be maintained. It is doubtful that they decided that the works needed to be maintained at the time of the reading but down the road the works became unnecessary.

Maintaining good works required them to superintend those works, to aid in assuring the works continued, to give continual attention to them, to be protective of those works, and to take care of those works. There would be constant evaluation and implementation of the works. And the reason is given for maintaining those works: “That they be not unfruitful.” There was a goal in the maintenance. The people needed to be fruitful.

Now go back to 1 Timothy 3. The man is to maintain his house. What is the goal? It is to have those under his rule to be fruitful. It is not simply that he has made rules and the rules have been followed. It is not that he could crack a whip and obedience was forced. The rules and regulations he sets in his house are for the purpose of protecting, caring for, and aiding those under his rank. His is a loving rule. It is a tender rule. It is a rule that has been and continues to be implemented in his house.

The word is used in 1 Thessalonians 5:12. There Paul is telling the Christians to know those that rule over them. The same word used for a man ruling his children is used for a man ruling the church. Going back to 1 Timothy 3:5, he is said to “take care of” the church. The same principle must be included in ruling and taking care of. Those that argue a man rules children but does not rule the church have a problem with Paul. The ruling is not a dictatorial rule. The word in the Greek means ‘to be superimposed, over, and upon’ in ‘caring for and having interest in.’ The word is in the present tense. There is a tender overseeing involved. The man desired and continues to desire his child to

live life according to God's instructions. The man desires and will continue to desire the members of the church to live life according to God's principles.

If the present tense of 'ruling' can be made to only apply to a certain time period, then why could not the present tense of 'caring for' be made to apply to a certain time period. Why could not the 'caring for' be needed at time of appointment, but not made a necessity some years later? If the present tense can be ignored in one instance, why cannot it be ignored in the other?

Those that argue this ruling of the children is only while they are young and at home, have a problem. How would dealing with young children prepare the man to take care of adults? It is usually argued that the man cannot rule his children once they leave home. If a man does not have any rule over an adult child, how does he have rule over them if they are in the church in which he oversees? Since the same word is used for the man and his children that is used for the church, would there not be a major contradiction? According to the argument, the man would not have any responsibility as a father to his child, but he would have the same 'rule' responsibility for the child as member of the congregation. It is many times argued that 'rule' for a child cannot be applied once the child leaves home. It is stated that one cannot force an adult child to do anything. That argument cannot stand since the same word 'rule' is used for the members of the church.

The rule must be done 'well.' The Greek word is most often used in a moral sense. It means in a good place, honestly, recovering, nobly, commendably, excellent and well. It comes from a word meaning beautiful. This word occurs 36 times in the New Testament. It is used for doing a proper job. The man who rules well is proper in leading his child in a noble, commendable, honest, and excellent manner. Since the well is in reference to how he rules, it is assumed the child will emulate the same character. This is why the child will not be accused of certain lifestyle characteristics. This same rule is to be used with those in the church. This all leads to a conclusion that there must have been some evidence from the children that such rule is active toward the children. Remember, the 'must' is in present active tense.

Riot and Unruly

Riot in the Greek is a word meaning *unsaved* and *excess*. It is an abandoned, dissolute life. It only occurs three times in the New Testament. It is used in Luke 15:13, in reference to the Prodigal son having wasted his inheritance in a fully sinful life. It is used in 1 Peter 4:4, when speaking about non-Christians not understanding the Christian's unwillingness to engage in certain activities. The activities mentioned in verse three are lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries. There is very little chance of a younger child being accused of these things. What innocent youngster would make such choices? The list is of things that requires a choice. It is agreed that a child in the teen years could be accused of such; how much more likely is it that an adult child would be accused of these? Granted, if a child at home is into such things, the man would be unqualified to lead God's people. But, how is it that some think that if the man's adult child is living in such, it is in no way connected with how the child was reared? This is not to say that a child cannot stumble from the faith and make mistakes. It is not saying that the children must be perfect. But, God said that a man whose child is living in such a state disqualifies the man. Remember, the 'must' is active present. If all the man's children are gone from home, and the man is no longer responsible in any way for the children, how is he to fulfill this qualification? There would be no way of fulfilling the 'must.' If it is argued that the children were not accused of riot when they were physically under his roof, and therefore he is qualified 15 years later, Paul made a mistake in using the present active.

Unruly in the Greek means unsubdued, insubordinate, disobedient, or incapable of being subjected to control. It is used only four times in the New Testament. It is used in Titus 1:10 in reference to those in the world who attempt to adulterate the church with false teachings. The context is those who refuse sound teaching. It is used in 1 Timothy 1:9 for those whom the law is made for; the lawless, the ungodly, the unholy, etc. Again, *it is used for those who have the ability to make decisions*. It is not in reference to a young child who does not pick up toys when instructed to do so. A teenager could come under this term.

However, remember that part of the intent of the word is to reference those who are incapable of

being subjected. What would it say of a man if he cannot get his teenage son or daughter to be in subjection? Even if he can force the child to get in the car and attend worship, and can quarantine the child at home, how does that translate to knowing how to care for the church? The real test of how the child has been reared is when the child is an adult. Are they of a humble heart and mind, willing to be instructed in sound teaching? Do they live godly lives? Do they restrain themselves from riotous and unruly living?

If one argues that adult children are not being included with these two terms, then the ability of the man to fulfill these is very limited. He would only be capable of this when his child is a teenager, or a young adult still living at home. Does it seem reasonable that God listed these two terms as vitally important in choosing the man, but the man has at most 10 years to demonstrate the qualities in his child? And how is it that what a man did 30 years ago determines he is totally qualified in the present? While it is true that past actions can have permanent consequences, it seems unlikely God would be satisfied with what a man did 30 years ago. God has always required present obedience. Remember, the 'must' is in the present active.

The children are not to be '*accused*.' The word is used primarily in the New Testament for formal charges. The formal charges could be false charges, but they are formal. The one being charged is responsible for answering the charge. While a young child might be accused of something, the parents are the ones who would be ultimately responsible for addressing the charges. A teenager would answer charges made, but the ultimate responsibility is still seen as the parents.' However, an adult is fully responsible for answering any formal charges made against him/her. The adult child should have been reared with the foundation to avoid such accusations. The man is not held guilty for the accusation being made. But the man does reap consequences of the accusations toward the child if they are true.

Subjection With All Gravity

The word 'subjection' in the Greek carries the meaning of 'subordination, obedience.' It is closely associated with another Greek word, translated *subjection* and *submission*. Both were used as military terms addressing the ranking of officers. The

Greek word in this context is found only four times in the New Testament. In 2 Corinthians 9:13, it is used for the submission to the gospel. That is not a forced submission but rather a willing submission. It is a submission from love for the Lord. It is used in Galatians 2:5 when making the point that they did not give submission to false teachers. There was no forced submission and no forced non-submission. Christians made the mental decision to not submit. In 1 Timothy 2:11, it is used in stating that women should submit themselves in worship with men present. It is a proper choice of mind to obey and worship as God wants the worship to be directed and performed.

It is many times argued that this regulation of subjection only applies to children while they are under the roof of the parent. But the usage of the word demonstrates that subjection is also a term applied to adults. As an adult, the child still has a responsibility to be in a subjection to the parent. There is a parent-child relationship that never ends. It is not argued that the subjection of a three year old is the same as the subjection of a 16-year old or the subjection of a 40-year old. The subjection is tied to the ruling. As a child matures the 'ruling' changes to accommodate the level of self-restraint and self-government the child demonstrates.

The subjection of an adult church member to the gospel would entail the member to be in submission to the elder. The elder cannot force a member to obey God. The elder cannot force a member to obey *him*. The elder through proper 'caring for' aids and encourages the member to obey God and the eldership.

There seems to be no logic in stating that a man who was able to make his children at home live a certain way, has demonstrated that he can lead an adult. It is obvious the ruling and subjection for an adult is different than the ruling and subjection of a young or even teen child. Therefore, the conclusion is that by having an adult child in subjection, through a loving relationship of guidance and rule, the man demonstrates he is capable of leading the church of our Lord.

It may still be argued that it is wrong to say adult children are in subjection to their parents. 2 Timothy 3:1-5 gives a list of sins that men will be involved with in the last days: Covetousness, truce-breaking, unholy, unthankful, traitors, despising of good, and blaspheming are some listed. These

would be things which primarily adults would do. It is not impossible that a teenager could be involved. Notice that ‘disobedient to parents’ is included. The implication is that adults can be disobedient to parents. This conclusion is bolstered by verse six, which says such persons are those which enter houses and lead women into sin. It is granted that a teenager might be able to do this. But it cannot be denied that this is primarily addressing adults.

“And he that curses his father, or mother, shall surely be put to death,” (Exodus 21:17; Leviticus 20:9). This law is in a context of adult sins. Two verses prior it is said that a man who smites his father or mother is to be put to death, (v.15). It is true that a child still living at home could smite a parent. But this condemnation surely would not end when the child became an adult. Neither would the cursing condemnation.

“Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or his mother,” (Deuteronomy 27:16). The Hebrew word for ‘setteth light’ means to despise or lightly esteem. This could be done by a child still under the roof of the father. However, it can be done by an adult child as well. The Hebrew word is used in Isaiah 16:14, where God is condemning Moab. Imagine the distaste of God toward Moab and apply that to a child toward parents. This can apply to a teenager ‘under the roof’ or an adult child. It suggests the ability to have a mature reasoning.

Exodus 20:12 is part of what is known as the Ten Commandments. Children are to honor their parents. The reward is that they will have prolonged days. All the other commands are for all people at all ages. Are we to believe that this one is only for children as long as they are at home? Are we to believe that if a child honors his parents until he leaves home that he is rewarded for those years? Are we to believe that as soon as the child leaves home there is no honor required?

The word ‘honor’ is from a Hebrew word which means ‘heavy’ and is used with the sense of wealth, rich, honorable, or glorious. The child is using their will to bring glory to the parent. Is that something an adult child can do for a parent? Is it something that is demanded of God? Jesus believed it was. He quotes the command in Matthew 15:4. He also refers to Exodus 21:17. In the context he is condemning the scribes and Pharisees for their mistreatment of their parents. A reading of Matthew

15:1-9 leaves no doubt that adult children have a responsibility of subjection to their parents. Jesus stated that if adult children did not give honor to their parents, they were hypocrites and their heart was far from God. All other commands could be followed but they were in vain if parents were not given the honor God demanded.

This relationship is addressed in Ephesians 6:1-2, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise.” This is a direct reference to Exodus 20:12. There is a connection made between obeying and honoring—to do them is ‘right’ and is tied to the ‘first commandment with promise.’ The fact that this cannot only apply to children in the home, is addressed in Proverbs 23:22, “Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old.” How could an adult child be hearkening to or not despising the parents if that child was not living the life of a Christian?

If a man has no ‘rule’ with his adult children, and the adult children have no responsibility to the father, what is to be done with Proverbs 1:8-9? “My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother: for they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.” Or Proverbs 4:1-2, “Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding. For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law.” Or Proverbs 6:20, “My son, keep thy father’s commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother.” If the adult child has no responsibility of subjection to the father, then much of Proverbs is directed to children at home. That would mean that once leaving home, there is no reason to hear the instruction.

The children are to be in subjection with ‘all gravity.’ The word ‘all’ needs little commentary. Whatever gravity is, every bit of it must be employed. Gravity comes from a Greek word meaning, ‘honesty, dignity, reverence, majesty, sanctity and respect.’ The word is used in Titus 2:7, when telling young men in the church how they should behave. Young men should have respect and reverence toward the other members of the church. Not only church members but to all in the world. They should present themselves with dignity and a certain majesty as children of God. If young men are instructed to carry themselves with such character-

istics toward others, how much should children do in interaction with their parents?

Is it to be argued that once a child leaves the home the child has no responsibility to treat the parent with special regard as the parent? Even if one were to argue such, the child still has the responsibility to have all gravity toward older Christians. Thus, the adult child would have all gravity toward the man desiring to be an elder.

It would also be questioned how the man's children would abide by this instruction if they are young? With 'all gravity' indicates the ability and maturity of mind to understand dignity, sanctity, reverence and honesty. And that is tied to subjection to rule. And remember, the 'must' is in the present active.

Know

The word comes from a Greek word which is tied to experience. It is possible to know something as a topic. It is possible to recognize something and to say you know it. I might know a man named Bill. But, I might not know all about him. I might know a lot about him if I have read his life story. But I cannot know Bill in terms of this Greek word unless I have spent a significant amount of time with him. That would give me an experiential knowledge of Bill. The word is used in several ways and therefore it is not wrong to see a combination of meanings within one context. The word means 'to see, to perceive with the eyes or senses, to discern, to pay attention, to inspect or examine, to visit, to have knowledge, to be skilled, or to have regard for one.'

So, the man has a significant and proper knowledge of having his children in subjection to his rule. This obviously cannot be the case if his children are small. He has experience with his children having all gravity toward him. His knowledge is also the knowledge of the congregation. They must know that his children have proper respect and reverence for their father. They must know that his children have not been rightly accused of a sinful lifestyle. This qualification is not only dependent on the father and children but on those who are deciding to make this man an elder. If they do not really know what the relationship is between the man and his children, if they do not know the reputation of the children, then they do a great disservice to themselves by appointing the man. His lov-

ing care and guidance of the congregation is likely to be similar to how he treats and guides his children. This is God's directive. Remember, the 'must' is present active.

Blameless

This word comes from a Greek word meaning 'unreprovable, unaccused, or not called into question.' It is used in 1 Corinthians 1:8 in reference to being in the right condition at the Second Coming of Jesus. The person is to be righteous to stand before him in the Judgment. He is to be in such a spiritual state that Jesus cannot make accusation from the Throne of unrepentant and uncovered sin. There is no spiritual blemish that would prevent entrance to Heaven.

If the qualifications given are met, the man can stand before God as blameless. It is very interesting that in Titus, Paul reiterates this blamelessness immediately after the injunction regarding the children. And it is specified that he is a steward. The things given to him are to have been used for the glory of God and the increase of spirituality of him and his family. His children have been given to him and he 'must' have reared them in the way of the Lord. And he must continue to do what he can for them to guide them to heaven.

If his children do not meet the requirements then the man fails to meet what God wants in a man to be an elder in His church. It seems unlikely that God would require such blamelessness while the children are under his roof, but have no consideration of his standing with the children after they are no longer under his roof. Can it be argued that it is possible to know, *for a certainty*, that nothing the man did while his children were under his roof had any influence over how they live after they are not under his roof? If all of a man's children are living righteous lives when they no longer are under his roof, can one conclude that nothing the man did while they were under his roof had any bearing on their present life?

It is sometimes argued that if only one child rejects the life of a Christian, and all the other children live proper lives, that the one child does not nullify the man's ability to serve as an elder. It is argued that all the other children are sound, so obviously it is all the child's fault and responsibility. This argument contends that the man has done and continues to do a great job with his children. What

if only one child remains in Christ and all the others fall away from Christ? By the same logic this would mean that the one child turned out right in spite of the man's rule in his home. The argumentation is that the man cannot be held accountable for the adult child. But does any of it matter if the requirement has nothing to do with adult children? The man could have ten children and all ten could be heathens. It would not matter, if the requirement did not include adult children! The man would be blameless because the adult children's reputation and lifestyle (according to some) have no bearing on his appointment as an elder. Remember, the 'must' is present active.

His Own House

Many argue that this phrase proves that the man is not held accountable in any way for an adult child. Usually Genesis 2:24 is brought into the discussion to support this conclusion, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh." Jesus quoted this verse in Matthew 19:5. It is a true statement. Jesus did not lie. This was God's plan from the beginning of the world. However, this states nothing in regards to the spiritual parental responsibility; nor does it say anything regarding the child's subjection to the parent, except for the fact that a new separate family unit is created. If this verse is to be taken as the final say on the parent-child relationship, then look at what it does not say. It does not say that the wife is to leave her father and mother. If the man leaving his father and mother is an indication that all parent-child relations are nullified, then the absence of saying the woman leaves means that all parent-child relations remain.

Even if it were agreed that this rule negated a married adult child's subjection to the parents, it does not negate it for an unmarried adult child. Where is the teaching found that negates their relationship? Is it to be proposed that the married adult child is given a different status just because of the marriage? Would the adult non-married child have to 'stay' with the parents until the marriage came? Is the intent of the verse to give the only way a child negates the parental cord? Is it given as an incentive for the child to get out from under the parents?

To press this verse to address the finalization of parental rule and child submission is to raise trou-

bling questions. It is also to misunderstand 'a man's house.' There are instances where house is used for a structure. That is not denied. But scripture has clear teaching that a man's house references his family. It includes children and servants. It includes young and old children.

In Genesis 34:19, a pagan adult son is said to have more honor than 'all the house of his father.' If this does not include adult children, then it is saying that the son had more honor than all the young children still at home. In verse 30, Jacob says to Simeon and Levi that they have made great trouble for him. He says he will be destroyed with his 'house.' He obviously is referencing all of his children in that. Simeon and Levi come back that they could not allow their sister to be treated as a harlot. Is it going to be argued that Simeon and Levi committed murder, but only those living under the roof of Jacob are going to be held accountable? Obviously Jacob's house includes his adult sons. This also shows that Jacob had a fatherly authority in dealing with his adult sons.

There are numerous instances where the 'house of Jacob' includes the entire nation of Israel, (Exodus 19:3; Psalm 114:1; Isaiah 2:5-6; Isaiah 48:1; Ezekiel 39:25; Micah 2:7; and others).

In Genesis 41:51, Joseph names his son Manasseh because God had made him forget "all my father's house." Who was Joseph referencing? Was he saying he had forgotten all those youngsters living under Jacob's roof? Or was he referencing all of Jacob's adult sons and all others who were related to Jacob and served him?

In Genesis 46:27, we read, "and the sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, were two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten." Who will contend that the souls of the house of Jacob did not include Jacob's adult sons and their wives?

Genesis 50:7-8 could not be clearer, "And Joseph went up to bury his father: ... and all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and his father's house: only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds, they left in the land of Goshen." Jacob's adult sons were included in his house.

The story of Jacob's sons going into Egypt to buy corn demonstrates that Jacob had fatherly rule over his sons. They obeyed their father in going to Egypt. They had sorrowful thoughts and compassionate thoughts regarding what to tell Jacob. They

felt responsibility toward their father. Why would any of that matter if they did not answer in some way to their father? Why would it matter if their father had no fatherly rule as we have already discussed?

If Jacob had no parental authority and rule after his adult sons were married, why did he bother with the blessings he gives them in Genesis 49? If Jacob had no fatherly rule over his sons, and they had no child to parent subjection, why did Jacob bother to give his sons the advice in Genesis 50:17? Why would the sons want a blessing from him?

Job had married children. In 1:5, he offers sacrifices for his sons. Putting aside the possibility that he is a Priest in the Patriarchal Age, why would he be concerned about sin in his sons' lives if he had no parental rule or responsibility for his children? We are told that he did this continually. He was very concerned for his children's spiritual condition.

It is argued that present-day parent-child relationships cannot be educated from examples in the Patriarchal Age. It is argued that their culture and customs are different from ours and therefore are irrelevant to the topic of the elder and his children. They will again reference Jesus quoting Genesis 2:24 and say that is the true guide. It has even been argued that it would be wrong to have such a relationship. If that assertion is correct, then all of the families in the Patriarchal Age were living in sin. It makes all of the Patriarchs ignore what Genesis 2:24 supposedly says. Or it makes them at least some of them totally ignorant of God's will. It would mean that many of the lessons that could be learned from the Patriarchs regarding family are tainted. Since God spoke directly with the Patriarchs, are we to conclude that God did not communicate with any of them to instruct them to change their wrongful culture? If such a contention is true, then what to do with certain cultures today? There are nomadic cultures where the Patriarch has the same role as those in the Biblical Patriarchal Age. Is it scriptural for them to have that arrangement, or should they be taught to change their culture due to sin? Is it moral in God's eyes for them to have such arrangement because it is their culture? If their culture then changes to become more like western societies, would they be wrong to go back to the old culture?

Eli had two sons who served as priests. The Bible says they were the sons of Belial, (1 Samuel 2:12). Eli went to speak with them regarding their sins, (2:23). It is of interest that it is recorded they "hearkened not unto the voice of their father," (2:25). God found it important to give that specific. He could have stated that they did not listen to the prophet of God. He could have said they did not listen to an older priest. But he found it of importance to specify they did not listen to their father. There should have been a deeper appreciation by the two men that it was their father entreating them.

In 1 Chronicles 22, David calls for Solomon and gives Solomon fatherly advice about serving God. Solomon is an adult. Yet David desires to guide him in a proper relationship with God and the people of Israel. Almost everyone is familiar with God asking Solomon what he could give him. Solomon asks for wisdom. That was not something Solomon came up with on his own. He was subjecting himself to David's rule. David had told him to ask for wisdom. Solomon at this point is demonstrating just exactly how he was humbling himself to his father. 1 Kings 3:6-7 gives a wonderful picture of an adult son showing respect and subjection to a father, "And Solomon said, Thou has shewed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. And now, O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in." He considered himself part of David's house. He was an adult. But being an adult did not sever the parent-child relationship.

It should be noticed that even though these fathers had rule and the children were in subjection, there were limitations. There is not recorded an instance where the father went into the sons' tents or homes and told them where to put the furniture. There is no record of the father getting involved in the daily home activities of the children. Those adult children indeed had left father and mother and had created their own family unit, the adult son's house. But in major decisions, particularly spiritual matters, the father was consulted. And at times the father intervened.

It is not the case that stating a son is part of his father's house means the father has dictatorial rule of the adult son's house. The father has an adult to adult relationship with the son. The son has a more intimate reason to listen to his own father than to another adult. The father has a more intimate relationship to give spiritual advice to his own children. It is this adult to adult, parent-child relationship which is included in the qualifications of an elder.

If the father sees spiritual problems in the adult child's life, the father has a God given responsibility to approach the child. The child has a God given responsibility to listen and apply that Godly advice. That is proper subjection as being a member of the father's house.

In Ephesians 6:4, Paul wrote, "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." The word 'provoke' comes from a Greek word for bringing emotions up to a level of another. The father is not to bring the child's anger up to his. This means the father disciplines with love and kindness. Some may argue that this only applies to children living under the roof of the father. That cannot be known as a certainty from the statement. If this does only apply to the child while living at home, where is the injunction for a father not to do so to an adult child? If it only applies to the child living at home, does this mean the father is only concerned for the child's spirituality until the child leaves home? Does it mean that the minute the child moves out of the house the father becomes totally unconcerned as a father?

A parallel passage is found in Colossians 3:21. The Greek word in this verse for 'provoke' means to send the child's anger above the father's. The reason given is that the child will not be discouraged. The father is not to interact with the child in a way that disheartens or creates a spiritless child. Again there is no way to prove this is only for the child at home. Consistent improper interventions by a father can cause many problems with an adult child.

It has already been shown from Proverbs 1:8; 4:1; and 6:20 that adult children have the responsibility to be in subjection to the father. These verses also demonstrate a father's concern and rule in the adult child's life. The author of Proverbs did not intend for his son to go solo when he became an

adult. The writer also stated in Proverbs 5:1-2, "My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding; that thou mayest regard discretion, and that thy lips may keep knowledge." Instead of 'regard' the American Standard Version has 'preserve.' The father wanted his son to preserve the wisdom which God's word brings. This wisdom and knowledge would follow the son his entire life. By the son following this injunction, the father is 'ruling' in his son's life.

Faithful

All of the forgoing discussion was essential in addressing what is meant by *faithful* in context of an elder's children. Much more could have been said regarding the above but it is hoped enough has been stated to lay a sturdy foundation.

1 Samuel 2:35 gives a good definition of faithful: "And I will raise up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind: and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine anointed forever." God said the faithful would obey his commandments. The faithful individual would not just desire to do God's will, he would actually do his will. The faithful one would be close to God for eternity. The adult children of an elder have done and continue to do according to all that the father desires. This obviously is in regard to those things the Father of Heaven desires. It is obedience to the Will of God.

"Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations," (Deuteronomy 7:9). God is a faithful God. This is stated in connection with keeping his covenant. It means he does that which is right. He always does that which is in the best interest of those he loves and that love him. The man being appointed to the eldership has been and continues to be faithful to his children. He wants the best for them. In return, the children will be faithful to him. They will obey his wishes out of love.

In Nehemiah 9, there is a declaration made to God by some Levites. In verse 8, they reference God's approval of Abraham with "And foundest his heart faithful before thee." It was not good enough that Abraham followed the rules of God. Abraham's heart was found faithful. Abraham was not being forced or coerced to do anything. The children of an elder (including adult children), will

have a faithful heart to their father. Out of respect and love, they would not want to do anything that would cause spiritual grief from their father. Such an attitude is the mature level of subjection. It is a voluntary subjection. It is a reverential subjection that produces a desire to be faithful to those things the godly father would desire.

Psalm 119:86, “All thy commandments are faithful: they persecute me wrongfully, help thou me.” The Hebrew word for ‘faithful’ in this verse includes the meanings of ‘firmness, security, truth, and stability.’ We can count on God to be secure and firm. His commands are true and give stability. The elder has been a father who reared children to be firm, secure, stable and true to his commands and desires, which spiritually are God’s commands and desires. The children cannot be faithful without these characteristics and qualities.

In a sense, the elder’s children are his witnesses. They give evidence to their father’s principles, teachings, and leadership. “A faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies,” (Proverbs 14:5). Faithful children are faithful to the environment and training they have received. Their words and lives give testimony to the home from which they came. It is true that each person has the right and ability and responsibility for their own lives. It is true that a child can be reared appropriately and not live the appropriate life. But God says that should not and does not happen often: “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it,” (Proverbs 22:6). This does not say a child will not falter and fall. However, it does say that it does not happen frequently. And it does say that when a child is properly guided in their life (secular career matched with spiritual life), that even if the child falls, he will return later in life.

Now, remember the ‘must.’ It is in the present active. So, even if all was done right in the home, and even later when the child is an adult, if the child is not faithful, the man is not meeting the ‘must’ of the qualification.

In a sense, children are the messengers sent out from the home. It is the desire of a godly parent that when the children leave to begin their own ‘houses,’ that they will be God’s light in the darkness of the world. Their desire is that they have trained them to live righteously in front of all men. When the children do this, the parent gets great

pleasure. “As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him: for he refresheth the soul of his masters,” (Proverbs 25:13). A faithful child messenger brings great happiness and refreshment to the father. It means that the child is reliable in presenting the father’s message. And in presenting the father’s message, the child is presenting the Father’s message.

The word ‘faithful’ in Titus 1:6 comes from a Greek word meaning ‘true, believing, and sure.’ The American Standard Version translates it as ‘believing.’ The Greek word is used 54 times in the New Testament. In 1 Timothy 1:12, Paul used the word about himself. He says that he thanks the Lord who counted him faithful. Obviously Paul is stating that the Lord knew, and expected, Paul to do everything in his life to live accurately and lovingly in accordance with the Lord’s will.

The faithful children of an elder do everything they can to live according the father’s will. Some will say that this does not mean the children have to be Christians. This author has attempted through exegesis to demonstrate that the children being discussed are old enough to know right from wrong. They are old enough to recognize sin in their lives. They are old enough to know they need Christ’s blood. The faithful children include adult children.

It has been argued that the children only have to be faithful to their father. It is argued that this is not saying the children have to be faithful to the Heavenly Father. How can a child be faithful to a godly man who is appointed as an elder and not be faithful to God? That is simply an impossibility. There would not be proper subjection to the rule of the father.

A priest’s daughter that committed adultery or prostitution was to be put to death. Her actions profanes the father. The implication of Leviticus 21:9 is that if she is not put to death, the father cannot perform as a priest. So, an elder with an unfaithful child also can be profaned by that child.

Some will argue that it is unfair and unrighteous to penalize or hold guilty the father for sins his children committed. God makes it clear in Ezekiel 18 that the godly father is not held guilty for his children’s sins. (This is not to say that there might be guilt for parental mistakes which led to the children’s sins.) Nor is a child found guilty for the father’s sins. However, there can be repercus-

sions for someone who did not sin. In Deuteronomy 23:2-3, God makes it clear that the children of a bastard could not be a part of the Israelite congregation. This held true until the tenth generation. He also commanded that no Ammonite or Moabite could be a part of the congregation. And this prohibition held all the way until the tenth generation. Was God holding the children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, etc. guilty of sin of their ancestor? No but they were reaping the results of those sins.

God is not necessarily holding a man guilty for his children's sins in the directives for an elder. However, the man is reaping the results. There could be several reasons for this. The home life may have been different than anyone outside the home could know. So, while by all appearances the man was a stellar father, the father's rule over his children in the home contributed and even possibly caused the child to reject him and God. The elder will be counseling members who have wayward children. It would be human nature for those members to reply with accusations regarding his children. While the elder may have done nothing wrong, the efficacy of the elder's intervention is hampered by the unfaithfulness of his children. The elder's reputation in the community could be hampered by unfaithful children. People talk. Rumors spread. Respect is lost. Even if the man has done nothing wrong, his leadership of the church comes into question as well as the glory that the church is to bring to God.

The question arises if *all* the children need to be Christians. With all that has been covered in this chapter it is the author's recommendation that all should be Christians. The author also leans toward the idea that all should be adults and 'on their own.' It is only when the adult children are living their own lives, in their own house, that the results of their time in the father's home can truly be seen. [While not a fast or absolute finding, there is some evidence for this when considering the Greek word 'presbuteros.' It is used for men and women in the New Testament. It is used when speaking of the elder men and women in 1 Timothy 1-2. Just a few verses later the widow indeed is discussed. This woman must be at least sixty years old, (vs. 9). In cultures of the time, presbuteros could mean fifty or older, or at least sixty. In the Jewish priesthood, priests could retire at the age of fifty, (Numbers

8:25). If the age of fifty or older is connected with the eldership in the Bible, then it is likely the majority of the children referenced would be young adults. Again, this is not a hard and fast rule that this author would bind. But, it should at least be considered in the discussion.]

The question arises as to whether all the elder's children need to be alive. Not all of the man's children need to be alive. But, at least one needs to be. If all the children are dead, he has no way of fulfilling the requirement. Remember, the 'must' is present active.

It has been contended that the amount of time between the establishment of the church and the first appointment of elders, does not allow for men to have fulfilled the requirement as seen in this chapter. First of all, many of the first Christians were faithful Jews. These men would already have a solid knowledge of Scripture and would have reared their families in the truth. Secondly, one must take into account the miraculous gifts of the early years of the church. Elders would likely have gifts. Some would have miraculous knowledge and wisdom. This would aid in converting their children. It would not take the place of being the right kind of father. It would only aid the man in his role as father. There are no solid facts to dismiss that qualified elders could be appointed.

Conclusion

It is believed there is enough evidence to support the conclusion that an elder's children should be Christians. They must be faithful to God. If the father is godly, they must be faithful to the father. Faithful children are the evidence of a man who rules his own house. Faithful children are evidence of proper subjection. Faithful children aid a man in being blameless before God. Faithful children are the sign that a man will properly lead the church of our Lord. Adult children directly affect a man being qualified to be an elder.

Shepherding the Flock: Not Given to Wine

BY SCOTT CRAWFORD



“Me Paroinos”

The deleterious effects and lamentable outcomes of drinking upon the individual, and society in general, have been well documented. Even as the evidence of medical and other scientific data continues to mount in opposition to the use – even in moderate amounts – of alcohol; while the world, by contrast, continues to promote the consumption of alcohol with only minor head nod to the ever present oxymoron, “Drink responsibly.”

The story of Nadab and Abihu has long been a part of our religious instruction. The number of preachers that have not used the example of these sons of Aaron to speak to fellow congregants about the need to follow the instructions of the Lord is few; and not only follow, but stringently hold to the instructions and examples given us in the pages of Scripture. While the point made is paramount, closely upon the heels of that error committed Aaron receives instructions by God regarding the conduct of the Priests.

Then the Lord spoke to Aaron, saying: “Do not drink wine or intoxicating drink, you, nor your sons with you, when you go into the tabernacle of meeting, lest you die. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations, that you may distinguish between holy and

unholy, and between unclean and clean, and that you may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord has spoken to them by the hand of Moses (Lev. 10:8-11; NKJV).¹

Although we cannot be absolutely certain that the sin of Nadab and Abihu stemmed from a state of inebriation, the proximity of this command points strongly to the probability. Matthew Henry was of the opinion that the connection between the destruction of the brothers and the consumption of alcohol was understood. Henry further took the opportunity to note that even though priests in general were not restricted in the use of alcohol, during the time of their ministrations at the Temple they were forbidden (cf. Ezek. 44:21). “Drunkenness is bad in any,” says Henry, “but it is especially scandalous and pernicious in ministers, who of all men ought to have the clearest heads and the cleanest hearts.”² While pronouncing judgment on Ephraim and Je-

¹ Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture taken from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

² Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible: Vol. I – Genesis to Deuteronomy* (Old Tappan: Fleming H Revell Company, 1970), 482-83.

rusalem, Isaiah has this to say about the conduct of the priests and prophets.

But they also have erred through wine, and through intoxicating drink are out of the way; The priest and the prophet have erred through intoxicating drink, They are swallowed up by wine, They are out of the way through intoxicating drink; They err in vision, they stumble in judgment. For all tables are full of vomit and filth; No place is clean (Isa. 28:7-8).

Can anyone miss the point? Those that were to be the very mouthpiece of God, giving not only the instruction and interpretation of the Scriptures to the people but also being a living conduit for the words of God as ones that were moved by the Spirit, had failed in their office because of the ravages of alcohol. If only someone had reminded them to “Drink responsibly.”

Echoing of the sentiments expressed thru Solomon (i.e., Prov. 23:29-35), the Holy Spirit uses Paul to encourage Christians in general to clothe themselves in the armor of light, to live in such a way that revelry and drunkenness, lewdness and lust, strife and envy are put behind them (Rom. 13:12-14). In two strongly worded passages, Paul is guided to list drunkenness among other abominable behaviors, and then adds the sobering conclusion that those practicing these behaviors “will not inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Cor. 6:9-10; Gal. 5:19-21). Yet to offer a criticism of certain behaviors without offering a plan attack would be idle talk, unworthy of the great apostle. Therefore, Paul tells us not to be drunk on wine which leads to a life empty of use, but rather we should be filled with the Holy Spirit so that we can not only minister to and encourage other Christians, but also be able to give thanks to God for all things (Eph. 5:18-20). Here then is where the Old Testament instructions to the Priests and the New Testament instructions to Christians in general meet – by both Peter and John that Christians are,

in fact, priests to God (1Pet. 2:9; Rev. 5:10). If Christians in general are admonished to avoid drunkenness, what should be the attitude of those that lead the people of God?

“Not given to wine,” in 1 Timothy 3:3, is ... “*me paroinos*.” Other translations use such words as “no brawler” (ASV), “not addicted to wine” (NASB), “not a hard drinker” (The New Testament in Modern Speech), “neither a drunkard” (The Berkley Version), and “neither intemperate” (The New Testament in Modern English) to name but a few.³ The word – *paroinos* – is noted by Thayer to indicate a person that sits long at his wine, and then a secondary sense associated with the word: quarrelsome, a brawler or abusive.⁴

An interesting note regarding the specific Greek word is that it is only used twice in the New Testament, at 1 Timothy 3:3 and Titus 1:7; a *hapax* used only in reference to those that desire the office of Elder, Bishop, or Overseer in the Pauline corpus. As long as we have a reliable translation of this word, and from the evidence of most lexicographers we do, the thought being conveyed by the Holy Spirit is beyond even the admonitions given to the general

Christian populous. The thought conveyed points specifically to the fact that our leaders should desire to defend the gospel (Titus 1:9) and the care for the people of God (Heb. 13:17) rather than the consumption of alcohol and the accompanying decrease in social responsibility and propensity for violent confrontation.

Drink responsibly!?

The negative admonition given in the words “*me paroinos*” is well summarized by Guy N. Woods, “To the lowest depths of degradation do men often descend because alcohol has dulled their sense, destroyed their spiritual perception, and ren-

*What man, entrusted with
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ical destruction?*

³ Curtis Vaughn, ed. *The New Testament from 26 Translations* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1967), 968.

⁴ Joseph H. Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Coded with Strong's Concordance Numbers*, 8th ed. (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 2007), 490.

dered them incapable of moral judgment.”⁵ As those men that lead a congregation go thru their life, they should be expected to understand the challenges that are faced by the church and “grow in the knowledge of what is happening in the culture because of the world or ‘age.’”⁶ Do we truly believe that a leader is connected with the difficulties of a congregation if that Elder has had his senses dulled by the consumption of alcohol? The truth that the church is “guided, governed, and controlled wholly by the Bible, God’s spiritual law and God’s inspired ritual”⁷ is frequently recalled by preachers and teachers. How much is too much alcohol when called upon to care for the Lord’s flock with spiritual perception? As has been already seen in several of the Scriptures noted above, and in the media, the sins of the flesh are a nagging and ever present temptation, for “the body is the instrument through which the spirit acts either for good or bad.”⁸ What man, entrusted with souls of the church, should be considered a qualified candidate that indulges in one of the most well-documented sources of moral and ethical destruction?

Imagine this scenario. You have spent the last hour or so in worship to God: raised your heart with others in prayer to the Lord of Heaven, heard a sermon regarding the love of God as expressed by the sacrifice of Jesus, remembered that sacrifice and proclaimed the future return of Christ in the Lord’s Supper, have given of your means to help support your congregation and possibly some missionary efforts, and finally sang praises to your Lord and God with a heart filled with grace. You have the closing prayer and make your way out of the building, shaking hands and hugging those that are closest to you in this world, and finally come to an Elder standing at the back meeting and greeting those Christians as they exit the building. You grasp the hand of that man and say, “A wonderful day ... it was a pleasure to be here among the Saints.” To which he replies, “Sure was. Have a great week, and don’t forget ... drink responsibly.”

⁵ Guy N. Woods, “Drinking Alcoholic Beverages,” *The Spiritual Sword* Vol. 2, no. 4 (July, 1971): 22.

⁶ Tom Holland, “Should Elders Continue to Grow?” *The Spiritual Sword* Vol. 42, no. 2 (January, 2011): 26.

⁷ N. B. Hardeman, *Hardeman’s Tabernacle Sermons Volume II* (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Company, 1958), 195.

⁸ Robertson L. Whiteside, *Doctrinal Discourses* (Fort Worth: The Manney Company, 1955), 57.

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Shepherding the Flock: THE EXTENT OF THE ELDERS' AUTHORITY

BY GANTT CARTER

Do you like to be in control of things? Do you like being under another individual; being under their charge, authority, etc.? Many people strongly dislike the concept of authority, unless they are the ones in charge. Our culture appears to be quite fond of rejecting authority. Authority is often rejected in the home, in civil matters, and even more often (so it seems) in matters of religion.

The English term “authority” refers to “the power to give orders or make decisions: the power or right to direct or control someone or something.”¹

Yahweh, our God, is **the** supreme authority. He is the Most High God. All proper authority finds its origin with the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. In discussing government, the inspired apostle Paul explains, “there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God” (Romans 13:1). Jesus, our Savior, has been

given “all authority in heaven and on earth” (Matthew 28:18).

God has delegated certain authority to different groups and individuals. Read the account of Numbers 16 as an initial example. Notice the fact that it is certainly acceptable for one to exercise the authority given to them by Deity. For one to rebel against a delegated authority is ultimately to rebel against the one who delegated it – God Himself.

The children of God are to be submissive to civil authorities (1 Peter 2:13-15; Romans 13:1-7), unless doing so would be disobedient to God’s law (Acts 4:19-20; 5:29). Concerning the home, children are to be obedient to their parents (Ephesians 6:1-3), the wife is to be submissive to her husband as the head of their home (Ephesians 5:22-24), and the husband must be subject to the will of Jesus (1 Corinthians 11:3).

What about the assembly of the anointed One (church of Christ)? Christ is the head of His body, also called the church (Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:23-24; Colossians 1:18; cf. Matthew 28:18-20). It makes

¹ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/authority>

sense that there is only one body (Ephesians 4:4; 1 Corinthians 12:13), and therefore, that there is only one head (Ephesians 1:22). The Scriptures also clearly and abundantly teach that God desires a group of men to be leaders in His church. These leaders of God's people are identified in the Scriptures as overseers (bishops), elders (presbyters), and shepherds (pastors). "Bishop" is from the Greek term often translated as "overseer," "presbyter" from the Greek word for "elder," and "pastor" from the Greek word usually found in the text as "feed" or "shepherd."

Foundational Texts

What is the extent of the elders' authority? How much authority does the Word of God give to the shepherds of a congregation? It is a common question, and one that will receive varied answers from different sources.

Some claim that the only actual authority elders have is that of leading by example. Others maintain that elders have such an authoritative reach that it extends to very personal demands.

Let us now examine the words of Deity regarding this question/issue. I submit that there exist roughly eight different passages that make reference to the authority of elders within the Lord's body.

*He must **manage** his own household well, with all dignity, keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to **manage** his own household, how will he care for God's church? (1 Timothy 3:4-5).*

The statement and question above is among the qualifications of elders given by Paul to Timothy (1 Timothy 3:1-8). Elders need to manage (to be set over, to rule) their personal house effectively, so that they can be equally effective in managing or attending to the church. If a husband has authority over his home, then it would follow from this passage that elders possess authority over the church. Later in the same letter Paul writes,

*Let the elders who **rule** (or manage) well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching (1 Timothy 5:17).*

The term translated "rule" here (*proistemi*) is the very same Greek term we see earlier in 1 Timothy 3:4-5. If elders have no authority, then why does the apostle have them ruling? What are they ruling over, if not the congregation?

In another list of qualifications for overseers, they are said to be "God's stewards." In context, we can easily discern that overseers are stewards of God's church. The very term "overseer" should make it clear that they are tasked by God with overseeing His body of people (see Acts 20:28; Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:7; cf. 1 Peter 2:25). Consider Thayer's definition of an "overseer": "A man charged with the duty of seeing that things done by others are done rightly" (Thayer's Greek Lexicon, p. 243). Elder and overseer clearly refer to the same position within the church of Jesus (Titus 1:5, 7).

[T]he role of an overseer is to oversee the spiritual vitality of those who make up the local congregation.

We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all (1 Thessalonians 5:12-14).

The phrase "over you" is from the Greek term *proistamenous*, a different grammatical form of *proistemi* that we noted earlier in 1 Timothy 3:4-5 and 5:17. Paul instructs us to appreciate and love those who rule over us in the Lord. The phrase "in the Lord" shows that the authority stems from the Lord. It is reasonable to conclude that he is referring to elders. This submission does not sound like a submission that is done grudgingly or with gritted teeth, but a healthy relationship between members and elders. The exhortation to be at peace among ourselves connects well with respecting elders and their authority. One sure way to help maintain peace in a congregation is to willingly submit to and greatly value our elders. Note the contrast of such in the "idle" or "unruly" mentioned in verse 14. Remember, for one to rebel against a delegated authority is ultimately to rebel against the one who delegated it – God Himself. Rebelling against the authority of the elders is certainly a serious offense.

Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith (Hebrews 13:7).

This verse does speak of “leaders” or “those leading you,” but I humbly suggest that it is not specifically referring to elders. The Hebrew writer states that these specific leaders are the ones who brought the word of God to them. He tells his recipients to pay attention to the outcome of their faithful way of life. I think the best overall interpretation is that the leaders in view here are the apostles (like James, Acts 12:1-5), and men like Stephen (Acts 7:54-60). The Holy Spirit encourages these Hebrew Christians to remember men who had served after the pattern of the faithful throughout the centuries (see Hebrews 11).

Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you (Hebrews 13:17).

The leaders (or “those who rule over you”) in this text are those who are keeping watch over Christians. Such a description quite accurately fits the role of the elders or overseers of a congregation. Christians are clearly under these leaders, for they are directly told to submit to their leadership. “Keeping watch” over souls teaches us that the role of an overseer is to oversee the spiritual vitality of those who make up the local congregation. I submit that the authority of the elders is focused in on spiritual matters, like edification of the faithful, spiritual discipline of the wayward holy ones (cf. Galatians 6:1 and 1 Corinthians 5), and outreach to the community (evangelism and benevolence). It also seems logical to this writer that overseers of a congregation are to be in charge of the withdrawal process described in 1 Corinthians 5:1-13 and 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15. Such spiritual discipline is one way elders keep watch over the members.

Hebrews 13:17 literally tells us to be *persuaded* (see the word “obey”) by our leaders. Of course, we are to “do all things without grumbling or disputing” (Philippians 2:14). God wants us to maintain a submissive attitude toward elders that grants them the liberty to lead with cheerfulness. Let us strive to never make their work a burden on their

shoulders. The text also says that they serve “as those who will have to give an account.” This could be saying that they will have to give an account of how effectively they carried out their role in the body of Jesus, just as all of us will have to give account (cf. 2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:12-14, etc.). However, I tend to view this with an emphasis on the term “as.” The text may simply be saying that they work **as if** they will have to stand and give an account of each member under their charge on the day of judgment. Regardless, the text certainly does not diminish each individual’s responsibility to obey God themselves. No one can truly justify their behavior by blaming an elder or an eldership. “For we must **all** appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil” (2 Corinthians 5:10).

Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which He obtained (for Himself) with his own blood (Acts 20:28).

Have you ever noticed that Paul chose to meet with the elders in the Ephesians congregation? He only met with the elders (Acts 20:17), and not the preacher(s), deacons, or others. Our brother B.J. Clarke observes, “This is because God did not give preachers the authority to oversee the work of the church. It is elders who are to superintend or oversee the work of the church, not the preachers, deacons, or any other members” (B.J. Clarke, online article).

Paul told these elders to give special attention to the congregation over which the Holy Spirit had made them overseers. The Greek term translated as “pay careful attention” is a present, imperative grammatical form. Elders of the Master’s people are to possess a continued diligence in their watchful work. Acts 20 clearly confirms that elders are overseers (Acts 20:17, 28). Thayer defines an overseer as: “A man charged with the duty of seeing that things done by others are done rightly” (Thayer, p. 243). Their authority to oversee the workings of the congregation is limited to their congregation or flock. The authority is delegated from Deity. The Holy Spirit had miraculously appointed them to be elders in that congregation via the work of the apostles. (see Acts 14:23; and

Bradley S. Cobb, p. 213-214).

Elders are to take care of the members or flock under their care. The description is that of shepherds carefully tending to the various needs of their sheep (cf. Psalm 23:1-6). The phrase “care for” refers to tending, feeding, or shepherding a flock. Our English term “pastor” is taken from this Greek term for nourishing and caring for sheep.

The soberness and value of this work is further underscored by the Paul’s reminder that God obtained His assembly of holy ones by shedding His own life giving blood (cf. 1 Peter 1:18-19; Hebrews 9:11-28). To do the body of Christ a disservice is ultimately doing a disservice to Yahweh Himself! Further reason for this careful watching and diligent caring for is found in the verses that follow verse 28.

I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears (Acts 20:29-31).

The shepherds should know their sheep (Acts 20:28) and do their utmost to protect them from themselves and dangerous wolves (cf. Ezekiel 34:1-10). Paul sets himself up as an example of this type of passion for rebuking and restoring (cf. Galatians 6:1). Elders need to make sure that the truth of the Scriptures is faithfully taught and practiced within the body. Sadly, the Holy Spirit through Paul makes it clear that even some elders will depart from the way of truth.

So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: shepherd (or tend) the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory (1 Peter 5:1-4).

As in Acts 20:28, elders are encouraged in this section to shepherd, or take care of, the sheep in all ways. Although elders fulfill the role of shepherds, Peter reminds them that the flock actually belongs to Deity (“the flock of God”). “Shepherd” or “tend” here is the same as used by Paul in Acts 20:28.

The noun form of the word translated “shepherd” or “tend” in this text is found in Ephesians 4:11. This noun is usually translated as “pastors” or “shepherds.” Elders are a part of those that God has set forth “for the equipping of the saints for the work of service” (Ephesians 4:12).

Notice the phrase, “that is among you.” Elders only possess authority over the members of the local congregation. There is **not** a shred of Biblical evidence to even suggest that an elder or elders have authority over more than one local congregation. The concept of archbishops and the like is completely foreign to the writings of the New Covenant. The only Chief-Shepherd in the Scriptures is the anointed One Himself (1 Peter 5:4).

Please do not miss the phrase, “exercising oversight.” Peter does clearly confirm the fact that elders possess authority over the congregation. He does remind them to lead with desire and with gentleness. Elders must not fulfill their role out of misplaced motives. Some may seek to be a part of the eldership for the sake of power, or possibly to gain some financial ground.

Elders are to lead from the front of the battlefield, if you will. A flock (especially made up of human beings) cannot be driven, but they can definitely be led with gentleness and wisdom. Overseers should lead the rest as they follow the lead of the Chief-Shepherd themselves. Jesus is the head; the elders serve to bring about His will on Earth. Elders are to feed with the words of Deity, to tend in all ways, guide to spiritual growth, protect from falsehoods, and correct with all patience the assembly of God.

Elders are certainly **not** to act as dictators (cf. 3 John 9-10). Elders are not lawmakers, but are bound themselves by the law of Christ. For example, they do not have the authority to keep a preacher from preaching the truth (cf. Acts 20:25-27; 2 Timothy 4:1-6)—at least not *legitimate* authority.

The fact that some pastors may misuse and abuse their authority as elders does not mean the

authority is not there at all. In like manner, some elders are not even qualified to serve, but that does not mean that all elders are unqualified. Some use Peter's reference to leading by example to claim that elders can only lead indirectly, but that is isolated hermeneutics. Peter and the other Biblical writers plainly set forth the actual authority of the eldership. The apostle condemns the *abuse* of authority, not spiritual authority altogether. Note again how he tells the elders to tend the flock and to exercise oversight (or management) over them. Given the context, the instruction to submit to elders in 1 Peter 5:5 may be a reference to the role of elders, not merely a general reference to older Christians. We saw similar language ("obey your leaders") employed earlier in Hebrews 13:17.

Commenting on 1 Peter 5:2, Guy N. Woods observed:

"To fail to do so (to oversee) is to be remiss in duty and recreant to the trust imposed; and for the congregation to refuse to recognize this oversight when properly exercised and by duly qualified and appointed elders, is to be in rebellion against God himself" (Woods, p. 124).

Elders are to lead by example, but that complements, not undermines, their authority over the congregation. Paul told Christians to follow his example (see Philippians 3:17; 1 Corinthians 11:1), but that did not nullify his apostolic authority in any way.

"Those in your charge" literally refers to a lot or portion given. Our English term "clergy" comes from this Greek term for lot or allotment. God entrusts His people to the elders to be cared for lovingly; it is special honor indeed.

Further Thoughts

That elders have authority in making decisions in the area of expediency is not explicitly stated in Holy Writ, but who else would be in charge of making such decisions? If the Scriptures are the authority in binding matters, then in what way are elders to "rule" over the congregation? Majority rule among all members of the congregation would lead quickly and easily to chaos and division. Division and strife will still arise with elders exercising proper authority, but the potential is far greater with a more "democratic" form of organization. Let us be thankful for the wisdom of heaven for

this wonderful pattern for congregational leadership. Consider the words of B.J. Clarke on this question:

"The point is that I must obey even in the realm of judgment. It is not enough for me to obey the elders about the things that are obvious. I must submit to the elders even when the decision is based upon human judgment with which I might not agree, unless, of course, that human judgment contradicts God's law. Also, I need to recognize that, in matters of judgment, the wisdom of others may be superior to mine" (B.J. Clarke, online article).

If the elders make a decision that clearly violates the words of God, then we must remain true to God's truth. We must always "obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). In such situations, let us bring the inconsistency to their attention. If they are unrelenting in this error, then let us peaceably remove ourselves from their oversight.

Are the elders the authority overseeing the congregation, or are the members as a whole the final authority? Some suggest that any authority the shepherds may have is "trumped" by the overall desires and opinions of the membership. If the congregation as a whole has the final say, then how exactly is that congregation submitting to its elders (see Hebrews 13:17; and the others discussed above)? I submit that the word of God is the standard for absolute matters (clear right or wrong issues), and that God has delegated all other matters related to His assembly to the elders.

In light of these thoughts, let us recognize that elders would do well to consider the input of the congregation, especially in making significant decisions. For overseers to ignore the needs and input of the members in their charge would be contrary to the teachings of 1 Peter 5:1-4 and others. Elders would be wise to remember that they have been given their authority for the glory of God and for the spiritual vitality of the body, and that they are far from infallible. On the other hand, let the members keep in mind that the elders are not perfect, and that they are not going to lead perfectly either.

It is unreasonable to conclude that elders have the right to meddle in the personal affairs of the members. I cannot find any Scriptural reason to think that the elders can dictate anything in connec-

tion with the work, hobbies, family interactions, friendships, and such like of the members. Elders are not exempt from the Biblical teachings on gossip and meddling in the personal matters of another (2 Thessalonians 3:11; 1 Peter 4:15). Now if something is amiss spiritually in regard to these things, then that is something to be addressed by the elders and even fellow members (Galatians 2:11-ff; 6:1). Along those same lines of thought, it is unscriptural and unwise for any elder or eldership to be “nit-picky” or overbearing toward the preacher, the deacons, or any of the members. Remember, the Holy Spirit says that they are not to be “domineering over those in” their charge (1 Peter 5:3).

There is **no** Biblical support for the concept of a “head elder.” In fact, the Scriptures only speak of a “body of elders” (1 Timothy 4:14) overseeing a local congregation. One elder is not to take the lead over the other elders or the congregation. The decisions of the eldership should be made collectively. Peace and harmony should exist within the body (Ephesians 4:1-ff), and it should certainly be found within the eldership. May all elders be persevering

in seeking unity and order among themselves and the whole assembly of Jesus.

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All quotations from the Holy Writings are taken from the English Standard Version. Any deviations from that English version are my own translation.



Quotes to Ponder

Can elders resign? How long should they serve? Can they be ousted? Let us ask, Can a Christian resign? No one can resign from any work which he is qualified to do and still be pleasing to the Lord. If a brother is Scripturally qualified to serve as an elder, then he cannot resign from that which he is Scripturally qualified to do. As to the length of time that one should serve as an elder, ... he should serve as long as he is qualified to serve. Some grow old and feeble and become inactive; some may become unfit by loss of mental powers or physical strength; but so long as one is qualified and active for the work of an elder, so long should that one serve as an elder. When an elder who is qualified resigns, he resigns the work of God. *No*; a Scripturally qualified elder cannot be ousted by those who are doing the will of the Lord. "Against an elder receive not an accusation, except at the mouth of two or three witnesses." (1 Tim. 5:19.) If the members of the church oust an elder who is Scripturally qualified and who is Scripturally functioning as an elder, then the ones ousting him are rebelling against God's authority and God's work. If an elder is unfaithful in life [or] in his teaching [or] ruling, he is thereby disqualified as an elder.

H. Leo Boles

The Eldership of Churches of Christ

The first prerequisite to teaching is the possession of knowledge. Unless a man knows something that his pupils do not, he can not be their teacher. In order to be teachers, therefore, the Elders must be diligent in the acquisition of Scripture knowledge, and must be at all times better informed in the word of God than the chief part of the congregation. We say the chief part of the congregation, because it is quite possible that a congregation may contain individuals better acquainted with the Scriptures than the Elders, even though the latter be well qualified teachers.

J.W. McGarvey

Treatise on the Eldership

[Reflecting on Elias Cobb:] As Deacon Cobb I first heard his prayers and exhortations, and felt quite sure he was a good man. As Elder Cobb I believed him still a good man, but better as a deacon.

N. Williams, quoted in
A History of Woodstock, Vermont (1889)

See the Lamb without blemish representing the "Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world." The scape-goat which bore away the sins of the people into the land of forgetfulness, is an image or likeness of Christ, who "bear our sins in his own body on the tree." The two birds brought before the altar, the one slain, and the other dipped in his fellow's blood and then let go free, is an image of Christ slain for men, and man dipped, or washed, in his blood and made free by the same. I might mention many more things as figures in the Jewish rites, such as Solomon's Temple, etc., but I forbear. Thus, my friends, you cannot help seeing that the Mosaic dispensation was all a figure or image of things to come.

Abner Jones

The Vision Made Plain: A Sermon (1809)

When we first existed as a church, we had the Presbyterian form of government. But Richard McNemar, that eccentric genius... took it into his head that our existence in a formal body, as a Presbytery, was contrary to scripture—that our bond of union was a carnal bond—that we ought to be united by no bond but Christian love—and that this delegated body stood full in the way of Christ and the progress of the revival... With these enchanting views... he prepared a piece at home, and brought it to the last meeting of our Presbytery held at Cane Ridge, Bourbon County, Kentucky, June, 1804, entitled, "The Last Will and Testament of Springfield Presbytery." None of us had the least thought of such a thing when we came to that meeting; and when it was proposed, we had many objections against dissolving our Presbytery. But, after being together several days, those enthusiastic fancies so far gained the ascendancy over our judgment, that we consented to subscribe the obnoxious instrument.

John Marshall

(signer of the *Last Will and Testament*)

In the New Testament there is no contradiction between faith and obedience. Between faith and law-works, yes; between law and grace, yes; but between faith and obedience, not at all. The Bible recognizes no faith that does not lead to obedience, nor does it recognize any obedience that does not spring from faith.

A. W. Tozer

What Did Jesus See?

BY MICHAEL SHANK

Lesson Texts: Mark 1:40-44; John 4:1-42; Luke 23:39-43

Baxter Evans was a high-level corporate executive, who had worked for a well-known investment firm for 28 years. Over his career with the company, he had become increasingly negative and cynical. He was paranoid about everyone; he believed that his subordinates were thieves and his superiors were all corrupt. Baxter lost all faith in his fellowman, and gave no one the benefit of the doubt. His attitude was strange, because the employees overwhelmingly rated the firm as one of the best organizations to work for, and their corporate culture reflected a “family friendly” company, so no one could understand Baxter Evans’ attitude and perceptions—until one week after his 28th anniversary of being with the firm. The FBI raided Baxter’s office early one Monday morning. They confiscated his computer and his files; Baxter Evans had embezzled over six million dollars from the firm over his 28-year career. As for his attitude? His perception of his fellow employees? He simply saw in them what he saw in himself. In Baxter’s mind, people were a mirror image of his own sins and his own corruption.

What do you see in people? Be careful in how you answer that question, because it may very well reveal the real you, and the kind of person you are deep down inside, in your heart of hearts.

In this article, I want to share with you how our Master saw the common people—not the Pharisees and Sadducees; we know they were whitewashed sepulchers (Matt. 23:27). I’m talking about the regular, everyday people of Jesus’ day.

I believe that we can learn much from how Jesus Christ saw His fellow men and women through three simple scenes in the life of Christ;

Scene 1: Jesus Sees Beyond the Surface

In the first chapter of Mark, at vs. 40, we find Jesus preaching in the synagogues all throughout Galilee. He is approached by a leper who kneeled down to Him and was “beseeching” Him (beseeching means “to beg urgently – to plead”) saying, “If you’re willing, you can make me clean.”

Now, before we examine Jesus’ reaction, and specifically, what Jesus saw in this man, we need to look at what His new disciples probably saw in this man.

In verse 40, Jesus has just called 4 disciples; Simon, and his brother Andrew; and James, son of Zebedee, and his brother John. Four new Jewish

disciples in tow, and all of them probably thought like the rest of the Jews did about lepers.

What did the Jews think about lepers? They knew full well that lepers were in subjection to the priests for inspection and sentencing, and that only God could cure leprosy. Leprosy was considered to be the pinnacle of filth, because if a leper was ultimately pronounced unclean, Leviticus 13:45 said that his clothes shall be rent, and his head shaved bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, “Unclean, unclean.”

The Jews remembered, in the Law and the Prophets, the story of Uzziah, in 2 Chronicles 26. Uzziah was the king who went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense on the altar of incense—but only the priests were sanctioned to do such a thing. The priests warned Uzziah, but he wouldn’t listen, so God smote him on the forehead with leprosy, and he left the temple, spending the rest of his days shut away from everyone.

They also knew Micah 6:13, “Therefore also will I make thee sick in smiting thee, in making thee desolate because of thy sins.”

In other words, the Jews’ mindset was that lepers are cut off from society, and from the Temple. They have leprosy, probably because they’ve sinned. They’re getting what they deserve.

And that’s probably how the disciples saw in this man.

Now, let’s look at Jesus’ reaction to the leper.

Verse 41 says that He was moved with compassion, and He put forth His holy hand and touched him, and said, “I will – be thou clean.” And as soon as he spoke those words, the leprosy disappeared, and the man was clean (verse 42).

Jesus saw multiple opportunities through this encounter:

First, since the Jews knew that only God could cure leprosy, this was a great opportunity for Jesus to demonstrate that He and the Father were one, John 10:30.

Secondly, He demonstrated His great love and compassion to His fellow man; God is love, 1 Jo. 4:8.

Third, Jesus saw the opportunity to fulfill prophecy at that very moment, “That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses” (Matthew 8:17, referring back to Isaiah 53:4).

Fourth, Jesus saw the potential of a faithful worshipper of God. *Why do you say that Mike?* Because in verses 43 and 44, Jesus warned the man and sent him away with this message; “tell no one, but go show yourself to the priest, and offer the things that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them.” In essence, God’s done a great thing for YOU; now you go and do what you’re supposed to do for God; follow God’s commandments under this current dispensation, and do it right now—BE OBEDIENT TO GOD!

Jesus saw beyond the disease, to an opportunity to fulfill the Law and the Prophets; an opportunity to show compassion; to prove that He and the Father were one; and to encourage faithfulness and devotion toward God.

Scene 2: Jesus Saw a Potential Messenger

In the 4th chapter of John, the first 42 verses, Jesus, going through Samaria, comes to the city of Sychar, and meets up with a Samaritan woman drawing water from Jacob’s well. His disciples, meanwhile, had gone into the city to buy some groceries. Now, the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans, but Jesus sees something in this particular woman, and He says, “Give me a drink.”

The woman, shocked of course, says, “How is it that you, being a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink – the Jews have no dealing with Samaritans!”

And Jesus has a discourse with the Samaritan woman. He reveals that He is the living water. She, meanwhile, reveals that she has knowledge of the Law and the Prophets. Jesus broaches a very personal subject in her life – her having had five husbands—and that the man she was living with now was not her husband! (Bet that was embarrassing!)

After all this, the woman left her water pot, and went into the city, evidently to her Samaritan friends and family, and said, “Come see this man who told me all things I ever did; could this be the Christ?”

Jesus, instead of only seeing an adulterous foreigner, saw the underlying potential of a person who would be willing to spread the word that the Messiah had come!

The Bible says that many of the Samaritans in that city believed in Him *because of the word of the woman who testified*, “He told me all that I ever did!” (verse 39).

Jesus saw the potential of a great witness for His cause. You see, *Jesus had a clean and pure heart, and his purity allowed him to see the possibility of bringing out the best in people.*

The good you find in others,
is in you too.
The faults you find in others,
are your faults as well.
After all, to recognize something
you must know it.
The possibilities you see in others,
are possible for you as well.
The world around you is a reflection,
a mirror showing you the person you are.
To change your world,
you must change yourself.
To blame and complain
will only make matters worse.
Whatever you care about,
is your responsibility.
What you see in others,
shows you yourself.
See the best in others,
and you will be your best.
Give to others,
and you give to yourself.
Appreciate beauty,
and you will be beautiful.
Admire creativity,
and you will be creative.
Love, and you will be loved.
Seek to understand,
and you will be understood.
Listen, and your voice will be heard.
Teach, and you will learn.
Show your best face to the mirror,
and you'll be happy with the face looking
back at you.

Jesus saw a potential messenger; someone who would boldly testify that she had been in the company of the Messiah!

And Scene 3: Jesus Saw Opportunities to Save Sinful Man

In the 23rd chapter of Luke, we find our Master, dying on the cross. One of the criminals who hung beside Him blasphemed Jesus saying, "If you're the Christ, save yourself and us!"

But the other rebuked the first by saying, "Don't you even fear God, seeing you're under the

same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss!"

Then he turned to Jesus and said, "Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

What did Jesus see in this man, this criminal, who was justly hung on the cross to die a surely-deserved death?

In verse 43, Jesus said unto him, "Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."

Jesus saw a soul worth redeeming; a soul that was repentant; a soul that believed that Jesus was the son of the living God. Jesus saw in this frail, flawed, broken fellow man, a soul that was still valuable, still redeemable, still worth saving.

Jesus saw salvation opportunities

Conclusion

We've looked at three simple scenes in the life of Christ, and the question is this: What did Jesus See?

In these three scenes, Jesus saw:

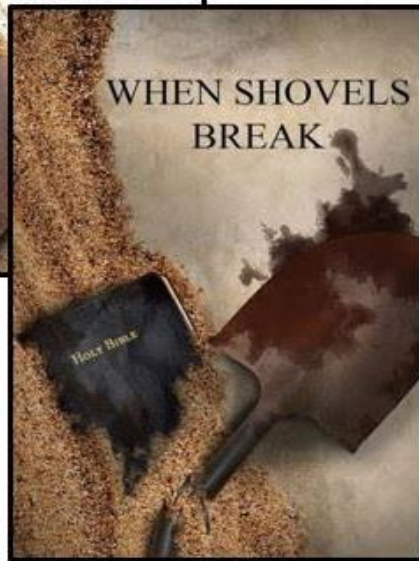
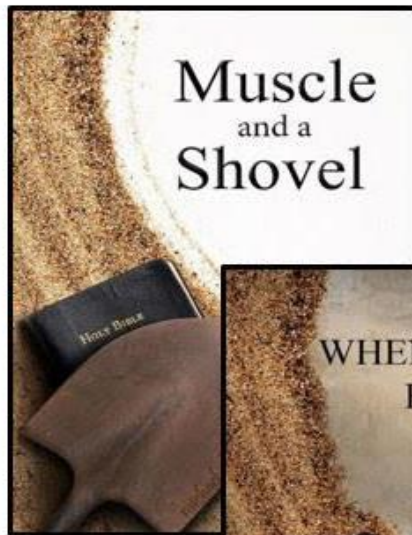
Multiple opportunities in seeing beyond the surface of an illness, into the heart of a man who had the ability to worship and to be obedient to God

He saw a woman who had the potential to become repentant through exposing her error, and a woman who could evangelize a city with her simple testimony that she had been in the company of the Messiah

And Jesus Christ saw the value of redeeming sinful man through a willingness to first believe in the core of His message; that He was, and still is, the living son of God!

Do you look at people in the same way Jesus does?

Muscle and a Shovel



June 2017

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WALK IN A MANNER WORTHY

(Part 2B)

Allocate Our Gifts - A Study of Ephesians 4:7-16

JAKE SCHOTTER

INTRODUCTION

Before we jump into this lesson, we should review where we are at. Ephesians 4 can be outlined with the acronym, "WALK." The first article dealt with the theme of "Walking in a manner worthy" from verses 1-6. The previous article (part 2A) started our discussion of "Allocating our gifts" from verses 7-16. In part 2A, we observed the first point entitled, "The Grace that Has Been Given By Christ" in 4:7-10.

Paul gave four details describing this grace. The first description was the exclusivity this grace has. This grace is not a saving grace but grace that is directed towards a particular people. This is made clear to us by Paul, for example, when he wrote, "*I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power*" (Ephesians 3:7). God, through His grace, gave us all unique talents to use in our service for Him and in no way are we able to promote our own pride because we had to be given these gifts.

The second detail we see here is an emphasis on the diversity of gifts used for the building up

and the growth of the body. Christ gives His own people a variety of gifts and in different amounts (Paul described it as "*the measure of Christ's gift*" - 4:7). As one author put it, the individualized gifts

from Christ "had resulted in many different talents and abilities, but it had come from one divine source, and was intended to prepare each member for the service of the church."¹

The most important detail is the expression from Psalm 68:18. This is the key to solving how Christ was able to give us these gifts. Paul used David's imagery of a

military victory. Historically, it was the custom of victorious rulers to come back from battles with spoils and slaves; whatever was gathered from the defeated people was then distributed to the victorious. With that background, we are called to remember the battle between good and evil, the battle between Christ and Christians versus the Devil and death. It was only at the cross that Jesus became

CHART 1

"WALK IN A MANNER WORTHY"

(Ephesians 4)

W – Walk in a manner worthy (1-6)

A – ALLOCATE OUR GIFTS (7-16)

L – Live the new life and

K – Kill old life mannerisms (17-32)

¹ Erdman, Charles. **The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians: An Exposition.** Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1966:87.

the conqueror and the Devil and his minions became Christ's captives. This victory was completed and put into effect when Christ resurrected from the dead and ascended into heaven.

Paul, then, concludes this section with an explanation. Simply put, Paul made his own application from David's original audience. The last phrase, *"so that He might fill all things"* shows the excellence of the victory and the abundant ability for us all to be able to have gifts that will help the church.

Whenever God blesses His church, His people, it will not be lacking.

After the discussion of the grace that has been given to us by Christ, Paul logically goes on to describe the manifestation of people using their spiritual gifts. Perhaps, it would help to stir our memories at this time of each of the gifts. It is not only a good exercise to remember them again, but also to realize the difference there is between a spiritual gift and a function of the church. During the preparation of this study, the realization that there must be some confusion exists because some commentaries identify verse 11 as spiritual gifts instead of offices or functions of the church.

The discussion and confusion arises out of four passages written by Paul and Peter: Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28-30; Ephesians 4:11, and 1 Peter 4:11. For the purposes of this article, we will not go into depth in regards to them. How-

ever, several fundamentals will be stressed so that there will be less confusion.

A good starting point is knowing what a spir-

itual gift is. A concise, excellent, and easy-to-remember definition of these gifts is given by Charles Swindoll; he defined them as "a God-given ability or skill that enables a believer to perform a specific function in the body of Christ with effectiveness and ease."² As we have already seen, God gives us the gifts

(determined to be these spiritual gifts to Christians) because of His victory over Satan on the cross. Then, we must put an emphasis that these gifts are only discovered through being an active member of

the Lord's Body, not tests or books or what someone says to you. When Christians used their gifts, their activity allowed the church to become firmly rooted and grow—thus needing official offices in the church (known as functions). Having these abilities given to us by God, tailored for each one of us individually (Ephesians 4:7),

helps the Body as a whole (1 Corinthians 12:7).

In 1 Peter 4:11, Peter gives us two broad categories of these gifts: speaking and serving. Now these, of course, have an overarching purpose, and

CHART 2

A – ALLOCATE OUR GIFTS (7-16)

The Grace That Has Been Given by Christ

(vs. 7-10)

The exclusivity this grace has

The emphasis on the diversity of gifts

The expression from Psalm 68:18

The explanation by Paul

CHART 3

CHRIST'S CAPTIVES AT THE CROSS

Devil's Defeat	Death's Defeat	Christ and Christians Conquer
Genesis 3:15		Matthew 16:18
Romans 16:20	Hebrews 2:14-15	1 Peter 3:18-19
Job 2:6	John 14:19	2 Corinthians 2:14-16
Revelation 20:10	1 Corinthians 15:54	1 Timothy 1:17
John 12:31	Matthew 16:18	Romans 8:37
John 16:11		Revelation 6:2

² Swindoll, Charles. **Insights on Galatians, Ephesians.**

Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary series, vol. 8. Carol Stream: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2015:240.

that is to glorify God (Note the end of verse 11: *"so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."*). Peter does not go into any more detail than that, but Paul does in several other passages.

Paul mentions at least fifteen spiritual gifts and five functions where Christians have and will continue to serve in. In total, there are nine speaking and six serving gifts. From these gifts as a whole, those who serve in official capacities will have a combination of several. (Hopefully, all Christians will use their gifts.) In Chart 1, you will notice Peter's two divisions and then the determination of whether or not a certain gift has ceased or continues.

This is all mentioned because not everyone is going to serve in an official capacity, even though you may be equipped with gifts that fit one serving as an evangelist, or pastor, or a teacher. In any case, all Christians are expected to serve in accordance to the gifts that they have. Until we extend ourselves and exert our energies into finding out what we do well, we will all be more efficient in the Lord's work. Truly, the spiritual gift tests are only good for so much—you have to discover them

yourself, by being involved in the church body.

Because God gave these gifts to *Christians*, one is not born into these positions. The apostles and prophets were not born immediately into their position (yes, even Jeremiah and Samuel). God, in His

infinite plans and purposes, has equipped us for the work—and to be able to do it well. As briefly alluded to earlier, part of that equipping is the discovery stage of finding and honing that skill. 1 Corinthians 12:31 says we are able to discover our best gift, not just settle for what we have. The discovery stage includes the stretching out of ourselves and our abilities for the building up of the church. (After all, the better way mentioned leads to chapter 13, the chapter of love that seeks the best for others, but especially the brethren.)

We are all born with certain abilities. When we become Christians, God gives us a specially designed spiritual ability for a ministry. Timothy is

a great case-in-point for us when we see his call to the ministry (2 Timothy 1:9). God gave Timothy, long ago, the gifts he would be able to use to preach the Word. When we are saved, we reap the benefits of the Gospel and a calling to live a life of holiness. This is something only God could provide. "They did not earn their calling. It was a gift from God that needed to be cherished (by a life of

CHART 4

MULTIPLE MEANINGS OF EPHESIANS 4:8

Key Word	David's Audience (Psa. 68:18)	Paul's Application (Eph. 4:8)
<i>"He"</i>	David	Christ
<i>"Ascended"</i>	Military victory in a battle	Resurrection and Ascension
<i>"Captive... Captives"</i>	War Enemies	Devil, Demons, and Death
<i>"Gifts"</i>	Wealth, bounty, slaves	Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers
<i>"Men"</i>	Citizens of victorious king's territory	Christians

CHART 5

Review of Spiritual Gifts

"A God-given ability or skill that enables a believer to perform a specific function in the body of Christ with effectiveness and ease" (Swindoll).

SPEAKING GIFTS		SERVING GIFTS	
<i>Ceased</i>	<i>Continue</i>	<i>Continue</i>	<i>Ceased</i>
Interpretation of tongues	Prophecy	Faith	Miracles
Tongue speaking	Knowledge	Giving	Healing
	Wisdom	Helps	
	Teaching	Hospitality	
	Exhortation	Mercy	
	Discernment	Administration	

service).³ We 'return' this gift of grace by fulfilling His agenda.

What a great reminder of the proper perspective we are to have regarding His power! We are His workmanship (Ephesians 2:10), we are molded by Him (Isaiah 64:8; Jeremiah 18:2, 6) to do what He wants. As His creation (Genesis 1:26-27), we are subject to His dominion (Colossians 1:16)! Since He has graciously equipped us for the work, we must do nothing but find ways to serve Him!

Before we get too lost, let's continue our discussion and recognize the second point Paul makes in 4:7-16 with the theme "Allocating our gifts"...

THE GIFTS THAT HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO THE CHURCH (4:11)

"And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers"

The discussion of spiritual gifts was a necessary introduction to this verse because it is what qualifies one for leadership in the church. Christians who are effective and qualified (with the proper spiritual gifts) may be brought in to serve a church in an official capacity. Not everyone who has these gifts may be in an official position, but that is of least importance. The consideration we need to remember here is that everyone, in their own way, needs to serve God, not puff up their pride and put it on display. Our focus is to be effective workers in the kingdom, glorifying God through using the abilities He gave us when we were saved.

As we look at this verse, Paul mentions five functions that can be divided into 2 main categories:

functions that have ceased, and the others that still continue and are in effect in today's congregations.

The first category of functions Paul lists are those that have ceased: "apostles" and "prophets."

First, let's examine the role of an apostle.

"The word apostolos means 'one sent' and refers especially to one sent on a mission and possessing the authority conferred by the sender... [the] Jewish concept of 'sending' [was] best represented in the Old Testament accounts of the call and commissioning of the prophets."⁴

Linguistically, the role of an apostle ranged from a very vague and general meaning to a very specific one. The overall, all-encompassing meaning of this office is 'one sent.' In other words, an apostle was a messenger who had a message to share. He had a duty and was expected to carry it

out. On the other end of the spectrum, the most specific example of this term, and the most precise meaning of Paul's statement, is the 12 apostles, who were chosen by Jesus to spread the Gospel message and become the foundation of the church (Ephesians 2:20). It is the

12 apostles and their duties that we will look at exclusively to understand this function better.

The title of "apostle" was given to a person who was a witness of the life and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Matthew 12:16-20; Luke 24:46-48; Acts 1:2, 8; Romans 1:1-5). This was, later on, an

CHART 6

FUNCTIONS – EPHESIANS 4:11

A person's spiritual gifts permits a Christian to be able to serve in an official capacity... also known as a function.

There are TWO types of functions:

1. FUNCTIONS THAT HAVE CEASED TO EXIST

Apostles

Prophets

2. FUNCTIONS THAT STILL CONTINUE TODAY

Evangelists

Pastors

Teachers

³ Petrillo, Denny. **Commentary on 1,2 Timothy & Titus.** Abilene: Quality Publications, 1998:104-105.

⁴ Ferguson, Everett. **The Church of Christ: A Biblical Ecclesiology For Today.** Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996:301-302.

important criterion when selecting a new apostle (Acts 1:12-26), because the life and resurrection was the very message they were to proclaim to the world (Acts 10:39-40). In the book of Acts, the apostles became known as the men who spread the message of Christianity "*in Jerusalem... in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth*" (Acts 1:8).

In addition, the apostles were carriers of special revelation (Ephesians 2:20; 3:5; John 14:26; 16:13-16) and were able to perform miraculous signs to confirm the Word they were sharing (Matthew 10:1; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Acts 2:43; 8:6-7; Hebrews 2:3-4). They were specially appointed for the task by Christ Himself (Mark 3:14; Luke 6:13; John 15:16; Acts 9:15; 22:14-15). Paul, in his own writings, emphasized this calling, as well, from and for the Lord (Rom. 1:1; 1 Cor. 1:1; 12:28; 2 Cor. 1:1; Gal. 1:1, 15-16; Eph. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:1; 1 Tim. 1:1; 2 Tim. 1:1; Tit. 1:1). Their message, at first, was directed to the unbelieving house of Israel (Matthew 10:5-6; Luke 24:47; Acts 13:46) and then to all nations (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; 2 Tim. 1:11). These apostles were specially devoted to the office of ministry (Acts 6:4; 20:27).

It was God's design that through divine appointment, men would accompany Jesus, become properly equipped and authoritative to carry the word of God to the entire world (1 Thessalonians 2:6).

This function had to end, however, and the evidence does show that this office has ceased. In part, this is because there is no laying on of hands to enable miraculous activity, because Paul suggested that he was the last apostle (1 Corinthians 15:8), and because of the cessation of any new prophecy, with the completed New Testament record.

The next function Paul mentions in his brief list, which also has ceased, are the *prophets*.

Prophets were people who received revelation from God and spoke on His behalf. There are two types of prophecy we see in the Bible. The first is foretelling where a person predicts the future. Many people get this image when they hear the word "*prophet*." However, a more frequent usage of this role is the idea of forth-telling where the prophets tell what is going on or to declare a message. With the roles of the prophets, there is a mixture of both, because we read of events, people, and the effects of decisions both now and in the

future. "In forth-telling the will of God, they necessarily to some extent fore-told the future, because they announced to men the consequences which would follow if men disobeyed that will."⁵

Paul's usage of the phrase, "*apostles and prophets*," in that specific order, shows that he references New Testament prophets, not the Old Testament kind. Paul's consistency in using this phrase in such a precise way supports the idea (see also Ephesians 2:20 and 3:5).⁶

Now, what were their roles, aside from the basic definition of sharing a message and how things were to be? A major difference that sheds light to the work of a prophet was that apostles were intended to move around and prophets were to be more stationary.⁷ Barclay seems to disagree with this assessment, but Paul was not called an apostle, until after he was traditionally called (14:4, 14). He was just called a prophet when he worked with the Christians in the local congregation of Antioch (Acts 13:1).⁸

While there were instances of New Testament prophets foretelling the future (Acts 11:27-28; 21:9-11), the majority of their work was to reveal the word of God. When this was done, people would become aware of their sin (1 Corinthians 12:24-25) and the church would be encouraged (Acts 15:32).

The church has been blessed with the work of Everett Ferguson and his research on the early

⁵ Barclay, William. **The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians**. The Daily Study Bible Series, vol. 10. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1958:172.

⁶ "That the prophets of the Christian church and not of the Old Testament are intended here is clear from the order of the phrase apostles and prophets, and by the way that both words come under the same definite article in the Greek." (Foulkes, Francis. **Ephesians: An Introduction and Commentary**. The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, vol. 10. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 1989:94.)

⁷ Barclay (p. 72) seems to disagree when he wrote, "The prophets were wanderers throughout the Church. Their message was held to be not the result of thought and study, but the direct result of the Holy Spirit. They had no homes and no families and no means of support. They went from Church to Church proclaiming the will of God as God had told it to them."

⁸ MacArthur, John. 1 Corinthians. MacArthur New Testament Commentary Series, vol. 17. Chicago: Moody Press, 1984:323

church. In his monumental volume on ecclesiology, Ferguson thoroughly describes the work of prophets and the verification of who a true prophet was. Although this is a lengthy section, it is well worth quoting here. He writes,

"But across the strands of New Testament literature the common idea regarding the functions of prophets is their association with revealing God's will (Eph. 3:5; 1 Pet. 1:10-12; 1 Cor. 14:6, pairing revelation and prophecy, and knowledge and teaching; c.f. 14:26, revelation' apparently referring to what was communicated by a prophet; 14:29-31; Acts 13:1-3 assuming that the Spirit spoke through the prophets). This included distinguishing true from false 'revelations' (1 Cor. 14:37; c.f. 1 John 2:20, 27; 4:1-6), the secrets of the human heart (1 Cor. 14:23-25), identifying leaders for the church (1 Tim. 1:18; 4:14), and strengthening believers (Acts 15:32). Prophets revealed new truth, in distinction from teachers... who expounded the meaning and made the application of the revelation."

He goes on to write,

*"Individual prophets received only partial revelation so they only 'knew in part' (1 Cor. 13:9, 12). Hence, they might need to have their message clarified, and their messages were subject to discernment by other gifted persons (1 Cor. 14:37f.). An individual prophet was not the judge of His own message; the community had to test the prophets, for there were false prophets (1 Cor. 14:29; 1 John 4:1). Paul, therefore, submits the prophets to the necessity of discernment, including (1) judgment by the community (1 Thess. 5:19-22), (2) judgment by other prophets (1 Cor. 14:29), and (3) accord with apostolic teaching (1 Cor. 14:37f.)."*⁹

As has been said before, the function of prophecy did end, and is no longer active in the church. The work of a prophet was primarily to reveal the will of God in a time where there was no written New Testament and was not widely available. However, when the divinely inspired writers recorded the words of God and wrote letters to the

various churches and Christians, there was no longer a need for these men and women of God. As we see, especially, in the later part of the New Testament, false prophets were infiltrating the Lord's church, spreading erroneous ideas, and leading people away from the pure gospel.¹⁰

CONCLUSION

Our next article will continue the gifts Christ gave the church in this 11th verse, with the ones still in effect today.

We cannot be callous about the very important role the apostles and prophets had in the early church. Without them, there wouldn't be a church in existence—it was God's plan to use these men to bring into existence His kingdom!

*"Both the apostles and prophets have passed from the scene (Eph. 2:20), but the foundation they laid is on which all of Christ's church has been built."*¹¹

*"The apostles and prophets were given to the church to get her established, but now their role is assumed by the canonical writings of the New Testament."*¹²

Praise God for the abilities He has given us to benefit the church and to continue the work of the apostles and prophets!

[To be continued in Part 2C]

¹⁰ Latter letters that deal with these false prophets are especially prominent in Galatians, Colossians, 2 Thessalonians, Colossians, 2 Timothy, 2 Peter, 1 John, and 2 John.

¹¹ MacArthur, 142.

¹² Hughes, R. Kent. **Ephesians: The Mystery of the Body of Christ**. Preaching the Word Series. Wheaton: Crossway, 2013:131.

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⁹ Ferguson, 307-308.

Lessons for Little Ones: An Unnamed Hero

BY MARK MCWHORTER

King Ahaziah was 22 years old when he began to reign (2 Kings 8:25). His mother was Athaliah, the daughter of Omri, king of Israel. Ahaziah was the son in law of Ahab, an evil king. Ahaziah was extremely evil. He allowed his mother to be his counsellor to do wicked.

When Ahaziah died, his mother decided she would be Queen. She commanded that all of the royal seed of Judah be killed. This would mean that no male heir would be left who could make claim to the throne. This was an incredibly evil thing to do.

This would have ended the royal line of David. God had said the kingdom would be ruled by his lineage. Athaliah did not worship God. And she intended to end God's connection to Judah. She thought she could do this by killing all of David's male heirs.

Jehoshabeath was the daughter of the king. She decided to save David's lineage. Before Athaliah could kill all the males, Jehoshabeath took the young boy, Joash, and his nurse and hid them in a bedchamber. The bedchamber was a room that housed the beds and linens of the palace. No one would think to look there.

Imagine the nurse holding the child Joash. She is fearful for not only his life, but her own. She holds him closely and does all she can to assure him and keep him quiet. She probably holds her breath as soldiers walk past the door. She probably is able to hear the screams as all the male children are being killed in the palace.

As soon as possible Jehoshabeath, along with her husband, the High Priest Jehoida, move Joash

and the nurse to the Temple. They are hidden there. The nurse and Joash stay in the Temple for the next 6 years. They must stay there to stay alive. It is possible the nurse never leaves the room with Joash. They could not allow anyone other than the High Priest and a few other priests to know they are alive.

When Joash is 7 years old, Jehoida brings all the Levites, priests, and faithful captains to the Temple. He brings Joash out and there is overwhelming excitement and joy. No one knew a male descendant of David was still alive. Joash is anointed king by Jehoida.

Imagine the joy the nurse had when Joash is finally revealed. Imagine the tears shed by her realizing that she aided in saving and rearing the next king of Judah. Imagine the love and bond between her and Joash.

It took courage for this nurse to do what she did. She knew that her life was in danger for 7 years. She knew she was doing a great service for God.

We are never told the nurse's name. We have no name to honor. Yet we know God knew her name. She may not be mentioned in any recorded Hall of Fame, but her example of selfless love and service to God is a wonderful exhortation. It is not necessary for us to be known. It is not necessary for us to make sure others know about what good we do. God knows. And it might just be that others will be told of our deeds even if our name is never used. It is the deed, not the name that is important.

The Compassion of God

BY BRYON SCHULZ

Introduction

But You, O Lord, are a God full of compassion, and gracious, Longsuffering and abundant in mercy and truth (Ps. 86:15).

He has made His wonderful works to be remembered; The LORD is gracious and full of compassion (Ps. 111:4).

I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion (Ex. 33:19).

But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd (Mt. 9:36).

And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick (Mt. 14:14).

Now a leper came to Him, imploring Him, kneeling down to Him and saying to Him, "If You are willing, You can make me clean." Then Jesus, moved with compassion, stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, "I am willing; be cleansed" (Mk. 1:40-41).

We serve a compassionate God (Jn. 11:32-38).

The one who created all things (cf. Jn. 1:1-3) has deep compassion for the human race. Notice how He groaned in His spirit (11:33, 38). This is because of His empathy for mankind. He knew the pain that was experienced by Martha and Mary. This passage shows that the Lord of Glory, the Creator of all things, the I AM, wept when confronted with the sorrows of man (v. 35).

Consider what Isaiah had prophesied about the Christ (Isa. 53:3-4). His love for mankind is what drives His compassion for him (cf. Jn. 3:14-17; Phil. 2:5-8; Heb. 4:15; 5:5-8).

God has condescended to man in compassion because he loves us and is merciful.

But He, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and did not destroy them. Yes, many a time He turned His anger away, And did not stir up all His wrath; for He remembered that they were but flesh, A breath that passes away and does not come again (Ps. 78:38-39)

But You, O Lord, are a God full of compassion, and gracious, Longsuffering and abundant in mercy and truth (Ps. 86:15).

But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd (Mt. 9:36).

You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful (Jas. 5:11).

We serve a God who provides hope through His resurrection (Jn. 11:17-27).

God, creator of all things, giver of life, provider of peace and sustenance, our Divine Teacher and Director of our steps, continues to offer eternal life to whosoever will (cf. Rev. 22:17). He gives us everything we need in this life (cf. Mt. 5:45; 6:25-33) – and this is just a temporary life, how much more will He give us in the life to come? He gives us every spiritual blessing in Christ (Eph. 1:3). He desires to give us eternal life with God and Christ (Lk. 19:10).

God has taken away the threat of sin and death for all who are in Christ Jesus!

Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed – in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be

changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?" The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord (1 Cor. 15:50-58).

He who says these things, giving us such great and precious promises, is Faithful and True, and will do that which He promises!

We need to be sure our minds are right when we think about God, who He is, what He's done for us, what He continues to do for us, and what He promises to give to those who are faithful to Him.

Conclusion

Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable.

Our worship and service to God ought to be from a heart of thanksgiving, adoration, gratitude, awe, and reverence for our God. He has done, continues to do, and will do so many things that deserve our whole-hearted, completely focused and reverential worship, service and love.

Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless (2 Pet. 3:11-14).

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15 Ways to Man Up:

How To Be A Real Man – How To Find A Real Man

BY PERRY HALL

True story. For over a year I have been working with a transgender. Without betraying confidences, he did confirm a suspicion of mine. How does someone become transgender? Is it because society does not know what a real man is?

A lifetime ago real men were “macho.” If you were not, and if you did not do macho things, you were effeminate, weak, and ridiculed. Along came feminism which de-gendered characteristics and traits. Dolls were for boys and girls. In many ways I agree. In fact I played with Barbies as a boy – but I did it to be near the girls. Real men don’t have to hunt and be hairy; and women can – except I suggest they keep shaving. Likes and dislikes were not necessarily masculine or feminine. No longer did they define masculine and feminine.

Then along came transgenderism which made the same mistake as generations ago – it solidified traits as male or female. If you weren’t a “macho man,” it is because you had a female mind trapped in a male body. If you were a woman who liked splitting fire wood, you must have a masculine mind trapped in a female body.

This is what happened to my new transgendered friend, who is now transitioning back to his birth gender. He was taught that certain characteristics he preferred were female, but he was a male. So he bought into the lie that his mind was female. After I pointed out to him my theory, that the LGBT crowd made the same mistake that older generations did, he said it fit perfectly into his story. I wonder how many others are like him?

This article is not just about transgenderism. This applies to any man, and any woman looking for a real man. So what makes a male a man?

Another true story. A father was dying, and knew that his time was near. He called his son to his side and gave him some final instructions; words he hoped his son would never forget and always live by: “I am going the way of all the earth. Be strong, therefore, and show yourself a man” (1 Kings 2:2 NASB).

The admonition to “show yourself a man” proves several important points:

- Being a real man is Positive – It is a goal worth reaching.
- Being a real man is Possible – It is a goal that is reachable.
- Being a real man is Perceivable – I can understand what this goal is
- Being a real man is Provable – Others can see my success or failure
- Being a real man is Purposed – It is not reached accidentally.

Being a real man means being what God designed a man to be in all his relationships – husband, father, friend, Christian and so on. Being a real man is what every man should want to be; what every father should be teaching his sons to be; what every mother should be teaching their daughters to look for; and what every father should be proving what their daughters should want in a relationship.

What we are going to do is look at the creation and fall of man, taking a walk in the Garden of Eden. In this walk we will see what a real man looks like – sometimes in the ideal, sometimes in reality, and sometimes by failure. Some of these lessons will be learned through Adam’s mistakes; others from positive actions; and finally, some through the precepts of God. We will take the lessons sequentially as they are revealed through inspiration: 15 Steps to being a real man.

1. A Real Man Is A Paradigm Genesis 1:26, 27, 31

While these verses apply to both male and female, a man is made in the image of God and therefore is a paradigm for others to behave as God. This imaging of God expands to all aspects of a man’s responsibilities. Notice after the statement of man’s divine lineage, responsibilities then follow in relation to both family and the earth.

Remember ladies, when dating and choosing a husband, you are choosing a father for your children and not just a husband for yourself. Will you want your future children to emulate the man you are contemplating marrying? If you are going into the marriage with the concept, "I will change him," what does that say about the man you are marrying? It says he is not living the image of God.

2. A Real Man Is A Purposed Creation **Genesis 1:26-28; 2:7**

It's sad that we have to make this point, but man is not a result of accidental ooze becoming electrified. Man is created, and because he is created, man has to behave how God created him to be. This means not simply as a glorified, "evolutionized," animal. Since God made man with a purpose, real men show purpose. A "real man" does not act like a woman, a child, or an animal. He acts like he has a manly purpose.

Notice the findings in "The Path to Purpose: Helping Our Children Find Their Calling in Life" (William Damon - Director of the Stanford Center on Adolescence). They "reveal a society in which purposefulness among young people is the exception rather than the rule." Today's society, and therefore today's males don't understand "Purpose is a stable and generalized intention to accomplish something that is at the same time meaningful to the self and consequential for the world. ... A true purpose is an ultimate concern. It is the final answer to the question of 'Why? Why am I doing this? Why does it matter?'" Too often, the answer is, "I have no idea." (Washington Times). God tells us men are purposed and therefore have purpose.

3. A Real Man Is A Provider **Genesis 2:15; 3:17-19**

In the beginning God commanded man to work (Gen.2:15). But where did the first man, Adam, learn to work? From God Himself:

The LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there He placed the man He had formed. The LORD God caused to grow out of the ground every tree pleasing in appearance and good for food, including the tree of life in the middle of the garden, as well as the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:8-9, HCSB).

It is important to understand, the Creator is a worker.

There is a Jewish tradition, "Whoever does not teach his son a trade or profession teaches him to be a thief" (Babylonian Talmud, Kiddushin 29a). The Talmud explains an uneducated child will not be equipped to earn a living honestly and will engage in illegal activities.

Today we have deadbeat dads and such that are contrary to what a real man is. They are males, but they are not men. "Lazy" and "man" are two words that do not belong together. Check the statistics on unpaid child support. You will be dismayed. We have a nation of grown infantile males.

4. A Real Man Is A Proclaimer Of Truth **Genesis 2:16-17; 3:1-3**

A real man should study the word of God so that he can teach it to his wife and children. This comes from the fact that he is the head of the home. This is not saying women have no responsibility to study, nor that children should not study. Too often, husbands and fathers leave it up to their wives and the church to teach their children.

Real men proclaim the word of God in how they live and the examples they set in their homes and the world. From sharing the wonder of God in His creation to your toddlers to later discussing the wisdom of abstinence to your teens, a Man should manifest the Word to his family.

When our children were young, we used a set of bible cards with pictures on one side and a story on the other. Since I ate faster than everyone, I would read the bible story while showing the picture to the children as they ate. Afterwards I would ask questions (level of difficulty based on age); so we had a lesson and competition. Whether obtaining knowledge or beating their siblings was their goal, you can probably guess. Our nightly family dinners and "duels" were a highlight of our parenting.

5. A Real Man Is A Partner To His Wife **Genesis 2:18**

"Because men have lost their manhood, women have lost their womanhood and children have lost their childhood" (unknown). In this quote we see there is a cause and effect, caused by a partnership and relationship between a man as father and husband. Let's consider how a real man is a partner in marriage.

The word “helper” (‘ezer) means “ally” (Gen.2:18, 20). It is a word referencing someone strong enough to help, and is even used of God (Psalm 30:10). This doesn’t deny man’s headship, but recognizes that it and subjection were and is part of creation. What it does deny that subjection is due to a woman’s weakness and the curse (Gen.3:16) and that man is superior. He is not. His is a partner, and has a partner.

The word “suitable” (neged) (“meet” - KJV) (Gen.2:18) refers to one who is the opposite, and therefore capable of completing what is needed. I know I am going to get into trouble with this illustration, but here goes. Have you ever had to fix a plumbing problem with the wrong tool? You might get it done, but it will take longer and be frustrating. It might make you feel stupid too (not that I know anything about that!). A woman is like having the right tool when fixing the plumbing in the house. But no tool fixes anything by itself. Properly understood, husbands and wives “use” each other ultimately to the glory of God.

These divinely given words describe function rather than worth. One does not lose value as a person by humbly assuming the role of a suitable helper. One does not gain value by leading. The woman was to be a help to the man because the man needed a partner:

(1) As a spiritual partner to assist in obeying the word of God and being active in spiritual ministry;

(2) As man's partner in the divinely assigned process of procreation, in order to assure the continuation of the race (Gen.1:28);

(3) As man's friend to offer comfort and fellowship (Gen.2:23, 24); and

(4) As man's encouragement and inspiration.

The woman is the perfect counterpart of man, possessing neither inferiority nor superiority, but being like and equal in personhood, and unique and different in function.

Ontologically they are same, but functionally different.

While most of the above focused on describing a “helper as his complement” (HCSB), it does show that he is a partner to his wife. Real men don’t treat their wives as lesser than themselves, as children, or things to be played with and discarded. Man is a partner to and with his wife.

6. A Real Man Is A Prince In His Home Genesis 2:21-22

“The poorest man may in his cottage bid defiance to all the forces of the crown. It may be frail—its roof may shake—the wind may blow through it—the storm may enter—the rain may enter—but the King of England cannot enter” (William Pitt - 1763).

This is the source of “a man’s house is his castle.” It doesn’t mean he can do whatever he wants; or that the queen is his servant and maid. Too many men don’t understand what it means to be head of the household.

A comedian told a joke: when he got married he told his wife he would handle all the big decisions while his wife handled the small decisions. And in 30 plus years of marriage there has never been a big decision! This is meant to be funny; but I don’t like jokes about the wife or children being the real boss as this mocks God’s wisdom and plan for man.

We live in a society where it is politically incorrect to teach that a man is the head of the home, and that the woman is to be subjection. And yet, society apparently has no problem with the woman being the head of the home and the man being in subjection. We see that by constantly hearing of the woman “jokingly” being referred to as “the boss.”

The husband was created to be the head of the home which is seen in him being created first (1 Timothy 2:13; the law of primogeniture) and then seen in naming Eve twice, both as to what she was and who she was (Gen.2:23; 3:20). Many unfortunately look at the “curse” in Genesis 3:16 and see subjection as a curse post-fall. If it is, then the church is cursed being in subjection to Jesus (Eph.5:24).

The better explanation of Genesis 3:16 is that there are three parts:

- Curse – “I will intensify your labor pains; you will bear children in anguish”
- Comfort – Your desire (sexual which leads to the pain of childbirth) will be for your husband”
- Command – “he will rule over you”

The first real man was created as head of the home, and today imitates Christ as head of the

church (Eph. 5:23). Unfortunately Adam failed in this, which is seen in the next point.

7. A Real Man Is A Protector

Genesis 3:6a

I want you to visually focus with me on a very likely interpretation of the temptation scene. I had always pictured the Satanic serpent with Eve alone. But notice,

Genesis 3:6a - When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her....

Adam was *with* Eve. He wasn't off doing his own thing. Sadly, instead of acting as his wife's protector, apparently he did nothing to stop her and even went further and "listened to his wife's voice" (3:17). Adam failed to protect his wife by not spiritually leading. Real men protect, not just socially, physically, and emotionally, but spiritually. Men, knowing the scriptures is not enough (1 Timothy 2:14)! Adam knew but was weak. Real men lead and protect. This takes strength.

The Bible's version of protection is different than the Quran's:

Quran (4:34) "Men are the maintainers of women because Allah has made some of them to excel others and because they spend out of their property; the good women are therefore obedient, guarding the unseen as Allah has guarded; and (as to) those on whose part you fear desertion, admonish them, and leave them alone in the sleeping-places and beat them; then if they obey you, do not seek a way against them; surely Allah is High, Great."

The number of American troops killed in Afghanistan and Iraq between 2001 and 2012 was 6,488. The number of American women who were murdered by current or ex male partners during that time was 11,766. These are not real men. They are weak males.

8. A Real Man Professes His Love

Genesis 2:23

Most people have heard the story of the wife who complained her husband doesn't say "I love

you." If you haven't, his response was, "*I said it on the day we got married. If I ever change my mind I will let you know.*" I don't like this kind of joke either, as professing love is imitating our God in His love for us.

In some Bibles Genesis 2:23 is set off because it is, to use today's language, a love poem:

The man said, "This is now bone of my bones, And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man."

One of the best Biblical examples of this is the Song of Solomon. This profession of love can come in many forms: dependence; encouragement; comfort; sensual; etc. A female comedian joked that, for her, the most powerful aphrodisiac was when her husband vacuumed! Love can be expressed and professed in helping around the house.

I will admit that I am either jealous or impressed (probably jealous!) of men who are thoughtful and romantic, who plan all these romantic getaways and gifts for their wives. I'm not like that. I am more of a "cheap romantic." For example, I will call my wife and tell her I just wanted to hear her voice. She feels love, and it doesn't cost me a dime! Since it is true, I am not getting away with being cheap. Real men show and say love.

Steve Harvey said, "A man who loves you will do the 3 Ps:

Profess —within 6 months you'll have a title from a man (my girlfriend, love, my fiancée)

Provide —Give you and the kids the money (my point 3)

Protect —No bill collector can call and harass you (my point 7)

One of the 3 isn't enough for a real man.

9. A Real Man Is Prioritized

Genesis 2:24a

A real man knows where "home" is. I don't get men who want to go somewhere else every day after work before coming home. You need time to unwind? What about your wife needing time to unwind, especially if she is at home with the kids? Learn to unwind together. A real man puts his wife and family above his job, parents and friends:

Genesis 2:24a: For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother....

This does not mean job, parents, and friends, are to be forsaken, just that they are not put in front

of the wife. And while those other three things are important, a sad fact nowadays is that marriages are adversely affected by married “boys” not mature enough to put their family before gaming. Think of the irony that marriages are destroyed because of virtual reality when the wife is IRL (In Real Life).

10. A Real Man Is Possessive Genesis 2:24b

The verb is traditionally translated “cleaves [to]”; it has the basic idea of “stick with/to” (e.g., it is used of Ruth resolutely staying with her mother-in-law in Ruth 1:14). In this passage it describes the inseparable relationship between the man and the woman in marriage as God intended it (NET Notes).

There is nothing wrong with a little healthy jealousy. Even God is a jealous God (Exodus 20:5). But jealousy is dangerous when it becomes a game. There should be confidence and peace in knowing with your spouse that “She is mine and I belong to her.”

11. A Real Man Is Passionate Genesis 2:24c; 3:16b

The Bible approves of the intimate relationship between a husband and wife. Here are four reasons for sexual activity within marriage:

- Procreation (Genesis 1:28)
- Protection (1 Corinthians 7:1-5)
- Affirmation (SofS)
- Recreation (SofS)

While historically it is women who withhold sex, it is historically men who use women for sex. Compare the following two translations. The first is very literal, but within our society some might miss the point. The second is not literal in the sense of translating word for word, but is literal in the sense of sense:

1 Corinthians 7:1 (ASV) Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote: It is good for a man not to touch a woman.

1 Corinthians 7:1 (CSB) Now in response to the matters you wrote about “It is good for a man not to use a woman for sex.”

This is true before marriage and even in marriage. There is sacredness to sex within marriage that mimics God’s creative and loving nature. Real men treasure their wives, and their wives’ bodies in this godly way of showing love in marriage.

12. A Real Man Is Pledged Genesis 2:24c

We live in a society where some subcultures define a man by how many women he has, or how many babies he has with different women. Sadly our culture has created a new word - “babydaddy.” This is father of a woman's child, used to denote that the father is neither the mother's husband or boyfriend.

We also live in a society where “no fault” divorce means a man can leave his wife and children for no reason whatsoever. The idea of marriage being a covenant has been lost, and now it is a contract to be sued over in order to get out of. Do a web search on the differences between covenant love and convenient love. The latter is favored by physically grown “boys.” Marriage is a pledge for life—not just until the time it is decided it will take work that you don’t want to undertake; or to the moment you’re “just not feeling it” anymore. A pledge connotes commitment which connotes work. Nothing worth having and keeping comes easy.

13. A Real Man Is Pure Genesis 2:25;

Genesis 2:25 is one of the most baffling verses in the whole creation narrative. And yet coupled with the rest of the story, I have concluded that men (and women for that matter) can only be what God intended when they purify their lives, minds, and hearts so that they can live without shame with their wives.

Job 31:1 (CSB) I have made a covenant with my eyes. How then could I look at a young woman?

Check out the NET Notes:

The motif of nakedness is introduced here [Genesis 2:25] and plays an important role in the next chapter. In the Bible nakedness conveys different things. In this context it signifies either innocence or integrity, depending on how those terms are defined. There is no fear of exploitation, no sense of

vulnerability. But after the entrance of sin into the race, nakedness takes on a negative sense. It is then usually connected with the sense of vulnerability, shame, exploitation, and exposure (such as the idea of “uncovering nakedness” either in sexual exploitation or in captivity in war).”

Psalms 101:3 (HCSB) I will not set anything worthless before my eyes. I hate the practice of transgression; it will not cling to me.

This entire article could have been twice as long if I supplied statistics throughout. Just as emotional immaturity destroys marriages, so does sexual immaturity. By this I mean porn. I know of men who struggle with this, and of women who are affected yet try to be strong for their husbands in being a suitable helper. This is an addiction as much as cocaine, heroin, and alcohol. If you are addicted, get help. There are A.A. type meetings for you. Learn again what it means to be pure.

14. A Real Man Is Principled Genesis 3:6b; 3:17

“The Fall” shows that Adam knew what he was doing, but decided not to stand up for what he believed in. When we stand up for what we believe in, we will not always be popular – even with our wives – but a real man stands, even when standing alone. Real men stand alone on principle because sometimes he leads alone.

15. A Real Man Pleads Guilty When Wrong Genesis 3:12

When Adam blamed both God and the woman, he shows weakness, which is the exact opposite of being a real man. God addressed Adam first, before Eve, because man is the leader in the home. Being a leader always means taking responsibility when wrong. Learn to say, “I am sorry.” Learn it is not weak to say, “I was wrong.” Real women are willing to follow men who are real enough to admit they make mistakes. Matter of fact, it makes it easier for them to submit.

All of the above leads us to conclude that *a real man is a paradox*. By paradox I do not mean difficult to understand. But rather:

A Real Man Is a Paradigm that is Not Perfect (Genesis 1:26, 27, 31)

A Real Man Is a Purposed Creation That Needs Guidance (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:7)

A Real Man Is a Provider But Not Just a Paycheck (Genesis 2:15; 3:17-19)

A Real Man Is a Proclaimer of Truth Still Learning From Others Including His Wife and Children (Genesis 2:16-17; 3:1-3)

A Real Man Is a Partner to His Wife, but Head of His Wife (Genesis 2:18)

A Real Man Is a Prince But Not Domineering (Genesis 2:21-22)

A Real Man Professes His Love Even Without Words (Genesis 2:23)

A Real Man Is Prioritized But Not Excluding (Genesis 2:24a)

A Real Man Is Possessive But Not Possessing (Genesis 2:24b)

A Real Man Is Passionate But Guarded (Genesis 2:24c)

A Real Man Is Pledged But Devoted To God First (Genesis 2:24c)

A Real Man Is Pure Especially When Asking for Forgiveness (Genesis 2:25)

A Real Man Is a Protector But Never A Bully (Genesis 3:6a)

A Real Man Is Principled and Pleads Guilty But is Not Stubborn (Genesis 3:12)

You ladies might be thinking that I left out a point – “Men are Pigheaded.” There is a difference between what a real man is, and what a man really is! Sadly, too many “males” today (I refuse to call them “men”) are pariahs, paramours, palsied, puny, and paltry examples of what a real man is supposed to be.

At the beginning I listed a theory dealing with how transgenderism has taken a hold on so many males and females. I want to close with another theory that is biblically based. In many ways I have personally and biblically concluded that women are superior to men in some ways. Despite that, God designed them to be the strong helpers while men are the leaders in both the home and church. As evidence of this, statistically look at how many women are faithful to God as compared to men when their spouses are not believers. Women are spiritually stronger. Also, again based upon statistics, women survive better without men in their lives than men do without women. Women are socially stronger. So here is my theory, one that is

humbling to any real man. God did not make us superior; in fact maybe the opposite is true. God made us the head to stretch us beyond what we are naturally. This is why we men need such strong helpers to help us become as useful and purposeful for His glory as God knows we can be. This is another example of God's upside down world. Real

men don't live according to the thinking of the world. We live according to an upside down world that is not of this world.

1 Corinthians 16:13 (NASB) Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.

Acts of Apostles

BY STEPHEN SCAGGS

What's in a name? While its traditional name is "Acts of the Apostles," this name does not really tell us the contents of the book. The book chronicles the growth and development of the early followers of Jesus, but it centers around two main characters: Peter and Saul of Tarsus. However, it is more than just a chronicle of events, but a portrayal of the kinds of people and kinds of things taking place in the first-century world. Of course, the book also gives a fair treatment of other devout men like Stephen (Acts 6:8-8:3) and Philip (Acts 8:4-40).

What's its purpose? Perhaps a more apt name would be "Acts of the Risen Savior" or "Acts of the Holy Spirit." Luke's first installment was a history of Jesus. Acts is the second volume of Luke's history-writing project; it is about what Jesus did *after* His ascension – directing the apostles via the Spirit (cf. John 16:7, 13). Luke is showing his audience how Christianity moved from Jewish origins to a Gentile world.

What's a summary of the book? The book essentially revolves around two main characters: Peter and Saul. However, one should not think of this as a book of miscellaneous stories; the book centers heavily on central themes. The book begins in Jerusalem, spreads to Judaea, spreads to Samaria, and then spreads throughout the entire Greco-Roman world (Acts 1:8).

How should we read this book? This book tells how Christianity began and spread. No history book has enough space to tell *all* the facts. The historian has to select crucial facts and events and then organize and present them in an effective way. Luke does this well. Luke tells us what happened. This book is a history, not necessarily law. In his

first volume, Luke tells us that it was his purpose to convey the truthfulness of the Christian faith (Luke 1:4). Many ancient histories included speeches; this book presents eighteen. These represent the basic message of the early church.

Concisely, the following verses are a concise message of this book. Jesus said to His apostles, "Thus it is written [in the Scriptures], and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Ye are witnesses of these things. Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:46-49).

What is its relevance? The book of Acts is an invaluable reminder of the life of the early church, which should be our guide in the modern era. The book also invites us to learn about God. In over 300 instances, the book references key terms: God, Lord, the Christ, the Spirit. Historically, this book links the gospels and the epistles. This book tells us how the Messenger (the Gospel accounts) became the Message (the epistles).

While we may read this as a history, it serves to bolster our faith and commitment in Jesus. As we read, we can put ourselves in the apostles' sandals, in the first-century Greco-Roman world, to feel their boldness and to read about how they faced their fears. We can marvel that right after being flogged, they immediately began "rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name" (Acts 5:41). By reading of their faith and perseverance, we can embolden ourselves in our own crises.

Hymn History:

Bringing in the Sheaves

BY KYLE FRANK

The author of this widely-known gospel hymn was none other than Knowles Shaw (part of whose story was told in the very first issue of the *Quarterly*). Brother Shaw was well-loved by brethren throughout all parts of our beloved nation.

Knowles Shaw was born in Ross Township, Butler County, Ohio on October 13, 1834 to Alban and Huldah Griffith Shaw. Shaw lost his father when he was only thirteen years of age. The words that his dying father gave him were to stay with him throughout his tragically short life: "Prepare to meet thy God." His last gift was a violin, which had often been a solace to him in his life of toil, and soon after the weary toiler closed his eyes on what had been a world of toil and care to open them on earth no more.

Knowles did not forget his father's legacy, the old violin. From infancy, music had been a passion; and now all his spare moments, when the toils of the day were over, were devoted to his father's gift, and he soon was able to play upon it with the ease and skill known only to a born musician. A talent like this could not be kept secret. The neighbors would often drop in to see the widow Shaw, but never left until Knowles had been called on for a tune—one only paved the way for another, and the evening would wear into night before the listeners were aware how the hours had sped by. It soon came to pass that he was invited to play at other places than at home; and in a short time no social gathering or merry-making of any kind was complete unless enlivened by the merry strains of his violin.

Brought up amid such surroundings it is not to be wondered at that young Shaw, who was of a social, lively and excitable temperament, should soon acquire a taste for strong drink. He was the life of every social gathering, a favorite especially with the young, his musical skill the admiration of the whole settlement, and it is not to be wondered at that he was often the soul of the revel and the gayest of the gay. He knew so many things from the habit of close observation that he had cultivated, that one of the neighbors quaintly expressed the

general sentiment in regard to him by saying that "Knowles Shaw's head was like a tar-bucket, for everything that touched it stuck to it."

Previous to this time the movement called the Reformation, (slanderosly called *Campbellism*) had made considerable progress in Rush County, being advocated with great zeal and ability by several preachers whose names have long been household words, not only in that locality but all over the State and throughout the West—such as B. Franklin, H. K. Pritchard, B. K. Smith, and George Campbell. Several churches had been organized, and, among others, one known as the Flat Rock congregation, in the neighborhood where young Shaw was living.

The great change in the current of Shaw's thoughts and life was sudden, and had a strange beginning. One night he was playing the violin for a large company of dancers, and in that most unlikely of all places for serious thought, there came into his mind the dying advice of his father, in the impressive words of the prophet: "Prepare to meet thy God." They came unbidden; they forced themselves upon him with a power that he could not resist; they seemed to him not only a voice from the grave but a message from heaven. Still the dance went on; but the gayer the crowd became, the sadder grew the heart of the player, whose mirthful strains were at such variance with the solemn thoughts with which his mind was occupied.

He stopped. Then he spoke, without reservation, the state of his mind. The dance ceased; another set was formed, and all were waiting for the music to begin. To the astonishment of all, Shaw, in response to the call to "strike up," said he could not play anymore. A dozen voices called on him to begin, when he gravely walked out into the middle of the floor and told all that had been passing through his mind; told of his father's dying words, neglected till then, and expressed his determination never to play for another dance. He expressed regret for his past course of life; that it was not such as it should have been; that it might do if this life

were all; but in view of the life to come, he must pursue another course.

Shortly thereafter, he was exposed to the teachings of Gabriel McDuffie and George Campbell. These instructions in the way of the Lord was about to bear much fruit. He was immersed for the remission of his sins and arose to walk a new life on September 13, 1852. When the company gathered on the banks of the stream; the words of prayer at the administration of the solemn rite; the sweet song at the close, and the serene joy of the young convert, in the assurance that he was Christ's, and that Christ was his—All this must be left to the imagination. But one thing is certain: that there would have been even a deeper feeling and a more intense joy could the godly men who took part in the doings of that day have foreseen the multitudes the young convert should bring to the Master's feet. As it was, to young Shaw it was a day never to be forgotten. From that hour, life had to him a new meaning; it was no longer to be a mere struggle for the bread that perishes, but an endeavor for a better life beyond the present—a race in which an immortal crown might be won.

On the third Lord's Day of October, 1858, from some cause or other, he was called on to talk to the people who had gathered for worship. He made the attempt with some diffidence and confusion at first; but gradually gaining his self-possession, he made a brief address, marked by such good sense, and delivered with such unaffected earnestness, that his hearers were satisfied that they had before them one possessed of the elements of a successful preacher. As a trial sermon before an assemblage of ministers, it would doubtless have been regarded as greatly lacking in most of the elements of a popular address; but his hearers judged by their hearts, by what they felt, and the decision rendered by nearly all was, that Knowles Shaw would make a preacher. No one was more surprised at the effect of the discourse than the speaker himself.

To keep some brevity to this tale and leave room for a look at the verses of this wonderful hymn, I will tell the reader that it was said that Knowles Shaw was faithful to his Lord and it is thought that he brought nearly 20,000 to obedience to the gospel. He was a man of an unusual mental strength, unswerving faith and an unusual sense of empathy.

He was known as the “singing evangelist” and he used his musical talents in that he was most often his own song leader in the multitudes of gospel meetings that he held during his short life. “Bringing in the Sheaves” is popular and found in most all of the hymnals used by the churches of Christ. He also wrote “I am the Vine” and “Tarry with Me.” It is said that in his short time on the world's stage he wrote and put to music some one hundred and fourteen songs.

On the day of June 7, 1879, he was traveling from Dallas to McKinney, Texas for another gospel meeting and the train in which he was riding derailed and went over an embankment. Bro. Shaw was killed instantly. He had been traveling with another man who managed to survive the deadly crash. The railroad car had been completely flipped over and lie on its roof. When the man went back into the car to find Bro. Shaw, he saw an arm extending out from the water, pointing to heaven. Previous to this deadly crash, the last words out of Bro. Shaw's mouth were “Oh, it is a grand thing to rally people to the cross of Christ!”

Sowing in the morning,
sowing seeds of kindness
Sowing in the noon-tide,
and the dewy eves.
Waiting for the harvest
and the time of reaping
We shall come rejoicing,
bringing in the sheaves

This song uses agricultural means to extend its message. The country was at that time an agrarian society, meaning that most all of the work being done was done on countless large-and small-farms. It is easier to speak to farmers using agrarian terms that they would understand.

Jesus often taught by parables. In fact, one of the prophecies about the Messiah was that he would speak to the people in parables. Psalm 78:2 says:

I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old.

Proverbs 1:6: To understand a proverb, and a figure, The words of the wise, and their dark sayings.

And finally, Jesus' speech regarding all of this: John 16:25

These things have I spoken unto you in dark sayings: the hour cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in dark sayings, but shall tell you plainly of the Father.

Another scripture that is vital to a proper understanding of all of this, is Luke 8:11.

Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

In describing this Jesus is telling us that the word of God is the spiritual seed. Hence, telling others of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection from the dead is actually sowing spiritual seed. If one is to take this understanding, much can be understood about the gospel and how vital it is to the salvation of souls from the consequences of their sins.

This verse of the song talks about physical sowing, in the noon tide, in dewy eves, and finally the rejoicing that comes from harvesting the results of that planting of God's word.

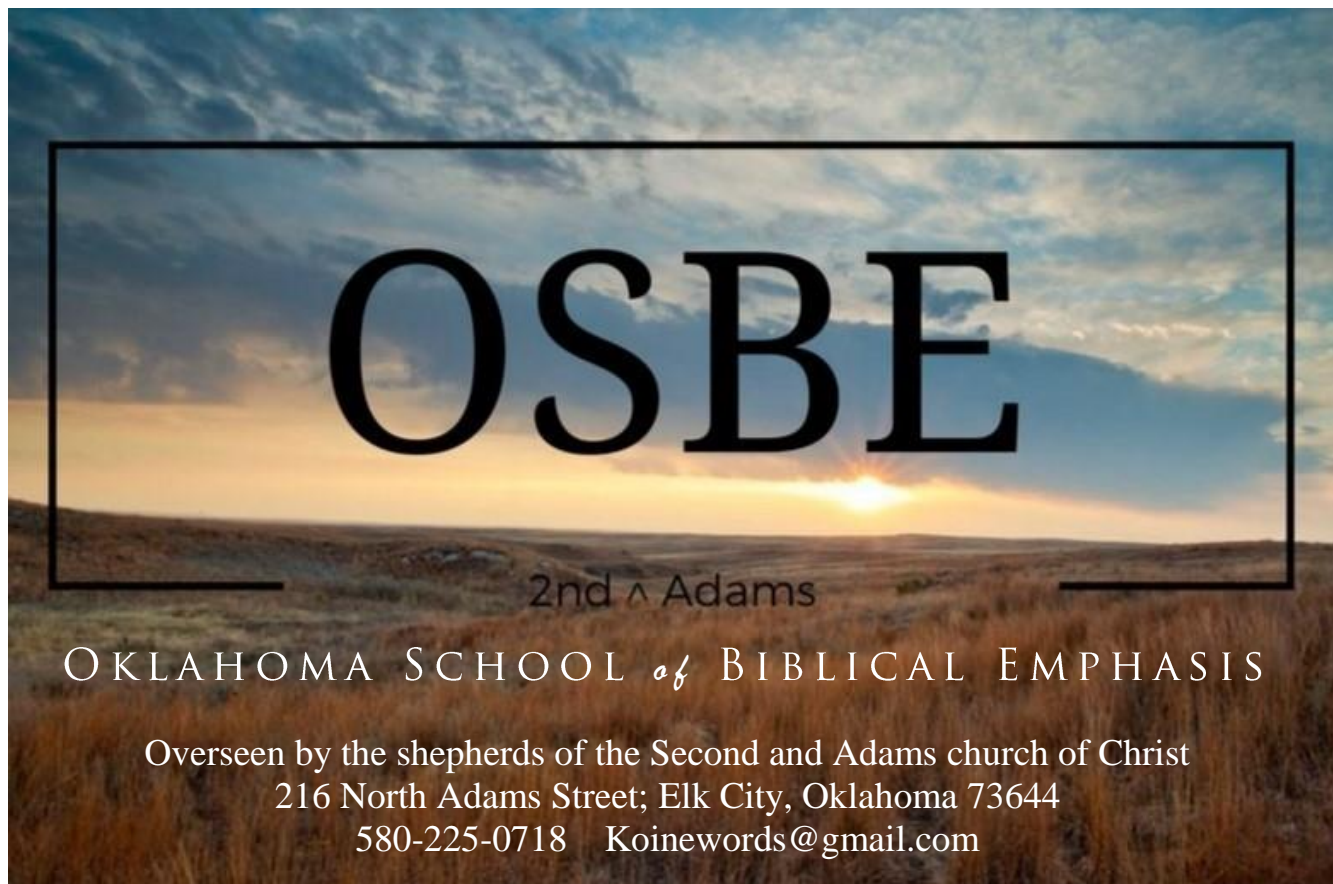
Sowing in the Sunshine,
sowing in the shadows,
Fearing neither clouds
nor winter's chilly breeze;
By and by the harvest,

and the labor ended
We shall come rejoicing
bringing in the sheaves

Again, many ways of looking to the harvest, even though we must face the clouds and nature's chilly breeze. We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves...catchy tune, so much so that I ended up singing it while trying to describe it. Bro. Shaw, you did a marvelous deed!

Go then even weeping,
sowing for the master
Tho' the loss sustained
our spirit often grieves;
When our weeping's over,
He will bid us welcome
We shall come rejoicing,
bringing in the sheaves.

As God's spokesmen, we must face our trials. If we are found faithful, we shall receive the reward given by God. Here we see the words weeping, loss sustained, griefs. It isn't any easy path that we must follow but He is faithful, who called us to this way. With his spirit guiding us, the way shall be clear. Let us then, rejoice!!



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TABERNACLE SHADOWS

The Gate of the Court
BY MARK MCWHORTER

Introduction

The Gate of the Court is described in Exodus 27:16-17. The Gate was 20 cubits wide (30 feet) and 5 cubits high (7 feet, 6 inches). It was wide enough to allow all who wanted to enter. It had 4 pillars of shittim (acacia) wood fixed in sockets of brass. It had hooks, connecting bars, and capstones of silver.

The Colors

The Gate colors were blue, purple, and scarlet, and was fine twined linen.

Purple represents kingship. Matthew shows him as the King, the Divine Sovereign. His genealogy comes through David.

Scarlet represents sacrifice and servanthood. Mark shows him as the Servant and the Divine Savior. The word ‘scarlet’ means ‘worm scarlet.’ Psalm 22:6 shows Jesus as a worm, a reproach of men. He became the blood sacrifice.

Blue represents Deity. John shows him as the Christ of heaven, the Divine Son. The sky is blue. Clouds come and go but the blue never goes away. Psalms 19:1, “The heavens declare the glory of God.” “The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory,” (Psalm 97:6).

Linen represents perfection and holiness. Luke shows him as the perfect, holy man. His genealogy traces back to Adam.

Philippians 2:6-11 shows all of this.

Since blue is listed first, it may have been the primary color of the Gate. It gives a brief look at heaven. By passing through the Gate, the person is embarking on the road to heaven.

The Supports

The Gate was supported by the 4 pillars. These were not covered in gold like the ones in the Door, but rather in silver.

It is possible that the four pillars represent the four accounts of his life by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. They tell his life; the divine life in the flesh. “Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh,” (1 Timothy 3:16).

The colors and pillars referencing the Gospel writers also speak of the universality of the Gospel. Matthew invited the Jews. Mark invited the Romans. Luke invited the Greeks. John invited all nations.

Panels

There were 3 panels created by the four pillars. These panels may represent his three name distinctions. *Lord* is his deity. *Jesus* is humanity. *Christ* is his anointed role to join God and man.

The message is that as one passes through the Gate, one is on the path to understanding the great truths of salvation which come through Jesus the Christ who is Lord.

Authority

God had instructed the Israelites to appoint judges and officers in “all your gates,” (Deuteronomy 16:18). These were to judge just judgment. The Gate was a place of authority.

Thus, Jesus is pictured as the Judge in the Gate. No one is more Just than Jesus. He stated that his Judgment was Just, (John 5:30). Stephen stated that the Jews had killed the prophets who spoke of the coming of the Just One and even killed him, (Acts

7:52). Peter also told them they had denied the Just One, (Acts 3:13-14).

Jesus said he had ultimate authority, (John 5:27).

Christ Came to Be the Gate – the Only Gate

Matthew 7:13-14, “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”

“Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able,” (Luke 13:24).

Christ stated to the officers sent by the Pharisees and Chief Priests that they would seek him but not find him, because where he was going they could not go, (John 7:33-34). The word ‘come’ is in the middle voice, meaning the person is attempting to do the action on his own.

Many in the world look for a Savior, they look for salvation, they look for rest, but they never even take the first step through the Gate. Rather than looking at Christ as presented by the Bible, they attempt to make their own salvation through their own rules. They state a belief but balk at the Scriptures. They have no intention of walking through the Gate toward the Brazen Altar.

Those who walk through the Gate must set aside their nationality and heritage, their own worldly desires, and teachings and philosophies that originate with man, (John 1:13).

Belief

The Gate is representative of Belief, the second step in the scheme of redemption for the non-Christian.

Jesus asked the healed blind man if he believed on the Son of God. He asked who he was so that he could believe. Jesus answered, “Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee, And he said, Lord, I believe,” (John 9:35-38).

Just acknowledging the goodness of the Bible, of Christians, and of Christ is not enough. A person must have a real belief in Jesus to walk through the Gate into the Court. Walking through the Gate is a step toward salvation. But there is more learning needed, which will lead to more belief.

In Mark 9:23-24, Jesus is confronted with a father and his possessed son. The man has belief of Jesus and his disciples. He had asked the disciples to cast out the spirit. They could not. Jesus tells the man,

“If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.”

Matthew 7:13-14, “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”

Entering the Gate was not the attainment of life, but a step ‘unto’ life. Many will not enter the Gate. But walking through it is not the attainment of the goal.

Belief is necessary for salvation. But it is not salvation. “But as many as received him, to them gave he power [ASV – the right] to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name,” (John 1:12).

There are those who believe and walk through the Gate. They look around with interest. They may be excited when they first enter the Court. But, they lose interest.

“They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away” (Luke 8:13).

Walking through the Gate is to embark on the Way. Jesus said he is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, (John 14:6).

Psalms 77:13, “Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary....” Isaiah 30:21, “And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, ‘this is the Way, walk ye in it....’” The Gate encourages those who have walked through it to continue on the road to salvation.

There are many who will state a belief but never tie themselves to the Altar. Belief is not enough. (This will be addressed further at the Brazen Altar Horns.)

Fear of the Lord is necessary. It will push one to walk through the Gate and begin the real process of learning the 'secret' of the Lord, (Psalm 25:14). Those who continue to journey along the Way will learn more by passing through the Door into the Holy Place than those who never enter it. (This will be discussed further at the Door and the Holy Place.)

His secret is with the righteous, (Proverbs 3:32). Job referenced this 'secret' of a more intimate relationship and understanding with God in Job 29:4. He said God was upon his tabernacle when this occurred.

Once one is a Christian and goes about daily living inside the Court and the Holy Place, it is clear that the Court and Holy Place are representative of the Church. The Court and the Holy Place are the New Jerusalem founded by Christ, (Hebrews 12:22).

The Gate and the Door represent those entrance ways established by God as the openings and closings of the Church. This is demonstrated in Psalm 24 where the Gate and Door of the city are ordered to open themselves to the Lord. The first two verses speak of the Lord's creative authority. Verses three through six speak of the righteous who follow the Lord. The final four verses speak of the Lord Christ taking his position of authority in the city. "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory." (This will also be addressed at the Door.)

East Side

The Gate was on the East side of the Tabernacle. (As were the Door and the Veil.)

There is consistency of East-West in God's designs. The entrance of the Garden of Eden was on the East side, (Genesis 3:24). The entrance to the

Promised Land was on the East, (Joshua 4:19). The Israelites were looking for rest in the West.

The main entrance to the First Century Temple was on the East. Jesus' triumphant entrance as the King was from the East. This author believes Jesus was crucified on the Mount of Olives, east of the Temple. This would make the Savior rising in the east as the crucified one. It would make him looking west toward the Holy of Holies. The Jewish leaders probably did not see the irony in the situation. "And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west..." (Zechariah 14:4).

Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the King," (Psalm 48:2). The sides of the North are East and West.

The sun rises in the East and sets in the West. Looking east is to see the rising of the Savior and the Day of work and service, particularly speaking of the Church. Isaiah 43:2, 4, "And, behold, the glory of God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with

his glory And the glory of the Lord came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east."

The light of the rising sun guides us through the Gate, the Door, and the Veil.

Luke 1:78, "Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

Those that follow the Sun from the rising to the setting are always in the light. John 8:12, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

[T]he word normally translated as 'east' is used in Deuteronomy 33:27 and translated as 'eternal.' The text could read, "The God of the East" rather than "The eternal God."

The Sun

Christ is the spiritual sun. Malachi 4:2, "But unto you who fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings...."

Of interest, is that the word normally translated as 'east' is used in Deuteronomy 33:27 and translated as 'eternal.' The text could read, "The God of the East" rather than "The eternal God." In context, God is seen as the sun riding heaven and sky.

Matthew 24:27, "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

John 12:36, "While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light."

The West

Looking West is to see the setting of the sun; the rest that comes with the night.

Jesus said in John 9:4,

"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."

Revelation 14:13, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

Hebrews 4:9, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."

The righteous look West through the Gate, through the Door, and through the Veil. They are looking for the rest that comes at the final night, looking for the rest that comes in the Holy of Holies.

Conclusion

The Gate represents Christ who is the way to salvation. Several aspects of the Gate give us pictures of spiritual truths associated with the Church he established and of which he is the head.

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TEENS

BY HUNTER HILL

Teens, we all want to be kings and queens.
When most of us already have plenty of blessings.
We want and want but it's time to give.
It's time to do this so other won't just be alive but so they can live.
Let's spread love to those who don't know what love is.
Our generation is so advanced so why not be true children of his.

God gave us a chance to change something for the better.
Let us stop obsessing about sins and help a blind man write a letter.
Give a homeless human a home filled with love.
Free a slave to be as free as a dove.
Adopt a kid whose parent's they'll never meet.
Love one another and always be sweet.

Show the world that evil is NOT winning.
But that the word of God gives you a life worth living.
Let us not be so caught up in ourselves that we forget.
All of the humans who want to give up and quit.
You see this thing called life has its times.
When you can't think of anything but your own committed crimes.

Your brain becomes filled with bad.
Good doesn't break through until you become united.
With people who love you and the God who is with you.
He knows what you're going through.
Tell him everything and give him nothing less.
Than if you're willing to truly confess.

Let us be the ones that bring people to God.
And forgive them of all the things they've done and doubts they've had.
We may just be teens but we can do incredible things.
Don't let anyone convince you different even if it stings.
We just have to train ourselves to not be a light that may flicker.
But to be one that shines and brings people home.

Working Together Outside the Worship Service?

BY DAVID DEAN

One of the greatest joys for Christians is the ability to come together on the first day of the week. We join with millions of brothers and sisters across the globe as we remember our Lord. This practice is one that was started just shy of 2,000 years ago on the day of Pentecost, when Peter along with the other disciples stood before the gathered Jews, proclaiming the now famous words, “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36, NKJV). However, when we turn to this section and consider the blessings involved in gathering together on the first day of the week, we often gloss over the remainder of the chapter. Continuing our reading of the book of Acts, we notice that these Christians did not just start a standard practice of meeting on Sunday (the evidence requires we acknowledge this was a command: Acts 20:7, 1 Corinthians 16:2), nor did they declare they would meet on Sundays and Wednesdays as we have taken to doing here in the United States. Instead, when we read the ending of the second chapter of Acts, we learn that they “continu[ed] daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart,” (Acts 2:46). The early church desired more than a once weekly gathering of themselves together. In fact, a study of the New Testament reveals a singular desire to spend as much time as possible with one another.

In reality, it should come as no surprise to us that the early church spent as much time together as it did. The beginning of the church arrived on a day on which hundreds of thousands of Jews made a temporary home out of the city of Jerusalem. Bob Winton in his work on the book of Acts describes the importance of Pentecost to the Jewish nation. He points out that millions would have gathered for this festival. The reason that we bring up this particular point is to ask a question, “Where did all these people go?” Out of necessity they would

have gathered in every available home possible. We can even consider the disciples of Christ; in Acts 2:15 we are told that approximately one hundred and twenty had gathered together. As we fast forward we see that three thousand were baptized after hearing that first gospel sermon, (Acts 2:41) and many more would be added in the days to come, (Acts 2:47). These new Christians needed to stay longer than originally planned if they were to continue to grow and learn more about the Christ and the path now set before them. So, we can see that by necessity the early church was incredibly close.

This closeness would continue outside of the immediate start of the church. In the days that followed, the disciples would spread the Gospel, but they would not do it alone. Continuing in the book of Acts we see by chapter three that Peter and John were working together in taking the Gospel to people. They would work closely together, striving to bring the Gospel to the world. This is not the only pairing we see in the Scriptures. It is interesting that in almost all of Paul’s epistles we find Paul’s companions also send their greetings. He did not work alone; instead, he was constantly taking people with him—Barnabas, Timothy, Silas, etc. Outside of the immediate work of the church, we also see several examples of families opening up their homes to the disciples as they travelled. Lydia, for example, would go so far as to beg the disciples to stay in her home after learning the truth of the Gospel (Acts 16:14-15); this invitation would not be just a one-time event either, as we see the disciples again staying with her after being freed from prison (Acts 16:40). Lydia is not alone in opening her home to the disciples; instead, countless other examples could be shown of the early church using their houses as a means of gathering together and growing closer to one another and the Lord. These examples serve to remind us that our friendships should primarily be with those that are our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Outside of the spiritual labor required of all Christians, we understand the need to provide for our families. After all, as Paul declared, “If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat” (2 Thessalonians 3:10). And Paul was no exception to this rule. In his writings to the church in Thessalonica, he declares how he worked so that he might not be a burden to those that he taught, (1 Thes. 2:9, 2 Thes. 3:8). We see the truth of these claims when we read of Paul’s activities in Corinth as recorded in Acts 18. Having entered the city, Paul joins himself with Aquila and Priscilla. The text tells us the reasoning for this being “because he was of the same trade” (Acts 18:3). Paul not only chose to work with two Christians when the opportunity presented itself, but he also stayed with them. This example harkens back to the reality that even the apostles choose to work with each other when handling their physical needs. In the Gospel of John, we see Peter returning to the fishing boats, he however, is joined by Thomas, Nathanael, James, John, and two other unidentified disciples (John 21:1-3). Together these men offer each other the much-needed comfort and support even outside of a strictly religious setting.

How do the examples and historical setting of the First Century apply today? When we conclude a study such as this, we have to ask ourselves if the message is limited to the individuals addressed, or if it can be as valuable to us today as it was to those that first received it. Naturally, the context of Acts 2 is that of the First Century and the events following Pentecost. However, the continual “togetherness” of the disciples only shows that this level of fellowship was meant to be lasting. Today, in a time when we find ourselves surrounded by one of the more vulgar cultures, how much more do we need to join together outside of the traditional schedule of services! We need to be together so that we can follow the instructions found in Romans 12. How can we cling to what is good (vs 9) when we are never with our Christian family? How can we give preference to each other (vs 10) when fellowship is considered unneeded by so many? Ultimately, we must acknowledge that being together two days a week is just not enough, and for those that profess to love our Lord, it should not be considered enough!

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Understanding Denominational Doctrines:

The Assumption of Mary

BY STEPHEN SCAGGS

In November 1, 1950, Pope Pius XII declared *ex cathedra* these words: “[W]e pronounce, declare, and define it to be a divinely revealed dogma: that the Immaculate Mother of God, the ever Virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory.”

The purpose of this article is not to offer a rebuttal, but simply an unbiased summary. Before we delve into this Catholic teaching, let us consider a few important terms. First, the phrase *ex cathedra* means “from the seat” and refers specifically to the chair of Saint Peter. When the Bishop of Rome speaks from the seat (*id est ex cathedra*), his statements carry the same weight as apostolic writings. It would not be a leap to say Catholics regard *ex cathedra* statements as the words of Christ Himself. Second, what is meant by assumption? This Latin word means “to take up.” As defined by Pope Pius XII, “The Assumption of Mary” is the Catholic dogma that Mary was “assumed body and soul into heavenly glory.”

While most Catholics believe Mary was taken up into heaven in a glorified state, many are unsure when Mary died, or if she died at all. There is some ambiguity in Pope Pius’ words, but it seems he believed Mary did die when he quoted the words “suffered temporal death” in his papal Bull.

When the death occurred is another matter. Some sources indicate that it was as early as three years after the death and Resurrection of Christ; others place it as late as fifty years after that. Likewise, some sources claim that Mary’s body was assumed into heaven while on its way to burial. Others assert that her body was raised after three days, just like her Son’s. Still others believe that she did not die at all, that she was assumed directly into heaven during her natural life. Catholic teaching leaves the question open. (McBrien 330)

Why did Pope Pius XII declare the *Munificentissimus Deus* on November 1950? Historically in 1950, the world was still recovering from its second global war.

... Pope Pius XII intended to send a message to a world newly emerging from the horrors

of World War II. His pronouncement deplored the destruction of life, the desecration of the human body, and the prevalence of moral corruption. He pointed to Mary’s Assumption as “the exalted destiny of both our soul and body.” (McBrien 331)



We should not confuse the Ascension with the Assumption. Mary was *taken up* into Heaven, according to Catholics; Christ ascended *by His own Divine power*. Keane explains it this way: “Jesus arose from the tomb and ascended into heaven by his own power, whereas Mary’s body was taken up to heaven by the power of her Son. For that reason we use two different words: the Ascension of Christ and the Assumption of Mary.”

While the actual dogma is dated 1950, Mariologists have debated for centuries what happened to Mary’s body. In his article, Keane quotes a fourth century writer named Epiphanius.

[Mary’s] life was so completely heavenly and wonderful that mankind could not possibly have borne the spectacle... [T]he Apocalypse (12, 13) would show by the woman who was snatched from the dragon, [*that Mary escaped death*]. If she did die, her death was kept hidden, that people might not think too carnally about Mary (Keane).

In this article, we learn the definition of the assumption, some history behind the papal bull itself, and some distinctions between the ascension and the assumption. Let this information be of some fruit in the kingdom of God in talking with our Catholic neighbors.

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PAUL DARST:

A Novel

BY D.R. LUCAS

[Editor's note: This book was written in the late 1800's, when some people held backwards views about non-white people. The writer of this novel was not backwards, but one of the characters in his story is, which will be seen in chapter fifteen.]

Chapter Fourteen: *A LITTLE CONVERSATION.*

The pleasant and affable young preacher, Love, was welcomed as an addition to the company that met in the doctor's office. The infidels were anxious to get a "chance" at him, and it soon occurred that circumstances gave them the opportunity.

Darst opened the battery by saying: "Mr. Love, do you believe the Bible to be a revelation from God?"

"Most assuredly I do. My faith is weak and I cannot choose the harder side."

"What! Do you pretend that it is easier to believe the Bible true than false?"

"Certainly," responded Love. "Since man is a religious being, and must have some form of religious worship, it seems to me the Bible presents the best system, the best idea of God, that I can find, and, therefore, I accept it, as it meets the aspirations of my nature."

"There it is again," said Henry, interposing, "the old exploded notion that the idea of a God or a higher power is intuitive, when I know it is not true. I have no religious intuitions, and, when men argue for the universality of religious ideas, I am a living example that it is false."

"Not so fast, my good friend," said Love, kindly; "perhaps you are an abnormal product of nature. Do not all men love life, and is it not a universal desire of mankind to prolong life?"

"Certainly."

"Why then do some men commit suicide?"

"Because every rule has its exceptions, and they are not sane."

"Very true, and so with the atheist, he is as much an unnatural being as the suicide."

"Then you believe that man has a religious nature?"

"Most assuredly he has, or it could never be cultivated. Education creates nothing, it only directs. We know by a comparison between man and the rest of the animal creation that he alone is susceptible of religious cultivation. We can never teach an animal the idea of a future life, while we can inculcate and impress the idea upon man."

"What?" said Darst, earnestly, "you do not pretend that the Bible teaches such an idea as that? If I thought that, I do not see why I might not be a Christian."

"Of course, the idea is taught in the Bible. Revelation does not pretend to implant a religious element in man's nature, nor to create his religious or moral nature, it recognizes it as already existing, and simply proposes to educate and direct it aright. Revelation is simply educative and directive, not creative. It does not impart to man the idea that there is a being or beings superior to himself, or that good and evil exist, it only gives him correct ideas of these matters, teaches him to do that right which he would do wrong if left to himself. Paul expresses the idea clearly in Romans 1:20, 'For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.'"

"Well," responded Darst, "that is a new thought to me, I supposed that religion was something a man had to receive. I have been seeking for years to find religion as something that I was to 'get,' that I must have to develop within me the power to

believe and understand the Bible. Do you think I already have the power to understand and believe what God says?"

"Certainly. If you have not, why has God addressed you? It is idle mockery to think that God would make a revelation, and address it to man, if man could not comprehend it and by its use develop his religious nature."

"But you must remember, Mr. Love, that Jesus said in John 6:44, 'No man can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me draw him.'"

"Yes; but how does the Father draw men to him?"

"It must be in a mysterious way, for I have always been so taught."

"Here is where some of our professed Bible teachers make the mistake by such an assumption. Read the next verse."

Darst reads:

"It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."

"Now," said Love, "you see that the Savior's explanation is perfectly clear, and is in harmony with the idea that men are to be taught of God; that as Paul says, 'Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.' Romans 10:17."

"But surely the Bible teaches that we are born or begotten, for that I think the correct translation of the word, of God and of the Spirit. How do you reconcile these statements with Paul's statement?"

"Will you just read all the New Testament says about being 'begotten?'"

Darst reads:

"Begotten or born of God." John 1:13.

"Begotten or born of the Spirit." John 3:5.

"Begotten or born again of the incorruptible seed, by the word of God." 1 Peter 1:23.

"These, or expressions of exactly similar import, are all I find, except one, 'Born of water.' John 3:5."

"Now read 1 John 5:1."

Darst reads:

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born (or begotten) of God."

"By a little comparison now you can see the whole subject. God does not directly and immediately operate upon the heart, but sends the Spirit, the Spirit does not directly and immediately oper-

ate on the heart, but uses the word of God as the instrument, so that when a man is begotten of the word of God, he is also begotten of the Spirit, for the Spirit gives the word, and he is also begotten of God, for God sends the Spirit. Now Peter says that certain persons were begotten of the word of God. Read the next verse and see how the word came to them."

Darst reads:

"And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."

"O, I see now," said Darst, "just how it is. Jesus sent his apostles to preach the gospel, but they did not give the gospel, the Holy Spirit gave the utterance, so that when men believed the word they were begotten of the Holy Spirit, and, of course, were begotten of God. But why did not God say so plainly? Then there would have been no controversy and misunderstanding."

"He has," responded Love; "read James 1:18."

Darst reads:

"Of his own will begat he us, with the word of truth."

"Well, he has said so truly," replied Darst, "but how does the water come in?"

"Jesus says, 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved,' so the Savior has taught us that 'Born of water' is a figurative expression for baptism."

"But the Savior said to Nicodemus, 'The wind blows where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit.'"

"That is true," replied Love, "so far as Nicodemus was concerned, but it is not to us. You must remember that Jesus did not speak to the people except in parables and figures before his death, but afterward spoke plainly. To illustrate a little, Jesus said in the same conversation, that 'as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so the Son of man must be lifted up.' Did Nicodemus understand that, think you?"

"No; for Jesus was not yet lifted up."

"Do you understand it?"

"Yes; for Jesus has been lifted up on the cross, and it has been explained to me."

"That is it exactly," said Love, "Nicodemus did not understand the new birth, but I do, because Jesus and the apostles have since explained it to me,

and I have been 'born again,' and have read accounts in the Acts of the Apostles, where hundreds were born again, where the process is clearly explained,"

"Is there no case in the Acts of the Apostles where faith was produced in the heart without the word?" asked Darst with much interest.

"No," said Love. "What is the strongest case you have heard spoken of?"

"The case of Cornelius and the Gentiles."

"Well, read what Peter says about that case in Acts 15:7."

Darst reads:

"God made choice among us that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel and believe."

"You are right," said Darst, "I never noticed that before; but why was the miraculous gift of the Spirit bestowed upon them?"

"In the first conversion of the Gentiles there were three miracles, as follows:

"1. The appearance of the angel — to convince Cornelius that God would accept him.

"2. The vision of unclean beasts — to convince Peter that he ought to preach the gospel to the Gentiles.

"3. The miraculous baptism of the Gentiles in the Holy Spirit — to convince the Jews that God was no respecter of persons, and that God had accepted the Gentiles.

"You will find that it is a scriptural as well as a scientific truth that 'faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.'"

"Strange," replied Darst, "that I never saw that before. I wish that I could understand and believe the Bible, for I certainly have reason enough to desire it."

"Pshaw!" interrupted Henry, "What do you want to believe the Bible for, with its fabulous stories, pretended miracles, and unknown origin. I have no desire to have any such nonsense in my brain. All men are fanatics who believe in such things. I have no doubt, Mr. Love, but you are a good man, but you are fanatical on this subject. No man of sense would believe in something that he had never seen, nor that any one he knew ever saw."

The sarcastic tone that seemed so natural to Henry, accompanying these oracular utterances,

touched Mr. Love, and having a little of the spirit of retaliation, he turned to Henry with:

"I might answer you as the old Quaker did: Have you ever seen your mind?"

"No."

"Has anyone else ever seen it?"

"No."

"Then, are you certain that you have any?" The laugh that followed this old, and perhaps illegitimate illustration, put the party in a merry mood, and while they are laughing we will give a chapter to the subject.

Chapter Fifteen: *LEVITY.*

The town of Bethel had also its uneducated philosophers, some of whom, in their own estimation, had they been consulted, might have assisted Omnipotence greatly in planning and constructing the Universe. I am compelled to admit, however, that, in the estimation of others, it was a question as to whether Omnipotence would be justifiable in holding them accountable or not, on the ground that where little is given little is required.

Job Raines, however, was not that kind of a character. He was uneducated, murdered his mother tongue with no compunctions of conscience, was given to exaggeration, yet combined with a keen sense of the ludicrous, he had a common sense view of things that entitled him to the title of "genius." He was ready to argue any question, and sometimes it mattered little whether he had any acquaintance with the subject or not. He enjoyed nothing better than a tilt at the atheistic Henry, always trying to puzzle him with questions. He would say, "I like to discuss religion with Henry, or Elder Sleeper, but on politics, give me Ike Loar, cause he understands the subject."

Ike Loar — he was originally called Isaac, we suppose, as his father's name was Abraham, but the "oldest inhabitant" never called him anything but Ike, and in order to be true to history, we must call him Ike. Ike was a politician of the regular stock, and a profound logician, in his own estimation, especially on the negro question. His only interest in religious matters was confined to the relation the children of Ham sustained to the system of redemption.

Elder Sleeper was one of those uneducated preachers, whose business had been to sing ser-

mons on election and kindred topics for many years. A man of some natural ability, had not his early training been on the principle that “education is sinful,” and an attempt to interfere with the “decrees,” he would have been useful in his day and generation. As it was he was one of the “characters” of Bethel.

It was an impossibility for him to meet Job or Isaac, or those two worthies to meet themselves, and separate without an argument. The Elder and Job met one morning in a store and were soon discussing the subject of levity, the Elder charging that Job “always had too much levity in his conversation, when all of us are poor critters and don’t know whether we’re elected or not.” Just then Ike stepped in to make a few purchases. He listened a few minutes until the Elder and Job reached the dry and green trees of the Scriptures, when he forgot all about his errand and was soon in the midst of his favorite topic of “negro ekality,” winding up with the broad assertion — though what bearing it had on the question it would puzzle a Brooklyn lawyer to tell — “it’s no use talkin’, a they has no soul anyway.” Isaac had a habit of putting sentences together that were sometimes very irrelevant, without the use of conjunctions or prepositions. I have known other would-be logicians to do the same. In fact as Isaac had no acquaintance with Lindley Murray or his celebrated work, it is charitable to suppose that he did not understand the use of such small words.

“Well, Isaac, my friend and fellow citizen, of the Caucasian persuasion,” said Job, determined to present a question which he thought would prove a puzzle, “Will you please inform us what the soul is?”

“Goshens,” said Isaac, “the soul? why? why? the soul’s the enjoyment — the Scriptor says so.”

Job was stunned almost by the answer for it was unexpected, but he soon rallied and came back at Isaac with a poser, as he thought, this time, sure:

“Well if you’re a ardent believer in Scriptor will you be so kind and accommodatin’ as to let a fellow traveler on the Jordan road know how you reconcile with your theory the passage of Scriptor which says,

‘Suffer the little black children to come unto me for of such is the kingdom of heaven?’”

Job gave Isaac a look as he closed the quotation, as much as to say, now what will you do? but Isaac not in the least perturbed, responded:

“Goshens, that can all be ’splained away — Adam and Eve — driven out of the garden — Cain and Abel — the mark in the forehead — Noah in the ark a cussin’ of Ham — David a weepin’ for Absalom — the feller what eat grass for seven years, like an ox — Nebubelshazzer or some such name — the rich man and the beggar — the old red dragon a bein’ bound by a angel, such angel bein’ clothed in white — which shows the angels is white men and they’s enjoyin’ themselves — that ’splains all your passage away and there isn’t a splinter left.”

He stopped more from a lack of breath than anything else, when Job came out again:

“Well, it seems to me you can go from Genesis to Josephus about as fast as any preacher I know on — it ‘most makes my head dizzy to listen to you, but sayin’ nothin’ about that, it seems to me that the illusions and quotations you’ve made have about as much bearing on the passage of Scriptor and the question under the investigatin’ process as some of the quotins of Elder Sleeper on total hereditary depravity, effectual callin,’ and other hetrodox doctrines, and it seems likewise — not to be in the least parsonal” — looking at the Elder with a merry twinkle of the eye as he perpetrated the pun — “it seems to me that Fred Douglas mought discount us all, the Elder, Isaac, and your sanctified servant, in intellect and still have sense enough to distance us all a quotin’ Scriptor. What say you Elder?”

Thus appealed to, the Elder with a very somber look replied:

“I don’t want to talk with you, Job, for you always make light of everything and turn it into levity.” And, as levity was a capital sin with him, there was no more argument for him that day. Isaac was still bewildered over the question of Job; not certain that he had “’splained it away” sufficiently, he remarked to Job that he would “collect his thoughts” and meet him again. Job remained, therefore, master of the field, but the Elder winced more than ever at the levity of the bystanders, as Job quietly remarked: “Isaac says he’s goin’ to collect his thoughts — my ’pinion is, ’twill be rather a difficult task as they are so few of ’em and they so ’tar-

nelly scattered from Genesis to Josephus they'll never git together."

"There aint no subject but what you turn into frivolosity, even the failin's of your feller critters, when you ought to be prayin' and considerin' on the sartainty of the futer condition of the elect and reprobates," said the Elder with a tone of severity not altogether natural to him, as if he wanted to make the irrepressible Job serious for once at least.

Job always prepared a defense when attacked, and whether it was as strong as a barricade of stone, or as easily pierced as gauze, made very little difference to him. He would say his tongue was made to rattle and it might just as well rattle a little nonsense now and then as a contrast. He rose up and commenced his defense of levity by an address to the Elder. In anything like a speech the first word was always "well," and sometimes it was repeated. He had the habit of stammering in his younger days, and when he was cured by the process of marking time, instead of saying "down, left, right, up," he would say "well, well, well," so as to be ready to read his sentence at any point. The result was that in breaking himself of one habit he formed another.

Job is not the only person in the world who has done the same thing. I knew a preacher once who was only cured of the habit of saying "My Christian Friends" fifty times in every sermon, by saying "My Dear Friends and Brethren," a hundred.

"Well, my predestinatal friend, what you call levity is what I call mirth, and mirth's a blessing. Well, perhaps you didn't never read Peter Pindar. Well, Peter, he says, that,

"Care to our coffin adds a nail no doubt,
And every laugh so merry, draws one out."

"An' if that's true, I'm in for laffin'. Not to say a man should laugh all the time, but he should have a time to laugh. If the Creator and beholder of this universal hemisphere made me 'long 'o my "feller critters," — a smile at the Elder — "he give me my laffin' propinquites, and I don't b'lieve he'd make such things in vain. Them is facts. Some folks believe in whiskey and other stimulants, but as for me the best cordial (its better'n Godfrey's), I know for the blues and to stir up the blood and spirit is a jollyfyin' good laugh. Nothin' cures a mental hallucemation quicker'n a timely, an' innocent, an' mer-y jest. O'ny the human of all God's earthly works

has the faculties for laffin'. The gentle, sportive lambs can gambol in the meadows, the little dogs can wag their rudiments if they're in a rejoicin' mood, the 'possum can make b'lieve he's deader nor a door nail, the lion can holler louder'n Blackstone Dickens can say amen, the elephant can carry his trunk wherever he prognosticates, the monkey can eat candy and nuts and take your pennies very p'litely when you give 'em to a organ grinder, the little fly can tickle your nose when you want to sleep in the mornin,' and I've no doubt he enjoys it, but it's man — man alone — that has the power to laugh. Them is facts. Well, as I'm a man, I'm goin' to laugh when I see or hear anything funny, that is, provided it is the proper time for laffin'."

Whether the explanation of Job was satisfactory to the Elder, or not, he did not say, and whether it is satisfactory to the reader I know not, but it is right that Job have the benefit of his explanation, at all events.

Chapter Sixteen: DEPARTURE OF ROSE.

Long and confidential conversations took place between Love and Dr. Van Buren, until the latter imbibed some of the spirit that actuated the former in his purpose to cleave to the "Word of God alone as the source of all religious knowledge." Dr. Van Buren prevailed upon him to make his house his home and await future events.

Paul Darst was drawn to Love by a feeling for which he could not account. Both had passed through trial and persecution to some extent. Paul was trying to crush the feeling of love he had entertained for Rose, but it would not go down at his bidding. They met at times, but there was always a feeling of restraint upon them, perceptible to all by whom they were surrounded. The pallor that overspread the countenance of Rose at times, told how severe was the conflict of love and duty, but duty always triumphed — hard as the struggle might be. She had made her decision and by it she must stand. Her father approved her course, and, at her request, gave her permission to visit a dear friend in a neighboring state, trusting that a change of scene would be beneficial in overcoming the sorrow for the past. She felt that she must go someplace where the surroundings would not continually remind her of the sweet hopes once cherished but now never to be realized.

Miss Penelope Prince came in to bid goodbye, and to strengthen, as she had often tried to do before, her good resolution. But, if the truth must be told, instead of adding strength to Rose, the latter always felt her resolution weakened by the visits of Miss Penelope. Why, she could not tell, but somehow she always felt — “perhaps if I had married Paul, I might have been the means of his conversion.”

I know not why it is, cannot give a philosophical reason, but there are some persons in the world that always make us feel a little contrary, like it was easier to go contrary to their wishes than to harmonize with them. Miss Penelope began:

“Why, Rose, what makes you look so sad, you look as blue as indigo, when you ought to be cheerful.”

“One cannot always control their feelings, you know, and I am going away from home for a long time,” responded Rose with a tinge of sadness.

“I know it, Rose, but you are doing right, just what any Christian woman ought to do.”

“That is true, perhaps, but some things that are right are hard to do.”

“Not if we ask for grace to help us. I am afraid you do not rely enough upon Providence and too much on yourself. You must remember the flesh is weak.”

“I do know that the flesh is weak, and the spirit also, I fear, but I know I am relying wholly on Providence, for I am following in this matter only the Word of God. If I followed my own inclinations I should marry Paul Darst.”

“Why, Rose Leyden, the idea! A Christian woman wanting to marry an infidel! I am astonished at you. I would no more think of wanting to marry an infidel than of going to China or flying to the moon. Just let one of them come about me talking his nonsense about marrying! He would learn a lesson that he would not forget for many a day. But I must be going. Goodbye, Rose. Some day you will marry a minister, I know you will.”

Rose smiled sadly as Miss Penelope departed, but somehow thought to herself, “I wish Miss Penelope could have a trial of her faith; I wish Unruh Henry would propose to her,” and then went quietly about her work of preparation, little dreaming of the great changes that would occur ere she should again enter the old mansion.

How we long to peer into that mysterious depth, the time to come, and what a blessed thing the future is hid from our gaze. When John, on the Isle of Patmos, saw the “little book” sealed with the seven seals, but open on the outside, and we realize that that book was a symbol of the future, we can understand why John wept much, when “no man in heaven, or in earth, or under the earth was able to open the book or to look thereon,” and why he rejoiced when one of the Elders said to him, “weep not; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed to open the book and to loose the seven seals thereof.” So we as travelers along the highway of life can listen to the teachings of One who is able to unfold the future, well assured that the future is the brightest and will be the most fully appreciated by him who most willingly, faithfully, and persistently follows the path of duty in the present. In every walk of life it is duty now, and by and by — well, “we know not what we shall be, but when Jesus shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.”

Chapter Seventeen:

A WEDDING.

When Miss Penelope left the house of Judge Leyden, the first person she met on reaching the street was Unruh Henry, the atheistic philosopher. Being a good looking bachelor, people had often wondered why he had never married, in fact, he had often wondered at the matter himself. That very morning he had soliloquized after this fashion: “If it were not for her nonsensical notions about religion, her long prayers, and singing psalms, Miss Penelope would make some man a good wife. Everybody says she is a good housekeeper, a little particular perhaps, but it is a good thing to always have the buttons on and your slippers in the right place. She is not very young, I guess; neither am I. She is not handsome, neither is she very homely, indeed, she always looks so neat and prim, I think she is decidedly good looking, and” — but he did not finish the sentence, and imagination is a dangerous fountain to draw from, its waters are very intoxicating, and we may drink too deeply. We will follow the record and cleave to the facts. As they were both going the same way they walked along together. Certainly, Miss Penelope thought, there can be nothing wrong in that. The conversation naturally turned on the departure of Rose, which

Miss Penelope proceeded to unfold to Henry as something in which she took a deep interest. Henry interrupted her to say:

"If I was going to give my opinion I would say that Rose Leyden is a fool. Marrying is for this world, and none of us know whether there will ever be another, or not, and when a girl has an opportunity to marry a good man she loves, she is a simpleton if she don't do it."

"Why! Unruh Henry! How you talk! Paul Darst is an infidel!"

"Infidel! What if he is? Hasn't a man a right to his opinions? Miss Penelope," turning toward her and speaking low, but very earnestly, "I have been thinking that I would like to marry you. We have both of us outgrown the sentimental fire of youth, perhaps, but we might enjoy ourselves together, and lead a quiet, peaceful, home-life if we had sense enough to allow each other our own religious — or as I suppose you would call mine, anti-religious opinions." Miss Penelope made a movement as if to stop him, but he continued, "Not a word until I am through. Let me have my say. We have known each other a long time and I am not insensible to your many charms and virtues." As Henry uttered this, the usually placid features of Miss Penelope became flushed, and a strange feeling entered her heart at the thought of a handsome marriageable gentleman talking in that way to her. I will not say it was manna, but all human hearts are sometimes hungry, and a starving soul is more to be pitied than a starving body. "You are lonely at times, and so am I. Let us link our hearts, hands, and fortunes together. Will you marry me? I love you!"

"Why, Mr. Henry, what will people say?"

"Who cares for what they will say. It is nobody's business but our own. I am not going to marry all the people. It is you I want to marry."

"But people will talk so about it!"

"O, well, if you do not love me and care more for what people will say than you do for me, say so and I am done."

"But your proposal is so sudden!"

"What if it is? Some things have to be done suddenly. I don't suppose a woman ever received a proposal who didn't think it sudden when it came, no matter how long she had been expecting it. It is one of those things there are no set rules of society

for doing. But you surely have thought of this before? See, here we are at your gate and I want an answer. Will you marry me?"

"If I say yes—" she responded, scarcely daring to say yes, and not wishing to say no. I will do her the justice to say that in her new-found happiness she had entirely forgotten her advisory conversation with Rose a half hour before.

"If you say yes," replied Henry, "I will say that you are a sensible woman and that I am the happiest man alive."

"When shall it be?" said Miss Penelope.

"Today, if you are ready. We are old enough to be sensible."

"Come in," she said as they were now in front of her house. As they must have time to seal their vows in the usual way we will not follow them. Our business is simply to narrate the facts. There was a quiet wedding that evening, in which Miss Penelope Prince became Mrs. Unruh Henry, and those that were present say the bride, judging from the roses on her cheeks and brightness of her eyes, had become ten years younger in a single day. To say that gossips and many staid people of Bethel were astonished would be to state it very mildly indeed. And I have no doubt my readers will be a little astonished likewise, as it is usual for writers to reserve the marriages for the last chapter, but I am detailing facts just as they transpired, and as the proposal and marriage came the same day, of course both must go into the same chapter. It saves words and time, and none of us have any to spare in useless details. Some may say that Miss Penelope was inconsistent in her course, but they must remember Gloster and Lady Anne, and if they ask

"Was ever woman in this humor wooed?"

"Was ever woman in this humor won?"

I will answer, Shakespeare says so; he was a wise man, and a good judge of human nature. Miss Penelope, or Mrs. Henry, as we must now call her, said it was "foreordained," and she was not disposed to find fault with the "decrees." It was her only apology and was enough.

About the Authors

Isaiah Caesar Bie says: I am Isaiah Ceasar Bie, 20, from the Philippines. I preach for the San Felipe church of Christ in the City of Ilagan, Province of Isabela, while finishing my bachelor's degree in Law. By God's grace, I am what I am. ☺

Gantt Carter is married to the former Julie Johnson. They have two young children and reside in Elk City, OK. He has been preaching for about a decade, and he is currently the preaching servant for the 2nd & Adams congregation in Elk City. He enjoys fishing, martial arts, and spending time with his family and friends. Gantt delights in God and in studying the Word of God. His greatest desire is to glorify God with his life and to encourage others to do the same.

Gerald Cowan has been preaching the gospel for over 50 years. In addition to many mission trips to Albania, he has also taught in the British Bible School, and has spent the past 2 ½ decades working for the Lord in Southern Illinois. He has an email publication (Gerald Cowan's Personal Periodical) that he sends out for free to all who are interested.

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Kyle Ellison is 26 years old, preaches for the Mt. Olive church of Christ, and is working on his second year there in B’ham, Alabama. He also works as a part-time firefighter and cattle farmer. He’s not yet married, but he says he’s working on it! Lol.

Kyle Frank is a Christian, Restoration Movement enthusiast, and book lover. His writings have appeared in *Gospel Light* as well as *Faith and Facts Quarterly*. He has edited a three-volume set of the Life and Letters of Jacob Creath Jr., two volumes on Elder Benjamin Franklin, the autobiography of Daniel Sommer, as well as compiling *The Lost Sermons of H. Leo Boles*. His latest book is *A Life Richly Lived: The Life and Writings of Tolbert Fanning*.

Terry Gardner is an independent scholar who can be found at every “Friends of the Restoration” lecture (at the Freed-Hardeman University lectures and the Faulkner University lectures), often delivering fruits of his immense research. He has visited literally hundreds of gravesites of Restoration Movement personalities.

Perry Hall has been preaching over 30 years, and has degrees in History and Philosophy. He has been married since 1984. When not having back surgery, he enjoys riding motorcycles and adopting children. He can be found online at PerryDox.com.

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Bill Howard has been serving the Lord for more than half a century, preaching in small congrega-

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William Howard lives in Dacula, Georgia with his wife and children. He is easily amused and thinks dryer lint is funny. William is currently enjoying the fall of the year while drinking coffee and eating things not on his diet. He loves discussing philosophy and theology and needs to lose weight. William also preaches on Sunday.

John Krivak preaches for the church of Christ in New Castle, Pennsylvania. His family includes Becky, his wife, two daughters, three grandchildren, and occasional foster children. He's been a Restoration Movement enthusiast since the baptismal waters flooded over him, and he has a special appreciation for Alexander Campbell. His studies of the Bible at Harding University emphasized Biblical Languages, and his favorite professor was Dr. Paul Pollard. He may be contacted at jkrivak@zoominternet.net.

Mark McWhorter is a former medical professional, a research fanatic and history nut, a missionary, a book-seller (with his wife, Teah), and that doesn't even come close to all that he does. He has written for several brotherhood periodicals, spoken on several lectureships, helped present Restoration Movement seminars, and was integral in starting Roundhouse, an annual gathering of members of the church who homeschool. He also has, from time to time, gone dumpster diving.

Jim Mitchell obtained his Bachelor of Arts from Freed-Hardeman University & Master of Divinity from Oklahoma Christian University, and has been preaching for more than 35 years and has worked with congregations in Florida, Virginia, and Oklahoma. He served as the minister for the church of Christ in Harrah, OK, from 2006 to 2014 and is now the pulpit minister for the Cherokee Hills church of Christ in Oklahoma City.

Stephen Scaggs is a graduate of the Memphis School of Preaching, and has served congregations in Iowa and Virginia. He is a grammar nerd and does proofreading on the side.

Jake Schotter is an aspiring preacher in Goodyear, Arizona. He loves studying the Bible, reading books, preaching, and writing about the Truth. He has been preaching since 2009. He has been very fortunate to be able to grow his library to over 2,500 books and loves ordering them for cheap prices. He currently attends West Valley church of Christ and can be contacted at jakeschotter@gmail.com. He is planning to attend Freed-Hardeman University this fall, after he graduates from high school.

Devin Self is a member of the Gravel Hill Church of Christ in Dover, Arkansas. From a very young age he knew he wanted to serve the Lord. Going to church camps, youth devotionals, and vacation bible schools were part of his favorite childhood memories, as well as the many great influences that kept him growing stronger. He is married to his wonderful wife of 2 years, Kelsey, and they hope someday to have children to be raised up with Christ as their foundation.

Michael Shank is a former office equipment guru who later ran his own electrical business. Between those two jobs, he became a preacher and wrote some book called *Muscle and a Shovel*. If you've not read it (hundreds of thousands have), you should. Then read the sequel, *When Shovels Break*.

Bradley Cobb is a shrinking preacher, partially due to diet, and partially due to his side-job, loading trucks for UPS five days a week (way too early in the morning...). He lives with his wife and best friend (who happen to be one and the same) and their four Christian children, and has sometimes unintentionally hilarious adventures involving their fireplace. He also writes, edits, publishes, eats, (occasionally) sleeps, and helps to run the most unique Facebook group for preachers of the Lord's church. Oh, and tries to figure out ways to become debt-free. Still working on that