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The Quarterly

Vol. 2, No. 4

MARRIAGE

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before

A DEBATE

*What Happens when a
Christian is Abandoned by a
Non-Christian Spouse?*

Rejoice!

The Pharisees

Who Shepherds
When there are
No Shepherds?

Understanding the
Christian Graces

Humor and the
Human Soul

Parable in Pictures

Jude and Enoch

Lessons from the
Life of Elijah

Tabernacle Shadows

What I Learned
from Jerry Dowell

Helping Wives
Submit

Bartholomew

The Quarterly

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A Big New Announcement!!!!

We come to the end of the second volume of *The Quarterly* (and giving you 100 pages of material to celebrate), and we are excited about what we've got coming up next year. I have to tell you about a big new announcement regarding this much-loved magazine.

Beginning in January, the digital edition of the Quarterly is FREE!

Yep, you read that right. Beginning with Volume 3, digital subscriptions will be free to anyone who signs up at our website: www.CobbPublishing.com/Quarterly

The price for the print edition remains the same (to cover actual cost of printing/shipping).

I need to tell you something else right now from the get-go. *You are going to disagree with one of the articles in this issue.*

How do I know this? Because there are two articles which serve as a debate on whether Paul gives an inspired justification for a Christian to remarry after being abandoned by their non-Christian spouse. Both of the writers submitted their articles on this issue (by request) without seeing the opposing one, hopefully with the result that they would simply present what they believe the text teaches. By doing this, we hope you will understand where each side comes from, so that you will be better able to discuss the issue.

And just as a reminder, the inclusion of an article does not mean that the everyone else on staff necessarily agrees (in part or whole) with the content.

And I should also let you know that we had another one of those "how did that happen?" moments this issue. Your editor apparently sent out the same article assignment to two different writers. But as they approach the topic from different focuses, we are including both of them—two articles on the Pharisees.

In addition to these, we've also got articles on *Who Shepherds When There are no Shepherds?*, *Helping Wives Submit, Understanding the Christian Graces*, *Who Were the Hittites?*, and much, much more!

BRADLEY S. COBB

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Lessons I Learned from Jerry Dowell

AN EDITORIAL



During the summer of 2009, we drove to McLoud, Oklahoma. I was a student at the Bible Institute of Missouri, in between my first and second year at this time. If you aren't aware, most preaching school students fill in at congregations as often as possible. So when I got a call from the preacher in McLoud, asking if I could come fill in for him on a certain Sunday, I thought nothing of it. We got there on a Saturday afternoon and went to the preacher's house to meet him ahead of Sunday. It was there that I first met Jerry Dowell.

Over the next nine years, I got to know Jerry as a person, a brother, an elder, a friend, and an unintentional mentor.

The Importance of Visiting Members

This one thing—even if I had learned nothing else from him in the nine years I got to know him—was incredibly important. In fact, I'd venture to say that it was the most influential thing I learned from him. As I said above, the first time I met Jerry was when we went to the preacher's house in McLoud. Jerry was there checking on him (at least, that's *part* of the reason he was there), because he had just had surgery.

After the preacher retired and we moved to McLoud to work with the church there, Jerry encouraged me (and the family) to go visit the members. Several times, Jerry would ride with me and show me where people lived. We went to the nursing home together on multiple occasions, checking in on members who lived there. He showed me how to talk, how to listen, and how to ignore how much time passed. He taught me that you shouldn't make your visits feel like something scheduled, where you only have a certain specified time that you stay.

Over the course of our time there in McLoud, I don't think anything was as impactful in building a relationship with the members as frequent visits at their houses. We would usually take the whole family on these visits, and even after visiting with someone for hours, both sides still feel bad that it has to end.

I learned this from Jerry Dowell—not because he *told* me about how important these things were, but because he *showed* me by example.

The Importance of Continued Study

Before he was diagnosed with Alzheimer's, I remember Jerry sitting in the foyer of the church building, reading a tract on baptism. I walked in, greeted him, and he handed the tract to me. He said, "This is good. You ought to read it." I smiled, and he continued without prompting, "It's getting harder for me to remember things, so I re-read so I don't forget."

It's a principle many of us would do well to take to heart. We may think we've got it all figured out, but we need to keep re-reading, to keep studying, so that we don't forget. I John 2:12-14 is a list of things that the Christians knew, but John is writing to remind them, so they didn't forget what they had in Christ.

The Importance of Visiting Wayward Members

One Thursday morning, I drove to the Dowell house, and Barbara (Jerry's wife, and a wonderful friend) handed me a list of the people that Jerry wanted to go visit. They were all former members who still lived in the area. By this time, Jerry had started showing signs of Alzheimer's, and couldn't drive. And as I had no idea who most of the people on the list were (and didn't have addresses—nor did I have GPS on my phone at that point), I was in Jerry's hands.

He kept me worried that we were going to get lost, as he would say things like, "I think there's something up here where we go," and would point left. Sure enough, the road curved sharply to the left. Eventually, he led us directly to a trailer, and told me about a woman he had studied with, and had baptized, but who hadn't been to church in decades. She pulled in just after we did, and I watched as Jerry talked with her in love about her soul's condition. She still hasn't ever returned, and Jerry told me he didn't think she ever would, but that wasn't going to keep him from trying.

Later on, as his Alzheimer's had progressed more, he would frequently have difficulty expressing his thoughts and carrying on conversations (though for some reason, I usually always knew what he was talking about). We went to visit a man, and on our way there, Jerry told me (as only Jerry could) that he had been away from the church for a long time, that he was a great song leader, and that he really wanted to see him come back. Mind you, it took concentration on my part, and reading in between the lines to make sure I understood correctly, but he nodded that I had it right.

We got to the man's house, knocked on the door, and he was happy to see us. We sat at his kitchen table and talked for a while, when I brought up how everyone would love to see him and his family back at church, and how much he was loved by everyone there. Jerry, who hadn't said a lot up to that point, looked at him and said, "Paul, do you remember what you told me the last time I came here?" The man nodded and said, "Yes, sir." Jerry pressed him, "Why don't you tell me, so I know you remember." The man spoke up, "I told you that I'd come back." Jerry nodded, and said, "I'm getting old, so you might want to hurry up if you want me to see it."

We left his house, and Jerry said that if he could only get one family to come back to the Lord, it was them. That man, and his family, are now some of my family's best friends and favorite people, and they have been back active in the service of the Lord for several years. Even earlier this year, when Jerry's Alzheimer's was making him nearly unresponsive, the mention of this family coming back made his eyes light up and his smile go from ear to ear.

Jerry passed away earlier this year. But I can't help but smile every time I think about him. Thanks be to God for putting Jerry Dowell in my life for nine years.

-Bradley S. Cobb



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REJOICE!

BILL HOWARD

*“Rejoice in the Lord always:
and again I say, rejoice.”*

-Paul of Tarsus (Philippians 4:4)

How do we comprehend the meaning of ‘rejoice’? What does it mean? And what does it mean to each of us? To rejoice is to be happy, to be delighted, to be pleased: something to celebrate.

This admonition from the Apostle Paul to the Christians at Philippi was then, and still is today, deeply meaningful to the family of God. Having heard the gospel of Jesus Christ and believing in the sacrifice He made for our sins, we confess that belief, are baptized into Christ, and we are cleansed from sin and added to his spiritual kingdom, which is his body, his church. In view of this, we can understand why Paul would counsel Christians to always, constantly, be in a state of joy. In Christ, we have set ourselves on the pathway to righteous living and the certain knowledge that we will live forever in the presence of our Maker, the Almighty God, if we stay the course. Eternity is unending, forever, where there will be no markers of time. How could we, as God’s children, not be filled with joy?

Listen to the words of our Savior.

*“Don’t let your hearts be troubled.
Trust in God, and trust also in me. There
is more than enough room in my Fa-
ther’s home. If this were not so, would I
have told you that I am going to prepare
a place for you? When everything is
ready, I will come and get you, so that
you will always be with me where I am.
And you know the way to where I am”
(John 14:1-4 NLT).*

Is there a more beautiful and meaningful thought the human mind could conceive? Other than telling us about heaven, Jesus lets us know it will be always, without question. Also, He says we know the way to where He is. That way is death, burial, and resurrection; just as Christ did, so we do in our obedience.

Other than Jesus himself, the Apostle Paul was the greatest teacher of record. His constant effort to teach and preach Jesus brought him many problems, and ultimately death. He wrote to the church at Cor-

inth relating the suffering he had endured for his faith:

*“I have worked harder, been put in
prison more often, been whipped times
without number, and faced death again
and again. Five different times the Jew-
ish leaders gave me thirty-nine lashes.
Three times I was beaten with rods.
Once I was stoned. Three times I was
shipwrecked. Once I spent a whole night
and a day adrift at sea. I have traveled
on many long journeys. I have faced
dangers from rivers and from robbers. I
have faced danger from my own people,
the Jews, as well as from the Gentiles. I
have faced danger in the cities, in the
deserts, and on the seas. And I have
faced danger from men who claim to be
believers but are not. I have worked
hard and long, enduring many sleepless
nights. I have been hungry and thirsty
and have often gone without food. I have
shivered in the cold, without enough
clothing to keep me warm. Then, besides
all this, I have the daily burden of my
concern for all the churches” (2 Corin-
thians 11:23-27).*

Yet, in spite of all he endured for the gospel of Christ and his love for the souls of mankind, he wrote to the Philippians:

*“but this one thing I do, forgetting
those things which are behind and
reaching forth unto those things which
are before, I press toward the mark for
the prize of the high calling of God in
Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:13-14,
KJV).*

To the Elders of Ephesus:

*“And now I go bound in the spirit unto
Jerusalem, not knowing the things that
shall befall me there: Save that the Holy
Spirit witnesseth in every city, saying
that bonds and afflictions abide me. But
none of these things move me, neither*

*count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might **finish my course with JOY***" (Acts 20:22-24).

As the children of God, we can be comforted by the words of Jesus:

*"And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and **your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you**"* (John 16:22).

We do not live in a world that is free from problems; there will be uncomfortable situations we will endure. However, our deep-seated faith in the Father and the promise of eternal life with Him will sustain us and bring us untold joy. Paul to the Romans:

*"Now **the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit**"* (Romans 15:13).

"But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yea, let them exceedingly rejoice" (Psalm 68:3).

And, why should we not? We are reconciled with God through the blood of our Savior, Jesus Christ. We have the certain knowledge that if we remain faithful to the Lord, we too will receive that crown of righteousness of which Paul speaks.

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto them also that love his appearing" (2 Timothy 4:7-8).

This is the assurance we have and our reason for joy as faithful Christians.

"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matthew: 13-43).



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MESSAGES OF ENCOURAGEMENT

CALEB LEHMAN AND XANDER PASLEY

[Editor's Note: These four short messages are examples of what these two teenage Christians are doing to encourage other teens to follow God in their daily lives. I'm happy to call them my friends and brothers in Christ.]

A man who has friends must himself be friendly, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother. (Proverbs 18:24 NKJV)

Life is rough, guys. We need people to help us through our lives. All of us have our own personal struggles and temptations. Satan uses those to get us to fall, but that's what friends are for! Friends, true friends, are the people who stick by your side no matter what. Who help you no matter what you may be going through. Who come to your aid when you need them. I know all of you would do that for me, and y'all know that I would do that for you—that's what friendship is.

But you guys are more than just friends; y'all are family. We're always there for each other, encouraging, praying, advising, caring. I don't know where I would be without you guys, but I definitely wouldn't be where I am today, I'll tell you that!

Sometimes life gets us down. Troubles, strife, and tragedies may fall our way. But we know that we can always rely on each other to pull us through. We never leave a friend behind, EVER. We're all in this together; the battle on earth is real. This is a spiritual WAR that we are fighting, and it's not easy; but no one said it would be—God sure didn't say it would be. All of us are on the frontlines, fighting against the devil. We need to put on the full armor of God to go into battle (Ephesians 6:13-17). God is on our side! Romans 8:31 says:

*What then shall we say to these things?
If God is for us, who can be against us?*

We all fight battles, sometimes personal ones. But you don't have to fight it alone. All of us are standing by, at the ready to jump in and give aid, to

help each other when we need it. I know that when I'm on the front lines... All of you are right there next to me.

I hope this was helpful, keep fighting guys!

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. (1 John 1:5-10)

We know we've all sinned. If we say we haven't then we're liars ourselves. So if sin separates us from God (Gen. 3:11, 22-23), then whenever we sin we are immediately separated from God and going to Hell, right? Well.... about that. How can 1 John 1:7 be true? If we walk in the light like He is in the light, then we must be perfect like Him, right? But if we're perfect as we walk in the light then how can Jesus' blood cleanse us of sin? The answer must be that we still sin while still walking in the light. However, to paraphrase Paul, should we sin even more since we can, and still be cleansed? God forbid! (Romans 6:1)

Does my struggle mean I am separated from God since I turn to sin again and again, though I try to fight? I refuse to believe this. The path of light ends when we FULLY reject Him. Why would He turn us away as we strive to reach perfection to be with Him (2 Pet. 3:9)? Falling is not the same as failing. We

may fall, but as long as we get back up through His power we have not failed.

Let's keep walking guys, we've got a ways to go yet.

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes'? Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits. And the one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him." (Matthew 21:42-44)

Humility is a difficult concept for many of us to master. Many times I've had to shove my pride to the back of my heart to do what I know is right, and even then I haven't always succeeded. Why is this so hard? As humans we each have natural God-given talents, and that is great! Having different talents keeps us all unique and makes life interesting. Sometimes when we should be seeing the good in other people and admiring their talents, instead we look at our own talents and say to ourselves, "Ha! That person is terrible at ____." I have caught myself doing this several times recently, sadly, often in retrospect.

In the verses above, look at the last section. *And the one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him.* In life we have two options. Break yourself. Or be crushed unwillingly. I can choose to stand solid and unmoving alone and have God utterly crush me when the time comes or I can take my God given will, snap it over my knee and say, "God, I need you to be my will." That's humility. If you are truly humble before God and give Him your will, then humility will fall into place everywhere else. Humility does not mean you see yourself as worthless—you aren't. No one is (Matt. 10:29-31). Breaking your will as a sacrifice for Him is hard (Rom. 12:1-2), but His will is so much greater to have in our lives. Please, break your will because if we aren't broken then the day WILL come where we are crushed, and I want that for no one. I love y'all, let's always pray for each other.

Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer (Rom. 12:12)

Romans 12:9-21 is PACKED with beautiful things we should be doing but I want to zero in on this one thing. Prayer. Prayer is incredibly important to me; maybe I emphasize it more than necessary, but I don't think so. Consider: at any time, in any place, you can open your mouth or your mind and have the Creator of the world listen to your every word. Can we talk about this marvelous gift enough? I don't think so, but can we do it enough? *Be constant in prayer*, there's your answer.

That said, prayer is special, it shouldn't be taken lightly nor should it be abused. Prayer should stay special. Does this mean you should pray only in church so it does not become common and so prayer keeps its specialness? No!

How do we pray always and keep prayer special? If we pray about everything we see and think every second of the day, then isn't our prayer pretty much... meaningless? To balance praying constantly and at the same time keeping prayers special, we should remember who we're talking to. He created everything through His might, He can do exceedingly above what we ask and THINK (Eph. 3:20). He has indescribable beauty. His voice alone has the power to make nations tremble (Ex. 20:18-21). Pray constantly, but when you do, remember these things and your prayers will keep their meaning.

I encourage all of us, pray always. We have each other now but a day may come when we are alone. When that time comes we will need a good relationship with God, and it is impossible to have a good relationship with someone you don't talk to.¹

I challenge you all, tell someone you trust about your prayer life, honestly. You don't have to get into detail, just examine yourself and talk about what you need to work on. I'll start the ball rolling. Personally, I struggle with praise in my prayers. I ask Him for things and I thank Him for things, but simply praising Him is hard for me. Your turn. Let's keep praying guys.

¹ Editor's note: AMEN!

UNDERSTANDING THE CHRISTIAN GRACES

(2 Peter 1:5-11)

NATHAN COZORT

We often speak, and rightfully so, about the many uses of scripture. The words of the Apostle Paul to the young preacher Timothy are a favorite when discussing the inspiration of scripture and its many uses. Within this verse there is a specific phrase that applies directly to our topic, "...for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16). If we truly want to understand the Christian graces, we need to first understand their purpose.

Our God, throughout history, never left His creation without instruction. We generally accept this when we teach about the plan of salvation, acts of worship, and how other nations (besides the descendants of Abraham) were able to live a life pleasing to Jehovah. For the purposes of this discussion, we must recognize that God has provided for us everything that we need to become the fruit-bearing children He desires. In his book on the topic, Adam Cozort had this to say concerning our typical use and understanding of the Christian graces:

Unfortunately, it is true that in many cases we give only a cursory glance at the details of Christian life that is described in these few verses. Many assume that they understand what Peter has written and neglect to delve deeper into what this standard entails. These few words, however, form the foundation of every aspect of individual development discussed in the New Testament –

their weight and power cannot be over-emphasized.¹

Our goal, a Christian's goal, is to be the very best worker in the Kingdom of our Lord as possible. The implementation of the Christian graces, in order, is an essential formula for the Christian soldier to be the very best he or she can be. We do this text (2 Peter 1:5-11) a disservice by assuming, or only briefly mentioning, these qualities without doing our

best to fully understand and integrate these soul-strengthening principles in our lives.

For Christians today, understanding the meaning of these words and how we should apply them to our lives is of the utmost importance. We cannot be the fruitful offspring God desires without the knowledge and understanding

of these growth principles. With a better grasp of God's instruction for our everyday living, we can ensure that we become "...perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work" (2 Timothy 3:17).

Diligence:

This word has gone largely without discussion, yet, it is a very crucial piece of the foundation which the following qualities rest upon. Vine's defines the Greek word *spoude* as "earnestness, zeal."² This word appears most often the New Testament text as

¹ Adam Cozort, 2011, The Christian Graces: God's Blueprint For The Development of Complete Christians, Belmont, ABC Publications

² Vine W. E., M. A., 1940, Bible Dictionaries: Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, www.StudyLight.org, <https://www.studyLight.org/dictionaries/ved/d/diligence-diligent-diligently.html>.



a verb or adverb (e.g. Galatians 2:10; Ephesians 4:3; Hebrews 4:11; 2 Peter 1:10 and others). However, in our text, the word translated “diligence” is a noun which indicates that the action (which in this case is our effort or earnestness) does not come from the Christian, but it is brought with or from within the Christian. That is a very important distinction to make in how we apply this word.

When you put that definition together with the word “giving,” which Thayer defines as “to bring in besides, to contribute besides to something,” Peter is saying that Christians should bring their diligence along beside them. To understand this better we need to put it in its proper context. Peter, backing up to verses 3-4, introduces the necessity of the Word of God. There are three specific areas: 1) It provides us with everything that has to do with life and godliness; 2) It brings knowledge to those who seek it; 3) There are great and precious promises for those who obey it. Therefore, this places great value on the Word. It is through our obedience that we “...escape the corruption that is in the world through lust” (2 Peter 1:4b).

Speaking concerning the relationship between the value of the Gospel and our diligent obedience to it, Cozort writes:

*Taking the context into account, consider again the statement at the beginning of verse five. Peter states that by the Word of God we have all things that we need in this life, including the ability to escape the corruption of the world. But besides all of this, when the Christian comes out of the world there must be **something brought with him**, something that brought him to the point of being obedient to the Gospel, and that is just as necessary after becoming a Christian as before: diligence. The zeal to want to do what is right and the desire to follow through with what is necessary.³ (emphasis added, NC)*

This diligence comes in many forms. We see it in our desire to know more about our Creator. We see it in a person who knows there is something better than what this world has to offer, and is seeking

out what brings about true fulfillment in life. This diligence will help the Christian remain faithful and fruitful in the Kingdom of God, as he or she continues to build their faith.

Faith:

The next logical step when someone seeks to obey God is the development of faith. Strong’s defines faith as “Persuasion, that is, credence; moral conviction.”⁴ Thayer describes faith in this way, “The conviction of the truth of anything.”⁵ This faith is not like many suggest today; (i.e. a blind leap in the dark, a gut feeling, or a warm fuzzy feeling) however, faith is “conviction by belief based upon evidence.”⁶ True faith must have a suitable source. We read in the book of Hebrews, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). This faith comes from instruction in the Word of God, “So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17). Without this faith that is based on evidence, a soul cannot be pleasing to God (Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24; Mark 16:16; John 12:47-50).

Belief is essential for the Christian: “all who believe...should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). Saying that faith is necessary does not help us to understand what we need to believe or have faith in. Consider, for a moment, some things we must have faith in. Mankind must believe in the existence of God, “if ye believe not that I AM, ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:24). We must also believe that the Word of God is inspired, “All scripture is inspired of God...” (2 Timothy 3:16). Belief in the promises of God is elementary in the development of faith. “Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature...” (2 Peter 1:4). Yes, faith is required to please God, but faith alone is not sufficient. Faith alone will not sustain the soul. Once faith begins to grow, the Christian must add virtuous actions.

⁴ James Strong, Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, pg. 331, Peabody, Hendrickson Publishers

⁵ Joseph H Thayer, 1889, Thayer’s Greek Definitions, Peabody, Hendrickson Publishers

⁶ Cozort, pg. 14.

³ Adam Cozort, 2011, The Christian Graces: God’s Blueprint For The Development of Complete Christians, pg. 7, Belmont, ABC Publications

Virtue:

This word “virtue” is not often used in modern English. It is necessary for us to understand exactly how virtue applies to the Christian.

There are two New Testament terms translated “virtue” in the King James Version. On three different occasions (Mark 5:30; Luke 6:19; 8:46) the term translated “virtue” comes from the Greek word dunamis meaning “power, strength, ability.” In these three cases, the word is used in reference to the healing power of Jesus emanating from him to those who touched him.⁷

However, this is not the word that we find in 2 Peter 1:5. This word come from the Greek word *arete*. Thayer defines this word as “a virtuous course of thought, feeling, and action; moral excellence.” Now we can begin to understand the thoughts of Peter. We are to add virtue, high moral excellence and the proper application of right and wrong, to our faith, to our belief in God based upon the evidence, and to our diligence. Let us consider another passage, “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9).

The word translated “praises” is the same word translated “virtue” in our text. We, as Christians, are to show forth the virtues, those things that are morally excellent, of our God.

How must we apply this virtue? To show a virtuous course of thought we should consider the words of Paul:

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things (Philippians 4:8).

Virtue has to do with the actions we perform and the way we perform them. Consider virtue to be the process of applying filters to our actions. If we ask

ourselves a series of questions before committing an action, then we can have confidence knowing that our actions will align with God’s blueprint. The opposite is also true. If/when we discover that our actions are questionable or blatantly rejected by God’s word, we must choose to serve God or suffer the consequences.

Knowledge:

Sometimes we get tripped up on this word. We tend to over-simplify it or dilute its true meaning. The word translated “knowledge” is *gnosis* and it means, “to know, to understand, intelligence.” Peter is not simply referring to the gaining of facts. While that is one form of knowledge, gaining facts, in and of itself, is not overly helpful if we do not know what to do with our facts.

There are two areas we must consider if we want to follow God’s blueprint. First, we should consider wisdom. In the words of Solomon, “Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding” (Proverbs 4:7). Two principles of knowledge, mentioned by Solomon, are essential for the student of God’s word. Wisdom is the ability to know how to use the information you receive. As we mentioned earlier, if you do not know how to apply something, knowing that thing is not valuable. Wisdom is determining how God’s word applies to your everyday life. Secondly, understanding is giving the reason(s) for doing something God prescribes. God wants us to know the “why.” Solomon has this to say concerning wisdom and understanding. “The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his ways: but the folly of fools is deceit.” (Proverbs 14:8)

How can we acquire the knowledge that meets God’s pattern? This knowledge will not come by accident. We will not stumble into knowledge. Very simply, knowledge, true knowledge, will only come through studying God’s word. Paul would write:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith (Romans 1:16, 17).

A few chapters later, in the book of Romans, Paul would state, “...faith comes by hearing and

⁷ *Ibid.*, pg. 18.

hearing by the word of God” (10:17). Knowledge comes from the truth of God’s word. Paul says it is the “power of God,” righteousness is revealed by it, and John records the words of our Lord, “Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth” (John 17:17). John would go on to declare that truth is knowable. “The elder unto the elect lady and children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth. For the truth’s sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us forever” (2 John 1-2). John is saying that we can put our confidence in the truth.

Sadly, many do not see the value of God’s word. If they did, Paul would not have made this statement to the Corinthians:

And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified... And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God (1 Corinthians 2:1-2, 4-5).

We cannot place our trust in the wisdom of the world (James 3:13-17), but rather in the truths of God’s Holy Word. Knowledge is strategically placed here in God’s blueprint. Once an individual accepts God’s call (John 6:44-45), brings their diligence with them, and begins to live a morally excellent life they are well on their way to developmental success. However, the Christian must continue seeking knowledge. Cozort writes:

Without the continuation of learning, the development of the Christian will cease. It will then be impossible for the following Graces to be added to the Christian’s life because they are all predicated upon the continued growth, knowledge, and understanding of the Christian. Unfortunately, there are many who never develop past the step of

*knowledge toward becoming a complete Christian.*⁸

The more you know, the more you can apply God’s word in your life, and the better example you will be to others around you. This is where an individual, influence on an entire congregation, and congregational growth can come.

Temperance:

A fourth step in the development of the Christian is temperance. We commonly replace this word with self-control, and that is an accurate replacement. The definition, according to Thayer, is “self-control (the virtue of one who masters his desires and passions, especially his sensual appetites).” We only find this word six times in the New Testament, nevertheless its importance to the Christian is supreme. In discussing temperance, Cozort says:

*Temperance is the ability of the individual to control himself by his own strength or power. This word is specifically associated with the dealings of the physical body. However, the control over one’s body is directly tied to the control exerted over the mind...*⁹

The actions we engage in with our physical bodies will prove we understand temperance. Paul talks about the application of temperance when he says, “But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (1 Corinthians 9:27). Previously, Paul talked about the athlete who prepares for competition, “and every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things...” (2 Corinthians 9:25). We can take from these statements that there is a need to control our physical bodies. The excuse of “I could not help it,” or blaming our actions on someone else, will not satisfy God’s requirement for temperance. Without proper self-control we cannot be acceptable to God.

We cannot properly apply this definition of temperance until we consider how the body operates (namely the use of the mind). The body cannot function without the prior command coming from the

⁸ Cozort, Adam. The Christian Graces: God’s Blueprint For The Development Of Complete Christians (Kindle Locations 324-327). Azimuth Media. Kindle Edition.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 344-346.

mind. Therefore, a sober mind is one that will save the mind. According to Thayer, “Sober” comes from the Greek, meaning, “to save the mind, to rein in or curb.” By thinking the right things, not allowing our thoughts to stray to the right or left, we can train and retrain our bodies to act appropriately.

Patience:

The biblical view of patience is preparing the Christian for spiritual warfare. Patience is the training mechanism that takes a raw new-born babe in Christ and turns them into a well-rounded, well-equipped, well-prepared soldier who is fit for duty. Thayer defines “patience” as, “steadfastness, constancy, endurance, steadfast waiting for, perseverance.” We see this patience applied by those who strive to remain in Christ. Patience is our ability to withstand the temptations and fiery darts of Satan (cf: Ephesians 6:10-13). John wrote to the church at Ephesus, relaying Jesus’s view of them:

I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and has found them liars: And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name’s sake hast labored, and hast not fainted (Revelation 2:2, 3).

In this list of things that pleased the Lord, endurance or patience is listed and described in several ways. The Ephesians could not bear those who did evil, they labored, and they did not faint. This is the desired outcome for a Christian striving to follow God’s blueprint.

Jesus is a perfect example of patience. As the author of our salvation (Hebrews 12:1-2), it was necessary for Jesus to endure (from the same root word as patience) the cross. The ability to do what is necessary, even in the face of certain death, is the epitome of perseverance.

Now let us apply this principle of patience to the new convert. We often expect them to take on the giants of the world having just stepped out of the watery grave of baptism. We have to understand the patience needed to overcome and build their confidence will not happen overnight. We do them a disservice if we attempt to advance them or put them on the front lines of this spiritual warfare, until they have matured sufficiently. While it is true that the

“...trying of our faith worketh patience” (James 1:3), it is neither required nor prudent to drop them in the deepest, darkest, and most often destructive environments and say, “good luck!” “Many a babe in Christ has lost their soul because they were thrown into the fray before they were prepared to defend themselves.”¹⁰

Godliness:

Very simply, godliness is our desire to be like God. W. E. Vine describes “godliness” as, “piety toward God, devout, godliness, godly.”¹¹ There are numerous passages in scripture (e.g. Matthew 5:48; 1 Peter 1:14-16; James 4:8 among others) that speak of our need to be more like God. Now this commandment to be God-like should not be taken to mean we will become God or sinless like God. Let us not fall into the same trap as Eve in Genesis 3:5, where the serpent spoke lies concerning the outcome of eating the forbidden fruit. However, we can be complete, as God is complete. Very simply we must love the things God loves and hate the things God hates. “Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you...” (James 4:8).

The importance of applying godliness to our lives cannot be overstated. The world does not want to transform its thoughts and actions to align with God’s word (Romans 12:2). It would rather remain in darkness. To keep its deeds hidden (John 3:19). Paul put it this way:

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world: looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works (Titus 2:11-14).

The benefits of living a life of godliness will not go without being rewarded. It will require sacrifices and tribulations on our part, but in the end our confidence in God’s promise to reward the faithful (cf:

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 479-480.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 493-494.

Titus 1:1-2) will come to pass. “The attribute of godliness is the final layer of the personal development of the Christian. When one has grown to the point of incorporating true godliness there is nothing God has commanded that the Christian will not seek to obey.”¹²

Brotherly Kindness:

These last two principles (brotherly kindness and charity) don’t focus on the development of the individual, rather they deal with our treatment of others. The individual Christian, after correctly applying the previous five tenants, is now ready to demonstrate their Christianity to others.

Many people think of Philadelphia, the “city of brotherly love.” The Greek words mean much more than brotherly love. The most important word, for our consideration, is the Greek word for love. When this word refers to the love of God towards man it means “cherished above all else.” Consider the words of Jesus “For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God” (John 16:27).

When this word refers to men or brethren, it is indicative of “close bond of companionship, care, concern, and fellowship that is shared between individuals.”¹³ This would include many other relationships besides siblings. Most of the time, when brotherly love or brotherly kindness appears in discussions, it is related to the interaction and treatment of siblings. The meaning is much broader in scope. This word; however, is not intended to reference the physical treatment of our brothers and sisters, rather it deals primarily with the interaction of our spiritual family, the Church. “Seeing that ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently” (1Peter 1:22). Our love for the brethren is to be clearly seen and heard. Quite often the love brethren should have is not clearly seen or heard. Some brethren do not make the time to help when there is a need. They are nowhere to be found when times are hard. Certainly, this is not a representation of all brethren and thankfully so. Cozort puts it this way,

If we devote ourselves to our spiritual family the way God intends, there will

¹² *Ibid.*, 561-563.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 584-585.

*never be any doubt as to whether or not we have brotherly kindness as a part of our Christianity. But if we are simply using titles without emotion or substance our “brotherhood” is empty and useless.*¹⁴

Charity:

The last characteristic, in God’s blueprint for the development of the Christian, is love. Sadly, this is the word or principle of Christianity most Christians want to start with. Hopefully we have been able to prove that God placed these qualities in a specific order. This type of love is not automatic. This type of love demands conscious effort to develop and maintain. This type of love is sacrificial in nature. Thayer defines this love as “love, affection, benevolence.” The greatest description of what it means to show the type of love is found in 1 Corinthians 13. The first three verses talk about the need for this type of love. Paul reminds those in the first century that they could use their miraculous gifts, but if they left out this love, they are of none effect. Paul goes on to say that they could demonstrate all manner of faith and good works, but if they failed to love it profits them nothing.

Verse four begins God’s inspired definition of love,

Charity suffers long, and is kind; charity evnieth not; charity vaunteth not itself; is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth... (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

We need to remember that this love is an outward expression of how we feel toward others. First and foremost, we must direct this type of love towards God. Many passages speak concerning this (e.g. Mark 12:29, 30; Matthew 22:34-40). Cozort had this to say about the direction of our love,

This showing of love is not based on emotion, but a conscious decision to place the commands and desires of God

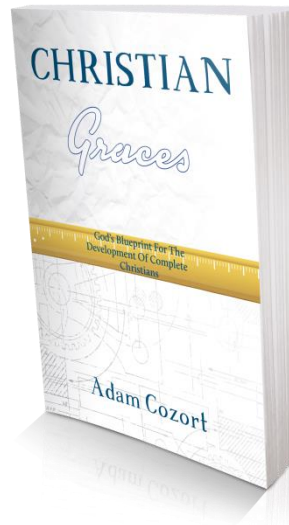
¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 640-642.

*before our own. The person who puts their own thoughts, desires, and ideas before what God has commanded does not have “agape” love toward God because he has put himself first and not God.*¹⁵

Secondly, our love should go to the brethren. John writes about demonstrating the same type of love we show to God, to our brethren, in 1 John 4:7-20. Failure to express this kind of love is a failure to understand God’s plan for the growth and preservation of the Church and the development of a good character in mankind.

Hopefully, this study has provided us with a stronger faith in God and assurance that God had our best interest in mind from the beginning. Adding these principles to our lives will ensure that we will never fall from grace, we will be the Christians God desires us to be, and the Church will grow in faith and numbers. I want to leave you with the words of the apostle Paul “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ

be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.” (1 Corinthians 16:23, 24)



Adam Cozort’s Book:
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¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 692-694.

HELPING WIVES SUBMIT

HELPING WIVES SUBMIT

PERRY HALL

The ‘Jehovah’s Witness’ elders were insisting that because Jesus was sent by His Father, being in submission meant inferiority. As they were talking I softly asked my wife to get me something to drink. When she returned, and they had finished, I asked, “Do you think my wife is inferior to me?” Adamantly they said no. Then I said, “But I just sent my wife and according to your theology of Jesus she is inferior because she is in submission.” They just smiled. The question for us is, how well do we understand the concept of submitting, and specifically wives submitting?

When I searched for images by plugging in Ephesians 5:22, the very first image that popped up was an abused woman. This is what many in the world think when they hear about wives being submissive to their husbands. The world—and some Christians—joke about the wife being the boss with no problem. But that joke is a reality the world accepts with no qualms and no problem with the wife being the head; but anathema if the husband is.

Before going public with this, I had my wife look over this lesson, so I could have a wife’s perspective. Men, it’s important to get our wives perspective. About subjection, any man who enjoys talking about wives being in subjection is a man about whom I have serious, worrisome suspicions! Any man who refuses to discuss it is a coward, more afraid of modern culture than of God. Today, the subjection or submission of a wife to her husband is a culturally unpopular topic, being considered misogynistic. In Paul’s day it was commonplace, until Paul via inspiration adds a new perspective.

Now having said all that, I will admit I personally do not enjoy talking about wives submitting because I am a product of my modern environment. However, knowing my hesitancy is beneficial because it is essential to know how society influences my thinking. Here is our Ephesian text:

*Ephesians 5:22-24 [HCSB] Wives,
submit to your own husbands as to the*

Lord, for the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church. He is the Savior of the body. Now as the church submits to Christ, so wives are to submit to their husbands in everything.

Wives, you might enjoy this tidbit. The word for “own” is *idios* from whence we get the word “idiot”! As a husband I will admit sometimes Janet has had to be in submission to her idiot husband.

First things first is defining what submission or subjection is:

- Subjection (Greek) — *hypotássō* (from *hypó*, “under” and *tássō*, “arrange”).
- Submit (English) — to place (oneself) under the control of another, to yield oneself,” from Latin *submittere* “to yield, lower, let down, put under, reduce,” from *sub* “under” (see sub-) + *mittere* “let go, send.”
- Subject (English) — from Medieval Latin *subiectare* “place beneath”.

Now in some translations, *subject* and *submit* are interchangeable. However, in the eyes of some, the definition of submit is something done by your own power, while subject is done *to* someone. It’s important to let the words define their application, and in just looking at the definitions they have nothing to do with worth, intelligence, ability—only with order.

Let’s look at five ways to help wives submit to their husbands.

1. THE WHOLE BIBLE HELPS BECAUSE SUBMISSION IS A BIBLICAL THEME FOR EVERYONE

Submission is a theme within the Bible that is often ignored. Maybe that is because submission is not glamorous. However it is when we look at it Christologically that we discover an interesting twist. If I were to substitute another word than sub-

jection, I think we can see submission in a far better light – “servanthood.” Some scholars even suggest that the gospel account written by Mark has Jesus’ servanthood as its theme. Or in other words, Mark wrote about Jesus’ submission which teaches us to follow Him as disciples and submissive servants.

Here are, just within the New Testament, passages showing submission is a thoroughly biblical topic:

- Jesus was subject to his parents (Luke 2:51).
- Spirits were subject to disciples (Luke 10:17, 20).
- The mind set on the flesh is unable to be subject to God (Romans 8:7).
- Creation was subject to futility because of sin (Romans 8:20).
- Those who seek to establish their own righteousness fail to be subject to God (Romans 10:3).
- Christians are to be subject to governing authorities (Romans 13:1, 5; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13).
- In the assembly context of 1 Corinthians 14, the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets (vs. 32), and women are to subject themselves by remaining silent (14:34).
- All things are subjected to Christ (1 Cor. 15:58; Eph. 1:22; Phil. 3:21; Heb. 2:8; 1 Peter 3:22).
- Corinthians were told to be in subjection to those who have devoted themselves for ministry and “to everyone who helps in their work and labors” (1 Cor. 16:15-16).
- Servants are to be subject to their masters, being well-pleasing, not argumentative, and with respect (Titus 2:9; 1 Peter 2:18).
- Angels were not subject to the inhabited earth (Heb. 2:5).
- All are to be subject to the “Father of spirits” so they can live (Heb. 12:9; cf. James 4:7).
- Young men are told to be subject to their elders (1 Peter 5:5).
- All are to be subject to one another, including wives to their husbands (Eph. 5:21-22; Col. 3:18; Titus 2:5; 1 Peter 3:1,5), and the church to Christ (v. 24).

(Don Moyer, *Blessed Be God, Ephesians p. 239-240; edited*)

The point is everyone is subject to someone at some time for some reason. Jesus’ teaching on authority and serving must be part of our understanding of how people are in subjection to others even when put in a position of authority (Matthew 18:1-5; Mark 9:33-37; Matthew 20:20-28). Leaders subject themselves to the needs of those they are leading.

2. WOMEN HELP WOMEN

There are two undeniable realities:

1) I don’t think men talking about subjection is the better, more effective method. Although admittedly Paul and Peter are both men, only one was married, yet benefiting both was they were inspired unlike modern men today.

2) I do think women talking to women is the best method. Therefore, please older women follow Titus 2:

Titus 2:3-5 In the same way [i.e. as older men – v. 2], older women are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers [malicious gossips – NASB], not addicted to much wine. They are to teach what is good, so [i.e. one purpose] they may encourage the young women to love their husbands and to love their children, to be self-controlled, pure, homemakers, kind, and submissive to their husbands, so that God’s message will not be slandered [Young women be careful who you ask to mentor you].

The point is women need to help women because they are better at it than men. There is a difference between the theoretical and the practical; between reading and living. Older wives have practice. Younger women going to an older woman can itself be good practice in submitting as they are putting themselves under the direction of another. Younger women need to heed this warning – be careful and prayerful before rejecting the advice of older women.

3. PAUL HELPS WIVES

Here are four ways within Ephesians Paul helps wives submit to their husbands:

1. By addressing them directly. This gives them back their dignity as one created in the image

of God which had been dismissed within those cultures. In the Household Codes of Roman and Greece, women were not addressed. Their subjection was directed towards the husbands as their responsibility.

2. By telling wives to submit themselves and not telling the husband to make them submit. This is partly what the world gets wrong which explains the first picture I Googled under Ephesians 5:22 which showed a battered woman.
3. By putting submission in a higher light – “as to the Lord”. This will be commented on more later.
4. By first telling all, which includes the husband, they are to submit (5:21). This connection is made even stronger in the manuscripts which do not contain the word “submit” in 5:22 because the concept is carried through from 5:21.

The point is while submission of a wife to her husband was nothing radical socially, the way Paul frames it – how and why – was and still is radical. This is not about keeping order within society. The order is of a higher order; one from eternity which will be discussed later.

4. HUSBANDS HELP WIVES

There is a vintage Chase and Sanborn coffee advertisement that says, “If your husband ever finds out you’re not ‘store-testing’ for fresher coffee....if he discovers you’re still taking chances...” which is followed by the husband putting his wife over his knee and spanking her! This is not how husbands help their wives submit! Just as some atheists only know “Judge not lest ye be judged,” some husbands, who don’t know any other verse in the Bible, know “wives submit yourselves.”

So how can husbands help their wives to submit?

1. By physically, emotionally, verbally, abusing? No, then you have a broken-down wife, not someone strong enough to be a helper that corresponds to you (Gen. 2:18).
2. By shoving Ephesians 5:22, Colossians 2:18, 1 Peter 3:5 in their face? No, because that will lead to your own prayers being hindered (1 Peter 3:7).
3. By letting your wife rule the roost so you can have peace? No, because that is what Adam

did (Genesis 3:17), and because that will lead her to not respecting you (Ephesians 5:33). The number one need for a woman fulfilled in marriage is security. If she finds it in herself, she loses respect for her husband.

Contrary to those three methods, if we look at the entirety of what Paul said in verses 22-33, we see how husbands can help their wives submit:

1. “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church” (Ephesians 5:25). Submission because of love and respect are like a pair of scissors. When you have a pair of scissors, you have two things (blades) joined to form one whole. If the scissors are going to work, then both sides need to be in operation and in harmony. Submission is made easier when a wife sees a husband sacrificially loving her, enabling her to respect him.
2. “The wife is to respect her husband” (Ephesians 5:33). Acting like a bookend to submission, Paul ends this section of the Household Codes by stating, “the wife is to respect her husband” (5:33). Submission is made easier if the wife can respect her husband as a person, and not just as a command or position. Respect is earned.

Let’s look further at “husbands love your wives, just as Christ loved the church”. This was radical thinking in the first century. To maintain societal order, husbands within the Roman society had absolute authority. The husband, the father, and the owner of the slaves could rule their household with a rod of iron. The wife was regarded, not as a person, but as a piece of property. Freedom of religion didn’t even exist for wives – and yet we know wives still submitted to Christ first while showing respect to their husbands (1 Peter 3). Husbands loving their wives as Christ loved the church is old news to us but radical in the first century. The question today is, have we become so accustomed to it that we forget to live it?

Looking at respect, how can a wife learn this spousal respect? If husbands treat their wives as Christ does the church, then they deserve their wives respect. This means:

- 1) As Christ is the Savior of the body (5:23), husbands protect their wives.

- 2) As Christ died for the church (5:25), husbands put the needs of their wives ahead of theirs.
- 3) As Christ purified the church (5:26-27), husbands spiritually lead their wives.
- 4) As Christ provides and cares for the church (5:29), a husband is to love his wife as he cares for his own body.

The standard is high because it is the Messiah. I told my daughters never to marry someone who did not treat them as well as I treat their mother. I told my sons not to marry someone who did not treat them as well as their mother treats me. That helped set another type of standard our children could see in daily life.

Speaking of another, daily standard, Paul goes on to say “In the same way, husbands are to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself” (5:28). This is the 2nd Great Commandment (Matthew 22:39). Everything we do should be able to come under the 1st and 2nd Great Commands.

While Paul begins the Household Codes with wives being in subjection, the emphasis of the pattern starts with the husband. This is because before marriage, before Adam and Eve, Jesus’ mystery plan began with Him and not us. Men should earn their wives’ respect by loving them like Christ loves the church. The point is, sacrificial love leads to respect, which leads to a wife wanting to show submission.

5. WIVES HELP THEMSELVES

Notice what is at the beginning and near the end of this section:

- 5:22 – Wives submit to your own husbands [OLD NEWS], as to the lord [NEW NEWS]
- 5:32 – This mystery is profound, but I am talking about Christ and the church.

I am suggesting these are bookends and therefore these two statements are related. To help show that I want to make three related points within Ephesians.

1. Ephesians 1:3-23 – The church [anti-type] was predestined as God’s plan before the foundation of the world. This means even before the creation of Adam and Eve and the institution of marriage.

2. Ephesians 5:22-31 – The church [anti-type] is to Christ [anti-type] and Christ to the church, as the wife [type] is to the husband [type] and the husband to the wife. This analogy is not happenstance.
3. Ephesians 5:31-32 [HCSB] – “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife; and the two will become one flesh. This mystery is profound, but I am speaking about Christ and the church.”

What this third point shows is the mystery revealed in marriage (husband and wife) is a type created within time to reflect upon what was planned before time: the relations of Christ and the church, the anti-type. This is the same concept as the Tabernacle being a shadow of heaven (Hebrews 8:5-6). Just as heaven came first, then the Tabernacle; the church came first in God’s mind although not in time. Marriage then foreshadows what was to come. This puts marriage in a higher state, setting a higher standard, becoming a visual aid planned from eternity to paint a picture of Christ and the church.

What comparisons are there between these two marriages? Let’s put the comparisons under two headings:

Observations Made by Inspiration:

1. As the church submits to Jesus; the wife submits to her husband (5:22).
2. As Jesus is head of the church; the husband is head of the wife (5:23).
3. As Jesus loves the church; the husband loves his wife (5:25).
4. As Jesus was willing to die for the church; the husband is willing to die for his wife (5:25).
5. As Jesus provides for the church; the husband provides for his wife (5:29-30).

Observations Not Made by Inspiration:

1. As Jesus has one bride; Adam had one wife. This is contrary to Jewish tradition which teaches Adam’s first wife was Lilith.
2. As Jesus left his Father; the man leaves his father and mother.
3. As the church is washed by blood and water which came from Jesus’s side; Eve was taken from Adam’s side.

4. As God prepared a body for Jesus physically and spiritually; God prepared a body for Adam in Eve.
5. As the church wears Jesus's name (in baptism, as Christians, as a church – although “church of Christ” is not an official name); woman receives her name (*ishah* [Hebrew for *woman*] and Eve) from her husband.

The point is, when a wife is told to be in subjection, it is not a curse, but her God-given place to glorify Christ and His church! If there is any joy in speaking about subjection it is found in what mys-

tery it reveals.

All of this begins with understanding, appreciating, and imitating how the totality of God operates within themselves. There is no ontological inferiority, only functional differences; which is the same with a husband and wife. The Father is the head of Christ (while Christ is head of the Church and the husband is to his wife), the Son submits to the Father (while the Church submits to Christ and the wife to her husband), and the Holy Spirit submits to the Son (and reveals all of this via inspiration), and it is beautiful.

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Who Shepherds when there are No Shepherds?

JAMES PASLEY

Several years ago there was an argument between two denominational women about how their churches were run. The first claimed that the “Deacons” ran the church, but the second asserted that it was the “Pastor” who ran things in the church. After their battle had raged for a few minutes without either giving in, one finally walked away with a final parting shot, “Well, somebody’s gonna run it.” We might scoff at their ignorance of what the Bible says about the organization of the church, but before we do, we might want to look at the leadership in our local congregation and other churches of Christ.

According to a couple of informal polls I personally conducted, as well as my own experience with churches for the past 45 years, around a third of the churches of Christ in the USA don’t have elders and another large percentage are one heartbeat away from not having an eldership. In my own experience, living in 6 different states, I have regularly attended or been a member of 13 congregations. Of those: 2 did not have elders when I began worshipping with them, but ordained them while I was there (1 of those dissolved in less than 4 years, the other continues presently); 4 did not have elders at all during the time I was there (2 of those have since ceased to exist and the other 2 still don’t have an eldership); and 7 had elders while I attended there. Of the 9 that at some point had elders: 3 were larger

congregations (over 300 members) with 5 or more elders in cities of over 100,000; the other 6 were from 150 members down to about 50 and 3 had only 2 elders at some point while I was there. This fits with the information I have gathered from others as well. The numbers may fluctuate some in certain areas of the country and may be different for non-institutional churches. What can’t be denied is that we need to consider what can be done in these many churches that don’t have shepherds overseeing the flock.

We know that the Bible teaches that each congregation is to be overseen/shepherded by a group of men that we usually call elders, and that there are certain qualifications for them (Titus 1:5-9 and 1 Timothy 3:1-7). In addition to their qualifications they have responsibilities in overseeing the flock (Acts 20:28-31, 1 Peter 5:1-4, et al.), and they will have to answer to God for how they have carried them out. Of course God has expectations for the sheep of his pasture as well (Hebrews 13:17, 1 Timothy 3:14-15, et al.). There are enough difficulties for a congregation that has qualified elders striving to meet their responsibilities and members who are working to be helpful to their leaders, and becomes increasingly more problematic when there are issues in any of these three areas.

But what of a church that has no elders at all; no shepherds feeding the flock and watching for their souls? Who will lead and feed? Who will guide and chide when necessary? Who will show the young how to grow and where to go and how to sow? Will the believers be scattered like sheep without a shepherd, or will they become the prey of wolves or even the roaring lion, the Devil? A church without an eldership faces a great many dangers and only a few limited choices. Are any of those choices feasible paths that lead safely through the dangers?

Let's consider the possibilities.

1. Form an eldership even though none are qualified.
2. Use a men's meeting or congregational meeting model.
3. Push the preacher into the role of a Pastor.
4. Merge with another church in the hopes that the new larger group might have men that could form an eldership properly.
5. Let everyone fend for himself or herself.
6. Merge into an area congregation that has shepherds already in place.
7. Allow the most powerful, most aggressive, wealthiest, or loudest member or members to steer the church in the direction they want it to go.
8. Run things as a democracy.
9. Let the largest family or the ones with the longest history take control of their church.
10. Disband and let the sheep scatter to other churches in the area.
11. Work diligently with prospective elders to prepare them to be elders at a future point.

As we look at this list, what is a church without elders going to choose? None of these choices sound very appealing, do they? And, frankly, some like #'s 4, 6, or 10 are not even realistic for some more remote congregations. After considering the possibilities we can understand why some have chosen men who were not fully qualified to be elders and why many other small churches use what is often called a 'men's business meeting' to make decisions for the church. The problem is that making decisions is not the task God gave the shepherds. Notice Acts 20:28 first from the American Church Model Paraphrase¹: "Be sure you have someone who can make good

business decisions for the church, so the facilities and bank account that you are in charge of stay in good condition, since the money and the building are the Lord's." We know that is not what it says, but sometimes when we are looking for leadership that is what we act like it says.

Now let's look at a more accurate translation, "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 with his own blood."(ESV). Notice the emphasis on the focus of the attention being the flock, the people, that God spent his own blood to obtain. Unfortunately, even in some churches with elders God's sheep are going unshepherded while other things are being well cared for. How odd it would seem if a shepherd took great care of the fences and buildings and mowed the grass in his field and watered it, yet left the sheep locked up in cages, didn't feed them or give them water, didn't care for their wounds, or let the wolves eat one every couple of days. We would all agree that shepherd was not doing his job.

Our focus; however, is on those churches that have no shepherds, not those whose shepherds are not doing their jobs. Someone will, if at all possible, make mundane decisions and keep up the property, but caring for and feeding and protecting the sheep is far more crucial and difficult. As we asserted with the anecdote at the beginning, someone is going to lead, the question is where and how and why will they lead and will they care for the sheep they are leading. In the scriptures it was common for special care to be given for their flocks. In Genesis 33:13-14 Jacob tells Esau that he can't travel fast because of his children and flocks and herds or he might kill all the animals, and even though in this case it seems to be an excuse, it is accepted without question by Esau as valid reasoning. So will those who lead actually shepherd the flock or will they drive them so hard that they die?

We see what appears to be a difficult situation with a church that may not have shepherds in Third John. Because they don't have shepherds, Diotrephes has taken control and would not even respect the authority of the apostle John. John is rightly concerned (he wrote to the church, but Diotrephes the troublemaker wouldn't receive it) and he writes this new letter to Gaius, who seems to be a faithful Christian man, encourages him to be strong, and

¹ Note: this is not a real translation.

points out Demetrius, another godly Christian man, who has a good report. The difficulty here was that even though there seem to be two good men in the church, it is being led by someone who is only concerned with himself and not what is good for the church. John wants to come and set things right, but really Gaius and Demetrius ought to stand up to this bully. It is a sad state of affairs in too many churches that the one who wants to take the lead is not fit because of a lack of care for the church—and those who are most concerned for the welfare of the flock are often not assertive enough to rise to the challenge of the aggressive, domineering bully.

Depressingly the answer to the question of who shepherds the flock is, far too often, no one. The sheep are left to fend for themselves or are being devoured by the leaders who are horrible shepherds like those God condemned in Ezekiel 34:1-10. Every shepherd of God's people, as well as the preachers, deacons, and men in congregations without elders should pay close attention to God's anger in these verses:

Ezekiel 34:1-10: The word of the LORD came to me: Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy, and say to them, even to the shepherds, Thus says the Lord GOD: Ah, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not shepherds feed the sheep? You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat ones, but you do not feed the sheep. The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the injured you have not bound up, the strayed you have not brought back, the lost you have not sought, and with force and harshness you have ruled them. So they were scattered, because there was no shepherd, and they became food for all the wild beasts. My sheep were scattered; they wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. My sheep were scattered over all the face of the earth, with none to search or seek for them. Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: As I live, declares the Lord GOD, surely because my sheep have become a prey, and my

sheep have become food for all the wild beasts, since there was no shepherd, and because my shepherds have not searched for my sheep, but the shepherds have fed themselves, and have not fed my sheep, therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: Thus says the Lord GOD, Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require my sheep at their hand and put a stop to their feeding the sheep. No longer shall the shepherds feed themselves. I will rescue my sheep from their mouths, that they may not be food for them.

Ultimately, every sheep should look to the Chief Shepherd Jesus Christ, but there have to be those in the local church that are feeding the flock and caring for it or the flock will die. So, what can be done? God wants shepherds in every church just as Paul told Titus, so let's consider what we need to do carefully. There is no easy fix and the solution for one church may not be the path another needs to take. Consider these suggestions knowing that the goal should be for every church to have shepherds as God desires.

1. **Stop fighting and dividing.** If you are in a small town, especially, there is not a need for two churches, yet how many towns do we have where there are two churches of 30-50 meeting and neither have elders? How many churches of 100 or so that had a couple of elders got in a fight and split and now there are two churches of 40 (notice the loss of 20 sheep during this fight) and neither have shepherds. Ira North reported in his book *Balance* that information indicated that it took at least a full generation—and possibly much more—for a church to recover from a split. That would mean that churches that split back when he wrote the book in 1983 may have still not recovered. For some of you, that means that the church split before you were born and is still suffering. My experience is that churches are often still talking about splits that occurred 50 or 60 years ago. In those cases most of the people in the church were not there when the split occurred but it is so ingrained in the church's identity that they can't move past it.

2. **Work on reconciling.** When we have 2 churches in close proximity there are a multitude of problems. They can't put up a united front or have a

respected voice when they talk about religious division. Resources that could go toward evangelism are wasted. We have a shortage of preachers and have 2 or 3 within 5 miles of each other preaching to 50 people. If those churches merged there could be a preacher or two that could work somewhere else. There would be a greater likelihood of finding qualified elders in a church of 100 or 150 than with just 50. There would be more children and bigger classes. And there would only be one building to keep up. God's children are to be peacemakers (and not the kind with bullets). We have to put the good of the kingdom ahead of ourselves.

3. **Consider a merger.** This is not possible for some churches because they are isolated from others by great distances. We just talked about reconciling for churches that have split in the past, but here we need to consider when there hasn't been a split. Two churches may have sprung up back in the horse and buggy days only a few miles apart because travel was difficult. They may get along fine and fellowship and support each other, but with modern transportation what used to take an hour now takes 10 minutes. All of the benefits from above would be applicable to this situation as well. The unfortunate mindset we have too often, though, is devotion to a certain building or property or history when we should be concerned for what is best for the kingdom, not only locally, but universally. A congregation should especially consider this if they don't have shepherds and a neighboring church does. The sheep need shepherds.

4. **Train young men early.** Whether a church has elders or not every Christian who wants to see the church move forward needs to begin immediately encouraging young men who are not even old enough to date yet to desire the office when they grow up. We need to teach them to make the decisions now that will make it more likely that they will be qualified when they are needed in 30 to 40 years. Too many times we look around for 50-something-year-old men or older who could be qual-

ified to shepherd, but there are none because we didn't teach them when we had the chance, and the men that we do have either have no desire, no ability, or no reputation to do so.

5. **Don't expect perfection.** There are some churches where Peter could not have been an elder because the church is so nitpicky. I am not saying we should ignore any of the qualifications for elders (far from it), but what I am saying is be gracious and know that not even Jesus met those qualifications completely and perfectly (He was not married, nor had children). God did not give these two lists to Timothy and Titus to keep men out of the office, but

Too many times we look around for 50-something-year-old men or older who could be qualified to shepherd, but there are none because we didn't teach them when we had the chance, and the men that we do have either have no desire, no ability, or no reputation to do so.

to help them find the men that should fill the role. We sometimes have a strange perspective on this. Imagine a small church that only has 7 men. 3 of them are very active godly family men, but by no means perfect, and the other 4 are a new convert, a single man, and 2 who are rather worldly minded. Now the church finds some imperfection about each of the 3 godly quality men and so they reject being led by 2 or all 3 of them. So, what does this church do instead? They have a men's meeting where all 7 men vote and often the 4 who are least qualified outvote the 3 who are spiritually minded. This may sound ridiculous, but it happens—I have seen it. God wants the church to be shepherded by

godly, spiritually mature, spiritually minded men.

6. **Find Gaius and Demetrius.** If possible, men, be Gaius and Demetrius in your church, and desire the good of the church and the office of a bishop. If you can't for some legitimate reason, look around the church and find those good men who can be encouraged to be shepherds and lead the flock in the way God wants it to go.

7. **Be Aquila or Priscilla.** As far as we know Aquila and Priscilla were not an elder and his wife, but they were concerned about the spiritual welfare of Apollos and those who might hear his inaccurate version of the gospel. They took the opportunity to guide one person, and that one guided unknown numbers to the truth. Paul even mentioned him and

referred to the preaching that he did. We never know how showing a little care for a soul might impact the future. So if you are in a church without elders, do what Aquila and Priscilla did. Countless souls may be fed as a result.

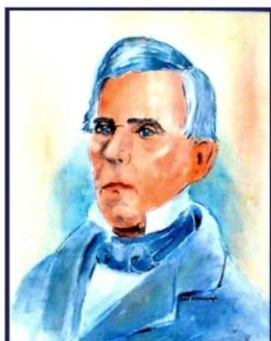
8. **Quit Making Excuses.** We scoffed at the ladies in the first paragraph for their ignorance of how God's Word says the church should be organized, but let's honestly ask whether it is worse to not know or to know and not obey. That is not to say that every church that doesn't have shepherds is in sin or doomed, but we must understand that in the scriptures a church without bishops was described as lacking something and it needed to be corrected. Churches without pastors in the Bible were new congregations that needed to grow and were not left for long before overseers were put in place. Consider Paul's missionary journeys. In Acts 14:23 they appointed or ordained elders in every church, and those churches could not have been more than a few years old. We have churches that have been around for 50 years or more and have never had elders to shepherd the flock. My brethren, these things ought not to be so.

9. **Consider a Necessary Ending.** We hate to hear about a church closing, but there are times when what we see as a bad thing can be turned by God to the good of his kingdom. I am not talking about the struggling church of 15 in a mission point that is 50 miles from the nearest sister congregation,

but there are other places where a church of 20 is continuing to meet and feeling discouraged and downtrodden while there is a thriving, group of fellow believers 5 miles away where they could go and not feel discouraged, but encouraged. Sometimes it is nostalgia, sometimes pride, sometimes misguided loyalty to family or something else; sometimes it is a power trip for someone, sometimes it is the fear of change (and there are more reasons I am sure); but whatever the reason it is not a good excuse to continue indefinitely without the congregation being organized as God defined. Consider putting a plan in place to prepare men for the eldership by a certain date or become part of a flock that has good shepherds.

So, who is shepherding the sheep if there are no shepherds? Often no one. In many other cases it is a young man in his twenties fresh from school with some book learning, some Bible knowledge, little to no experience, and no authority to do the work. I feel for these young men, because I was one. Unqualified to be in that position. Unauthorized by God to have that role. Unprepared and inexperienced. Don't rail against the unscriptural Pastor system of the denominational world and then imitate it in everything except the title. Shepherds may be preachers, but preachers are not shepherds. The mature spiritually minded in a congregation without elders must work together to have shepherds and to be surrogate shepherds for the short term.

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WHY CHURCH HISTORY IS IMPORTANT:

1 Clement and Hebrews on Unity

SAMUEL STINSON

“Let our boast and our confidence be in Him: let us submit ourselves to His will; let us mark the whole host of His angels, how they stand by and minister unto His will” (1 Clement 34:5)¹.

In this article, I will discuss the importance of church history, specifically the value of Christians reading the epistle of 1 Clement today, for its significant dependence on the letter to the Hebrews for exhorting unity in the early church. The term “church fathers” reflects writings composed by early Christians in the centuries immediately following the close of the New Testament canon.

Some writings, like 1 Clement, appeared shortly following the death of the apostles, while other materials were composed closer to the time of the Nicene council in 325 A.D. Early Christians responded to some of the same questions as we do, and their words can offer us valuable information for helping to understand and apply scripture for our needs today. These early Christian writings provide modern readers with knowledge of ancient debates, heresies, controversies of the day, and understandings about religious topics.

The church fathers are fallible: they are not inspired commentators. Yet even so, writings such as 1 Clement remain as helpful guides for those who are patient and willing to consider their words. In 1 Clement, the situation is this: written at the end of the first century A.D., with the apostles being dead, the church in Rome writes a brotherly, peer-to-peer letter through an elder named Clement to the church in Corinth. The letter’s exigence is this: a faction within the Corinthian church has broken unity, having ejected its elders from office, an act of sedition having occurred apparently for no legitimate cause.

In the case of 1 Clement, the elder’s response to this situation is to cite scriptural teachings, foremost teachings from the book of Hebrews. Greek Old Testament citations were most-generally taken from manuscripts of the Septuagint (LXX) extant in the first century and are generally recognizable to later readers

from direct quotations, with some occasional variant readings. Clement’s primary focus on Hebrews at times has caused some readers to suppose that Clement also composed Hebrews, though this is not proven (Hagner, 179). Due to these many citations, 1 Clement is useful in dating the book of Hebrews, as Clement relied upon Hebrews as he would any other inspired scripture, remixing these references within homiletic and exhortational materials to address emergent needs in the church. Both 1 Clement and Hebrews offer words of direction and correction to congregations familiar with the Old Testament, though it is likely that both Clement and the Hebrews writer were different writers drawing from the same Old Testament sources. Additionally, Clement cites Hebrews to support his overall argument for unity, drawing authority from both the New and Old Testament.²

Identifying 1 Clement’s usage of scripture is possible through study and comparison and will assist in showing the dependence Clement had upon Hebrews for keeping unity in the church (Hagner, 179). The general sequence in which Clement cites the Old Testament equivalently matches the order Hebrews cites the Old Testament. Yet, Clement never names the author of Hebrews, nor explicitly states that he believes Hebrews to be inspired, nor directly cites Hebrews with exact wording using any extant manuscript.

In the remainder of this article, I will provide two charts that focus on Clement’s usage of Hebrews. The first table will focus on four character examples, revealing the relationship between Hebrews and Clement, using conventional book, chapter, verse arrangement.³ The second table will focus on six topical similarities between the two books.

Both writers rely on the following examples to show the kind of obedience that each wished his audience to imitate for their specific purposes.

² These citations give implicit evidence of the acceptance by Christians of New Testament writings such as Hebrews as scripture. Yet, finding exact, unquestionable, word-for-word citations in 1 Clement has proven problematic. Clement, like many early writers, frequently made indirect, stylistically periphrastic references to his sources, frequently without directly naming the sources. Modern readers may be frustrated by this ancient citation convention.

³ All scriptural citations come from the New American Standard Version (NASB).

¹ In this article I am citing the Lightfoot translation of 1 Clement located on this website:

<http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/1clement-lightfoot.html>. Another copy may be located online at the *Christian Classics Ethereal Library*, located here: ccel.org/ccel/richardson/fathers.vi.i.ii.html.

Character Examples

Biblical Personality	Clement	Hebrews	Relationship
Enoch	“Let us set before us Enoch, who being found righteous in obedience was translated, and his death was not found” (1 Clement 9:3).	“By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; AND HE WAS NOT FOUND BECAUSE GOD TOOK HIM UP; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God” (Hebrews 11:5)	Clement uses Enoch to illustrate one who “ministered perfectly” to God (9:2). This follows a section in which Clement discusses God’s power. Hebrews uses Enoch for a similar purpose, to show that the faithful will be rewarded by God.
Noah	“Noah, being found faithful, by his ministration preached regeneration unto the world, and through him the Master saved the living creatures that entered into the ark in concord” (1 Clement 9:4).	“By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith” (Hebrews 11:7).	While Clement is attempting to convince his audience to restore the previous elders they had ruling, the writer of Hebrews is exhorting his audience to imitate the faithfulness of these men and women presented, especially the faith of Noah in obeying God’s commands. ¹
Abraham	“Abraham, who was called the ‘friend,’ was found faithful in that he rendered obedience unto the words of God” (1 Clement 10:1).	“By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son” (Hebrews 11:17).	Abraham is mentioned by Clement as obeying the words of God, while the Writer of Hebrews mentions Abraham obeying God by offering up his only begotten son. ²
Rahab	“For her faith and hospitality Rahab the harlot was saved” (1 Clement 12:1).	“By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace” (Hebrews 11:31).	Clement uses Rahab to suggest a type of sinner who was redeemed and added to the bloc of Israel. The writer of Hebrews shows that this was due to her obedience. ³

¹ Here, unlike in the days of Noah, the Corinthians that Clement addressed should have clearly followed God’s rulers given the assumption that without just cause for removal of elders, the “current administration and judgment are ethically right” (Batesman 14).

² There is no contradiction here, since both acts of obedience are likely referring to the same Biblical event.

³ What distinguishes Clement’s discussion from the writer of Hebrews is that the application made by Clement involves salvation for those who turn back from out-right rebellion of God, while the writer of Hebrews was addressing a congregation at most in danger of sliding back into pre-Christian Judaism. However, it is still clear that Clement made a new application of this passage for his audience, as good preachers habitually are wont to do.

Topical Examples

Topic	Clement	Hebrews	Relationship
Obedience to Leaders	<p>“Therefore it is right and proper, brethren, that we should be obedient unto God, rather than follow those who in arrogance and unruliness have set themselves up as leaders in abominable jealousy. For we shall bring upon us no common harm, but rather great peril, if we surrender ourselves recklessly to the purposes of men who launch out into strife and seditions, so as to estrange us from that which is right” (1 Clement 14:1-2).</p>	<p>“Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you” (Hebrews 13:17).</p>	<p>Clement asserts that supplanting Godly-appointed leaders with leaders who have no authority is sinning and risks “common harm.”</p>
The Prophets’ Example	<p>“Let us be imitators also of them which went about in goatskins and sheepskins, preaching the coming of Christ. We mean Elijah and Elisha and likewise Ezekiel, the prophets, and besides them those men also that obtained a good report” (1 Clement 17:1).</p>	<p>“They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, illtreated” (Hebrews 11:37).</p>	<p>The prophetic example of obedience leads often to suffering. F. F. Bruce notes that, “The ‘boldness’ which believers in Christ have to enter the heavenly sanctuary through him is set in contrast with the restrictions which hedged about the privilege of symbolic entry into the presence of God in Israel’s earthly sanctuary” (249).⁴</p>
Jesus, the High Priest	<p>“This is the way, dearly beloved, wherein we found our salvation, even Jesus Christ the High priest of our offerings” (1 Clement 36:1).</p>	<p>“Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession” (Hebrews 3:1).</p>	<p>Jesus is the ultimate salvation given by God. Clement points to Christ in much the same manner as the writer of Hebrews, showing the ministering of Christ as able to redeem those who have already fallen from grace.</p>

⁴ This “boldness” is shown greatly in the prophetic spirit that accompanied those who were obedient to God. The type of garb, the actions, and the descriptions of violent death that accompanied prophets of the Old Testament were reckoned faithful descriptions by both authors.

Angels as Ministers	<p>“For so it is written Who maketh His angels spirits and His ministers aflame of fire” (1 Clement 36:3).</p>	<p>“And of the angels He says, ‘WHO MAKES HIS ANGELS WINDS, AND HIS MINISTERS A FLAME OF FIRE.’” (Hebrews 1:7).</p>	<p>The servants of God are given as examples. The writer of Hebrews uses the reference early in his epistle to show and prove who Christ is, by comparison with spiritual beings—angels.</p>
	<p>“And again He saith unto Him Sit Thou on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet” (1 Clement 36:5).</p>	<p>“But to which of the angels has He ever said, ‘SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET?’” (Hebrews 1:13).</p>	<p>However, Clement uses the reference to show further that to imitate Christ is to truly be a Christian. The implication is that the audience is disobeying their elders, and thus Christ.</p>
The Son of God	<p>“But of His Son the Master said thus, Thou art My Son, I this day have begotten thee. Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the Gentiles for Thine inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Thy possession” (1 Clement 36:4).</p>	<p>“For to which of the angels did He ever say, ‘YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU’? And again, ‘I WILL BE A FATHER TO HIM AND HE SHALL BE A SON TO ME?’” (Hebrews 1:5).</p>	<p>Clement concludes with a question of the identity of the enemies (36:5) of Christ, “Who then are these enemies? They that are wicked and resist His will” (1 Clement 36:6). Clement’s argument rests upon identifying the culprits stirring up rebellion in Corinth.</p>
Moses, Faithful to God’s House	<p>“And what marvel, if they which were entrusted in Christ with such a work by God appointed the aforesaid persons? seeing that even the blessed Moses who was a faithful servant in all His house recorded for a sign in the sacred books all things that were enjoined upon him. And him also the rest of the prophets followed, bearing witness with him unto the laws that were ordained by him” (1 Clement 43:1).</p>	<p>“He was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was in all His house” (Hebrews 3:2).</p>	<p>Clement cites Moses in addition to his list of earlier witnesses culled from Hebrews. Moses being portrayed as a faithful servant would appeal to Christians who should also be obedient servants in the house.</p>

Hardening of the Heart	“For it is good for a man to make confession of his trespasses rather than to harden his heart, as the heart of those was hardened who made sedition against Moses the servant of God; whose condemnation was clearly manifest” (1 Clement 51:3).	“Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, ‘TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS AS WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME, AS IN THE DAY OF TRIAL IN THE WILDERNESS’” (Hebrews 3:8).	Moses typifies the elders of the Corinthian church who were thrown out. Clement infers that those responsible are like those who rebelled in Moses’ time against his God-given authority. ⁵
Scourging of Children	“For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth” (1 Clement 56:4).	“FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES” (Hebrews 12:6).	This dependence demonstrates that all who would be obedient to God must do so in a full spirit of obedience, considering the full doctrine of God above personal interests. ⁶

Conclusion

Christians today may benefit from reading church history. The completed canon of New Testament books, exclusively, is bracketed at the close of the first century by 1 Clement. From 1 Clement, we may better appreciate the importance that Christians had for unity in organization and leadership in the church and how this zeal for the house of God was supported by scripture. Based upon a clearer dependence, Clement’s use of the epistle to the Hebrews in encouraging unity shows recognition of God’s word being read by an appreciative audience of evangelists to hopeful effects. In the shadow of that standard of faith, it is therefore acceptable and right to exhort all who would invoke scripture to do so in similar fashion, as Clement depends on that which was given by God, that all Christians would do likewise. Thus, this plea for unity found in 1 Clement, the call for mutual submission to one another echoed in Hebrews for the sake of brotherly unity, also sounds forth for Christians today.

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⁵ This shows that Clement highly regarded the epistle and used its arrangement of OT citations to rightly divide the truth.

⁶ There would be consequences for rebellion against God. If one followed the fallacy that “human nature is the same whether or not God is taken into consideration” (Boyd 7), there would be no reason for Clement to exhort the Corinthians to return to God’s designated local rulers. But, just as the writer of Hebrews knew there would be need of discipline to prevent further backsliding away from God, Clement applied discipline to suggest that those causing trouble should leave the assembly at Corinth for the betterment of all, rather than allow the current divisions to remain.



The history of the pharisees

KYLE FRANK

a blood bath by his wise advice. Oh, that had there been less of the first type and more of the second!

Origin and the History of the Pharisees (From Foundation until Roman Times)

The Pharisees can be traced back to the time of the Hasideans (Hasidim) of the 2nd century B.C. Their relationship with Jehovah made them resist the increasing Hellenization that the leadership in Israel was leaning toward. They were also seen as the most avid supporters of Judas Maccabee in his struggle for religious freedom. The Maccabees were also fighting against the tyranny of Antiochus Epiphanes. They retired to the safe seclusion of the desert to escape him. This can be located in 1 Macc. 2:27-ff.

The temple was rededicated under Judas Maccabee in 164 B.C. and the achievement of religious freedom was in 162. The Hasidim found themselves more concerned with religious freedom rather than a political freedom. They soon found themselves at odds with the political intrigues of the Hasmoneans. Of the many sects formed at this time, the Pharisees were the most noted. They could almost be seen as a direct continuation of the Hasidim into the NT period.

The earliest direct historical reference to the Pharisees is found in the writings of Josephus. (Antiquities, 13.5.9.) He introduces them, as well as the Sadducees and the Essenes, as the representatives of the different doctrinal viewpoints. He places this approximately 145 BC.

In Antiquities 13.10.5, Josephus describes John Hyrcanus (a descendent of Simon Maccabee) who was the High Priest under which political independence was finally achieved (128 B.C.). The interesting point here is that he was a disciple of the Pharisees. He had invited Pharisees to a great dinner, and during the course of the dinner had shared his desire to have a more holy life. The Pharisees' reply angered him greatly. The Pharisees were so hostile to the possession of both the civil and the religious power by Hyrcanus that finally Eleazar, one of the Pharisees, said to Hyrcanus: "Since you desire to know the truth, if you will be righteous in earnest, lay down the high priesthood, and content yourself

Meaning of the term "Pharisee."

The Pharisees were a religio-political party that was in existence in Palestine. They are not thought of as being political by many, but after seeing how they operated during the Lord's life, and in relation to the apostles during that time, we must admit the political clout which they wielded made them a force in the Jewish world. They were one of the most important of the Sects during the intertestamental and New Testament period.

Before we launch into the history of this group, perhaps it might help to do a little research into the name and exact meaning of the term "Pharisee." This stems from the Hebrew word "*paras*," which could mean "to separate." This has led some to see the term as saying "to be separate," or "separated person, separatist." They saw themselves as being separate from the religious world and especially as being separated from the world at large. With this little nudge, one's imagination can send them off in the direction of total separation from other Jews, upon whom they looked down. ISBE explains them as: "From *perishin* Aramaic, *perashim*, 'separated.' To which Paul alludes, Rom. 1:1; Gal 1:15, 'separated unto the gospel of God'; once 'separated' unto legal self-righteousness."

Even more so, they were separate from the Jewish people, whom they saw themselves above in any and every possible way. The Gentiles were seen as dogs by those of the Jewish nation, and since they were above the other Jews, how much above EVERYONE did they see themselves? In the book of Acts they were seen as above the other parties such as the Sadducees and probably the Essenes as well. They were universal in their condemnation: everyone was below them! We see a couple of Pharisees in the book of Acts: Saul, who had the self-righteous attitude as a "defender of the true faith" and Gamaliel, the wise counselor who appears to have averted

with the civil government of the people.” When pressed for his reason for that demand, Eleazar said: “We have heard it from old men, that your mother had been a captive under the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes.” This unforgivable insult implied that Hyrcanus was a “bastard son of an unknown stranger, to whom his mother had given herself, and not a true son of Aaron.” This pretext angered Hyrcanus still more, with the result that he left the Pharisees, and went over to the Sadducees.

This incident is very suggestive and throws light in various directions. It shows that the Pharisees and Sadducees had been in existence for some time and were in clear-cut opposition. The Pharisees wish the high priesthood to be separate from the civil government, and are opposed to the union of Church and State. The Sadducees rejoiced to have Hyrcanus on their side and make no protest against his possession of both the civil and religious leadership.

The Pharisees here appear more as a religious sect and less as a political party. They wish, of course, for the high priest to be a Pharisee, and for the Pharisees to have control of the religious life of the people. But the Sadducees are at the core a political party, while the Pharisees are a religious party, though each make use of both elements to carry their points.

The Pharisees are now the party of the opposition with the Sadducees in authority, and they show their resentment in vigorous fashion. They fight Alexander Jannaeus so bitterly, that in a rage he ordered about eight hundred of them to be crucified; and while they were living, he ordered the throats of their children and wives to be cut before their eyes. Already before this, at a festival which was then celebrated, when he stood upon the altar, the nation “rose upon him and pelted him with citrons” (*Antiquities* 13.8.5). Evidently the Pharisees kept their leadership of the people, though they lost the king and high priest. The Pharisees resented the Hellenic name “Alexander,” which Jannaeus had as well as the title of “king,” since he was not of the Davidic line. Besides, a high priest was not allowed to marry a widow, and yet he had married the widow of his brother Aristobulus I. Alexander Jannaeus learned his lesson, and before his death advised his wife to “put some of her authority into the hands of the Pharisees,” for, he told her, “they had great authority over the Jews.” “Promise them also that you will do nothing without them in the affairs of the kingdom.”

Salome Alexandra took her husband’s advice, and made their son John Hyrcanus II., rather than Aristobulus, high priest, because he was the elder, but much more because he cared not to meddle with politics and permitted the Pharisees to do everything.” Josephus facetiously adds: “So she had the name of the regent, but the Pharisees had the authority.” It was a veritable millennium for the Pharisees.

The Sadducees found an ally in Aristobulus. Upon the death of Salome Alexandra, the kingship also passed to Hyrcanus, but Aristobulus made war upon him, with the result that Hyrcanus surrendered the kingship to Aristobulus and kept the high priesthood (*Antiquities*, 16.2). This compromise was due to the mild disposition of Hyrcanus, and after all suited very well both the Pharisees and the Sadducees, for each party had what it cared most about, the one the religious leadership, the other the political.

The “ifs” of history are always interesting. If the Idumean upstart, Antipater, had not turned up in Jerusalem and stirred up the gentle Hyrcanus to try to regain the civil power, the after history of the Jews might have been very different. Antipater was like the modern political boss who holds no office, and yet selects all who do hold such positions of power. He is the invisible government. Antipater is concerned about the civil rule of Aristobulus. He selects Hyrcanus as his tool because he is the more pliable of the two brothers. Antipater is neither Pharisee nor Sadducee, and has neither politics nor religion, but uses both to further his own ambition for power. So, he plays the Pharisees against the Sadducees in his effort to oust Aristobulus from the kingship and to restore it to Hyrcanus, whom he can manage. He makes Hyrcanus appeal to Aretas king of Arabia for help. This fratricidal contest, with the Arabs as arbiters, furnishes Pompey with a plausible excuse to come to Jerusalem on his way back from Armenia against Tigranes, and to assert the power of Rome in the dispute, with the result, after vacillation and trickery on the part of Aristobulus, that Jerusalem is captured, Aristobulus is taken captive to Rome, and Hyrcanus is left high priest, but not king. The Pharisees are left where they were, but the Sadducees are worsted. This was 63 BC, and the glorious days of Maccabean independence are over. The Roman yoke has now been placed upon the Jews.

(To be continued in the next issue. For more information, see the 1915 Princeton Lectures, A.T. Robertson.)

The pharisees

GANTT CARTER

Are you a Pharisee? Doubtless, you do not want your answer to be “yes” to that question. Aligning someone with the Pharisees in their theology and/or behavior is one of the most common insults. Calling someone a Pharisee is about the most negative religious description in our culture. But who were/are the Pharisees?

The Pharisees were one of numerous Jewish sects in the Second Temple period. The Sadducees, the Zealots, and the Essenes were the other main sects or distinctive groups. Sadducees and Pharisees held the most sway within the culture of ancient Judea. Sadducees usually comprised most of the ruling body of the Jews, the Sanhedrin, but Pharisees were also among them. Most of the Rabbis (teachers of the law) in First Century Judea were Pharisees.

“Pharisee, member of a Jewish religious party that flourished in Palestine during the latter part of the Second Temple period (515 BCE–70 CE). Their insistence on the binding force of oral tradition (‘the unwritten Torah’) still remains a basic tenet of Jewish theological thought. When the Mishna (the first constituent part of the Talmud) was compiled about 200 CE, it incorporated the teachings of the Pharisees on Jewish law” (<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Pharisee>).

Origin

The mindset that we might call “Pharisaism” basically originated during the time the Jewish nation returned from exile. Ezra and Nehemiah worked to rebuild the nation, the city, and to spiritually rebuild/restore the people of God. Many of the people developed a heart to read, to interpret, to memorize, and to carefully apply the Law of Moses (see Nehemiah 8-10). Ezra was a priest and a scribe, but the priests and the scribes were largely two distinctive groups. The priests oversaw the work of the temple.

The scribes copied, protected, interpreted, and often taught the Law to the people.

In the time following Nehemiah/Ezra, the priests and the scribes became more and more separated. Typically, the Sadducees were the priestly group. The Pharisees were the scribes.

The origin of the Pharisees as a characteristic sect within Judaism goes back to the time Maccabean conflicts. Although not exactly aligned with the Maccabees, they did fight for the purity of the Jewish religion. The Pharisees never seem to be wrapped up in nationalism, but they were always focused on protecting the faith of their fathers.

During the time of John Hyrcanus, the Pharisees and the Maccabees began to be in conflict. The Maccabees sought to establish a political stronghold and line of succession within the priesthood and the civil authority of the land. The group now known as the “Pharisees” stood against this movement/group.

“Not that they had apostatized from the law. But a secular policy was in itself scarcely reconcilable with that legal scrupulosity and carefulness which the Pharisees required. It was inevitable, that sooner or later there should be a breach between them and their two opposite pursuits” (A History of the Jewish People, 27).

In the end, the Pharisees came out of this conflict with great leadership power within the life of the Jewish nation. By the time of Jesus, many among the common people greatly respected the Pharisees and supported them and their stances strongly. Sure, the Sadducees were the head of the Sanhedrin, but they ultimately followed the designs of the Pharisees. Of course, this powerful influence ran counter to their exclusive positions, but it does not appear that they were too bothered by their dominating influence.

“It was just because their requirements stretched so far, and because they only recognized as true Israelites

those who observed them in their full strictness, they had so imposing an effect upon the multitude, who recognized in these exemplary saints their own ideal and their legitimate leaders” (Ibid., 28).

Their strong influence is easily observed in the Scriptures. Consider the way that several of the authorities believed in Jesus, “but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it” (John 12:42). On one occasion, the Pharisees sent officers to arrest Jesus (John 7:32). The officers interact with Jesus and return empty handed but stunned by Jesus’ teaching. Note the response of the Pharisees: “Have you also been deceived? Have any of the authorities or the Pharisees believed in him? But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed” (John 12:47-49). One can easily denote an air of superiority and authority in these Pharisees that opposed Jesus (cf. John 7:15). They viewed those who accepted Jesus as the Messiah to be ignorant of God’s Word, and therefore, to be under its curse.

The term “Pharisees” is based upon a term for either “interpretation” or “separation.” The latter is more likely, given the Hebrew grammar. Thus, the sect is often referred to as “the separated ones” or the even as “separatists.” Early on, the Pharisees called themselves simply “neighbors.” Even if the description of “Pharisees” was assigned to them (likely not as a compliment), at some point, they began referring to themselves as such.

The other sects of the Jews faded into history at the time of the Roman destruction of Jerusalem. From the understanding of the writer of this article, the Pharisees remained, and most orthodox Jews today adhere to the overall Pharisaical philosophy of use.

Mindset/Behavior

As with any group of humans, it can be easy to oversimplify or discuss their beliefs and practices as if there is a synchronization among them all. But due to our limited data and the need for an overview, let us consider some general aspects of “Pharisaism” within the ancient world, especially in the time of Jesus.

Many Pharisees viewed themselves as the true Israelites, because (in their minds at least) they followed the Law of God closely and carefully. We noted their pride and disdain for others in the previ-

ous section. Being a Pharisee was about your relationship to the Law (Philippians 3:5). Although often perceived then and today as being very strict to God’s Law (Acts 26:5), many of them in Jesus’ day were against God’s Law. They were, however, strict when it came to the oral law, and they were quite strict on others.

Jesus brought their disregard for God’s Law to their attention on several occasions, and that is one big reason they hated Him so much. To tell a Pharisee that he was not truly a follower of God’s Law is about the worst insult in his mind (cf. John 9:40; Luke 18:9-14). They had a righteousness, but it often stemmed from merely being a descendent of Abraham and being an adherent to the oral traditions/laws.

*“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. **Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven**” (Matthew 5:17-20).*

The Sadducees did not hold to the oral law, but the Pharisees created it and held to it strongly. They would elevate oral law above the Law. See Matthew 15:1-20. They were frequently guilty of binding where God had not bound (Matthew 12:2).

“The Pharisees’ approach to the written Law of Moses was marked by a theory of a second, oral Law (supposedly also derived from Moses); their interpretations were less severe than the Essenes and more innovative than those of the Sadducees” (An Introduction to the New Testament, 77).

The Sadducees rejected such beliefs as angels, spirits, resurrection, and God bringing His ultimate reign to the world (cf. Matthew 22:23-33). But these ideas were strongly held teachings of the Pharisees. See Acts 23:1-8, for a powerful example of this contrast between the two sects.

The rabbis of the Pharisees greatly impacted the development of Jewish rhetoric and methods of imparting the Law to young and old. For instance, they often taught in parables and engaged others with questions. It may be interesting for us to reflect on the fact that these two are common in Jesus' teaching style.

They were the separatists because of their strong ideas about separating from uncleanness and sin (again, at least by their definitions and traditions concerning such). But this separating process also came to include certain individuals and certain groups of people. They strove to have no interactions with those they labeled as "sinners." See Matthew 9:11-13; Mark 2:15-17; and Luke 15:1-2.

The Sadducees were typically the aristocrats and the wealthiest sect of them all. However, the Pharisees often used their religious influence to gain monetary wealth. Many of them were lovers of money (Luke 16:14).

The Pharisees and Sadducees were usually enemies, but they joined together to attack and to attempt to destroy Jesus. For instance, they joined them in requesting signs from Him (Matthew 12:38-42; 16:1-4). The Pharisees were even willing to compromise to the level of working with the Herodians in their goal of entrapping the Son of God (Matthew 22:15-16; Mark 3:6)!

Jesus had a lot of enemies while on this planet, but the Pharisees were probably His worst enemies. They are mentioned about 99 times in the New Covenant Scriptures, and almost always fall into one of three categories: Jesus is rebuking them; Jesus is warning about them; they are plotting against/attacking Jesus. Jesus' longest and strongest recorded rebuke is aimed primarily at the Pharisees (Matthew 23).

By rejecting the immersion of John's ministry, the Pharisees rejected the purpose of God (Luke 7:30). They were unwilling to humbly prepare and accept the coming One when He arrived on the scene to deliver them. They did not even accept His forerunner.

Besides the apostle Paul, there are two other Pharisees that are painted with a positive brush by the Holy Spirit. They are Nicodemus (John 3:1; 7:50-51; 19:39) and Gamaliel (Acts 5:34). Gamaliel was not only a Pharisee, but also a member of the council, meaning that he was a part of the ruling class. Nicodemus is described as "a ruler of the Jews", so it seems he was of a similar class.

Unsurprisingly, one of the troublesome elements within the early Christians was Pharisees (Acts 15:5). A likely conclusion is that many of those known as the Judaizing teachers were Pharisees. For them, following Jesus looked like circumcision + Jesus = salvation. Notice how Paul sums up the reality: "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love" (Galatians 5:6).

In the End

"What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith; but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law. Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone, as it is written,

'Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.'

Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes" (Romans 9:30-10:4).

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A Working Partnership with God in the Mission of the Church

GERALD COWAN

Jesus inadvertently caused his family some concern by lagging behind their company in Jerusalem. They found him involved in discussion with scholars and doctors of the Law in the temple, amazing everyone with his questions and answers and his understanding of the scripture. When his mother reprimanded him for worrying her and his stepfather Joseph, he offered a mild rebuke of sorts to her: “Why were you seeking me? Were you, of all people, not aware that I must be about my Father’s business?” (Luke 2:49, read it in its context 2:40–52). By this he showed that he knew, even at twelve years of age, who he was and who his true Father was. He knew his mission and the work God intended him to do. He would not allow himself to be distracted from his mission and purpose. In that, as in all other things, he set an example that each of us should follow (1 Peter 2:21). Apostle Paul reminds us that we are to be co-workers with the Lord (2 Corinthians 6:1-4), not only for our own salvation (Philippians 2:12-13), but to complete the work committed to us by Christ to disseminate his gospel throughout the world (Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-16). In a prior essay we looked at the qualifications and works of a true gospelizer – an evangelist, sharing the message of God in the world. The present essay is intended to be a follow-on from the other one, emphasizing that the mission of the preacher and the church and all its member Christians is the same as the mission of Christ himself.

The church is described in many ways. It is the **building** of God, His work or creative act (1 Corinthians 3:9, Matthew 16:16). It is the **house** or **family** of God (1 Timothy 3:15). It is the **body** of the Lord (1 Corinthians 12:27, Ephesians 1:21-23). Why not also describe it as the **business** of the Lord? As Jesus said, we too must be about our Father’s business (Luke 2:49, compare Romans 16:2). By business we do not mean some kind of commercial marketing enterprise (such as those of certain “televangelists” of the “electronic church”). But there is surely a sense in which the Lord’s work and activity and the

participation of His people in it can be compared to a business or enterprise. Every Christian is to have fellowship in the Lord’s business, as a partner and co-worker with the Lord.

Will you consider becoming a business partner with the Lord? You may want to find out more about the business and your function before deciding. A thorough examination is recommended by the Lord himself (Luke 14:28-33). There is to be no turning back when one has committed himself (Luke 9:62). Those who “sell out” or abandon the partnership later on will lose all they have invested in it. There is no equity and no residual benefits or royalties for those who discontinue active partnership. The “pension fund” is lost; one cannot cash it in or roll it over into a new plan with another employer (Hebrews 6:4-6).

THE PRIMARY BUSINESS OF THE LORD IS TO SAVE SOULS AND KEEP THEM SAVED.

Everything else is secondary, because everything else contributes to the business of saving souls. Jesus himself is our greatest example in this. He said that he came “to **seek** and **save** the lost” (Luke 19:10). His **miracles attracted** the lost and **convinced** them he was from God (John 6:26). His **teaching instructed** the lost (John 6:45, 8:32). By the **sacrifice** of his own life he **redeemed** the lost (Colossians 1:14, Titus 2:14).

Our business can only be what God’s business is: **A SALVAGE OPERATION**. *Salvage* is from the same root as “save” and “salve.” It means: to **rescue and reclaim** something which was marked for destruction. Needy people are willing to go to a *Rescue Mission*, but I wonder how many would go if we called it a *Salvage Mission*. Salvage also means to **repair, redeem, and restore** to give new value, meaning, or life to something that was damaged, sick, near death, etc. Salvage, salvation, or healing is designed to uplift and not degrade. The mark of a good surgeon is not that he leaves no scars but that he makes the end product functionally

healthy. A great artist often lets the character of his materials determine the nature of his work. Stressed or damaged goods, driftwood, etc. – often still showing “scars” – can be turned into works of true beauty. God too can make works of art and beauty out of people who were once on the scrap heap of humanity – junk, broken and devalued by sin. Note: **God is not a junk dealer.** One may be junk at the beginning, but when God works on and with a person, the result is not junk. The person is no longer junk. Important lesson: we must learn never to judge the salvage business of God on the basis of the raw materials with which He must work. Let us judge instead by the finished product, the washed, purified, sanctified Christian (Romans 8:14, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, Matthew 7:20). The “old man” (once scrap, junk) is recreated, recycled, and becomes a “new man” bearing the spiritual image of the re-Creator God (Ephesians 4:22-24). The Lord’s business is the greatest business in the world, a universal concern. It pays both physical and spiritual, temporal and eternal dividends (Mark 10:29). There is no danger of bankruptcy. There is never any need of a “bail out” from outside sources. There is infinite capital and capacity in the treasury of the Lord (Philippians 4:19, Hebrews 7:25).

THE LORD’S BUSINESS METHODS ARE IMPARTIAL. HE SEEKS TO MAKE ALL MEN HIS BUSINESS PARTNERS.

There is no respect of persons, no partiality, prejudice, or preference with God (Acts 10:34-35, James 2:1ff, 1 Peter 1:17). God’s impartiality means everyone is welcome. This does not mean Christians/saints do not rank more highly with God than the unsaved lost (Luke 19:10). There are only two categories: *saved* and *unsaved*. The distinction between saved and unsaved should always be clear. But there is no distinction among the *lost* and the *saved*. All the lost are lost, equally unsaved. All the *saved* are equally saved. Nobody is partly lost and partly saved.

No one who wants to come to God will ever be rejected or denied the privilege of coming to Him (Matthew 11:28 and Revelation 22:17). Of course one must come to the Lord on the Lord’s terms. You cannot start a business (a church or fellowship) and invite the Lord to become a partner in it on *your* terms (Matthew 7:21-22). You cannot become a

competitor against God in the business of saving souls. It would be like selling “citizenship” to aliens – the government would not accept or validate it. Some actually claim to offer salvation apart from or without submission to the requirements of God. But their offer is invalid, and they themselves are servants of corruption, not servants of God (2 Peter 2:1-3, 18-19). It is the Lord who invites you to become a partner in His business, and only on His terms. Impartiality means that everyone must come to the Lord on the same terms, with no special indulgence or dispensation, no prejudicial or preferential treatment, and no variation in the requirements for salvation.

Man cannot improve upon the work of the Lord. His methods are perfect, even if man never understands them (Isaiah 55:8-9). There is no suggestion box, no vote, no democratic process to be used by those in partnership with God. God directs and man follows. God commands and man obeys. Those who are in business with the Lord must be as impartial and as universal in their outreach as the Lord himself (Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-16, James 2:1). They must also be as exclusive as the Lord himself is (Matthew 7:21-22, 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14).

God’s plan meets the needs of every person in the world. Those who accept God’s plan for life and living (His plan of salvation) know that they will have the abiding presence of Christ (Matthew 28:20, Galatians 2:20, 1 John 2:1-2). Those who believe the gospel of God enough to obey it will be saved by it (Mark 16:15-16, Romans 1:16-17). They are saved from their sins (Acts 2:38). They are saved from the ongoing and future “slum clearance and destruction of the unrenowable” (2 Peter 3:8-10 and 13, 1 Peter 4:17-18). Note: some junk is not salvageable – it is not amenable to the transforming and redeeming power of the Master, and therefore has no intrinsic eternal value to Him.

What precise conditions must be met by those who desire to become a functioning part of the organization, working partners with God in His business of saving souls? Obviously one must become a Christian in order to be a partner. That means: one must have faith in the working of God (Colossians 2:12, Hebrews 11:6, 4:2). As part of repentance one must cut all that ties him to the old life. One’s allegiance (commitment) is to God alone (Luke 24:47, 2 Timothy 2:4, Matthew 6:24). One must commit his whole life to God and allow himself and his re-

sources to be used as God sees fit – his personal investment (Romans 12:1-2, 1 Peter 4:19). Faith and repentance (submission and commitment) will be shown by being baptized into Jesus Christ and identified with him, then sealed in Christ by the Spirit of God (Acts 2:36-38, 1 Corinthians 12:13). Being immersed into Christ means accepting the new life, the life of/in Christ, and having one's old life taken away (Galatians 3:26-28, Romans 6:2-4). Baptism into Christ shows one's willingness to be separated from his past, to be remade, to become a new creature with a new identity (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Self-sacrifice and service do not end when one becomes a Christian, a partner with God. Service *in/to the business, in/to the kingdom of God* actually only begins at this point and continues endlessly from this point – one becomes a servant of the Righteous One, to do righteousness (Romans 6:17-23). It bears repeating: those who would come to God had better “count the cost.” It will cost one the present world (1 John 2:15-17); it requires separation from any spiritual master other than God (Matthew 6:24).

When one really understands the alternative to serving God, it is not difficult to choose Him and His way. Satan is the default master if one does not choose God. If one does not serve God and righteousness then he serves Satan and unrighteousness (Matthew 12:30, Romans 6:13-18). The reward for serving God is eternal life. The wages of sin is eternal death (Romans 6:23, Matthew 25:46).

RESPONSIBILITIES, ACTIVITIES, AND ATTITUDES OF GOD'S PARTNERS.

First, before anything else and above everything else, one's responsibility is **to glorify God**. Everything one does should be done to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31, 6:19-20). We are not just to glorify God. We should choose at each moment those things that will glorify Him most – do everything to the greater glory of God.

One must **maintain a right relationship with God's other human partners** (2 Corinthians 6:1). As members together in one body we function as a unit and become a corporate temple in which the Lord dwells (Ephesians 2:19-22 and 4:15-16). Partners should attend the “business meetings” (Hebrews 10:25) and use the time to encourage and exhort each other to love and good works (Hebrews 10:24), to teach and admonish one another (Colos-

sians 3:16-17), to fellowship the faithful by sharing their joys and sorrows (Romans 12:15) and bearing each other's burdens whenever possible (Galatians 6:1-2).

As partners with God we have a mission and ministry to those outside the church as well as those in it. We have a threefold commission from God: **save** the sinner, **strengthen** the saved, and **serve** the suffering (1 Corinthians 9:22, Jude 20, Galatians 5:13). Nobody can be saved without hearing the gospel. We are therefore asked to **teach** them (Romans 10:14, Matthew 28:19-20). As we have opportunity and ability, **do what is good** for everyone, first but not exclusively to other partners in the business, in the household of faith (Galatians 6:10, Matthew 25:31-46).

It would be easy to say, “It's God's business. Let Him see to it.” But it becomes our responsibility too, as soon as we become Christians. “You have received freely, now give freely” (Matthew 10:18). God has designed the program/business so that it requires both God and His human partners to carry out the work – to bring about salvation. Jesus said, “Without me you cannot do anything” (John 15:1-5). But he will not do his work apart from us (2 Corinthians 4:7, Romans 10:14). Paul implied as much when he said in his own living body he was trying to fulfill and complete what the physically absent Christ could not do (Colossians 1:24).

Partners demonstrate the character of God himself (1 Peter 4:13-14, 2 Peter 1:4). Walk in love; love others as the Lord loves (Ephesians 5:2, 1 John 4:7-12, John 13:34-35). Live the truth, provide things honest in the sight of all (Ephesians 4:15 and 25, Romans 12:17b, 1 John 3:19). Be diligent in service (Romans 12:11). Half-hearted efforts are not acceptable to God. The best of all religions and the greatest possible God – surely they demand and deserve the very best we have to offer (1 Peter 2:9). Demonstrate patient perseverance – never break or give up or quit (2 Peter 3:15, 1 Peter 4:12-13, Hebrews 12:1-4).

CONCLUSION:

Having once been accepted into partnership does not mean one is always accepted. God can excommunicate, terminate the relationship – His partners are not senior to Him, individually or collectively. Simon violated the principles of God and was told, “You have neither part nor lot in this business”

(Acts 8:21). It is required of God's stewards that they be found faithful (1 Corinthians 4:2). The final reward of God's co-workers is not gained until the end of life, and the life must be lived in faith if one is to have any hope of reward (Romans 1:17, Revelation 2:10, 1 Peter 1:5, 9). No other business pays

such dividends, both present and eternal (Matthew 25:21, 23). It is costly and difficult. But sharing the reproach of Christ and ultimately sharing the reward of Christ is greater riches than all the treasures of the world (Hebrews 11:26, Romans 8:17).

MY MISSION

When by God's grace the battle's won
The Lord will welcome me as one
Whose earthly mission has been done
And say, "Come home now with my Son."

And when at last I reach that shore
Where death and pain will be no more,
I trust the Lord to take me o'er
To be with Him forevermore.

When earth and time have passed away
In heaven, an eternal day,
In love and joy and praise I'll pray
And there with Him forever stay.

When will I my race have run?
When will I see God's Savior Son?
When will my crown of life be won?
When God can say, "Your mission's done."

— Gerald Cowan

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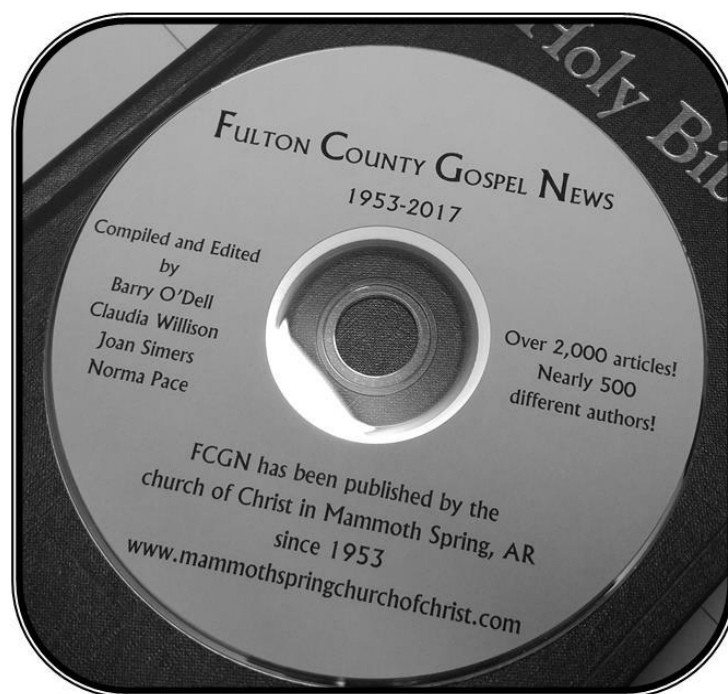
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RESTORATION MOMENTS

TANT AND PIGUE

At the Oldfield Methodist Church in Crockett County, Tennessee, in 1910. R.H. Pigue (pronounced “pig”), noted and powerful Methodist debater, was scheduled to meet J. D. Tant in debate. It was the first time the two had ever met (they had other debates in later years), and a huge throng of people had gathered for the opening session.

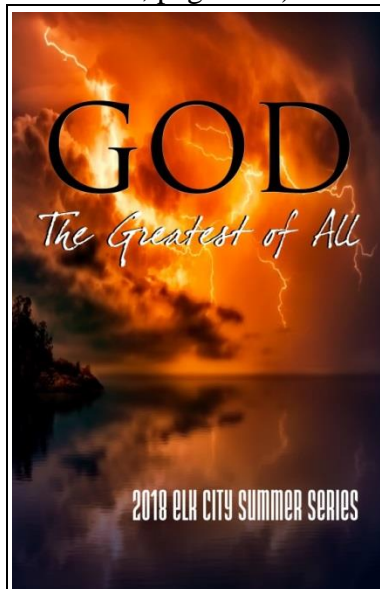
Pigue was there, his 300-pound figure dressed to perfection in elegance and style. But Tant was not on the platform, or anywhere else to be seen. After a delay of several minutes, waiting for Tant to appear, Pigue got to his feet, and made a long and rather insulting speech about the “Campbellites.” He said they were long on boasting, but short on everything else; and that since Tant had obviously been too frightened to make his appearance, the debate would have to be called off.

About that time a figure arose from the back seat of the assembly — a lanky, dirty, unshaven farmer, dressed in overalls and a blue shirt. He announced himself as J.D. Tant, and said he was ready to start the debate.

Pigue commented with an evident show of disgust on the “uncouth” appearance of his opponent. To which Tant replied, “I was raised on a farm; and our old pappy always taught his boys to dress for the

work they had to do. I came here to do a job of hog-killing on a fat, overgrown, and over stuffed ‘Pigue,’ and I dressed for the occasion! Let’s get on with the job.”

(Adapted from the book, *J.D. Tant: Texas Preacher*, page 313.)



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Bartholomew

BRADLEY S. COBB

Identifying Bartholomew

Bartholomew is an enigma. He was trusted by Jesus, given miraculous gifts, preached on Pentecost, and died faithful to his Lord, but the name *Bartholomew* only appears four times in the Bible—and each of those times is a listing of the apostles.

His name means “son of Tolmai,”¹ which indicates that this isn’t his *real* first name.² The question before us, then, is this: “Is it possible that Bartholomew was known by a different name in some of the New Testament writings?”³ This is a valid question, since the apostle Matthew was called “Levi” in some places, while he was called “Matthew” in others.⁴

Let us first point out some facts:

- Bartholomew is mentioned in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Acts—but not in the Gospel of John.
- John does not give a listing of the apostles (so we can’t appeal to that).
- John, it is generally agreed, wrote his gospel account last, supplementing the other three, adding some details that weren’t covered (such as the introduction of Peter, Andrew, and Philip to Jesus).
- There is a prominent supporting character in John’s gospel who is not mentioned by name in the other three accounts—Nathanael.

The general consensus among Bible scholars is that Bartholomew and Nathanael are the same person. The reasons for this conclusion are:

- (1) Nathanael’s call is given by John immediately after the call of Andrew, Peter, and Philip—all of whom became apostles.⁵ Thus, it would be strange for John to include Nathanael here if he wasn’t an apostle.
- (2) Jesus tells Nathanael that he will see “greater things...heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of man.”⁶ Thus, we have Jesus’ confirmation that Nathanael was going to be a close associate of our Lord.
- (3) Nathanael was the first to recognize Jesus for who He really was: “The Son of God...the

¹ See McClintock and Strong’s *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, Vol. 1, page 675. See also Eberhard Nestle, Ph.D., D.D.’s article “Matthias=Bartholomew” in *Expository Times*, Vol. 9 (1898), pages 566-567.

² Simon was called “Simon Bar-jona,” meaning “Simon, son of Jonah”; “Barnabas” means “Son of Consolation.” Though Barnabas was known by that name, it wasn’t his *given* name. It was a name taken on by him later, a nickname which stuck.

³ Dr. Nestle says “There is another tradition among the Syrians, that the original name of the Apostle Bartholomew was *Jesus*, and that the disciples did not call him by his own name because of the name of the Master, but called him after his father (the same case as with Barabbas of the Passion, who is also said to have been called originally Jesus).” *Expository Times*, Vol. 9 (1898), page 567.

⁴ Compare the calling of the tax collector “Matthew” (Matthew 9:9-13) with the calling of the tax collector “Levi” (Mark 2:14-17). See also the chapter on Matthew later in this book.

⁵ John 1:35-51. It is possible (some would argue *probable*) that the call of John, the son of Zebedee, is also included in those verses, making this argument even stronger.

⁶ John 1:50-51.

King of Israel.”⁷ It would be odd if this man was not included among the apostles.

- (4) John spends more time discussing Nathanael’s introduction to Jesus than he does on Peter, Andrew, or Philip’s introduction to the Lord,⁸ indicating that Nathanael was an important person. This makes no sense if he wasn’t one of the apostles.
- (5) Jesus appears to the apostles twice in John 20, and then He “showed Himself again” to them in chapter 21—and Nathanael is named as one of those present.⁹ Logic, then, dictates that Nathanael was one of the apostles.
- (6) Philip brought Nathanael to Jesus, and Bartholomew is usually placed right after Philip in the listings of the apostles. This may point to the relationship those two men had.¹⁰
- (7) Philip and Nathanael are connected in John 1, and it is Philip and Bartholomew who are connected in many of the extra-biblical *Acts* of Philip.¹¹ Thus, it would appear that these men who John connected were the same men connected in extra-biblical writings as well.¹²
- (8) Possibly the most conclusive piece of evidence is that in Acts 1, in order to choose a replacement for Judas Iscariot, Peter said they had to choose someone who had been with them from John’s baptism (Nathanael fits that description) and who had seen Jesus after the resurrection (Nathanael fits that description as well). Two men were nominated that fit that description: Justus and Matthias. The only reasonable conclusion as to why Nathanael wasn’t nominated was that he was already an apostle.

⁷ John 1:49.

⁸ The introduction of Peter covers two verses (John 1:41-42). The introduction of Philip covers two verses (John 1:43-44). The introduction of Andrew covers six verses (John 1:35-40). The introduction of Nathanael covers seven verses (John 1:45-51).

⁹ John 21:1-2. It should be noted that John never uses the word “apostles” in his gospel account, but only the word “disciples.”

¹⁰ This argument is given by almost all Bible dictionaries and encyclopedias.

¹¹ See the *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 8, page 497-510.

¹² As we will see in the “Traditions” section of this chapter, Bartholomew was supposedly paired up with several of the apostles as well.

Not everyone agrees with this connection,¹³ but there is no biblical evidence against it, and much to be said in its favor. Thus, we will continue with this section under the belief that Bartholomew and Nathanael are two different names for the same man.

The Call of Bartholomew

Bartholomew,¹⁴ from Cana in Galilee,¹⁵ was a man who put great faith in the Scripture, and who may have understood the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah better than any of the other apostles. He was under a fig tree when Philip approached him, probably very excitedly, and said to him, “We’ve found Him of whom Moses in the Law, as well as the prophets, did write: Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph!”¹⁶ Philip knew Bartholomew, and therefore knew that he would be extremely interested in the fulfillment of the Old Testament Messianic prophecies.

In response, Bartholomew was surprised. He replied, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” It could be, as some claim, that Bartholomew was prejudiced against Nazareth, and truly thought it was a place of evil—a place from which nothing good could arise.¹⁷ It could also be that Bartholomew, being well-versed in the Scriptures, knew that Nazareth wasn’t mentioned in the Old Testament,¹⁸

¹³ McClintock and Strong, in their *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature* (Vol. 6, page 859), state:

“St. Augustine not only denies the claim of Nathanael being one of the Twelve, but assigns as a reason for his opinion that whereas Nathanael was most likely a learned man in the Law of Moses, it was, as Paul tells us (1 Cor. 1:26), the wisdom of Christ to make choice of rude and unlettered men to confound the wise (in *Johan. Ev. Ch. 1, Section 17*). St. Gregory adopts the same view.”

Such a view ignores that Philip was one who was well-versed in the Law of Moses (John 1:45).

¹⁴ We have chosen to use the name *Bartholomew* instead of *Nathanael* because it is the name that appears in the listings of the apostles.

¹⁵ John 21:2 provides us with this information.

¹⁶ John 1:45.

¹⁷ See Barnes’ comments, as well as Barclay’s *Daily Study Bible*.

¹⁸ Matthew says that there was a prophecy, given by “the prophets” that Jesus would be a Nazarene (see Matthew 2:23), but all commentators and scholars agree that there is no prophecy that is specifically worded that way. Instead, it is likely a

and was simply expressing confusion as to how the Messiah could come from there.¹⁹ It is also within the realm of possibility that, being from Cana, Bartholomew was familiar with Nazareth, and knew it wasn't anything special, thus giving him cause to question that the King of Israel would reside there.

Regardless of the reason for his statement, Bartholomew was the kind of person who was willing to listen to the evidence. Philip knew this, which is why his response was simply, "Come and see." Bartholomew, being well-versed in Scripture, would have been able to point out any ways in which Jesus didn't fit the bill as the prophesied Messiah—if there were any. So he got up and went.

As he and Philip are walking towards Jesus, the Lord said (loud enough for Bartholomew to hear), "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile [or hypocrisy]!" This was indeed high praise from Jesus, the one who knows the hearts of men.²⁰ Not only is Bartholomew a physical Israelite (some early writers say he was of the tribe of Naphtali),²¹ but he is also of *spiritual* Israel, one who truly loved and followed God's law. Like David, Bartholomew could say, "O how I love Your Law; it is my meditation all day."²²

Bartholomew, according to Jesus, was someone who was pure in heart, with no deceit. It's no wonder that Philip was friends with this man, and that he had to go find him to tell him about Jesus. After Jesus said this, Bartholomew said, "From where do you know me?"²³ They hadn't met before this moment.²⁴ What Jesus said next was all the convincing it took for Bartholomew.

compilation of prophecies about the despised and rejected nature of the Messiah. Jesus is called the "Branch" or "Root" that grew up out of dry ground (Isaiah 53:2). The Hebrew is "Neser," which is where "Nazareth" apparently got its name.

¹⁹ It has been suggested that perhaps Bartholomew (Nathanael) was confused because he assumed that the Messiah would not only be *born* in Bethlehem, but also *raised* there.

²⁰ There are some who take the position that Jesus was being sarcastic when He said this, and then let Bartholomew (Nathanael) know that He heard what he had said about nothing good coming out of Nazareth.

²¹ *Contendings of the Apostles*, Vol. 2, page 50.

²² Psalm 119:97.

²³ John 1:48, Modern Literal Version.

²⁴ This fact eliminates Simon, the son of Cleopas, from consideration as Nathanael, for that Simon was (it is believed by many) a first cousin of Jesus, and certainly would have met Him prior to this date.

*Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.*²⁵

From just this one statement, Bartholomew knew that Jesus was the one Philip was certain He was. This shows that Bartholomew was open-minded, confident in his beliefs, but ready to accept the evidence that would prove him wrong. He had doubted that anything good could come out of Nazareth, but with just one sentence from Jesus as evidence, he knew he had been wrong.

Bartholomew then gave the great confession—the one that years later had to be revealed by God to Peter—"You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel." He had an insight into the nature of Jesus, the nature of the Messiah that came from proper understanding of several Old Testament prophecies. The Jewish leadership considered such a statement to be blasphemous, but Bartholomew understood that the Messiah was the Son of God.²⁶

Jesus' response was one of commendation, and a prophecy of things that would cause even greater belief.

*Because I said to you, "I saw you under the fig tree," you believe? You shall see greater things than these. Truly, truly I saw to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of man.*²⁷

Bartholomew the Disciple and Apostle

Bartholomew most certainly accompanied Jesus to the wedding feast in Cana—some even believe that he was the groom!²⁸ He accompanied Jesus into Jerusalem, heard Him teach in the temple, and baptized many people in Judea before returning to Galilee.²⁹ Throughout the 3 ½ years that Bartholomew followed Jesus, he heard much teaching and saw many miracles that confirmed for him that his initial confession about Jesus was correct. However, like the other men who were chosen to be Jesus' closest

²⁵ John 1:48.

²⁶ See John 10:31-36.

²⁷ John 1:50-51.

²⁸ See McClintock and Strong's *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, Vol. 1, page 675. The reason for this belief, apparently, is that John makes a special point to mention at the end of his gospel account that Nathanael (Bartholomew) was from Cana of Galilee (John 21:2).

²⁹ These events are recorded in John 2-4.

associates, he abandoned the Lord and fled for his life.³⁰

The Sunday after the resurrection, Bartholomew gathered with the rest of the apostles (except for Thomas, who was absent) in a room with the doors shut, fearful that the Jews would come after them. He had been told by Mary Magdalene that Jesus had risen from the grave, but he didn't believe her.³¹ But now, gathered with nine other apostles, Bartholomew saw Jesus appear in their midst; he saw the wounds in His hands and side, and he believed.³²

After that event, Bartholomew was one of the men who told Thomas about the encounter, trying to convince the doubting disciple that Jesus truly had risen from the grave. The next Lord's Day (though it was not yet given that designation), Jesus appeared to the eleven apostles once again, and Bartholomew must have been overjoyed to hear Thomas make the same basic declaration that he himself had made years earlier: "My Lord and my God!"³³

Bartholomew, a matter of days later, decided to join Peter after hearing him say, "I'm going fishing." Along with Thomas, James, John, and two of the other disciples, they spent all night fishing, but

caught nothing. The next morning, they heard a man cry out to them, "Do you have any meat?" They had to, frustratingly, admit that they had caught nothing, and then they heard the man say "Cast your net on the right side of the ship, and you shall find [fish]."

Bartholomew and the other disciples did as the man said, and caught so many fish that they weren't able to bring up the net.

John realized it was Jesus, and told Peter, who dove in the sea and swam to shore, leaving Bartholomew and the other disciples to drag the net of fishes to shore. When they made it to the shore, they saw Jesus had already started a fire, had fish cooking, and had bread ready for them.³⁴

That is the last time the name *Nathanael* appears in the Scripture. But less than a month later, he was standing with the other apostles, listening to Jesus speak, and watched as He ascended into heaven and was received by a cloud. He was present when

Peter stood up and explained from prophecy that Judas must be replaced. He was in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came upon them all and they began to speak the wonderful words of God in foreign languages. He spent a good portion of that day teaching and baptizing people.

Other than being arrested and beaten for preaching the word,³⁵ being with the apostles during Saul's persecution,³⁶ and gathering in Jerusalem to discuss



³⁰ Matthew 26:56.

³¹ Mark 16:9-11. There are those who wish to discredit Mark 16:9-20, but the overwhelming weight of evidence proves its inspiration. See *The Last Twelve Verses of Mark* by John W. Burgon for a full treatment of this topic.

³² John 20:19-20.

³³ John 20:26-28.

³⁴ John 21:1-14.

³⁵ Acts 4.

³⁶ Acts 8:1-4.

the circumcision controversy,³⁷ we are not told anything else about Bartholomew. But we do know that he died in faith, for his name is inscribed on the foundation of the Holy City, New Jerusalem.³⁸

Theories About Nathanael

As we stated earlier in this chapter, while most Bible scholars agree that Nathanael and Bartholomew are the same person, others disagree.

The Armenian and Syriac translations of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* use the name "Tolmai" or "Bartholomew" ("Son of Tolmai") every place where the Greek uses the name "Matthias." This has led to some people holding the position that Bartholomew is another name for Matthias. Of course, that causes its own confusions, since Bartholomew was already one of the apostles when Matthias was chosen to replace Judas.³⁹

Some have suggested that Nathanael (which means "gift of God") and Matthew (which means "gift of God") are two names for the same person. However, as Barclay points out, those men in the Bible who were known by multiple names generally had a Jewish name and a Greek name (or a first name and a surname). Nathanael and Matthew are both Jewish names, which, while not impossible, goes against the general rule regarding names.⁴⁰

It's been said that Nathanael wasn't a real person at all, but that he was an ideal representation of the true Israelite who would accept the gospel (some have said it specifically pictures Saul of Tarsus). In other words, Andrew, Peter, and Philip were all real people, but Nathanael was figurative, representing those who the apostles would call. There is nothing at all in the text, nor common sense, to suggest that Nathanael wasn't a real individual who was really searched for by Philip, and who really came to Jesus, and who really went fishing with the disciples after the resurrection.⁴¹

Various interpreters, with differing levels of evidence, have tried to identify Nathanael as John, the

son of Zebedee (though that makes John 21:2 ridiculous), as Stephen, as Paul, as Matthew, as Matthias,⁴² and as Simon the Zealot.⁴³

Each of these theories presents difficulties, while the identification of Nathanael as Bartholomew presents none.

Bartholomew, According to Tradition

With some of the apostles, tradition is generally in agreement. With Bartholomew, the traditions are all over the place. He is said by some "ancient authorities" to have been a nobleman in Galilee prior to becoming a disciple of Jesus.⁴⁴ He is said to have worked in India, Phrygia, and Armenia.⁴⁵ Others place him side-by-side with Peter, Andrew, and Matthew around the Black Sea.⁴⁶ Traditionally, it is believed that Bartholomew took the gospel also to Arabia.⁴⁷ There is a work entitled "The Acts of Andrew and Bartholomew" placing the two working among the Parthians, and includes Jesus telling Bartholomew "Rise up, O good Bartholomew, and go to the countries of the Greeks..."⁴⁸

One of the many stories surrounding Bartholomew actually records a demon describing his appearance:

He has black hair, a shaggy head, a fair skin, large eyes, beautiful nostrils, his ears hidden by the hair of his head, with a yellow beard, a few grey hairs, of middling height (neither tall nor stunted, but middling), clothed with a white under-cloak bordered with purple, and on his shoulders a very white cloak; and his clothes have been worn twenty-six years, but neither are they dirty, nor have they waxed old. Seven times a day he bends the knee to the Lord, and seven times a

⁴² See the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* entry on "Nathanael."

⁴³ See the "Genealogies of the Twelve Apostles" in E.A. Wallace Budge's *The Contendings of the Apostles*, Vol. 2, page 50. Here, Nathanael is said to be the same as Simon (the son of Cleopas), one of the twelve.

⁴⁴ Whyte, Alexander, *Bible Characters*, chapter 22.

⁴⁵ See Zondervan's *Bible Encyclopedia*, entry "Bartholomew."

⁴⁶ See *The Post-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 1, *Ecclesiastical History* (Eusebius), Book 3, part 1, footnotes 1.

⁴⁷ *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, "Arabia."

⁴⁸ See Budge, *Contendings of the Apostles*, Vol. 2, Pages 183-184.

³⁷ Acts 15

³⁸ Revelation 21:14.

³⁹ See Dr. E. Nestle's "Matthias=Bartholomew" in *Expository Times*, Vol. 9 (1898), pages 566-567.

⁴⁰ See William Barclay's *Daily Study Bible* notes on John 1:45.

⁴¹ Again, see Barclay's notes on this passage. He does not accept this interpretation, but does present it as what others have said.

night does he pray to God. His voice is like the sound of a strong trumpet...his face, and his soul, and his heart are always glad and rejoicing.⁴⁹

According to *The Martyrdom of Saint Bartholomew in Naidas*, the apostle angered a king by converting his wife to Christ, resulting in his death:

It came to pass that when Akrepos heard these words from him, he was angry with a great anger, for he had kept in his mind how his wife had separated herself from him. Then he commanded the officers of his guards to fill a sack with sand, and to put Saint Bartholomew therein and to cast him into the sea; and they did as the king commanded them. Now he died on the first day of the month Maskarram, and afterwards the waves of the sea cast him up, and on the day following, certain believing men, who had confessed the faith God through him, swathed him in swathings and laid him in a fair place.⁵⁰

But, according to another work with a similar title, a king in India was upset because his idols had been broken:

The king...ordered the holy apostle Bartholomew to be beaten with rods; and after having been thus scourged, to be beheaded.

And innumerable multitudes came from all the cities, 12,000 in number, and they took up the remains of the

apostle with singing of praise and with all glory, and they laid them in the royal tomb, and glorified God. And the king Astreges, having heard of this, ordered him to be thrown into the sea; and his remains were carried into the island of Liparis.⁵¹

Herbert Lockyer gives some other traditions, including that Bartholomew was murdered in Armenia in AD 44,⁵² and that he was either “crucified with his head downwards, or flayed to death at Albanopolis or Urbanapolis in Armenia at the command of King Astyages after the conversion of King Polymios.”⁵³ Coxe says that “the general tradition is that he was flayed alive, and then crucified.”⁵⁴

Perhaps the most interesting of the stories surrounding Bartholomew is that he went

into India with a Hebrew copy of the gospel of Matthew,⁵⁵ which was found around AD 170 by Pantnus, who was sent to India as a missionary.⁵⁶

One ancient writing called the “Gospel of Bartholomew” is no longer in existence, but it was labeled as heretical by the Catholic Church.⁵⁷



⁴⁹ *Martyrdom of the Holy and Glorious Apostle Bartholomew*, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 8, page 553.

⁵⁰ Budge, *Contendings of the Apostles*, Vol. 2, pages 109-110.

⁵¹ *Martyrdom of the Holy and Glorious Apostle Bartholomew*, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 8, page 557.

⁵² Lockyer, Herbert, *All the Apostles of the Bible*, page 58. Unfortunately, Lockyer did not state where this date or the traditions originated, leaving us to wonder if this is one of his many “embellishments” from this book.

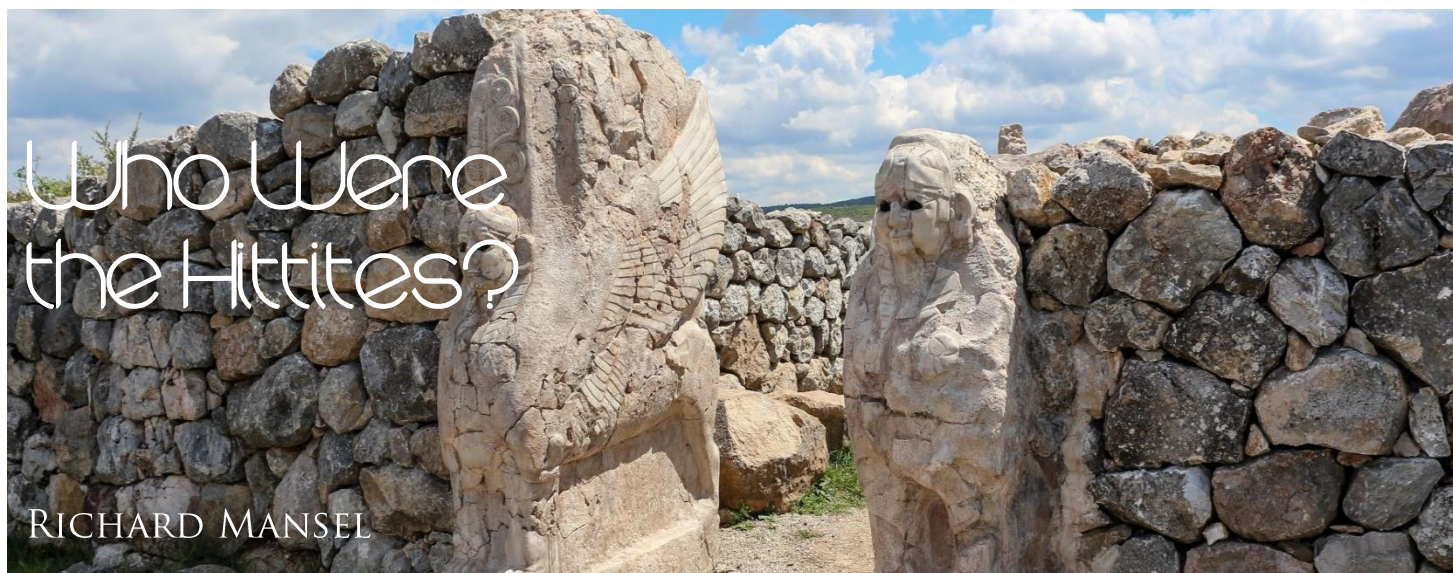
⁵³ Lockyer, Herbert, *All the Apostles of the Bible*, page 250.

⁵⁴ *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Book 5, page 255, footnote 2.

⁵⁵ Hippolytus, *Hippolytus on the Twelve Apostles*. See *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 5, page 255.

⁵⁶ Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, Book 5, chapter 10; see also *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, “Matthew, The Gospel of.”

⁵⁷ *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, “Apocryphal Gospels.”



Introduction

Curiosity can lead to an insatiable mind where a desire to learn becomes boundless. Zora Neale Hurston said that, “research is formalized curiosity.”¹ It leads us to seek and find answers where none are provided.

In God’s Word we seek truth and, by faith, follow it completely (Romans 10:17; Hebrews 11:6). In the Scriptures, God gave us the truth to attain heaven (John 14:1-6). Everything selected to be in the Bible is there to accomplish that task.

Along the way, we find people, places and groups that are mentioned in passing. Curiosity leads us to ask, seek and find who they were and their accomplishments and failures. We must turn to secular history today to fill in the answers.

Biblical Context

The Hittites are mentioned frequently in the Old Testament but they were simply words on a page until archaeological discoveries by Irish missionary William Wright in 1884 and German archaeologist Hugo Winckler in 1906.² From their work at Boghaskoy, in modern day Turkey, the Hittite capital city of Hattusa was unveiled.

Winckler found 10,000 clay tablets with cuneiform writing. Many of them were written in the Akkadian language from Mesopotamia, with which the archaeologists were familiar. The remainder were in an unknown language, but they were deciphered within a decade.³

Not everyone agrees that the Biblical Hittites and the historical Hittites are one and the same. Likewise, there’s some disagreement about which version is mentioned in Scripture. When they ceased to exist as a nation, remnants remained or people co-opted the name because they re-appear in the region.

We now turn to the Scriptures to see the Hittites in the Biblical record. Abraham bought the Cave of Machpelah from the Hittites in Genesis 23. They were descended from Canaan and Abraham (Gen. 10:1-6, 15-20; 15:18-21). Later, Jacob married a Hittite (Gen. 27:46).

The Hittites were one of the tribes in the promised land, and subsequently they were to be defeated (Deut. 20:17; Josh. 11:1-5; Num. 13:29).

When King David committed adultery with Bathsheba, he had her husband Uriah the Hittite killed (2 Sam. 11:3). King Solomon had Hittites among his wives (1 Kings 10:29–11:2), and the prophet Ezekiel used them as a metaphor to warn Israel (Ezk. 16:3, 45).

In an interesting twist that will matter in secular history, Israel imported chariots and horses to the Hittites (2 Chron. 1:17). In another instance, Israel hired them to fight against the Syrians (1 Kings 10:29; 2 Kings 7:6).

Secular History

The archaeological record indicates that the people we call the Hittites wandered into the land of the Hatti’s and assimilated. We really don’t know anything about the Hatti’s. The Hittites original language was apparently called Nesite. “Had scholars known from the beginning what has been subse-

¹<https://www.brainyquote.com/topics/curiosity>

²<https://www.ancient.eu/hittite/>

³<http://www.crystalinks.com/hittites.html>

quently uncovered, these people would probably be called Nesites or perhaps Nesians.”⁴

F.F. Bruce writes, “The Hittites first make their appearance in history as Indo-European immigrants from the northeast who settled in east-central Asia Minor in the Early Bronze Age (ca. 2000 B.C.).”⁵

There are still unanswered questions about their rise, but in time they became mighty as a nation. The capital, Hattusa, grew to be a large city with walls six miles long.⁶

“Visitors to the city would enter through the Lion Gate—named for the stone lions on either side of the entrance. The lion was a symbol of protection, defiance and royalty in Hittite culture.”⁷ “Two sculptures of life-size lions, each weighing about 5 tons in antiquity, have been discovered”⁸

They built prestige and wealth on trade and military power. Military responsibilities took workers away from the fields, so allowances had to be made.

“Each man, woman and child at every level of society was dependent directly on the productivity of the land. For this reason, the Hittite worldview was deeply rooted in agrarian concerns of fertility and the maintenance of balance and order in an unpredictable world”⁹

Their military was substantial enough to win against Babylon and to fight to a draw against Egypt and Ramses II, which is impressive by any standard.¹⁰ Their battles against the Egyptians are significant because of what the two accomplished. First, they may have engaged in the world’s largest chariot battle.¹¹ Secondly, the Hittite government and the Egyptians formed what may be the world’s oldest negotiated peace treaty.¹²

⁴ <https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/ancient-cultures/ancient-near-eastern-world/who-were-the-hittites/>

⁵ F.F. Bruce, “Hittites” *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*. Edited by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 2:720.

⁶ <https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/ancient-cultures/ancient-near-eastern-world/who-were-the-hittites/>

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ <http://www.crystalinks.com/hittites.html>

⁹ Billie Jean Collins, “The Hittites and Their World” (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007), 91.

¹⁰ <https://www.ancient.eu/hittite/>

¹¹ <https://m.warhistoryonline.com/war-articles/largest-chariot-battle-kadesh.html>

¹² https://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2018-04/coe-

“The last king of the Hittite Empire was Suppiluliuma II, famous for his part in the first naval battle in recorded history in 1210 BCE, in which the Hittite fleet was victorious over the Cypriots.”¹³

Despite their power, wealth and advanced skills in engineering, they died out and no one knows why for certain. Various theories, such as fire, famine or defeat by the Assyrians, exist.

Most of our knowledge on the Hittites comes from their tablets and they were ostensibly government business and their history. We don’t know much about their daily lives.

“The Hittite king was not an absolute monarch; his authority was limited by a council or assembly called the pankus. Succession to the throne required ratification by this body. The king was a military, civil, and religious leader; the succession normally passed to his son or son in law.”¹⁴

Their government building was called the Acropolis and it sat on a ridge and was called the “Upper City.”¹⁵

The Hittites were a religious people and the king headed their religion. Their beliefs were largely guided by politics, though. Whichever gods they found most beneficial at the time, they worshiped.

Conclusion

Hopefully, further archaeological work will uncover more about the Hittites. It’s sad to exist and die and no one know what happened in the middle. To have such wealth and power and not to leave a larger footprint teaches us the vanity of earthly prestige.

“What profit has a man from all his labor in which he toils under the sun?” (Ecclesiastes 1:3). Only our spiritual legacy will truly matter (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).

[wto042318.php](#)

¹³ <https://www.ancient.eu/hittite/>

¹⁴ Bruce, 2:721.

¹⁵ https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/ancient-cultures/ancient-near-eastern-world/the-last-days-of-hattusa/?mqsc=E3969278&utm_source=WhatCountsEmail&utm_medium=BHD+Daily%20Newsletter&utm_campaign=ZE8A7DZ42

A [Sort of] DEBATE
on
THE PROPER INTERPRETATION
of
1 Corinthians 7:15

BY ROD ROSS AND JOHN KRIVAK

*But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart.
A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases:
but God hath called us to peace.*

EDITOR'S NOTE: Both writers have submitted their articles without seeing the other. In doing it this way, the goal was to have each side simply present the case for their position, and not to get into an ongoing back and forth. We also hope that by doing it this way, our readers will be able to see what each side believes—from their own pens.

The verse in question deals with a Christian who is married to a non-Christian. James Bales was ostracized because he took the position that if the non-Christian left a Christian, then the Christian was free to remarry—in fact, many call this “The Bales Doctrine.” However, it is the same position taken by Burton Coffman, G.C. Brewer, Leslie Thomas, and Foy E. Wallace.

Of course, if we were to list names of those who disagreed with that position, we could fill pages. Here are some well-known men whose names would appear on that list: David Lipscomb, BC Goodpasture, Thomas B. Warren, and George W. DeHoff—men every bit as prestigious as those on the other side. We could add the names of literally hundreds of living preachers and writers of note to this list.

Hopefully you realize that giving names of who took which view doesn't prove anything, except that some well-known and well-respected brethren differed on this issue. Because of this, it behooves us to not take a position simply because it is held by one person or another. Instead, this should cause us to take a look at what the Bible says, and recognize that it is one of those topics about which we should “be diligent” (2 Timothy 2:15, ASV, MLV) to “rightly divide the word of truth” (KJV).

INFIDELS & DESERTION

ROD ROSS

One of, if not *the* most difficult situation that one can experience in a marriage is when the mates do not share the same outlook on life, especially when it comes to religion. This difficulty is compounded when the Christian in the marriage has been converted after having been an unbeliever himself. The change that comes with being “born again” makes it seem to the unbeliever that they are married to an entirely different person, which in a way they are. The non-Christian may have problems, sometimes severe problems, in understanding and/or accepting the change in their mate.

It is this strained relationship that Paul addresses in I Corinthians 7:12-16:

But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean, but now are they holy. But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace. For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?

The Christian, in a marriage with an unbeliever, is not free to either put away or to leave the unbeliever as long as the unbeliever wishes to stay. There is no uncleanness in the marriage as there was under the Old Covenant for the Israelite to marry an idolater (see Ezra 10:2-3). The marriage between a Christian and a non-Christian is acceptable in the sight of

God. There is no way of telling whether the Christian mate will convert their unbelieving mate. The best chance is by continued faithfulness to both God and the marriage (see 1 Peter 3:1). But, if the non-Christian wishes to leave, there is nothing that the Christian can do about it. Let them go. Marriage is not bondage, or slavery. It is not held together with chain and fetters, but with love and commitment. The Christian cannot “hog tie” the non-Christian to keep them in the marriage. The Christian is not responsible for the desertion of the non-Christian.

Many different explanations of the desertion by the unbeliever are made. Some make the desertion upon the basis of faith: the unbeliever being unable to remain with the believer because of their faith. But, what difference does that make? Whether the desertion is because of the faith, or because of the burnt toast, desertion is desertion; and, there is no indication what the reason for the desertion is in the context. The reason for the desertion makes no difference in what the Christian’s responsibility is.

Some assume that adultery (or fornication) must take place as a result of desertion. They make desertion imply adultery (or fornication). Therefore, they allow, upon the basis of desertion, remarriage upon the grounds of Matthew 19:9 coupled with 1 Corinthians 7:15. However, must one who deserts their mate commit adultery (or fornication)? Granted, in most instances when a mate is abandoned it is for someone else; but, does it have to be? Again, there is nothing in the context which truly implies adultery (or fornication) upon desertion by the unbeliever. It merely states “if the unbelieving depart, let him depart.”

Care needs to be taken not to read into any passage more than is actually there.

The greatest controversy surrounding this passage is to be found in the definition of the word “bondage.” Since “A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases,” “bondage” becomes a piv-

otal word in understanding what Paul speaks of by inspiration.

“Bondage” as Defined by the English Dictionaries:

Webster’s Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary

“1: villein tenure or service 2: SERFDOM, SLAVERY 3: subjection to compulsion.”

Funk & Wagnall’s Standard Desk Dictionary

“1. Involuntary servitude; slavery; serfdom. 2. Subjection to any influence or domination.”

Bondage carries the idea of servitude or slavery. Thus, it connotes a much different image than does the marriage bond.

“Bondage” in the Greek

The Greek word here is *dedouloutai*. It is the third person singular, perfect indicative passive of *doulooo*. It is defined:

An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words by W. E. Vine

“2. DOULOO (doulo), different from No. 1, in being transitive instead of intransitive, signifies to make a slave of, to bring into bondage, Acts 7:6; 1 Cor. 9:19, R.V.; in the Passive Voice, to be brought under bondage, 2 Pet. 2:19; to be held in bondage, Gal. 4:3 (‘Were reduced to bondage’); Tit. 2:3, of being enslaved to wine; Rom. 6:18, of service to righteousness (‘Were made bondservants’). As with the purchased slave there were no limitations either in the kind or the time of service so the life of the believer is to be lived in continuous obedience to God.”

The Analytical Greek Lexicon

“to be a slave or servant, to be in slavery or subjection, Jno. 8:33; Ac. 7:7; Ro. 9:12; to discharge the duties of a slave or servant Ep. 6:7; 1 Ti. 6:2; to serve, be occupied in the service of, be devoted, subservient, Mat. 6:24; Lu. 15:29; Ac. 20:19; Ro. 14:18; 16:18, et

al; to be enthralled, involved in a slavish service, spiritually or morally, Gal. 4:9, 25; Tit. 3:3.”

Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament

“to make a slave of, reduce to bondage; a. prop.: ...Acts 7:6; ... to him as has also been made a bondman, 2 Pet. 2:19. 6. metaph.: ... give myself wholly to one’s needs and service, make myself a bondman to him, 1 Co. 9:19; ..., to be made subject to the rule of someone, e.g. ... Ro. 6:18, 22; likewise ..., Gal. 4:3; ..., wholly given up to, enslaved to, Tit. 2:3 ...; ..., to be under bondage, held by constraint of law or necessity, in some matter, 1 Co. 7:15.”

The definition of the Greek word for bondage does not differ from the English definition.

Some may look at the last statement from Thayer’s and mistakenly apply it to the marriage bond. Thayer’s states: “to be under bondage, held by constraint of law or necessity, in some matter, 1 Co. 7:15.” At the most, this indicates that there is no constraint of law or necessity to remain with a mate who does not wish to remain with you. It does not indicate a freedom from the marriage bond, allowing the one who is deserted to marry another.

As has already been indicated, the Greek word for “bondage,” *dedouloutai*, is the third person singular, perfect indicative passive of *doulooo*. For those whose acquaintance with Greek is minimal, or non-existent, the following explanations of the Passive Voice, Indicative Mood, and Perfect Tense are given to more fully explain why 1 Corinthians 7:15 cannot be used to show the deserted may remarry upon the basis of desertion. These quotations are taken from *A Manual Grammar of the Greek NT* by H. E. Dana and Julius R. Mantey.

The Passive Voice:

“157. The passive voice is that use of the verb which indicates the subject as receiving the action. Its variations in use are determined by the medium through which the subject receives the action.”

The Indicative Mood:

“162. The indicative is the declarative mood, denoting a simple assertion of interrogation. It is the mood of certainty. It is significant of a simple fact, stated or inquired about. The thing which distinguishes the indicative is its independence of qualification or condition. It represents the verbal idea from the viewpoint of reality. This is the attitude of mind expressed, whether the assumed reality is an objective fact or not. ‘The indicative does state a thing as true, but does not guarantee the reality of the thing. In the nature of the case only the statement is under discussion.’ (R. 915). It is ‘primarily the mood of unqualified assertion or simple question of fact’ (Br. 73), and hence is by far the most frequently used.”

The Perfect Tense:

“182, The perfect is the tense of complete action. Its significance is the progress of an act or state to a point of culmination and the existence of its finished results. That is, it views action as a finished product. Gildersleeve significantly remarks that it ‘looks at both ends of the action’ (op. cit, p. 99). It implies a process, but views that process as having reached its consummation and existing in a finished state. The point of completion is always antecedent to the time implied or stated in connection with the use of the perfect. It might be graphically represented thus:

“183. In the indicative the perfect signifies as complete from the point of view of present time.

“184. The significance of the perfect tense in presenting action as having reached its termination and existing in its finished results lies at the basis of its uses. Emphasis, as indicated by the context or the meaning of the verb root, may be on either the completion of the action or on its finished results. This possible

difference in emphasis lies at the basis of the variation in the uses of the perfect tense.”

The significance of the Greek grammar used then is this: 1) The Passive Voice shows that the deserted spouse is the one who is not in the bondage; 2) The Indicative Mood shows there is a certainty that the deserted spouse is not in this bondage; and, 3) The Perfect Tense shows they are certainly not in this bondage now, because they were not in this bondage before. The Perfect Tense is the important point under consideration here. It describes a state as being true now, because it was true before, and will continue to be true afterwards.

The implications of the Greek grammar are that the brother or sister has not been, is not now, and shall never be “under bondage” in marriage as to require them to chase down an unbelieving mate (or any other mate for that matter) and remain with them, even against the wishes of the mate. If “under bondage” refers to the marriage bond, then the Christian has not been, is not now, and never will be subject to the marriage bond—can one believe this?

The connotations and denotations of the definitions show that bondage refers to slavery or servitude. It does not, and cannot in this context, refer to “the marriage bond.”

Desertion is not scriptural grounds for remarriage.

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Not Bound To What?

JOHN KRIVAK

“But if the unbeliever departs, let him leave. The brother or the sister is not bound in such cases, but God has called us in peace.”

1 Corinthians 7:15

There are so few passages of Scripture that inform our critical decisions regarding divorce, and subsequently the possibility of remarriage, that we must make every effort to correctly understand what God has written. There is a key text in 1 Corinthians 7 that is important for this issue. In v. 15, Paul declares: *“the brother or the sister is not bound in such cases.”* The question I hope to answer is: *not bound to what?*

Historically, Paul’s ruling here has sometimes been referred to as “the Pauline privilege.” I find this designation unfortunate and inaccurate. It insinuates that Jesus, who made strong declarations against divorce and remarriage (Matt. 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18), was so unyieldingly strict that Paul had to step in and grant the “privilege” that compassion might seem to demand. That is bad enough, but reading Jesus and Paul this way is plainly disharmonious. A sound approach to Biblical inspiration and authority rules out any such notion. All Scriptures—including the Gospels and the Epistles—are God-breathed and, understood rightly, suffer no contradiction.

The Organizing Feature of Chapter Seven

I made a breakthrough discovery while researching 1 Corinthians 7 at Harding University. This chapter was to be the focus of an Independent Study course in NT Greek under Professor John “Jack” McKinney. I wondered: how was this material organized and structured? As I read and reread, I began to notice that Paul seemed to repeat a certain principle so as to emphasize it. It is found four times, and each is expressed with slight variation:

- V. 7—“...each man has his own gift from God, one in this manner, and another in that.”
- V. 17—“Only as the Lord has assigned to each one, as God has called each, in this manner let him walk.”
- V. 20—“Each man must remain in that condition in which he was called.”
- V. 24—“Brethren, each one is to remain with God in that condition in which he was called.”

Several observations should be made. First, the notion of “**calling**” grounds the principle. When Paul speaks of Christians being “called,” he is referring to their conversion/baptism. When the Gospel is preached, every sinner listening is being summoned by God to salvation and reconciliation (see 2 Thess. 2:13-14). Some hear His call. Those who respond are the “called”—for many are called, but few are chosen (Matt. 22:14). The principle four-times stated supposes one’s social-location at his calling to be a place of safety. The celibate should remain celibate, and the married should remain married. The same will apply to social stations of slave or free. That is how God found you when He saved you, so you must be safe there—*remain in your condition at His calling!* There is implied danger to moving from that haven without God’s approval. Your particular “social location” that pertained at your conversion should even be considered to be your “gift” from God—both celibacy and marriage are regarded this way by Paul (as are slave-status and free-status).

Second, it is likely that Paul laid down this principle authoritatively because some Christians were attempting to abandon their “condition of calling” by jumping from that social-category to another. The married were tempted to jump back into single status, and the celibate sought marital status. However, Paul laid down the principle that Christians should not category-jump! Notice that two of the

above statements are positioned as book-ends around vs. 17-24, and a third falls right between them in this section of the chapter (v. 20). This section contains two examples of category-jumping: the attempt to transition from uncircumcised to circumcised (and vice versa!) and the attempt to trade slave-status for freedom. Initially, I thought circumcision and slavery were just examples abstracted from the real issue of category-jumping—marital status. I am, however, considering another possibility. These dynamics may have been concrete factors in actual Christian marriages. Were there at Corinth mixed-marriages between Jewish and Gentile Christians, or between Christians who were slave and free? Such mismatches obviously might motivate a jump out of the category in which he was first called.

Moreover, there is ample evidence, throughout the epistle, that members of this church were competing against each other in a bid for spiritual superiority. Pitted against each other were Jew and Gentile, male and female, celibate and married, slave and free. The Corinthians even made an issue out of who was baptized by whom (1:10ff.)! All of this may seem silly and irrelevant in our culture, but in that social and religious environment such distinctions might establish a “pecking order.” This provided one more motivation for category-jumping: doing so might yield you a superior status in church! Much of Paul’s first epistle to Corinth works to squelch the resulting divisions by disarming the plainly unspiritual strategies behind them.

Third, Paul’s repetition of the principle gives it a heavy weight of authority. The principle is binding by a ruling from the apostle. At least, it usually is. As it so happens, this principle is distributed among the many marital situations that Paul addresses in Chapter Seven. The whole chapter is organized under it. **Only—and this is key—Paul varies the authority that applies to each specific situation.** Sometimes, Paul will **ENFORCE** the principle with absolute authority, and Christians are allowed no recourse. However at other times, Paul will merely **ENCOURAGE** the principle so that category-jumping is discouraged, but not absolutely forbidden. In fact, in such cases discretion is left to the Christians to decide for themselves, whether to jump or not to jump. And on still other occasions, Paul will make an **EXCEPTION** to the principle, and in such cases he actually favors a category-jump. In

each case, Paul’s wisdom shines. He manages to redirect the misguided strategies that the Corinthians employed and—by careful application of one grand principle—guides them toward true spiritual gains in unity, faithfulness, and love.

Three Applications of the One Principle

On my own, I have worked out a diagram that shows how these three applications apply across the entire chapter. Instead of including my work, I encourage the reader to try to produce a diagram of his own. It will be a most instructive exercise. However, it might be helpful to at least demonstrate this organizing feature with three examples:

- **ENFORCEMENT:** In vs. 10-11, Paul insists that Christian spouses remain together; they are forbidden to category-jump back into the marriage-eligibility of a single person. If separation takes place, it must end with either reconciliation or unmarried celibacy, because it is binding upon them to remain in the condition in which God called them.
- **ENCOURAGEMENT:** In vs. 1-6, Paul strongly urges single Christians to remain single (as per the principle). Yet he admits that he is speaking by way of “concession” rather than by command (v. 6). The singles are encouraged to remain celibate, but they are free to marry.
- **EXCEPTION:** The case of single Christians began with *encouragement* of the governing principle, but Paul makes a wise *exception* to it (v. 2) in the case of those singles in danger of burning (with lust). Celibacy is a gift from God for some, but not everyone is constitutionally fit to accept that gift. Such not only *may* jump category into marital status; according to the apostle’s best counsel, they *should* do so! In such cases, an exception is made to an otherwise authoritative principle.

Applications to Married Christians:

Vs. 10-16

Paul here turns from discussion of situations involving celibacy to those involving married Christians. Two separate situations are addressed: the first is separation/divorce of an “equally-yoked” Christian couple; and the other situation features a Christian in a marriage to an unbeliever. Moreover, Paul declares that while Jesus spoke to the first situation

during His earthly ministry (and so, Paul kept silent on it), the second situation was different. Thus, Paul now addresses this particular matter, because Jesus previously had not addressed it. The difference in circumstances between the two situations will determine how Paul applies the principle to each.

Jesus had spoken to a Jewish context. He could normally assume that marriages were “equally yoked.” Both spouses in a Jewish marriage were bound (by covenant) to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (however, there were exceptions, more commonly outside of Israel in the Diaspora, Acts 16:1). Both were believers with a covenant-status that was shared and *homogenous*.

However, Paul engaged a very different, predominantly Gentile context. In Christian communities it sometimes happened that evangelism took just one spouse in a Gentile marriage; while the other remained unconverted. They were already married though, and that could not be undone! So one spouse was bound by covenant (the New Covenant) to God, and the other remained an unbelieving, unconverted pagan. The resulting covenant-status of husband and wife was mixed, *heterogeneous*. Had they not yet married when Paul baptized one of them, I believe he would have *enforced* his principle and forbade them to become “unequally yoked” (2 Cor. 6:14). He would have forbidden the marriage! But what to do now that the knot had already been tied? Paul faced this and addressed it himself, knowing that Jesus had not spoken to such situations (1 Cor. 7:12—“*I say, not the Lord*”).

Now, in v. 10, where homogeneous marriages are in focus, Paul recognized the direct applicability of Jesus’ prohibitions against divorce and remarriage as found in the Gospels (“*not I, but the Lord*”—v. 10). As they had applied to two Jewish spouses, they likewise applied now to two Christian spouses. Recognizing here the Lord’s authority, Paul **ENFORCES** the governing principle. The believing spouses are forbidden to revert to single status (and so be eligible for another marriage). They must either reconcile so as to repair the relational fracture, or they must remain otherwise unmarried in a separation that is at least extended, if not permanent. To break the enforced principle would result in the sin of adultery, as Rom. 7:2-3 makes perfectly clear.

When Spouses Are Not Both Christians

The situation shifts in vs. 12-16 to heterogeneous marriages. Paul begins by **ENFORCING** the principle—for husbands in v. 12 and for wives in v. 13. They are forbidden to abandon the marriage to an unbelieving spouse. The rationale is given in v. 14 for this decision: God honors such mixed-marriages as acceptable to Him. He has “sanctified” the unbelieving spouse, so he or she should not be considered “unclean” in any way that would invalidate the marriage. The children produced by that union are fine too, says God. So, as far as the Christian spouse is concerned, he or she should remain faithful to the unbeliever.

But what if the unbeliever takes matters in his or her own hands and abandons the Christian wife or husband? That is the issue taken up in vs. 15-16. This is where big dividends are paid by recognizing the role played by the “governing principle.” It is said that the test of a hypothesis is whether it fits the facts. The glove *should* fit perfectly the hand for which it was tailored. The key *should* unlatch the lock. The answer *should* satisfy the question. The hypothesis suggested here is this: *Paul makes an exception to his governing principle when a Christian is deserted by an unbelieving spouse*. And the perfect test of that is whether—or whether not—this answers the question we intend to answer: “*he or she is not bound*”—not bound to what? Our claim has been that the “governing principle” guides meanings across the entire chapter, as the reader carefully attends to whether it has been enforced, encouraged, or set aside for some exception. How close of a fit do we find with the passage on which we now focus?

Paul writes: “Yet if the unbeliever departs, let him leave; the brother or the sister is not bound in such cases....” Again, we ask: not under bondage to what? It should by now be abundantly clear what Paul means: not under bondage to the governing principle! The Christian is cleared to jump-category because the apostle is making **an exception** to it!

Our interpretation is confirmed by the perfect fit. The declaration of “not bound/not under bondage” creates a void, an ellipsis: not bound to what, Paul? What happens if we fill that void by inserting Paul’s principle? Will it fit? Will it yield good sense? Watch carefully: I will use the form of the principle (stated in v. 20) to complete Paul’s declaration: “***the brother or sister is not under bondage...to remain***

in that condition in which he was called.” If this is Paul’s message, it should be obvious that an EXCEPTION to the principle is being granted. The fit is perfect.

Besides making very good sense of this passage, confirmation for this interpretation is found in two additional ways. First, the notion of “calling” that was prominent in explicit statements of the principle suddenly pops up right after Paul declares “not under bondage”! Paul finishes his sentence like this: “...but God has *called* us to peace.” **The express mention of our “calling” may be heard as a very natural echo of the governing principle** (it was used in three of the four statements). It is as though that very thought is playing in the apostle’s thoughts and evidential hints of that fall into his written communication. And to hear Paul this way, when readers supply meaning from the surrounding context, is not adding to what he says, so as to “put words in Paul’s mouth”. Filling out an elliptical expression from larger context is part of normal communication and sound exegesis. And this explicit pointer to the governing principle is not the only confirmation that we are on the right track in our understanding.

Here is the second confirmation: in the very next verse (v. 16), Paul questions the confidence level of the Christian to save the marriage-forsaking pagan! Although the syntax is difficult, this probably expresses pessimism toward the prospect. And pessimism is what we would expect if, according to this interpretation, permission is being granted to jump-category, again becoming eligible to remarry. The marriage is a lost cause, and it is not likely to bear evangelistic fruit. If there really was any cause for optimism (as in 1 Peter 3:1ff.), a different approach might have been taken. But since there is no real reason to hope for any better outcome, Paul makes a

compassionate “exception” for a situation that clearly calls for it.

So, Paul is not declaring that the deserted Christian is “not bound” to the marriage, *per se*. More precisely, the apostle is granting an exception to a principle that, otherwise, would forbid a return to eligibility for a new marriage. In either interpretation, the outcome is the same. Yet it makes better sense and is much more helpful to accurately understand God’s Word.

Helpful Reflections

When Paul declares that “*God has called us in peace*” (v. 16), he is speaking “covenant language.” Peace is the joyous state achieved when relationships succeed in their intended purpose. God intended marriage to bless both spouses. You might say that marriage was made for people, and not people for marriage (Jesus said the same about the Sabbath,

Mk. 2:27). Unfortunately the relationship designed by God to produce beneficiaries sometimes produces victims instead. God seems to have determined as first importance to keep bonds of the marriage covenant intact (“*what God has joined together,*

let people not separate”) where that sacred relationship blesses both spouses (and their children). Such relationships fulfill God’s loving purpose.

But, that failing, God can be seen to protect victims. Jesus offered protection to victims of adulterous partners. Moses (Deut. 24:1ff.), in response to hardness of heart, gave those women who suffered divorce (as Hagar did, Gen. 16) a “bill of divorcement.” This document did not give permission to divorce; the rabbis held that, first and foremost, it gave the right of remarriage to those who had been failed by broken vows and failed commitments. Seen in this light, what some have called the “Pauline privilege” would be far better characterized as



the “Pauline protection.” Paul did for those victimized by abandonment just what Jesus had done for those cheated by spouses who defiled their marriage beds.

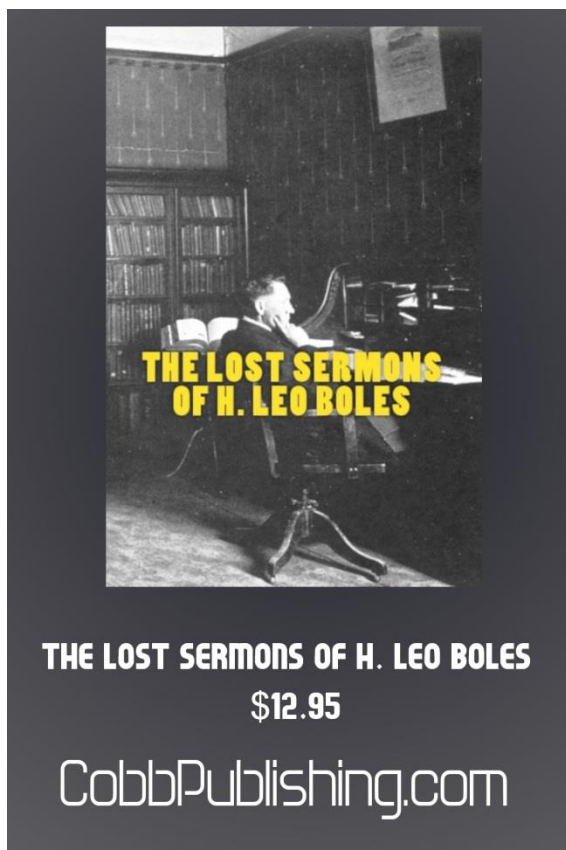
This calls for wisdom because, in our culture, victim-status is coveted for hurts, both real and imagined. The rabbis are said to have argued whether a man had grounds for divorce if his wife burned his food—ah, the poor man! Those who understand covenant-relating know that marriage is a relationship that can bear many relational failures (sins). Covenants rely on grace and extend forgiveness. But some sins, indeed, are serious enough to actually break the covenant. The damage they cause is extensive and they strike at the very foundation of the relationship. The damage, for example from adultery, simply is irreparable for most couples (I marvel at those couples that recover and reconcile from sins that typically are covenant-breakers).

Careful attention should be given to matters of Scriptural authority. As explained above, Paul did not in any way undercut the authority of Jesus, nor contradict Jesus. Some have held that the actual words of Jesus (the “red letter” verses) have universal reach, and thus Paul should be interpreted to say nothing different. There are two issues here, and we

should approach them separately. First, I thoroughly agree that revelation through Jesus carries a weight of final authority—“*God...spoke long ago...in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son*” (Heb. 1:1-2). His words will judge us—one and all—on the last day (John 12:48). I uphold the revelatory authority of Jesus fully. The second issue concerns the scope of Jesus’ revelation. Is that confined to His spoken words as recorded in the Gospels, the *ipsissima verba*, the “red-letter” verses? Or does the final revelation of Jesus—against which all are to be judged—include the entire scope of NT Scripture? The latter must be right. Jesus spoke not only through His own voice, but through the voices (and ink-pens) of His authorized spokesmen (Luke 10:16). All Scripture is God-breathed! That means that the marriage-message of Jesus to “equally-yoked” couples should not be played off against His marriage-message (through Paul) to heterogeneous marriages. Each situation receives appropriately different treatment—and all of that is included in our Lord’s unsurpassable revelation.

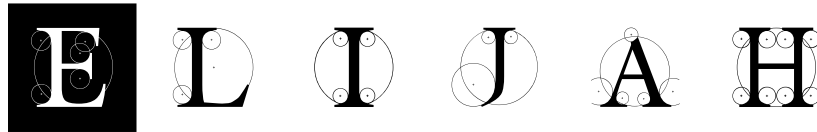
The Bible, in but few verses, gives us sufficient instruction to deal with issues of marriage, divorce, and remarriage. I find the nuanced treatment of balanced and unbalanced covenant arrangements in marriage helpful. A young Christian sister in the church that baptized me was divorced by her unbelieving husband, who wanted her to share a sinful way of life. She did all she could to hold the marriage together. It broke, and she took advantage of the exception Paul made to the requirement of remaining in that condition in which she had been called to Jesus. She later married a preacher, and found the peace to which God had called her. To fill out the scanty passages that deal with such relational issues, I have also found it helpful to explore and study what the Bible teaches about covenant-relating. Both Christianity and marriage are covenants, and the same “nuts-n-bolts” work in both—they are, in fact, co-instructive (Eph. 5:21ff.).¹ Finally, we as people of the Book will better navigate the troubled waters of marriage issues if we keep in mind the twin objectives of God: preserving the bonds of healthy and blessed marriage intact, and protecting those who are made victims in destructive relationships.

¹ See my article “The ‘Nuts-N-Bolts’ of Covenant Relating” in Vol. 1, Issue 4 of *The Quarterly*, pp. 17-20.





from the Life of



MICHAEL SHANK

Some Good Advice

Forget each kindness that you do as soon as you have done it.

Forget the praise that falls to you the moment you have won it.

Forget the slander that you hear before you can repeat it.

Forget each slight, each spite, each sneer, whenever you may meet it.

Remember every promise made and keep it to the letter.

Remember those who lend you aid and be a grateful debtor.

Remember all the happiness that comes your way in living.

Forget each worry and distress; be hopeful and forgiving.

Remember good, remember truth, remember heaven is above you.

And you will find, through age and youth, that many will love you.

Some Humorous Advice:

We could all save ourselves a lot of words if we'd only remember that people rarely take advice unless they have to pay for it. The trouble with good advice is that it usually interferes with your plans.

Good advice is what your own kids disregard but save to give to their kids. Stuff like:

- Never have more children than you have car windows.

- Never loan your car to someone to whom you have given birth.
- Seize the moment. Remember all those women on the Titanic who waved off the dessert cart.
- Never be in a hurry to terminate a marriage. Remember, you may need this man or woman someday to finish a sentence.

How About some Bible Advice?

About 10 days ago, a dear brother reminded me about the experiences of Joshua, and encouraged me to consider preaching about him; so I took that advice, and decided that Elijah would be an excellent topic for today's lesson. (See how well I listen and take advice?)

Now you might be thinking that Elijah sounds like a "boring" topic, but let me tell you something; Elijah is anything but boring. On the contrary, Elijah is as interesting a character as you'll find in the Bible. And if we take the time to look at his experiences, we can get some good advice about life.

A Brief Bio

Let's start with a little background on Elijah. He lived in the northern kingdom of Israel during the ninth century B.C., during the reign of Ahab and Jezebel. Elijah was a Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead (1 Kings 17:1), but scholars are unsure where this area was. He worked miracles, such as restoring a dead boy to life. He opposed the worship of the gods Baal and Astarte. During a contest with the prophets of Baal at Mount Carmel, he called down fire from heaven to show God's power to the fence-

straddling people. After the slaying of the priests of Baal he fled to Mount Horeb (Sinai) where God commanded him to foment a revolt in Israel.

Sometime after he anointed Elisha to be his successor, a fiery chariot appeared and he was taken to heaven by a whirlwind. He is one of only two men in the Bible that didn't taste of death (the other being Enoch). John's ministry is compared to the work of Elijah in Matthew 11:14. And Elijah appears alongside our Lord Jesus at His transfiguration; whereby Moses represented the Law, and Elijah represented the Prophets (Matt. 17:3).

What a fascinating life!

The Widow's Son

1 Kings 17:17-24

One of the first things that everyone recognizes is that Elijah obeyed God without question. And here's the first thing to learn; in this Bible account, who did Elijah go to first when he had a problem? God. And notice how persistent he was – v. 21 says he entreated God three times over this boy's life. And God heard the voice of Elijah.

Friend, God hears the prayers of the righteous!

Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth (John 9:31).

Whoa, whoa – wait a minute – I commit sin, you mean God doesn't hear me? No no – this is referring to the alien sinner. Christians commit sin. 1 John Chapter 1 says that if we as Christians say we do not sin, we lie, and the truth is not in us. No, he is speaking of the alien sinner. What is an alien sinner? That's someone who is alien, foreign, unknown, unrecognizable to God, because they haven't obeyed God's instructions on how to come to Him through Christ.

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man can cometh unto the father but by me" (John 14:6).

How do you come unto the father by Christ? You've got to get into Christ! Listen, Jesus is the ark of God; and in Noah's day, God saw you as either in the ark, or out of the ark; obey God by getting inside the ark, God will hear you, and God will save you. If you were in the ark, your obedience to His instruction made you known to Him; you were no

longer an alien; if you were outside of the ark, you were an alien, unknown to him, and therefore unheard by him.

Now follow me...you and I live under the Christian dispensation. Jesus today is the ark of old; obey God and get into Jesus Christ—in the ark; God will hear you, and God will save you. If you are in Christ, your obedience to His instruction has made you known to Him; you are no longer an alien. That is why John said that God does not hear sinners (alien sinners); but if any man be a worshipper of God, and DOETH HIS WILL – there it is – what's His will? "I am the way, the truth, the life, no man cometh unto the father but by me." Jesus Christ, the ark of salvation

Here's Christian Lesson #1: Elijah's example, in this account, encourages you and I to understand that God hears and answers the prayers of the *obedient*, but the blessings of prayer are contingent upon God's instruction to access Him, and today, that is *only through Jesus Christ*.

Praying like Elijah requires focus and concentration. Do you ever find yourself mentally drifting when you pray? I do, and it frustrates me to no end! I wish I could pray like my dog watches meat! We've got a chocolate lab named Gauge; when you get a piece of meat in your hand, Gauge acquires the focus and concentration of a laser; anywhere that meat moves, his eyes are right there; he has no other thought, no other concerns, no other interests at that moment. Oh I wish I could develop that type of concentration when I pray!

If you "drift" when you pray, start saying your prayers out loud, which will help you focus, and it'll help you to keep from "drifting" so much.

Contest At Mt. Carmel

1 Kings 18:20-46

What do we take from this Bible story?

Here's Christian Lesson #2: When you stand on God's word, when you stand for what is right, when you stand on the name of God, He will deliver on the faith that you've put into Him!

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him (Heb. 11:6).

One night a house caught fire in Wilmington, Delaware, and a 6-year old boy was forced to flee to the roof. The father stood on the ground below with outstretched arms, calling to his son, “Jump! I’ll catch you.” He knew the boy had to jump to save his life. All the boy could see, however, was flame, smoke, and blackness. As you can imagine, he was afraid to leave the roof. His father kept yelling: “Jump! I will catch you.” But the boy protested, “Daddy, I can’t see you.” The father replied, “But I can see you and that’s all that matters.”

Sound of Silence

1 Kings 19:11-18

Friend, when you are all alone, and searching for God—when it seems as though God has forsaken you—remember the desperation of Elijah, being alone, fearing for his life, and pent up in a cave, ready to die. Remember that God came to his rescue, and revealed that he had 7,000 faithful men in ready reserve for his aid.

To point out how lonely people can be, there was an ad in a Kansas City newspaper back in 1992. It read, “I will listen to you talk for 30 minutes without comment for \$5.00.” Sounds like a hoax, doesn’t it? But the person was serious. Did anybody call? You bet. It only took 4 hours before the person was receiving 20 calls a day! The pain of loneliness was so sharp that some were willing to try anything for a half hour of companionship.

Here’s Christian Lesson #3: Friend, you are not alone, you just don’t realize the people that God has in reserve for you; ready to serve, aid, strengthen, and encourage you.

Chariot and the Whirlwind

2 Kings 2:9-12

B. Elijah didn’t taste the common death of man; he was literally and truly translated into the kingdom of Heaven. There’s no room here for conjecture, for we are told that Elijah went up into heaven in the sure testimony of the Scriptures.

And herein lies the key component to this message today, from the life of Elijah: you too can be translated, and escape death!

You say, “Mike, what in the world do you mean?”

Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence (Colossians 1:12-18).

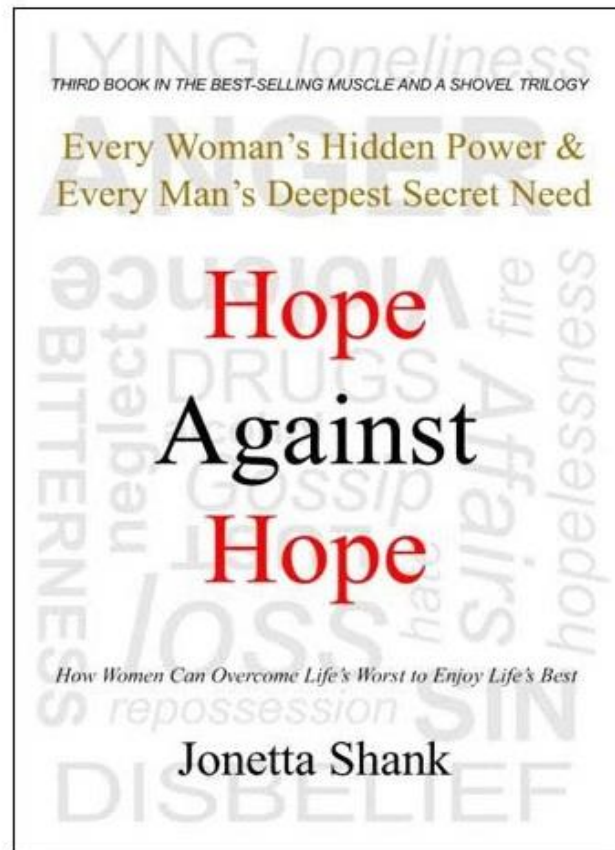
When you confess Christ and are baptized into Christ, God *translates* you into the kingdom of His Son, the church of Christ. You are taken into the kingdom by the whirlwind of baptism; translated into the kingdom of Christ. And if you remain faithful unto death, Jesus says that you will escape the second death, which is what I’m talking about. What is the second death? Revelation 20:14 says, “And death and hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.”

Conclusion

Four lessons can be easily seen in the life of this great man called Elijah:

1. The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers;
2. When you stand on God’s word; when you stand for what is right; when you stand on the name of God, He will deliver on His promises through faith.
3. Friend, you are not alone; you just don’t realize the people that God has in reserve, ready to serve and encourage you.
4. God wishes to translate you into the kingdom of his Son, if you will only obey him.

Marital Struggles?



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A HELPING HAND

and

Individual Responsibility

JIM MITCHELL

To the Christians in Rome, Paul wrote –

Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality (Rom. 12:10-13).

Paul reminded the Christians in Thessalonica that –

...even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat. For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busybodies. Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread. But as for you, brethren, do not grow weary in doing good (2 Thess. 3:10-13).

In his first letter to Timothy, within the topic of caring for widows, Paul stated –

...if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” (I Tim. 5:8).

While Christians have been, historically, the most benevolent people on the face of the earth,

and while this nation has been more giving than any other on the planet, our society has, for decades, become more and more of an “entitlement” culture. I remember when, in the sixth grade, a fellow classmate (whose family was receiving reparation from the US Government which would continue for that family for every generation) stated that he was neither planning on going to college nor pursuing any type of career when he became an adult since the government would take care of him for the rest of his life. Giving a hand out instead of a hand up does indeed stifle one’s incentive to use talents and abilities to benefit those around them.

In the quotations above from the inspired writings of Paul, Christians are encouraged to help with “*the needs of the saints*” and be “*given to hospitality*,” while at the same time making sure that they do not fall into the category of “*not working at all*” since Christians are challenged to “*provide*” for their own. Scripture teaches us to have both a benevolent spirit about us as well as to be as industrious as we possibly can in our work. Perhaps the best passage of all to deal with both of the above concepts is what Paul wrote to the congregations in the province of Galatia. “*Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ*” (Gal. 6:2). “*But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For each one shall bear his own load*” (Gal. 6:4-5).

The adage, “if you give a man a fish you feed him for a day, if you teach him to fish you feed him for a lifetime” can be traced back at least to *Mrs. Dymond*, a novel published in 1885 by Anne Isabella Thackeray Ritche (1837-1919), though it

appeared in slightly different form. The principle is valid, but can be pushed aside or convoluted. After the miraculous feeding of the 5,000 by the Sea of Galilee, the crowd followed Jesus, not because of the truths he taught, but because of the meal they had received. Jesus reprimanded them for their action.

“Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him” (John 6:26, 27).

From a spiritual perspective, we often stress the importance of letting the non-Christian read out of the Bible for himself/herself rather than telling them what passages say. Going beyond the step of sharing the Gospel by helping others read God’s word for themselves, we need to help oth-

ers learn how to study on their own and not rely on what others tell them. There will always be challenging things to learn and yet, whenever people become accustomed to waiting to be fed rather than take the initiative on their own to read, study, learn, and apply, the same problem will exist which is dealt with in Hebrews chapter 5. There were things which were “hard to explain” to the recipients of Hebrews, since they had

...become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food (Heb. 5:11-12).

Let’s do whatever we can to keep the incentive of individual responsibility alive and growing. It is much needed in the religious world in which we live. Please also keep in mind that this principle applies to many other areas of society.

BOOKS BY ANDREW D. ERWIN

Each One Reach One – 15.⁹⁵

Select Studies in Restoration History – 12.⁹⁵

“You’ve Been A Good Brother, Wille.” The Life and Sermons of W.A. Bradfield – 12.⁹⁵

*Truth Plain and Simple
& Other Gospel Sermons – 14.⁹⁵*

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HUMOR

and the Human Soul

WILLIAM HOWARD

We remember when our first child laughed for the first time. He was around four months old. It was on a Sunday morning. He had been fed and was placed on our bed. He was on his back and did what babies do – he observed everything around him. We were busy getting ready when his mother came into the room and into his view. She had pink curlers in her hair. He did not know what curlers were. He had no idea why they were there. When he caught sight of his mamma with pink things on her head he laughed. He laughed. Who taught him to do that? He could not crawl nor form a single word, but he laughed. How could he know what humor is? No one was trying to make him laugh, he just did. It was uncontrollable, and it raised an enormous question. How was he able to see something, process it as odd or out of place, discover it as funny and respond with a laugh? That is a complex set of mounting, progressive thoughts. There can be only one conclusion. A sense of humor is innate.

Laughter is a part of being human. It is a part of what it means to be created in the image of God. God gave us numerous abilities that cannot be found anywhere else in the natural world. We have a conscience and can choose right or wrong. We can reason. We are able to solve problems effectively. We are creative. We have emotions. We can laugh.

Laughter is a developmental marker for babies. Babies learn to talk. They learn to crawl. They learn to walk (May I add at this point that if you or your spouse are not witnessing these enormous moments in your child's life you must rethink your parenting). Laughter is different. It is not learned but arrives naturally as a baby develops. It is a conclusive response from thinking done in a split-second of time with the outward result of laughter. Though he had

only four months of observing the world and only four months of development from birth he saw humor. Behind those wide eyes he was thinking, processing everything and naturally came to the concept of the absurd (his knew his mamma was not supposed to have pink things on her head).

It is a delight to see small children laugh. Adults do not usually laugh so hard so often. Toddlers can go into an uncontrollable roll of laughter and it is wonderful. But why is it wonderful? There is something expressed, shared, understood and contagious in humor. Its existence is no accident. Evolution did not bring the recognition of humor as something necessary to life or an adaptation to survival. Animals do not need a sense of humor to live from day to day. Yet it exists in mankind and as usual evolution has no answer – this is yet another mystery unsolved by atheists. Though the text does not say it I am sure Adam and Eve enjoyed laughing together in the garden, then laughing together with their children.

Psalm 139:14 I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well.

There were many occasions when growing up I would hear my aunts and uncles talking with older relatives. Those generations would reminisce and speak of times, peoples, places and events. Some stories were tragic. Some were unbelievable – and I do mean unbelievable in that I do not believe them still. The one thing I always enjoyed was their conversations always contained wit. I noticed this on both sides of the family. My mother's and my father's side did the same thing. The conversations

were mixed with dry wit, absurdities, exaggerated impersonations, and just out-and-out fun. Both sides had their own unique qualities but were doing the same thing in different styles. We kids loved witnessing this and shared with each other what we heard. We were the spectators, but it was not for us they were doing this. They were not performing. They were having a conversation, an activity that was quite elaborate in that there were many moving parts to it, including humor.

Humor seemed second nature to them. If they talked about a fox hunt, buying a washer, or even a hospital stay they could subtly modify or modulate the humor deftly as needed. These were uncomplicated people but their conversations revealed the bewildering intricacies of the human mind. In their conversations were the elements of logic, psychology, family relationships, social skills and something quite enigmatic. On the surface it would appear to be nothing more than a simple conversation. But there was nothing simple about it. This went beyond the bounds of grammatical rules (which were ignored anyway). Their stories, discussions, quips and retorts bore a complex set of other rules. Those rules were unwritten. No one could recite them. Yet everyone knew them. How is this even possible? It is so natural that few take the time to think about it.

What we kids witnessed is found everywhere there are people. It is the process of elaborate communication paired with instantaneous interpretation. Their wit brought it to a much higher level of sophistication. This was not scripted and rehearsed. This was pure spontaneity – remark, response, and repartee. It is a highly structured and multifaceted system of communication honed and nuanced to the level of an art form, yet extraordinarily practical and effective. They could communicate without saying anything. The rules and the vocabulary went beyond the limits of words. They could convey a thought which ran counter to what they just said. In an instant they could change the context or add another meaning to a statement by vocal inflection, a gesture, the tilt of the head, a look, or just a pause. The

words spoken and the actual meaning beyond those words could be two very different things, but everyone understood. There was communication on many levels.

Why did they do it this way? They could have used words by a direct route, literal and straightforward, and conveyed exactly what they wanted. But they chose a method whereby messages could be sent in a mix of wordplay, bearing, and wit. The mind was in play. I realize not everyone has the same sense or depth of humor, but that does not matter. At one level or another it exists in the human soul. We have all seen humor used in identical ways

by many people in various situations and places. It appears to be universally used, accepted, and in many cases anticipated. Who taught people to do this and why?

Every action we take exhibits our absolute condition: we are created beings in the likeness of God. Even the most common things we do are astonishing if fully considered and not taken for granted. It is not enough to thoughtlessly accept some evolution made-to-order story.

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The universal abilities of the human mind are unexplainable except that we are all made of a surprising substance and that from God. The workings of the mind are much too intricate, powerful and mysterious to bypass what it all means. It is a conclusion usually ignored. A simple conversation finds spontaneous humor created out of thin air in an impromptu, highly polished game between minds. That can only be the product of a higher Mind. The evidence of God existed in their conversations.

Humor is often typified as the shallow product of a simple, carefree time. It may also be thought needless or juvenile and is only the silly invention of a giddy mind lacking the weightier elements of life and responsibility. Sometimes (or even many times) that may be true. But wit is also connected to deep emotion and is seen in moments of extraordinary circumstances. Humor is part of the complex mixture that composes the intricacies of the human spirit. Humor is versatile, functional and, as odd as it may seem, practical. Humor can easily voice trage-

dy and, depending on its use, is not out of place. During terrible circumstances people can joke about their situation to laugh and weep, seeing humor and sadness simultaneously. Laughter can be contagious and uplifting. It can be a help and a healer. In tragic times a rational, sentient mind may actively search for what is funny. How extraordinary it is. A person occupied by sorrow may find or even create humor. This is not seeking a laugh quick and cheap, but something intensely deeper.

A friend was dying from an incurable form of cancer. He was told he had two months to live (he would die within six weeks). I was asked to be with him and watch him for an afternoon. On this day his speech is slurred, he is unable to walk by himself, he often phases in and out of sleep and he cannot be left alone. He is quiet as we sit in his living room. Sometimes he speaks, and I can just make out what he is saying. Sometimes I can't understand him at all. We have short interspersed conversations followed by periods of deep silence. He knows what the doctors have estimated. He knows this cancer will kill him. He has no misgivings or unrealistic expectations. He knows he is likely to die inside of two months. In this quiet afternoon with a dying friend, he did something I did not expect. In slow deliberate words he formed a joke around his condition. That was the last thing he told me that day. That was the last thing he would ever tell me. In a matter of a few days afterward the disease escalated and took his speech and coherency. Those last words to me were an expression of humor. It concerned the fact that he knew he would die soon. It was delivered in his labored speech and in the limited time he had left. Should I laugh? Should I weep? How could he see his situation in a joke? I continue to be amazed at the profundity of the human soul. There is a complexity and resilience within us which is capable of handling most anything on this earth. There is the desire and ability to search for making the best of any given situation. He was not bitter nor resentful. He was certainly not avoiding reality. We had talked frankly about his cancer. This was a release for grief and loss. In his pain he could make a joke about his death while knowing it

approached all too quickly. In that quiet moment, in that struggle to speak there was something beautiful. Here was something courageous, resolute, and truly unsinkable.

These last words uncovered something. Here was a human soul at the end of this life communicating to another human soul. He expressed the message with the edge of cleverness. He was offering his farewell. He was saying goodbye to a friend. But he said it in a profound way. The words revealed the mind, soul, and character. They reveal his fighting back the pain with nobility. His body could be broken but he still possessed something that was untouched. My emotions were mixed in abundance: grief combined with joy, loss, sympathy, love, compassion, and the tears of a chapter closing in my own life. It was with biting humor he said his goodbye. And it is with tears that I still admire it.

Hardship shows the character. It brings out the mettle and the spirit deep inside. Trauma, tragedy, and catastrophe bring bereavement. Grief has a process and must process. The greater the sorrow the greater will be the necessary course for healing. Bitter times may bring bitter words. But even bitter words can be the product of a mind expressing sorrow through wit. It is an effort in healing and is part of the process of grief.

Beginning in Job chapter three Job speaks from his misery. His words are bitter, but it is how he says it that displays something beyond bereavement. Job is truly downtrodden, but even in this he speaks in poetic lines. The lines are filled with imagery and word play. They are intelligent and clever. At times he speaks matter-of-factly of things present and common in his day. But he also freely employs hyperbole and simile along with unattainable demands and absurdities. It reveals not only his emotionally shattered state but the mind and soul of Job.

Job's emotions were so overwhelmed he wished he had not lived to see this point in his life. He now preferred the impossible – not to have lived at all. Job would rather have died as an infant than to face this tragedy. Even though his wishes were not realis-

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tic he says in Job 10:19, **“I would have been as though I had not been...”** He wished he had died early to avoid this latter anguish. But his words found a very clever way to express this. The idea he could exist in the condition of nonexistence is, of course, logically absurd. In fact, these words match his completely futile desire of erasing his whole life. What extraordinary juxtaposition and contrast! In the midst of overwhelming difficulty, Job phrased his thoughts in such a way that his message is well understood, but humor and cleverness amplify the sense of emotion. Job had an extraordinary capacity to articulate his pain with wordplay even though no one was in the mood neither to be amused nor take time to notice and appreciate it. He meant what he said. A nonexistent person cannot experience pain. If his life contained this level of hardship, he would opt to forego the whole thing – even the non-painful parts. But why did he say it the way he did? It was not a joke tossed out to get a laugh. It was a high expression of profound anguish. This was a soul in an emotional free fall. Job was a noble being. When everything he had was taken away Job was still a noble being, but now in suffering. His body was covered in boils but his words reveal the man inside. Satan could inflict pain on Job, but he could not crush his spirit. Job’s words show him to be laid low, but his sharp wit and wordplay proved he was not destroyed. Satan’s expected results failed since Job did not falter. He saw in Job what he himself lacked: an irrepressible spirit steadfast in the face of calamity. Satan is never steadfast.

It was the spring of the year and my mother was in hospice care. She was the sole caregiver for my dad, so he was now with me. My mother was within days of her death and my father, who suffers from moments of confusion and forgetfulness, understood what was happening to her while forgetting my relationship as son to them both. He too was under a great amount of stress and this complicated his confusion. On a particular night he began to tell me things about her as though I were a complete stranger. He wanted to tell me about the lady in the hospital. He described their life together and I wept. With each sentence it became worse. Every sentence seemed to be perfectly timed to maximize the emotional impact. I went from weeping to wailing uncontrollably. And he would not stop. I do not know what my dad thought of this stranger who was so emotional about his wife. Every word he said mag-

nified everything before it. This effect I called anti-comedy - which is a real term but is not usually applied like this, but this is more accurate. Comedy brings laughter. This was anticomedy. Instead of laughter my dad calmly stood in front of me and moved me to sorrow escalating to inconsolability with every word. It was delivered one on one in a very composed, matter-of-fact way. I was overpowered by grief. He seemed to think nothing of it or even the effect it was having on me. He was nonstop and unrelenting. It became so strong I could not take much more. I would have been flattened emotionally. I found enough composure and enough of a pause to tell him it was time for bed. He went to bed and thus, it ended. Actually, I appreciated it. Though unintentional on his part it was very cathartic. It did me good to have that emotional release, but I also saw something else. I could see immediately the tragedy and the humor in this strange episode. How odd it is. We can have an incorporation of simultaneous perspectives and emotions. That is the human condition. We are multifaceted and intricate creations. Here too is beauty. Hidden inside this pitiable situation is something quite funny but it takes the image of God to detect it. Even here is something recognized and appreciated as absurd and comical.

The human soul is remarkably resilient and powerful (mostly underestimated). We are designed and formed by God. He made us in his image and that is no small matter. He created us to function on the earth and then for eternity. Why would God create us to live and not give us the means to enjoy life? Why would He place us in a world with potential pain, loss and tragedy and not give us the means to emotionally cope and heal? He gave us the capacity both to enjoy living and to conquer pain. Humor can be used in both extremes. While humor is not the singular means of healing or expressing ourselves, it is remarkably flexible for numerous emotional states. Humor may express heartache perfectly to become a sign of a soul intact attempting to lift up above the ashes and ruin. Job is utterly exhausted emotionally. This verse articulates pain. Using humor voicing tragedy intensifies that expression and reveals a spirit intact.

Unsung Heroes:
THE LAME BEGGAR
and the Five ‘Deacons’

TRAVIS ANDERSON

Introduction

We are looking at different characters from Scripture that we either tend to skip over or only look at from a certain point of view. We are going to keep looking for different lessons we can learn from them than what we normally discuss.

In this article, we will be considering a man whose name is never given, and five men whose names are just about all we know about them.

The Lame Beggar (Acts 3:1-10)

Luke (the writer of the book of Acts) was a physician and describes this specific beggar as being lame, and specifically relates the issue to his feet. From birth, it appears something in his feet was so deformed or non-existent that he had never walked.

When we think of a ‘man,’ we normally think of someone at least 20 years old. However, in Jewish culture it would normally have meant at least 40 years old.

His only livelihood was the generosity of others. As verse 10 points out, he was pretty regular fixture here at the temple.

He was a professional beggar. When I hear that term, I think of those today who abuse the system and take advantage of the generosity of others. Dozens of news stories on TV have been devoted to exposing those who scam people under the guise of begging, and those are just the ones in big cities who get caught. But in this case, he was a professional because he had no other choice.

He would not have survived without the kindness of others. So he would have naturally become quite good at identifying the best spots to position himself, and the type of people most likely to give. This is evident by where he was in this story: by the temple.

Jews were required, under the Law of Moses, to give alms. Numerous places in the Old Testament taught that giving to the needy was a necessary part

of fulfilling the Law of Moses (see also Matthew 6:1-4). Acts 10 points out three different times (verses 2, 4, and 31) that Cornelius, a Gentile, gave alms as a part of what made him special in the eyes of God. Paul mentions giving alms in Acts 24 in his defense before King Felix as being a part of what his life consisted of after his conversion to Christianity. In fact, the command to give alms is rarely seen in the New Testament because it was a given that people were already doing it, especially Jews. It was more the manner in which they did it that Christ addressed.

I say all that to say this is why the beggar was at the temple: he knew that Jews were required to help the needy and he knew he fit that description since he couldn’t survive on his own. Of course, the Roman government hadn’t created a giant welfare program for people like him.

Why he chose Peter and John (for they had little money and would not have been dressed in fancy expensive clothes) I don’t know, but I’m pretty sure he was glad he did.

The part we normally focus on is verse 6.

Silver and gold, I don’t have. But what I do have, I give to you. I say to you in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.

We use this verse to show that God offers us spiritual blessings, not necessarily physical ones. The gospel offers prosperity, not in wealth and riches, but in blessings and salvation.

Let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith (Gal. 6:10).

Instead of giving him something just to get him through the day, the apostles gave him something that changed his identity: he went from being the

lame man to the *formally* lame man who danced about praising God.

Instead of giving him good advice, he gave him the Good News about Jesus.

Instead of telling him what he should do, he told him what Jesus had already done for him.

Two other lessons

First, most people will be truly grateful for the things we do for them, so we shouldn't grow weary in our doing good for others (see Gal. 6:9; 2 Thes. 3:13). In the very temple this lame man had begged for years outside the gate, he is now in the middle of it dancing and praising God. Imagine how grateful he would have been! And just because people's gratitude is not expressed directly to us doesn't mean they aren't grateful. Keep up your good deeds to others, even if it seems like no one is grateful, for you never know what impact you may have just had on a lost soul!

Second, the way the Good News of Jesus Christ affects our lives in a visible way will provide opportunities for the cause of Christ. If you read the rest of Acts 3, you will find that the formerly lame man followed Peter and John. Peter took the opportunity of people marveling at this miracle—this lame man now walking and leaping—to talk about the power of God and need for repentance to be found a faithful child of God and to have sins forgiven (see also Col. 4:5-6).

When we have the sort of joy this man did, as a result of the life-changing message of Christ to us, the opportunities will present themselves to share that Good News with others.

The Five 'Deacons' (Acts 6:1-7)

We commonly hear these men in this passage referred to as deacons, but that word is nowhere here in the text. However, the Greek noun *diakonos* is used in Acts 6:1 ("ministration"), and the verb *diakoneo* ("serve") is used in Acts 6:2. This is the same root work that is translated *deacon* in Phil. 1:1, and 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

The word for deacon simply means servant, and that is what these men were. There were five requirements given for these servants:

1. They had to be believers
2. Men
3. Well respected
4. Full of the Holy Spirit
5. Full of Wisdom

They chose seven in part because seven was the typical number of men in that time to handle public business in a Jewish city, a city council if you would. We are pretty familiar with two of these men (Philip and Stephen) but not the other five. There were Greeks (as indicated by their names), who were probably Hellenists, meaning they were Jews, but had grown up in the Greek culture and spoke Greek.

The Apostles were mostly Hebrews, but chose Hellenists for this job. Why? Because as wise leaders, they understood that the easiest way for Hellenists to be ministered to was for it be done some of their own. These five are clearly unsung heroes, because

while we never see their name come up in Scripture again (as opposed to Stephen and Phillip), we know the result of this groups labor: the blessing of God continued and increased!

1. The church was unified (pleased the whole gathering v5)
2. The church grew even more (v7)
3. The church continued to spread (v8)

The Situation (1-4)

The Apostles are informed that some of the Hellenist (Greek-speaking Jews) widows are being left out when alms are being given to help the needy. It seems they were being made to feel like outsiders. If the Apostles had not stepped in and addressed this situation, it would have severely damaged the church's ability to reach the lost in the infant stages of its establishment.

Of all the people in ancient times, widows might have had the roughest. Property and wealth was passed from father to son so that the widow never

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had any wealth of her own and was completely dependent on her sons for support. All it took was one selfish son and a widow would have literally no one to look to for the necessities of life. Or there may not have been much wealth to pass on anyways and the son couldn't care for his mother. While this discrimination seems unchristian, it may have just been that the language or class barriers were difficult to overcome and many were just getting overlooked. Regardless of why, it was happening and something needed to be done about it!

The church was experiencing growing pains that made it difficult for the Apostles to look after everyone. The Apostles realized that they were human and could not do everything on their own. Because of the growth, they were being limited in how much they could teach others because they were caring for those who had already been taught. The rapid growth was actually stunting their ability to continue to grow. They did not think they were above 'waiting tables,' but they knew that was not what Christ had called them to focus on: they were called to be fishers of men. So instead of trying to do both their specific work and the work that took seven more men to accomplish, they simply found seven other men to do the extra work (see also Romans 12:3-8).

Lessons from these Five

Not only should we help others when we see the need (From the Lame man) but we should also seek out ways to help people in small ways. Greatness is determined by servanthood. "If any man desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all" Mark 9:35. Christ personified this in his life and death: he gave everything he could to everyone in need. An attitude of service brings true greatness to God's Kingdom.

When problems come, they give us an opportunity to express our love. These men were not too good for the job asked of them.

The widows were not too prideful to seek the help the needed. And as they sought the help, they helped the rest of the Christians fulfill the law of Christ, which is to help one another (Gal. 6:1-3).

When people are happy and willing to roll up their sleeves and do the work that needs to be done, good things tend to follow. This may have seemed small and trivial to some, but you better believe it wasn't small or trivial to those widows. And it wasn't small or trivial to the Apostles who could now go back to focusing on winning more souls.

Which means it wasn't small or trivial in the eyes of God!

CONCLUSION:

In these two short glimpses into life in the infant church (these two stories combined take up less than 20 verses), we see many great things to learn from these two scenarios.

1. Helping the needy is part of serving God.
2. Helping the needy can often be a door to showing them Christ.
3. Being willing to ask for help allows others to serve.

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4. We have a message that grants life everlasting, and doing the work that may seem trivial opens doors not just for us, but for others to spread that message to those who need it.

5. Small tasks are rarely small tasks in the eyes of those who receive them.

6. Servanthood was exemplified by Jesus and is expected of us.

Today, take a moment and think about those things and other points from these two passages. Which one is your weakest? Focus on that one for the next month and work to make it your strongest. Maybe one of these is non-existent in your life. Work this week to make it evident in your life.

Maybe your spiritual health is good in all of these areas. When is the last time you shared the message that Peter shared with the Lame Man? Obviously someone loved you enough to share it with you. When is the last time you have loved someone enough to share it with them?

TABERNACLE SHADOWS

MARK MCWHORTER

There are many shadows, types and figures involved in the Brazen Altar of the Tabernacle. It was the largest piece of furniture in the Tabernacle. This article will look further at the Altar.

The Compass

The compass was a projection all the way around the Brazen Altar. There is no definite way to know exactly what its purpose was. It may have enabled the priest to work conveniently at the top. This seems to be supported by Leviticus 9:22, where it is said Aaron “came down” from the Altar. This would associate it with the ‘lifting up’ that Christ stated would happen to him, (John 3:14).

There were no steps on the Altar. Steps to an altar were prohibited by God, (Exodus 20:26). The ledge would also hold the utensils used at the Altar in manipulating the sacrifice and cleaning the Altar.

This compass would allow everyone in the Court to see the priest as the priest placed the sacrifice on the Altar. People standing on the ground would look up to see the priest. Again, Jesus was raised up in his crucifixion. He willingly placed himself to be crucified.

Every Christian is a priest. When confessing each Christian places himself / herself on the Altar. All in the Court see this confession. (This will be discussed further later.)

Internal Grating

The internal grating that held the sacrifice was 1.5 cubits high. This was the same height as the Ark of the Covenant and the Table of Shewbread.

This shows there is an equality of importance of a) God’s throne of mercy and grace, b) the sacrifice needed for man to be reconciled to God, and c) the

food (the Truth of the Word) from God necessary for priests to live. They are all on the same level.

“Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other” (Psalm 85:10).

With the grating being inside the Altar and not just on top, it gives a picture that fiery purification of sin is an internal action. Sin is not on the surface. It is in the heart of man, (Galatians 5:24-25 and 1 Peter 3:21).

Hollow

The Brazen Altar was hollow. Christ emptied himself.

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus Humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:5).

“Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which he hath given thee” (Deuteronomy 16:17).

Every person can give himself / herself. Every person has the blessing of life from Him.

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (Romans 12:4).

“For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your

souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Leviticus 17:11).

"Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God" (Romans 3:5).

The sacrifice on the Altar was not sinful. It was given for sin. God saw the sacrifice as holy. It had no imperfection inside or out. Thus, Christ on the cross was not sinful and was not separated from the Father. He had no imperfections. The Father had no reason to turn away from Jesus when he was on the Altar (cross).

Reconciliation and Peace

The Brazen Altar was for reconciliation and peace.

"Moses took the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about with his finger, and purified the altar, and poured the blood at the bottom of the altar, and sanctified it, to make reconciliation upon it." (Leviticus 8:15. ASV says "atonement for").

"Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain enmity thereby" (Ephesians 2:15-16).

"God hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made righteousness of God in him" (2 Corinthians 5:18, 21).

"And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him I say, whether they be things in earth, or

things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight," (Colossians 1:20-22).

The Christian on the Altar

The Christian does not have to die on the Altar. But the Christian does have to present self on the Altar.

Christ said, "Take up the cross, and follow me," (Mark 10:21).

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me," (Galatians 2:20).

David may have referenced this when he said, "And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me..." (Psalm 27:6). This showing a desire to share in the reconciliation and peace.

"And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body" (Colossians 3:15).

By showing that one is willing to be a living sacrifice and share in the death of Christ, one is showing desire for God's peace to rule in the heart. Peace is in the one body of Christ.

A Living Sacrifice

The Christian stands on the Brazen Altar as a living sacrifice, (Romans 12:1).

It is the Altar of justification. The Altar of Incense is the Altar of Acceptance. (This will be further explored under that Altar.)

The Christian must stand on the Altar every time before entering the Holy Place. There was no entrance into the Holy Place without the giving of

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blood. Today the blood is from Christ from his once for all sacrifice.

But Christ being the atonement sacrifice does not negate that each of us must present ourselves as a living sacrifice, (Hebrews 4:12-16). Each person must demonstrate an emptying of self before he/she stands on the hollow Brazen Altar.

“Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin: that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God,” (1 Peter 4:1-2).

It is at the Altar that God will “count you worthy of this calling,” (2 Thessalonians 1:11). ‘Worthy’ being a word for ‘fit’ or ‘deemed entitled.’ Luke 9:23, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.” Every day the Christian carries his cross onto the Brazen Altar and communes with the Savior by following his example of crucifixion.

Standing on the Altar is done in joy, “therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy...” (Psalm 27:6). The Hebrew word for ‘sacrifices’ is “slaughter.” This reiterates the ‘self’ being presented at the Altar as a living sacrifice.

Fire and Burning

The word for ‘burning’ for any animal outside the camp (consume) is different than the word ‘burn’ for an animal on the Altar (ascend as incense).

Fire was for judgment and purification. Christ took our judgment and gave his blood for our purification. His sacrifice went up as a sweet smelling incense.

The Fire came from God.

“And there came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the

altar the burnt-offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces” (Leviticus 9:24).

This indicates it was God’s purpose that Christ would die. He instituted and designed the flame which would take his life.

The Fire was never to go out.

“The fire upon the altar shall be burning in it; it shall not be put out: and the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt-offering in order upon it, and he shall burn thereon the fat of the peace-offerings. The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out” (Leviticus 6:12-13).

Thus, a picture of the everlasting effect of the burnt and peace offering of Christ.

The fact that the fire on the Altar (Christ) continues to burn when each new person steps up on it as a living sacrifice is of great significance. The fire does not consume, but instead sends up a sweet smelling sacrifice of the new Christian. And of the rededication of the Christian in Confession.

It reminds of Hananiah, Misael, and Azariah not being consumed by the fire in the oven, to the extent that not one hair was

singed, nor even giving the smell of fire on them, (Daniel 3:10-30). In Daniel 3:17, they stated confidence that God who they served could deliver them from the fire. They were insistent that they would serve no other god, (v. 17). Even Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged that God’s angel had “delivered his servants that trusted him,” (v. 28).

Just as the non-consumed burning bush with Moses was a sign of the Covenant of Freedom and Salvation, so is the symbolism of the non-consumed Christian of the New Covenant. Not being consumed demonstrates God’s mercy and grace for the Christian.

*Each person
must demonstrate
an emptying of
self before he/she
stands on the
hollow brazen
altar.*

The same Fire used on this Altar was used on the Altar of Incense and to light the oil on the Lampstand.

Confession

The Brazen Altar is the step of Confession in the plan of salvation.

“For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) Or, who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed” (Romans 10:4-11).

Standing on the Altar is saying and showing that the person acknowledges Jesus as Lord of his life. It is demonstrating he acknowledges that Christ fulfilled his mission on earth. It acknowledges Jesus is the Christ, the anointed one. It acknowledges that righteousness only comes by bowing before the Son of God and serving him. Confession entails doing the pleasure of the Lord God and being separate from the world, (Ezra 10:11).

Confession entails loving God and keeping his commandments (Daniel 9:4). Confession is stating that one desires to stand before God as a proper sacrifice. However, the animal sacrifice had to be unadulterated. It could have no blemish. The non-Christian has repented, but the sins are not washed away as yet. So, standing on the Altar confessing these things does not make the sacrifice fully accepted by God. The sacrifice must be made pure.

That means the person must go the next step to the Laver.

Repentance and confession are for the Christian who needs to make things right with God and fellow Christians, before entering into worship, (James 5:16). Thus, the Christian tied to the horn / grabbing the horn and then standing on the Altar is not only for God to see but also for fellow priests to see. It is a demonstration of turning the life over to God and allowing him to purify it. Psalm 51:17, “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.” The word in the Hebrew for ‘sacrifices’ is ‘slaughters.’

This keeps proper fellowship with God and the church.

“... that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ,” (1John 1:3).

Standing on the Altar is also when the Christian officially presents those “works meet for repentance,” (Acts 26:20). They are included in the living sacrifice. These are seen as The Word dissects and examines us, (Hebrews 4:11-13). The wording in this passage was used in reference to the sacrificial animal being killed and examined by the priest. It was also used for a Judge looking down upon a defendant who is looking up to him on the bench. This author believes in this Hebrews context that the Word is the second person of the Godhead, known as the Word, Jesus, the Christ, the Messiah. The wording indicates an action being done by someone to someone else. The written word is used by God to perform the actions. Jesus is our Judge and High Priest. Thus, he is the one who is performing these actions on each person who ties himself to the horn and places himself on the Altar.

Conclusion

The Brazen Altar is the place of repentance and confession. The Altar is a symbol of Jesus. The sacrifices of the Old Law were figures of Christ as the ultimate atonement sacrifice. Today the Christian ties self to Christ and then presents self on the Altar as a living sacrifice. This article is not a completion of things to be seen in the Brazen Altar. The next article will go further.

Hymn History:

ABIDE WITH ME

KYLE FRANK

Lyrics: Henry P. Lyte (Most often sung to English composer William Henry Monk's tune entitled "Eventide.")

This great hymn is located to the front of most hymn-books due to its beginning with the letter "A". This writer feels that it should be at the front due to its classic construction and its superior sentiments. How many saints have memorized those wonderful words which tell us:

*ABIDE with me!
fast falls the even-tide;
The darkness deepens;
Lord, with me abide.
When other helpers fail,
and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless,
O abide with me*

Those words have carried innumerable saints through the bars of the prison, or horrors of failing health and ultimately across death's cold river to the land of light and life. Fear is not to be minded but in faithful trust we have the promise of comfort and strength that can only come from Him. The Son of God promises to abide with us during each of life's trials. With His presence, what do we have to fear?

The author of this timeless work of faith was Henry P. Lyte. He wrote quite a number of these classics. He was born in Scotland on June 1, 1793. He attended Trinity College and won a prestigious award for the quality of his poetry. Upon graduation, he lived in a socially difficult area which was known for the crude, worldly practices of those days. These trials and temptations, like Lot in Sodom, wore him down but he prevailed. "Detteshan lies in dreamy stillness and simple beauty. Here the wandering curate nestled in a cottage, going out now and then to officiate in Lower Brixham, which at length became his parish. Here for over twenty years he toiled away amid many a cloud of trouble—personal affliction, pastoral discouragement —amid

a rough, sea-faring people that had been subjected to all the corrupting influences peculiar to a neighborhood where naval and military forces often had a footing during the French war. Here he carried on his blessed work, caring both for the bodies and the souls of men, preaching the Word, making hymns—hymns for the children, hymns for the hardy fishermen.

His health, not being good at any time, had been rapidly declining, and he was advised to make a trip to the South to see whether a change of air and a warmer climate would not do something to arrest the progress of consumption. There was nothing for it but to go. But before going, he, weak and scarcely able to crawl, resolved to meet once more with his people, administer to them the Lord's Supper, and say some parting words, and he did so. The scene was peculiarly solemn, and his words must have been memorable. There were the symbols of the Savior's death—the broken bread and the poured forth wine—there the people to whom he had ministered so long, that had so often grieved him by their coarseness and carnality, but who were still dear to him—and there, too, was the weary minister, standing on the great border land, with the shadows of the long night gathering around him. Feeling that this was the case—anticipating the change that was coming on his mortal body—he spent the evening of that memorable day writing this hymn (originally eight verses), and thereupon handed the manuscript to a friend. Shortly afterwards he started on his journey, but by the time he reached Nice, France, he was entirely prostrated. There he died, and pointing upward said, "Joy," "Peace." His age was 54.

*Swift to its close
ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim,
its glories pass away
Change and decay
in all around I see:*

*O Thou who changest not,
abide with me !*

Our lives are that vapor spoken of in James 4:14 *What is your life? For ye are a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.* We have to learn to look up to Him for succor and strength. As life's little day closes we need to have that reliance and hope, hope which has the capacity to lift us when the end finally does come. That lift, hope, is from heaven above so we need to have faith which provides those wonderful, needful things.

*I need Thy presence
every passing hour,
What, but thy grace
can foil the tempter's power?*

*Who, like Thyself,
my guide and stay can be?
Through clouds and sunshine
O, abide, with me.*

How true it is, that we need him each and every passing hour. His abiding presence gives to us all that we could possibly need. It is especially when it comes to the wiles of the evil one that we need his abiding presence. Who has the power to resist the enemy's assaults? Not one of us. We HAVE TO rely on him for the strength to resist. That can only come from the loving, ever-faithful Son of God. Through each night and each day he has ABIDE WITH ME.

An **Easy Way** to Point People to the Truth!

Twenty years ago my life changed in a way I never thought possible. While out on one of my construction job sites, a good friend of mine, David Riley, came to visit with an arsenal of Bible questions for me. And much to my surprise, I knew none of the answers. That is when I began to look to my spiritual leaders, such as preachers and church members from my community. After collecting what answers I received and opinions of what the Bible taught, I shot them back at David.

Shockingly, David never told me what HE thought or HE believed, but rather opened up the Lord's word and let me read for myself. Being a young stubborn man, I argued with my dear friend about what I believed and what others had taught me to believe—and that is when it clicked. Simply, David reminded me that not once had he told me the answer, or spoke it in his own words, but let God tell me the answer in black and white. It hit me like a ton of bricks. There was nothing I could argue, because every question was answered directly from the Bible.

Since I became a Christian on March 28, 1998, every day I strive to teach the Gospel through the teachings of the Bible. When it is plain as day, there is no room for opinions or "I believe." We are all called to teach, therefore I hope this book can be used as a tool in your quest to find Jesus Christ and the Lord's Church.

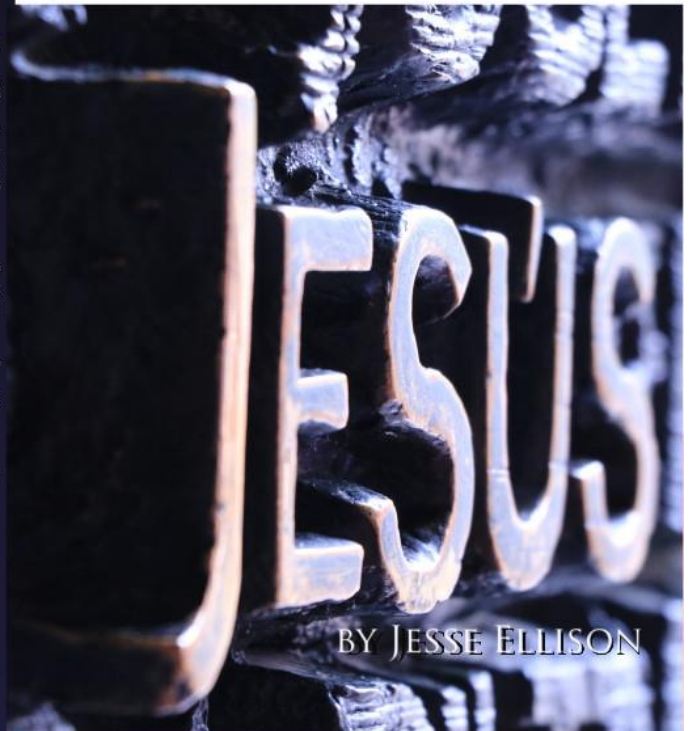
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Paul Darst:

A Novel

BY D.R. LUCAS

Chapter Twenty-Five: Persecution.

The letter of Rose to her father only preceded her arrival a few hours. As he read it, all the sectarian fire in his nature was kindled into a flame. He did not utter a word, it was not his way, but sat down to his desk and wrote:

Miss Rose Leyden: — As you have seen fit to disobey my commands, you need not return to my house, for you are no longer a daughter of mine.

E. LEYDEN.

This he placed in the hand of a servant with strict orders to go to the depot and hand it to Rose immediately upon her arrival.

Some may doubt that religious prejudice, in this age, would carry a man so far, but I am writing facts and can give names and dates, if necessary, for I but testify what I have seen and heard. As long as the tree of religious partyism grows, it must bear some very noxious fruit; for “men shall verily think they do God’s service when they kill you,” said a wiser one than man.

We may imagine but cannot describe the feelings of Rose as she hastily read her father’s note. She had thought of home so much on her journey that she had almost forgotten the circumstances under which she was going there.

While it has been often said, we still love to say that home is one of the sweetest words in the human language. Father and mother, with all the affection of their earlier years still undimmed, though somewhat saddened in the furnace of care, the children about the hearthstone, it is a holy place. If Burns had written nothing but the “Cotter’s Saturday Night,” he would have immortal-

ized himself, for that which is in our most sacred thoughts, and binds us with the strongest ties, is “home, sweet home.”

Rose stood for a few moments as if in a stupor, but was aroused by the good-natured salutation of Dr. Van Buren, who reached out his hand to bid her welcome. “Why, Rose, I am glad to see you; but — why — what is the matter? What are those tears about?” for he saw that Rose was weeping bitterly.

The look of compassion, which was so plainly visible on the doctor’s face, suggested the thought to her that she would explain the case to him and ask his advice. So she briefly explained how matters stood, but before she had time to finish, he stopped her by saying: “Not another word, my buggy is here, get into that and go home with me, as long as I have a home you shall have one. I will see about your baggage. Come, my wife will be glad to welcome you. Your father is mad, but he will come to his senses after awhile. I have always hated, while I feared, religious bigotry; but I have got bravely over the latter now. Why, Rose, you are looking well if you would only dry those eyes. We have a young preacher at our house. His name is Love — Arnot Love — an old friend of mine; pretty name, isn’t it.” And thus the doctor rattled on from one thing to another, as they were riding along, determined, if possible, to make Rose forget her surroundings. And the cheery good nature of the doctor was certainly almost contagious. If we all had a little more sugar and not quite so much vinegar in our composition, it would be a vast improvement. Let us put in the sugar, for “vinegar never catches flies.”

When the doctor spoke of Arnot Love, an incident occurred which I dislike to relate, but I must tell the truth, lest you think Rose an angel. Rose thought, “a young preacher, and I must meet

him, and I have on this traveling dress, and my hair, it looks like a fright, and my face is so dusty,” and she actually brushed back her hair, wiped her face with her handkerchief, righted up her hat, and sundry other things, forgetting for the moment her sorrow. I know some will blame her and say it was pride, but they must remember she was a *woman*. And if ever a woman reaches that point that she has no care for her personal appearance, she ceases to be what God intended her to be, the ornament and attractive center of the home circle. That she should dress in silks and follow all the absurd dictates of the tyrant fashion, I do not believe, but that she should try to make even calico attractive — and every true woman can do it — I do most candidly believe. In matters of dress I like the old Latin proverb, “*In medio tutissimus ibis*,” There! I have written that sentence without thinking. I was always disgusted when a boy, and I have not wholly recovered my equanimity on the subject to this day, to pick up a book and find every little while a Latin, French, or Italian phrase, which the English reader could not understand, and I thought I would never do the like. But the above sentence is written, and as I hate to erase it, I will explain it and go ahead. It means, “safety lies in a middle course,” or it is not only necessary for the dress to become the woman, but the woman must become the dress.

As Dr. Van Buren approached his residence with a lady by his side, the curiosity of his wife and Mr. Love was not a little aroused. “It is Rose Leyden, I do believe,” said Mrs. Van Buren, while opening the door, and she went out with Mr. Love to greet her. The good doctor knew it was better for him to do the talking, so he did it all, for which Rose was certainly very grateful. He began:

“I have brought you some company, wife, and I will tell you why after awhile. Mr. Love, this is Miss Rose Leyden. I hope you will get better acquainted, and I know you will agree. All of you just go into the house. Show Rose to her room, and I will go and have her baggage sent up.”

When Rose found herself alone, she threw off all reserve and gave full vent to the tears that seemed so sweet a relief to her burdened soul.

While she is weeping I am almost tempted to give a short chapter on the language of tears, but we are told “there are no tears in heaven.” Shall

we ever get there? Is suffering, sorrowing, and weeping with us to have an end? Yes, you say. What matters it then if we do weep here, if there “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away.”

After her first grief was over and she had looked the difficulties in the face, deciding that she was able to take care of herself, she grew calm and even hopeful under the profound conviction that the Master whom she had obeyed would not suffer her to be utterly forsaken. The doctor spent the first ten minutes after his return in satisfying the curiosity of Mr. Love and his wife by a statement of facts in her case. Mr. Love had been tried in that furnace and was ready to open his heart filled with sympathy for her, while good Mrs. Van Buren started at once to tell Rose that she knew all, and to bid her welcome to their home.

Rose thus became an inmate of the home of Dr. Van Buren, where she soon felt indeed that it was a home to her. She laid a full statement of the causes that actuated her before them all in the family circle, and her reasoning made a profound impression upon the mind of Mr. Love, for he had been “christened” in his infancy. I should love to give many of the incidents of that eventful period in the history of our friends, but one must suffice for the present chapter.

Dr. Van Buren had thought that Judge Leyden would relent, and he did feel badly, but his word was out, and the word of a Leyden was like a law of the Medes and Persians, it changed not.

One evening the doctor told Rose in the presence of the family, and one or two friends who were present, about an interview in which the Judge told him he would not relent. Rose made no reply, but went to the piano, struck a few chords, then sang the old song in a sweet, musical voice:

*“Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow thee,
I am poor, despised, forsaken,
Thou henceforth my all shall be.*

*Perish every fond ambition,
All I’ve sought, or hoped or known,
Yet how rich is my condition,
God and heaven are still my own.”*

*"Man may trouble and distress me,
'Twill but drive me to thy breast,
Life with trials hard may press me,
Heaven will bring me sweeter rest.*

*O 'tis not in grief to harm me,
While thy love is left to me;
O 'tis not in joy to charm me,
Were that joy unmixed with thee."*

She seemed to have caught the spirit of the song, and could have gone, when she had finished, with a Cranmer or Latimer to the stake. Every heart about her was full, every eye was suffused with tears. Though it was old, none thought they had ever heard the song before, sung as it was with the spirit and understanding. Dr. Van Buren rose and started toward her to assure her that his house was hers, but he could only lay his hand on her head, and say, "God bless you!" All knelt down, as if by common impulse, and Love, whose whole strong spiritual nature was aroused, poured out the aspirations, wants, and humble adorations of the little company in prayer. I cannot give you his words of tender pathos and humble trust in the Infinite, who seemed so very near to them, but the recording angel must have heard and written it. Perhaps, some day, he will let us examine it, when the reading will cause us to shed no tears. Until then let us watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation.

Chapter Twenty-Six: Cause Of Persecution

The comments upon the action of Judge Leyden in turning his daughter away from home were as variable as they were exciting. The excitement occasioned by the sudden marriage of Henry had subsided — although some persons had not forgiven themselves (and it is not certain that they ever will) for not suspicioning it, so they might have said, "I knew it, I told you to lookout for it, I told you so" — and this event afforded a new sensation. Rigid sectarians said he served her right. They are usually tyrants. Conservative persons, when asked, for they had too much policy to answer otherwise, would say, "Judge Leyden knows his own business." They never have an opinion and look out for number one.

The general feeling, however, was one of sympathy with Rose and condemnation of the action of the Judge.

Unruh Henry said it was the natural fruit of religion and he was glad he had nothing of the kind, and was more confirmed in his infidelity than ever. Some men live on the faults of others. The failures of their fellow mortals, especially if they profess Christianity, is manna to feed their consciences for their own inactivity and evil works. The smallest man, the most dwarfish soul, the most craven spirit, the most infinitesimal specimen of humanity, is the man who makes the failings of his fellowmen the excuse for his own wrong-doing, or an excuse for not doing right. Henry thought he saw in the action of the Judge a means of rescuing Darst from the heresy into which he felt that Love was slowly but surely leading him.

Elder Sleeper said it was foreordained and no one was to blame, and it does not become "any of us poor critters to murmur at sovereign grace or justice for they was all fixed afore the world was made."

Ike Loar couldn't see what it had to do with politics, so he "tuk no interest in such doin's."

Job was very outspoken in his sentiments. "If it was in China, or in Africa, or in India, or some heathen hemisphere it mightn't be so audacious, but to think, in a land where the bird of liberty makes her nest in any tree that pleases her, where such men as Judge Leyden git into office by cryin' free speech, free thought, and civil and religious liberty, for a father to turn his own blood kin daughter outdoors, 'cause she can't see religion through his spectacles, covered all over as they are with the gangrene of sectarian' pigotry — for I always thought that 'b' ought to be a 'p' — it's not only audacious, but mean, aromatical, heretical, evangelical, muriatic meanness."

Paul Darst said nothing and prudently kept his own counsel, trying to persuade himself that it mattered nothing to him. He believed it perhaps, but if any one had noticed the varying changes of his countenance, as Love was expressing his admiration for her character and firmness at their next meeting, he would have seen anything but indifference manifest there.

The influence exerted on Paul by the calm and dispassionate manner in which Love discussed the matter, even apologizing for the Judge and ascribing it, not to the influence of Christianity, but to sectarianism, was very great, so much so that it aroused the ire of Henry to an exasperating degree. The following colloquy ensued on the subject:

HENRY. — “You see the natural fruit of Christianity in the action of Judge Leyden!”

LOVE. — “Not so fast. Calm yourself and let me mildly suggest that it is the best policy to inquire what is the cause of an effect, before we say very much about it, lest we do injustice to an innocent cause or person. Do you think that Rose is any less a follower of Christ than she was before?”

HENRY. — “No, I presume not, I expect she is as fanatical as ever.”

LOVE. — “Then it is not her want of allegiance to Christ that causes her to be persecuted, it is the selfishness of sectarian feeling in Judge Leyden.”

HENRY. — “Well, if it was not for Christianity that sectarianism could not exist.”

LOVE. — “There is where you are mistaken. Man is a religious being and will have some kind of a religion, and because men abuse the pure religion of Christ, it does not prove that man does not need it, but rather the contrary, for if men do so badly under the teaching of a religion which says, ‘thou shalt love the Lord with all thy mind and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself,’ what would be the condition of a society where a religion prevailed originating wholly in the selfishness of a depraved religious nature. The history of Paganism, with its dark mysteries, its human sacrifices is the answer to the question. It is not the religion of the humble Nazarene, but partisanism that actuates the persecutor always. Gethsemane and Calvary speak to the world the lesson of pity and mercy, of loving forgiveness, and humble submission. They tell of the royal law of the Prince of Peace — the law of love. It is the religious partyism in Bethel that makes such men as Judge Leyden, and that I would condemn as much as you.”

HENRY. — “Well, if you do, you are the first preacher I ever heard that would do it. And I

doubt if you would if it were not that you wish to convert Darst to your notions.”

LOVE. — “It matters not whether you have heard them or not, it is the profound conviction of my heart, that the great mass of Protestants, preachers and all, are fast becoming convinced that denominationalism is a failure. The last Lord’s Day in Bethel it seems to me ought to convince anyone of the fact. The morning sun rose clear and beautiful, shedding its benign rays over all nature, proclaiming in its silent majesty that God is good to all. The day was memorial of the resurrection of the great Head of the church from the Arimathean Senator’s tomb, and surely the good angels must be abroad on errands of ‘good will to man,’

*“The angels that watched round the
tomb,
Where low the Redeemer was laid,
When deep in mortality’s gloom,
He hid for a season his head,
That veiled their fair face while he
slept,
And ceased their sweet harps to em-
ploy,
That witnessed his rising and swept
Their chords with the triumphs of
joy,”*

must have hovered over the earth again in token of that sublime triumph. Our souls go out in silent faith to catch, if possible, the faintest echo of their exquisite song of love, joy, hope, and peace — when hark! what sounds are those that grate so harshly upon the ear? It is the rival church bells, each calling its partisans to their different and respective sanctuaries to worship the God of love, the God who said, ‘if we love not our brother whom we have seen, how can we love God whom we have not seen?’ Even the sextons seem to have caught the partisan spirit, as at times it seems as if the bells speak almost angrily — ‘this is the way, I make the most noise,’ And then each little flock gathers in its respective house to worship in its own narrow groove. They pass one another on the street with a nod, perhaps not even that, unless it is one of ‘our folks’ and then it is ‘good morning, my dear brother.’ Even families are divided and that which should be the nearest and dearest

thought of the household, the family religion, is banished from the fireside for fear of inharmony. Partisans can never talk about the things in which they disagree without great danger of getting angry. And what is the worst of all, this sectarianism is no part of the religion of the New Testament, and causes many good men to reject the religion of Christ, and to live and die in infidelity on account of it. One-fourth of the infidels in Protestant lands, I doubt not, are made so by the jarring notes of a mystical sectarianism. So plain is the apostolic injunction for unity and so conscious are men that it is right, that they have invented the metaphysical idea of an unseen, indefinable, mystical union of spirit to excuse its violation, seemingly unconscious, or ignoring the fact that the apostles teach just as emphatically *one-body as one spirit*."

HENRY. — "Well, you preach that in this town and they will call it infidelity."

LOVE. — "I cannot think so. They might to-day, but it will soon be otherwise. It will soon be seen that no Christian ever was or can be a persecutor."

Chapter Twenty-Seven: Prophecy

Dr. Van Buren and some friends were so much pleased with the conversation of Love that they procured a house and invited him to preach. Darst was anxious to hear him discourse on prophecy, and Love finally consented. A large audience assembled at the appointed hour, for report had said that Paul Darst was almost persuaded to be a Christian, and was to be there with his infidel works. The congregation joined in singing the hymn commencing:

*"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform.
He plants his footsteps on the sea,
And rides upon the storm."*

And closing with:

*"Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain."*

Love then offered a fervent prayer, after which he introduced the subject by saying:

"The Bible is an inspired book. Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Spirit of God. Only God can know the future. Man cannot foretell the future. This is an age of enlightenment and civilization, and yet we read the future as dimly as any age of the past by mere human intelligence. The proofs of man's inspiration lie not in his ability to recount the past, but he who can foretell, with unerring certainty, the events of future centuries, gives an undisputable testimony that he is inspired. Man may guess at the future, but it is only a guess after all. The old prophets of God have told of a multitude of events that were to affect the future of all the nations of their day, some of them reaching forward more than twenty centuries. Now, my proposition is this, if they told the truth concerning these nations in all particulars, it proves their inspiration.

"Mr, Darst, have you Paine's *Age of Reason*, and Volney's *Ruins of Empires*?"

"I have them in my hand," said Darst, with a deferential air, for he seemed astonished at the candor and fairness of the man who proposed to put the question of inspiration to the test upon infidel authorities. Heretofore the infidels of Bethel had been shunned as the off-scouring of sinners and were denounced from the pulpit week after week with no chance to reply. Now, to meet a man who had so much faith in God's word that he was willing to investigate its claims with them on rational principles, seemed a matter of astonishment. The preachers of Bethel had spent their lives in studying theological definitions instead of the word of God. Calvinism, Armenianism, and a thousand other isms had usurped their time and talents.

Love then continued: "Mr. Darst has the *Age of Reason*, and Volney's *Ruins*, and I have the Bible. We will test the inspiration of some of the prophets. I will read a collation of their statements concerning the ancient nations, commencing with the Babylonish empire, which once ruled the world:

*'And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms,
the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency,
shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.
It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be
dwelt in from generation to genera-*

tion: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.' Isaiah 13:19-22.

'For I will rise up against them, saith the Lord of hosts, and cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant, and son, and nephew, saith the Lord. I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of hosts.' Isaiah 14:22-23.

Mr. Love then read the 50th and 51st chapters of Jeremiah, where the destruction of Babylon is fully described, the chapter closing with these words:

'So Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that should come upon Babylon, even all these words that are written against Babylon. And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, When thou comest to Babylon, and shalt see, and shalt read all these words; then shalt thou say, "O Lord, thou hast spoken against this place, to cut it off, that none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but that it shall be desolate forever." And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates, and thou shalt say, "Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her: and they shall be weary." Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.' Jer. 51:60-64.

"I will next read some declarations concerning Egypt:

'And I will bring again the captivity of Egypt, and will cause them to return into the land of Pathros, into the land of their habitation; and they shall be there a base kingdom. It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations; for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations. And it shall be no more the confidence of the house of Israel, which bringeth their iniquity to remembrance, when they shall look after them: but they shall know that I am the Lord God.' Ezekiel 29:14-16.

"Again, I read:

'And I will make the rivers dry, and sell the land into the hand of the wicked: and I will make the land waste, and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers; I the Lord have spoken it. Thus saith the Lord God: I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause their images to cease out of Noph; and there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt: and I will put a fear in the land of Egypt.' Ezekiel 30:12-13.

"I will next read some predictions concerning Tyrus:

'Therefore thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God: and it shall become a spoil to the nations.' Ezekiel 26:3-5.

"The following is concernig Ammon:

'Behold, therefore, I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and will deliver

thee for a spoil to the heathen; and I will cut thee off from the people, and I will cause thee to perish out of the countries: I will destroy thee: and thou shalt know that I am the Lord.’ Ezekiel 25:7.

“Concerning Damascus and Syria we read:

‘The burden of Damascus. Behold, Damascus is taken away from being a city, and it shall be a ruinous heap. The cities of Aroer are forsaken: they shall be for flocks, which shall lie down, and none shall make them afraid. The fortress also shall cease from Ephraim, and the kingdom from Damascus, and the remnant of Syria: they shall be as the glory of the children of Israel, saith the Lord of hosts.’ Is. 17:1-3.

“In the first chapter of Amos we find also a prediction concerning Syria, Philistia, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, Moab, and Judah, and in the 28th chapter of Deuteronomy, we find a full prediction concerning the Jews, as follows:

1. They should be destroyed by a nation whose tongue they should not understand.
2. They should be scattered among all nations.
3. They should become a hissing and a by-word everywhere.
4. Have no possessions or rest for the sole of their feet, and be persecuted.

“In Nahum we have also a full description of Nineveh and other cities. But it is unnecessary that I read more. These words were uttered long ages since, by men who claimed to be prophets of the Most High God. It is a universally admitted fact that the books of Isaiah and Jeremiah were translated from the Hebrew into the Greek 284 years before Christ, so that they must have been written more than 2,100 years ago, beyond all cavil. I will now ask Mr. Darst what Paine, in his *Age of Reason*, page 146, says about the books of Ezekiel and Daniel.”

Mr. Darst replied:

“Paine says they were written by Ezekiel and Daniel, at least, such is his opinion. His reasons are:

1. Because these books do not contain internal evidence to prove they were not written by them.
2. Because they were not written until after the Babylonish captivity began.
3. Because the manner in which the books ascribed to Ezekiel and Daniel are written agrees with the condition these men were in at the time of writing them.”

“Very good,” said Mr. Love, “this is the admitted testimony of all who have examined the question. Will you now read from Volney’s *Ruins of Empires*, commencing on page 23?”

Mr. Darst then read several pages, containing many such statements as follows:

“Here, said I, here once flourished an opulent city; here was the seat of a powerful empire. Yes, these places, now so deserted, were once animated by a living multitude.”

“The silence of the tomb is substituted for the bustle of public places. The opulence of a commercial city is changed into hideous poverty. The palaces of kings are become a den of wild beasts; flocks fold on the area of the temple, and unclean reptiles inhabit the sanctuary of the gods! Thus perish the works of men, and thus do empires and nations disappear.”

“And the history of former times revived in my mind. I recollected those distant ages when many illustrious nations inhabited these countries. I figured to myself the Assyrian on the banks of the Tigris, the Chaldean on those of the Euphrates, the Persian reigning from the Indus to the Mediterranean. I enumerated the kingdoms of Damascus and Idumea, of Jerusalem and Samaria, the warlike states of the Philistines, and the commercial republics of Phoenicia. This Syria, said I, now so depopulated, then con-

tained a hundred flourishing cities, and abounded with towns, villages, and hamlets. Ah! what are become of these ages of abundance and life? Where are those ramparts of Nineveh, those walls of Babylon, those palaces of Persepolis, those temples of Balbeck and Jerusalem? Where are those fleets of Tyre, those dock-yards of Arad, those workshops of Sidon, and that multitude of sailors, of pilots, of merchants, and of soldiers?"

"Alas! I have passed over this desolate land, and I beheld nothing but solitude and desolation. I sought the ancient inhabitants and their works, and could only find a faint trace, like that of the foot of a traveler over the sand. The temples are fallen, the palaces overthrown, the forts filled up, the cities destroyed, and the earth, stripped of its inhabitants, seems a dreary burying-place. Great God! whence proceed such fatal revelations? What causes have so altered the fortunes of these countries? Why are so many cities destroyed?"

"Ah! helpless man, said I, in my grief, a blind fatality sports with thy destiny! A fatal necessity rules with the hand of chance the lot of mortals! But see! it is the justice of heaven fulfilling its decrees. A mysterious God exercising his incomprehensible judgments! Doubtless he has pronounced a secret anathema against this land — blasting with maledictions the present for the sins of the past generations. Oh! who shall dare to fathom the depths of the divinity?"

"Fatality is the universal and noted prejudice of the East. It was written, is there the answer to every thing; hence result an unconcern and apathy, the most powerful impediments to instruction and civilization."

When Darst had read thus far, Mr. Love said: "Here we see an exact fulfillment of what those ancient prophets wrote. The man who admits that

Isaiah and Ezekiel wrote more than 2,100 years ago, and denies their inspiration, has a more wondrous fact to explain than any miracle ever recorded."

"But," said Henry, interposing, "While Volney describes the fate of those countries, he gives a reason for their condition aside from prophecy."

"I am aware of that. Men may see a reason now; but how could the prophets see the reason in their day? It was an impossibility. God alone could see the reason, and inspired the prophets, and 'Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.' If there could be a thousand reasons *now* assigned for the result, it would not lessen the inspiration of those who uttered the predictions before the reasons were known."

HENRY. — "Do you pretend that God has ordered it so just to fulfill his word?"

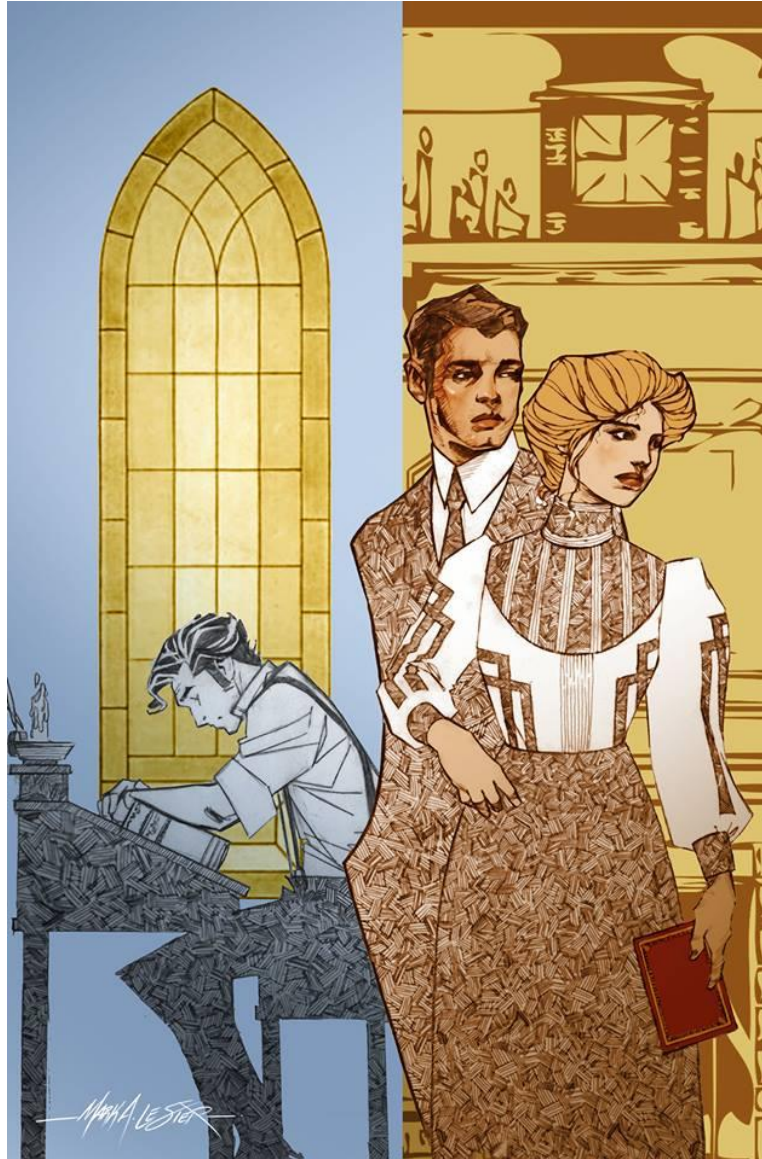
LOVE. — "It may be, we cannot fully understand the purposes of the Infinite. In this case it makes no difference as to that, it is with the facts we must deal. We know that nature is under the control of law. Man is a part of nature and also controlled by law, and let us suppose that God proposes to let nations and individuals work out their destiny under the laws of righteousness and prosperity, of sin and adversity and destruction. God then, without a direct interposition, may reason out the results, or as he sees all the causes may understand the effects. He may inspire men to make those results known, to show his relation to man, and knowledge of the elements that make or mar his destiny, without the idea of fatalism having to do with it."

These observations seemed so just to Darst that he was not disposed to continue the matter farther, and Love closed the meeting by quoting 2 Peter 1:19-21:

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts: knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

THE CONVERSION OF *Paul Darst*

BY D.R. LUCAS



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A Review of

YOU ARE A THEOLOGIAN: THINKING RIGHT ABOUT THE BIBLE

(Written by Ben Giselbach)

REVIEWED BY DAVID DEAN

You Are a Theologian is a series of lessons written by our brother in Christ, Ben Giselbach. The author has been serving the Lord in the role of minister since 2006 and might be recognized from his website *PlainSimpleFaith.com*. The topic of our review is the first book in this series, entitled *Thinking Right About the Bible*. It was published 2016 and can be acquired from his website.

Theology—many would meet this word with concern, if not outright dread. What does it mean to be a theologian? If I am being completely honest with myself, I am forced to admit that the word has produced dread even in me at times. Ben Giselbach pegs me perfectly when he states, “some mistakenly think, ‘Theology is for academics’” Thankfully, he does an excellent job of teaching readers to think like theologians about the Bible.

Placing emphasis on terminology, the book’s first two lessons lay a strong foundation for understanding the remainder of the work. In other chapters significant terms have been helpfully emboldened for emphasis and quick detection. Giselbach’s meticulous treatment of the word “prophet” exemplifies the importance he places on truly understanding the vocabulary of the Bible. He not only provides a brief word study, but he also devotes an entire section to define the role of a prophet. This lesson would be used later in a study of the canonicity of the Bible

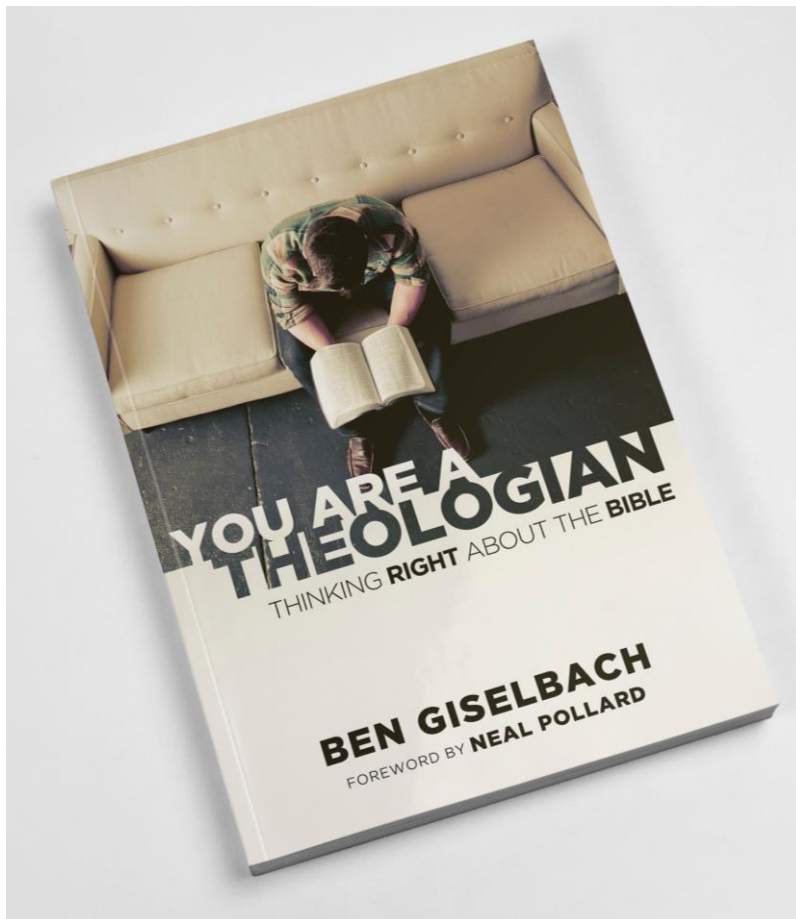
and the purpose of the prophet. The same high level of attention to detail is carried throughout the book with terms such as “general revelation,” “canon,” “apocrypha,” “inspiration,” and “hermeneutics.”

Giselbach continues by giving historical insight into the significance of theology with a series of lessons focused on the history behind the Bible. We

then are led into a discussion of how we got “our nice leather-bound Bibles of today, written in large point modern English with gilded golden page edges,” which did not, after all, “miraculously fall from the sky.” This section begins with a study of the historical methods of recording Scripture, since the original autographs (writings produced by the apostles or prophets) have been lost to time. Closely related is the discussion of the historical accuracy of manu-

scripts. He addresses the reality of mistakes in these ancient manuscripts, while also pointing out the problems presented by skeptics such as Bart Ehrman.

The lesson then moves from ancient manuscripts to more modern times. Ben addresses the addition of chapters and verses before offering his opinion on various translations. He describes the methods used by translators, taking the time to walk the reader through the history of the first English translation,



which is the basis of the various editions and translations we encounter today. He also emphasizes the need to constantly improve our understanding of the ancient languages.

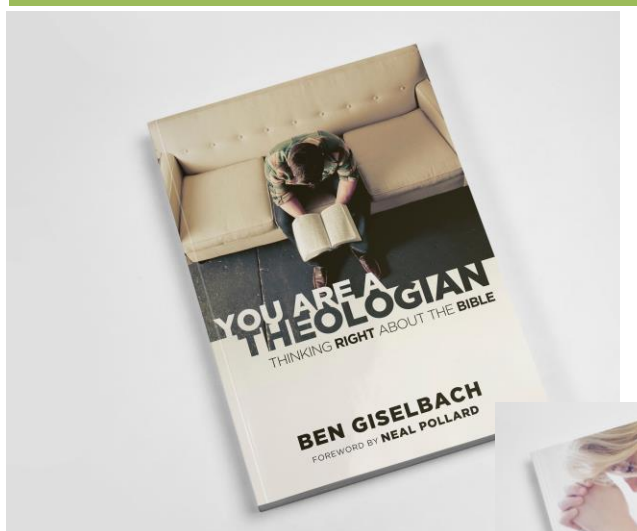
If establishing a solid base for interpreting the Bible based on history was not enough, you will be pleased to know that Giselbach includes plenty of practical application in his lessons as well. Each lesson ends with a series of discussion questions designed to make the reader dig into the subject and pursue outside research. The questions also serve to encourage discussion between members of a congregation during a Bible class.

In addition, there are a few lessons at the close of the book that aid the Christian in his daily walk with God. One lesson is entitled “Where Should I Begin?: How to Study the Bible,” and as one might expect, it approaches the subject in depth and offers helpful tips. The following statement stands out:

We have reduced “Bible study” to “daily Bible-reading plans” and devotional books. While these things are good, the Bible was not intended to give you a “morning Boost” or be neatly packaged in 365-day increments. (Giselbach, 79)

Another lesson approaches the subject of hermeneutics, which Giselbach aptly labels the “12 letter h-word.” He neatly condenses a topic that has been the subject of multiple and long books into a single lesson. This lesson like all the others is well written and serves as a good start for anyone wishing to dig deeper. The treatment of this topic gives the reader much to think about and serves to better prepare us for approaching the Word of God.

Ben Giselbach has done an excellent job of producing a series of lessons that can lead Christians—babes and mature alike—to produce fruits worthy of the Spirit. While not every lesson is covered in detail in this review, it is my hope that I have done the book justice. I would gladly encourage any eldership or individual Christian to give this series serious consideration as a guide for studying this perspective on our role as Christians. I look forward to getting the next two books in the series. After all, we are all theologians, and we must get our theology correct, for, as Ben states on page 2 of this book, “To worship a god you have made up in your mind is idolatry—even if you have peppered your understanding of that god with the occasional Bible verse.”



You Are a Theologian Series:
THINKING RIGHT ABOUT THE BIBLE
THINKING RIGHT ABOUT GOD
THINKING RIGHT ABOUT SALVATION
By Ben Giselbach

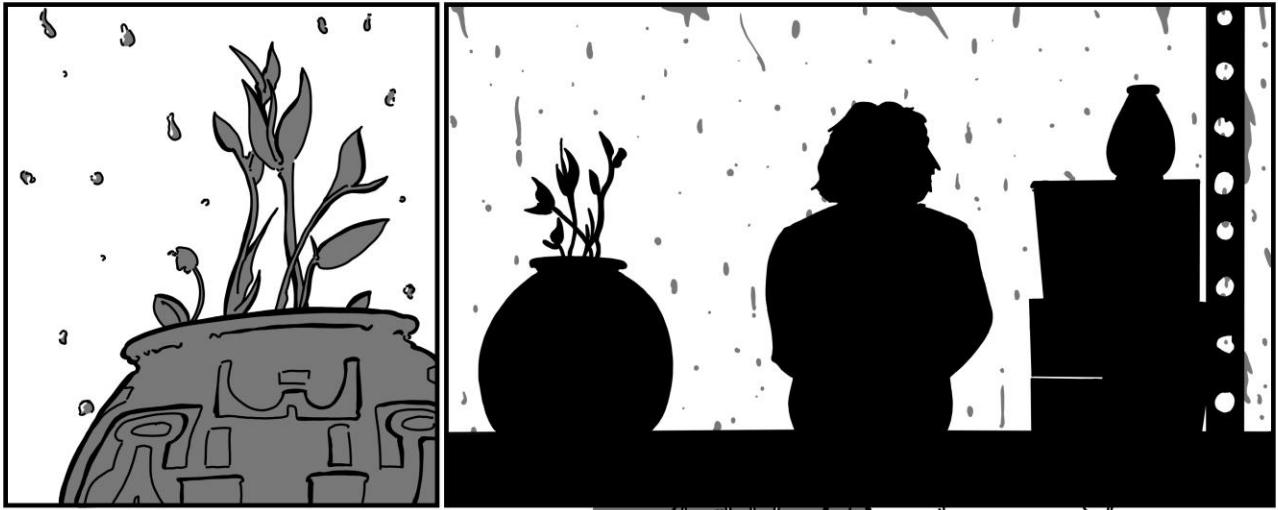
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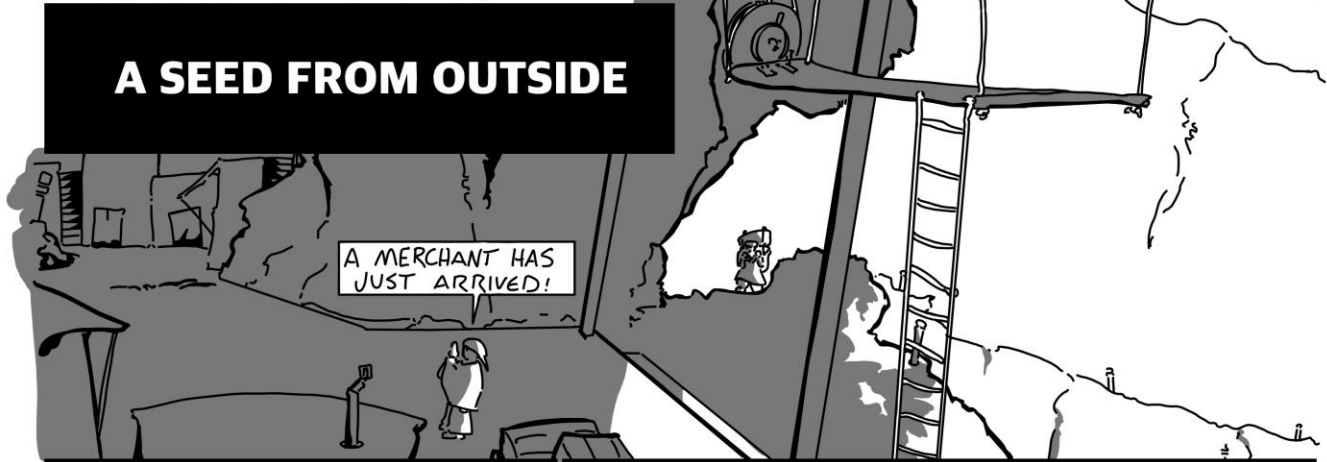


A Parable in Pictures

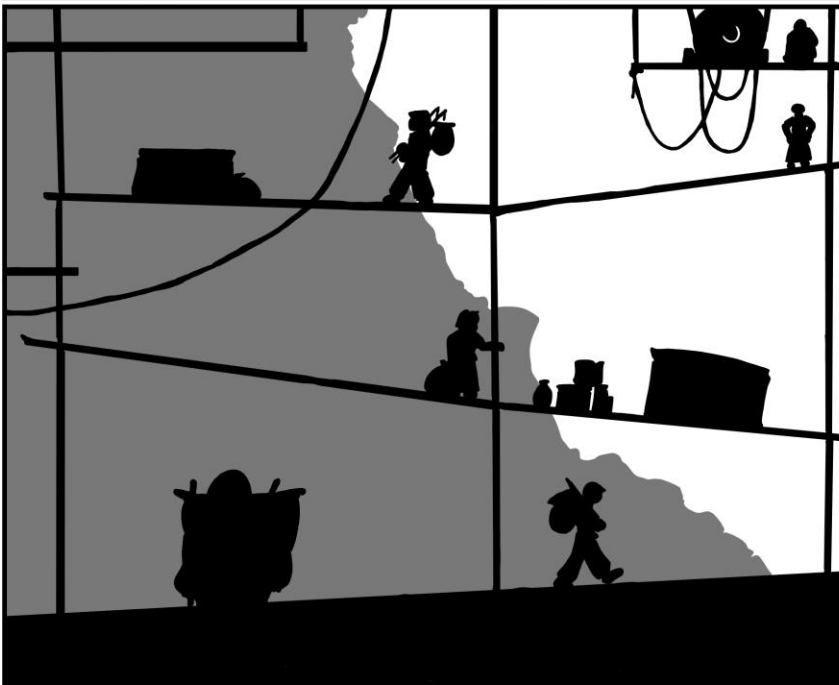
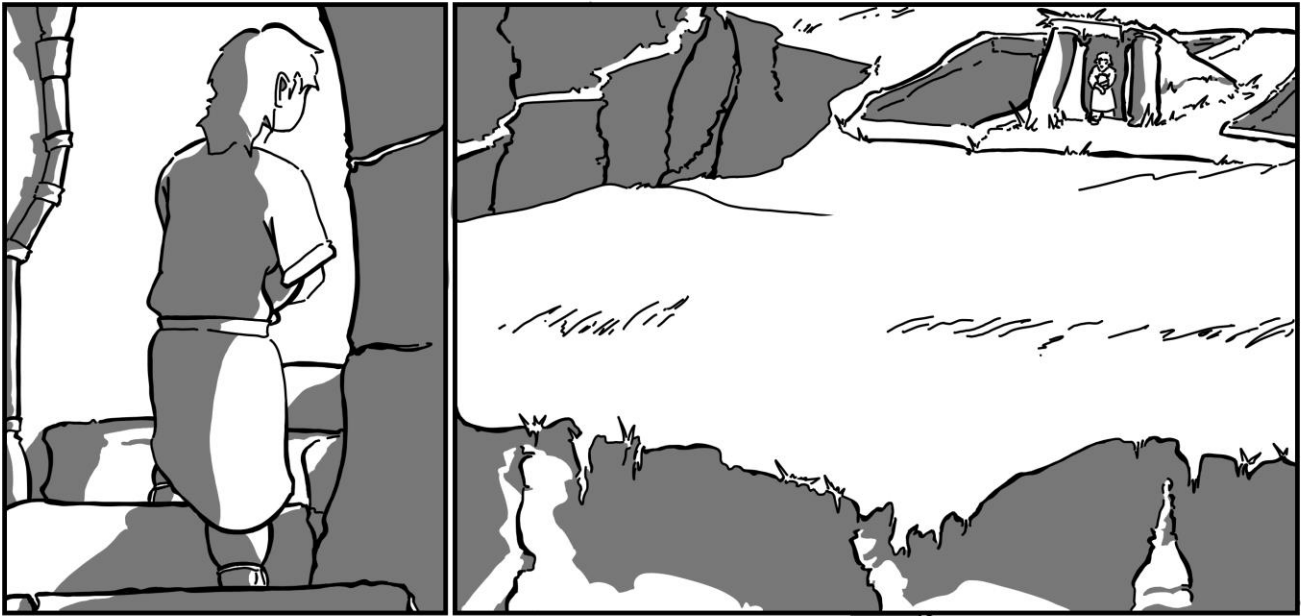
NATHAN HOWARD



A SEED FROM OUTSIDE











Question: How did Jude get Enoch's prophecy, since it isn't recorded in the Old Testament? Is the "Book of Enoch" inspired? And if so, why isn't it in the Bible?—S.P.

Thanks for writing. This section of Jude (that is, verses 14-15) has caused perhaps the most discussion and confusion of any section of the entire letter. Is Jude endorsing an apocryphal book as being from God? If so, why isn't it included in our Bibles today? Is Jude using an uninspired document as proof of what he's been speaking? If so, how can we have any confidence of what is inspired and what isn't? Is it possible that Jude is quoting something that truly happened, but just wasn't recorded for us? There are so many questions, and each of them deserves to be answered.

So, let's look at the text and answer the questions:

(14) And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,

Enoch

There are a few things that Enoch is known for in the Scriptures. *First*, he was taken by God and did not see death. Elijah is the only other on in Scripture that was taken by God without having to suffer physical death. *Second*, he "walked with God" or "pleased God," which is the reason why he did not

see death (Gen. 5:22, 24, Heb. 11:5). *Third*, he was the father of Methuselah (Gen. 5:22).

So far as the Scriptures outside of Jude are concerned, this is basically all we know about Enoch.

The seventh from Adam

If there was any doubt about the one who gave the prophecy, Jude eliminates it here. The prophecy he is about to quote came from Enoch, the seventh in chronology, starting with Adam. In order, they are: (1) Adam, (2) Seth, (3) Enos, (4) Cainan, (5) Mahaleel, (6) Jared, and (7) Enoch.

Enoch...prophesied

This is extremely important to understand, because Jude is saying *without a doubt*, that this prophecy is from the Enoch mentioned in Genesis 5. And because Jude was *written by inspiration of God*, we can know that this prophecy was indeed given by the real Enoch who was taken by God before the flood.

Why is this important? It is important for multiple reasons:

First, there is no such prophecy recorded in Scripture.

Some people, in trying to explain how Jude could quote a prophecy that isn't recorded, have said that perhaps Jude is quoting from some other Enoch. But Jude makes it clear that the Enoch he is quoting

is the seventh from Adam. That objection is thrown out.

Second, because Jude has been accused of quoting an uninspired book as Scripture.

The Book of Enoch 1:9 says:

“And behold! He cometh with ten thousands of [His] holy ones to execute judgment upon all, and to destroy [all] the ungodly:

And to convict all flesh of all the works [of their ungodliness] which they have ungodly committed, and of all the hard things which ungodly sinners [have spoken] against Him.

If you read Jude 14-15, you will see a striking similarity between the two passages.

It has become fashionable to say that Jude is quoting from this uninspired book. But given that no one can pinpoint the date in which it was written (with guesses ranging from 200 BC to AD 200), it is just as likely that whoever wrote “the Book of Enoch” was quoting from Jude.

If Jude was quoting from the Book of Enoch, then he lied when he said he was quoting from the real “Enoch, the seventh from Adam.” Hopefully, you can see that the charge leveled against Jude is a serious one. If Jude was quoting from the “Book of Enoch”—written no earlier than 200 BC—then the book of Jude cannot be inspired, for it would be speaking a lie as though it were truth—proving it was not from God.

So, how this all be settled? Where did the information come from? Why is Jude 14-15 so similar to Enoch 1:9?

Here are some plausible possibilities.

Possibility #1: There was an oral tradition that Enoch had given this prophecy, though it was not ever written down in the Old Testament Scriptures. If indeed this is the case, then the prophecy of Enoch was passed down by word of mouth accurately for over 2500 years. While it is *possible*, it seems very unlikely that any oral tradition could be passed down for 2500+ years and remain anything close to accurate. However, *if* there was an oral tradition to this effect, then Jude was confirming its authenticity and application (by inspiration), and there would be no surprise that the so-called “Book of Enoch” would have included it.

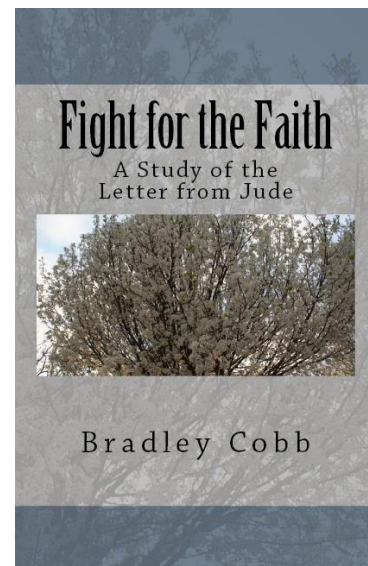
Possibility #2: Jude was given this information directly by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This possibility assumes there was no oral tradition, but instead that Jude was given information that wasn’t in the Old Testament record. This should not be a surprise, because the apostle Paul was given the names of two Egyptian magicians who withstood Moses—even though those two men were never named in the Old Testament (see 2Ti. 3:8). This was information given by inspiration without any reliance on an outside source.

Possibility #3: The Book of Enoch, though uninspired, contained an accurate quote of Enoch which was afterwards affirmed by God through Jude. What must be kept in mind is that this **does not** mean that *everything* in the Book of Enoch is accurate. This is just like when Paul quoted from two uninspired poets. He was **only** saying that the part he quoted was accurate—nothing more (see Act. 17:28, Tit. 1:12). The problem with this is again that no one knows when Enoch was written (some guesses are as late as the second century AD—long after Jude was written).

Of the three, I am convinced that the second is the most likely, though the other two are *possible*.

—Bradley S. Cobb

(Note: the above information comes from our book, “Fight for the Faith: A Study of the Letter from Jude”)



\$8.99

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About the Authors

Travis Anderson grew up in Southwest Missouri until attending Brown Trail at age 25. Upon graduation in 2014, he moved to minister to the Northside Church of Christ in Bismarck, IL, where he currently preaches. He is the father of two wonderful children and recently became engaged. He enjoys both playing and coaching softball and baseball and occasionally finds time for a video game or two when he's not spending time with his family or doing the work of a minister.

Gantt Carter is married to the former Julie Johnson. They have two young children and reside in Elk City, OK. 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. 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.

Nathan Cozort graduated from college in 2006 with an Associates of Science degree in Criminal Justice. For the last 12 years he has worked secular jobs and hand in hand with the elders at the Chipman Road Church of Christ. He currently preaches part time for a small congregation in the Kansas City area.

David Dean lives in Purcell, OK, with his wife, Catherine, daughter, Liliana, and two cats. Currently, David is a student with WVBS with hopes to start working towards his English Degree at the University of Oklahoma later this year. When he is not studying the Word of God, he can be found at home reading comics and fantasy novels.

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 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*.

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.

Bill Howard has served the Lord for more than half a century, preaching in small congregations, and recently retired as an elder in Dale, OK. His latest book for growing Christians, *Father I have Sinned*, was released last summer. A former restaurateur who still loves to cook, he also writes detective novels and books for new converts.

Nathan Howard was born under the sign of a rat and generally resembles one. Oddly he is an avid fan of cats, which in turn are fans of him. Supposedly this can be explained by a parasite known as "Toxoplasma Gondii" or "T. Gondii" that makes rodents and humans prone to appreciate cats and stupid decisions, but Nathan questions the validity of the stories. Previously he has made multiple animations without cats, a few with cats, multiple illustrated stories with cats, a few without cats, in this magazine was one without. He hopes to traverse Antarctica in the next decade and start an animation studio while he is at it.

William Howard William has been enjoying the cooler days. He has been drinking hot tea and trying to play long distance catch-up. He just finished a set of operas he wanted to see in 1984 and actually finished a book he started in 1981 (the

book owner had wanted it back, so he did not get to finish). William is still in Georgia and preaches on Sunday.

John Krivak John Krivak has been a Restoration Movement enthusiast since the baptismal waters flooded over him, and 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. jkrivak@zoominternet.net.

Caleb Lehman is currently a junior in high school. He enjoys serving the local congregation, acting in theatre, and being a rabid Star Wars fan.

Richard Mansel is a semi-retired preacher, writer, and bookworm, living in Tennessee.

Daniel R. Lucas has been dead for 110 years, so there's really nothing new going on in his life.

Mark McWhorter is a research fanatic, history nut, missionary, book-seller (with his wife, Teah), and serial overachiever. He believes growing up in Marion, IL can make you either a genius or insane. He's not sure which one describes him yet. He also has, occasionally, gone dumpster diving.

Jim Mitchell obtained his BA from Freed-Hardeman University & M.Div. from Oklahoma Christian University, has been preaching for more than 35 years and has worked with congregations in Florida, Virginia, and Oklahoma. He is the pulpit minister for the Cherokee Hills church of Christ in Oklahoma City, and is the new owner of the Open Bible Study program (by Ivan Stewart).

James Pasley graduated from Faulkner University in 1995 with a B.A. in Bible he has worked full-time with churches in Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Georgia. He and his wife of 24 years, Dawn, and their 5 children (ages 6-17) now live in Mineral Bluff, GA and he preaches for the Blue Ridge Church of Christ. He is familiar with the struggles of small churches. In 46 years of life he has been in churches under 100 members for more than 40 years and has never preached for a church of more than 100 members.

Xander Pasley is a rebellious seventeen year old who lives in his parents' basement...just kidding. Except for the basement, he actually does live there. He spends half his nights writing encourag-

ing posts for his friends along with Caleb Lehman. He is a part of those dreaded homeschooled kids who are accused of having no social life. He is the oldest of five siblings, the youngest are all girls, thanks for the sympathy. He isn't through with school yet but he hopes that the things he writes and understands from God's Word are true and as encouraging to others as they are to him.

Rod Ross has been married for 44 years, with three grown children (married), and nine grandchildren from ages 3-16. A lover of baseball, Ohio State football, hunting, fishing, Roy Rogers movies, and American history. He suffered a stroke in 2011, which left him legally blind, unable to drive, read, and work; but, he still believes that everyone should do what they can. He maintains a website, three Facebook groups, three Facebook pages, sends out an email lesson Monday – Friday, teaches Bible class, preaches every Sunday morning and evening, and does a weekly radio program. He does each of these in small time frames, followed by power naps.

Jake Schotter loves studying the Bible, reading books, preaching (since 2009), and writing about the Truth. He has been very fortunate to grow his library to over 2,500 books and loves ordering them cheaply. He is a freshman Bible major at Freed-Hardeman University.

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*. And when you finish those two, you might check out his western novel, *Revel Knox*.

Samuel Stinson began preaching shortly after he obeyed the gospel in Kentucky in 2004. He has preached in Florida, Kansas, West Virginia, and Nevada and is currently teaching college English.

Bradley Cobb has retired from inhaling sawdust at a cabinet shop, and is feeling much better as a result. He has recently preached about mooching, fish, and the biblical blessing of potlucks (not all in the same sermon, mind you). He is married to his best friend, and they are raising four impressive musicians, who are also their siblings (in Christ).