

The Berea Baptist Banner

"Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth" Ps. 60:4

Why Sinners Are Saved

By Wm. Doyal Thomas
(1932 - 2018)

Why Sinners Are Saved
By Doyal Thomas

"This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise. I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins" (Isa. 43:21,25).

There is much preaching being done concerning the matter of how God saves sinners. This is



needful, helpful, and without any question is God-honoring. It presents a God of sovereignty and purpose, who according to His own good pleasure has designed every means to cause His attributes of justice and mercy to be exercised.

Justice must be done, for God is just. Sin must be dealt with, judged, and punished. To

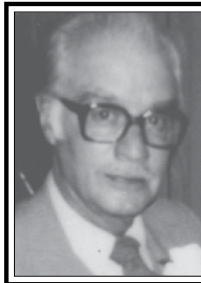
♦ (Continued on page 2)

The New Birth

By Wayne Cox
(1913 - 2003)

(John 3:1-10)

The subject under consideration is not one that is unfamiliar by any means. It is, perhaps, one of the most familiar subjects in all the Book of God---that is, the New Birth. I will have to admit, however, that in these modern days very rarely do you ever hear a sermon on the New Birth; for the simple reason that a "social gospel" is being proclaimed and people



are believing, accepting it. There is nothing in the world more damaging to the cause of Jesus Christ than the "social gospel" that is

being preached today. It sounds good to the alien sinner; it is certainly good news to them; it tickles their ears, but it damns their souls.

♦ (Continued on page 4)

The New Drug

By Nathaniel Hille
of Plant City, Florida

There is a new drug. Well, it is not actually new. It is old, but it has made a comeback. I am writing about pornography. I want to encourage you to not put this article down. Finish reading it. Your home and your church are at stake.

SHOCKINGLY AWFUL STATISTICS

If you do not think that pornography is an issue, let me show you that it is with some statistics. According to fightthenewdrug.org, two different internet pornography sites officially released their 2019 annual review (I am leaving the names of the sites off). One of those websites had 42,000,000,000 site visits to it. Nope! That is not a misprint. 42 billion site visits. Let us take a look at these numbers.



That equates to 115 million visits per day. 39 Billion searches performed. 6.83 videos uploaded. 1.36 million hours

of new content. Here is a quote: "If you started watching 2019's new videos in 1850 you would still be watching today." This is just one (1) pornography website!

Here are some more stats for the technical people. 209 gigabytes per second; 753,041 gigabytes per hour; 18,073 terabytes a day; 6597 petabytes of data transferred. "If you copied all that data onto hard drives they would reach 62 miles/100km high to the edge of space"

Every second 30,000 people

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The purpose of the Berea Baptist Banner is as follows:

1. To honor God and to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. To preach the gospel to lost sinners.
3. To spread the whole counsel of God's Word.
4. To encourage God's preachers and to strengthen His churches in the most holy faith.
5. To motivate God's children to a closer fellowship around His Word.
6. To inform people of world events in light of Bible prophecy.
7. To condemn and expose error wherever it may rear its ugly head.
8. To stimulate Christian growth in grace.
9. To make the Devil and his demons as mad as possible.

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Why Sinners Are

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imagine that God will permit His creatures to violate His laws and escape the accompanying punishment is unthinkable. God's justice demands that **"the soul that sinneth, it shall die."**

Mercy is extended to those whom none can be expected. Though mercy is extended, justice is not set aside, in order that this mercy may be shown. We must remember that God is just and merciful. How can God solve this dilemma? (It presents no dilemma for God, just in the injured mind of depraved man.)

The answer is found in God's purpose which He has purposed in eternity. It finds Christ, God's Anointed Sin Bearer, set aside to bear the full and final penalty that justice demands. He is substitutionally dealt with and punished to the full extent of God's righteous and holy law. He dies the death-that sin demands, thus satisfying the penalty due violators.

Upon full satisfaction being met in Christ, God now extends mercy to those chosen to share in the vicarious suffering for sin and substitutional death of the sinner at the altar of God's sacrifice. Calvary is the place where God punished sin, and there is the place where **"Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other"** (Ps. 85:10).

It is upon the inestimable worth of the blood of Jesus Christ that God's justice is vindicated and that sin is justly punished. It is upon the inestimable worth of the blood of Jesus Christ that God's mercy is shown to Hell-deserving sinners. God is pleased to testify that His demands have been fully met by the death of His Own

Firstborn, and that sin is properly dealt with. He does therefore give this testimony when He brings forth from death His Son, and in Resurrection declares His satisfaction. **"He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied"** (Isa. 53:11). Mercy is therefore extended because sin has been punished. But why does God save sinners? Why does He do it? Why?

This question needs to be asked and answers need to be found. For God to receive great honor that is due Him, we need an answer. For God's people to be made to know of God's great love, we need an answer. For our security and full assurance in the Blessed Hope, we need an answer.

In searching for an answer, let us look again at the text Scriptures. **"This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise. I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins"** (Isa. 43:21, 25).

Surely God formed a people for Himself. When God dwelt alone in eternity, it was His good pleasure that designed to create. When there was none else, nor anything else, He had already declared, I AM.

No influence could have been exerted upon God. No pressure could have been felt by Him who was alone and complete to do or not to do. It was all to His own pleasure and glory that He created. The only motive came from Himself alone.

In this timeless past, He, according to His own divine prerogatives did determine to bring forth in creation. He did, willingly, voluntarily, and in infinite love enter into everlasting covenant with Himself to secure

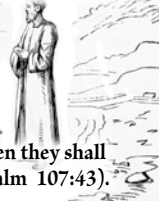
♦ (Continued on page 3)



Light Contemplations

By Luke Austin
of Cadillac, Michigan

"Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD" (Psalm 107:43).



CONSIDER THEIR END

"And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High? Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches" (Ps. 73:11-12).

I currently see it in many of God's people, this dissatisfaction with all that the ungodly are accomplishing today. Now if I am honest I am sure I have been here before and if you are honest so have you. But we should not dwell here, in this state of being dissatisfied with the sovereign plan of God. Has this creation suddenly left the plan and control of God? Certainly not. Even if you do not like what is happening right now you must confess if God is in complete control then this must fall within His plan. Now this is not me justifying the deeds of the ungodly in this country. Hopefully this just gets your perspective back on track.

Consider the psalmist of chapter 73. If I were to write all that he was in a kerfuffle about this would end up looking like a book. But go read it for yourself and listen to the tone of Asaph. "It is not fair, Lord." This pretty much sums up the heart of Asaph, "not fair." Does this not sum up the attitude of many of God's people right now? "It is not fair Lord." "Look at what they are doing Lord." "Lord, why do the wicked get away with such things?" "Lord, can you not see?" This funk that Asaph was in is the same as many are finding themselves in right now. Asaph

was so grieved he got to the place where it was too painful for him to think about. **"When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me" (Ps. 73:16).**

What snapped Asaph out of it? What finally got Asaph's head back on straight? **"Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end. Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors" (Ps. 73:17-19).** When Asaph considered the ungodly's end, he realized he had it all wrong. He realized how blessed he is to know the Lord. He remembered his sure salvation in God. He remembered that this earth is not his home. He remembered that no matter how difficult his life is now, the sufferings of this present time were not worthy to be compared to the glory that should be revealed in him. What about you dear Christian? Have you forgotten your end?

Have you forgotten their end? We do not rejoice in their end. In fact, we are sent to preach the gospel to them in hopes that God grant them repentance. We do not know who are the elect of God so we preach to all wicked sinners. But let them have their seeming victories now, for they are temporary. When all the purposes of God are accomplished, when the wicked are allowed to unify and fight against the LORD and

His Christ, He shall defeat them with a word. With the sword of His mouth He shall make an end of the ungodly. He shall cast them into the Lake of Fire and the smoke of their torment shall ascend forever and ever.

Let us not forget the end of those found in Christ. **"And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And 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" (Rev. 21:3-4).**

(Luke Austin is a member of the Cadillac Baptist Church of Cadillac, Michigan.)



Why Sinners Are

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from the then as yet uncreated mass of men, a people for Himself; a people that would praise and honor His name. And He did it for His own sake.

God brought forth Adam. Out of the dust of the earth He made him. He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and he became a living soul. He brought him forth in His own image; in His own likeness. From Adam, God took a rib and made woman to be a help meet for him; to be his companion. From this lump all of Adam's race came forth, each in his own time.

Adam, being made in the image and likeness of God, had at his beginning the capacity to commune with God, and to walk pleasing in His sight. He was made just and upright (Eccl. 7:29) and was free of sin.

But sin marred him. It defiled him. It corrupted him and rendered him unsuited to walk with, or to serve a Thrice Holy God. Adam sinned because he chose to rebel against God.

Because this people (God's people) who came through a sin-ridden Adam are equally guilty, of Adam's original sin, does this make God the author of sin? God forbid. Adam sinned willingly. He sinned because he chose to sin; to hearken unto the voice of the woman rather than to the voice of God. God is not the author of sin.

Adam was not created as a robot. He could have been, but he was not. God could have brought forth a robot and the activities of that robot could and would have been to the honor and praise of God. God had purposed and designed His creation to His own praise and glory, and His wise counsel anticipated greater honor from a creature that could sin. Here is great honor to God: to permit His creature to sin; and then to recover him from that sin and cause him to stand in Christ, holy, and unblamable before Him in love (Eph. 1:4).

In the consummation of all things, God's precious covenanted elect will be forever before Him in true holiness. There they will continually sing praise to Him who is worthy. **"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:9-10).**

Knowing that God sees the end from the beginning, we are persuaded that God's decrees

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Why Sinners Are

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are all harmonious and that they are the means unto the end. The consummation of all things is to the glory and praise of Almighty God.

Our election therefore is but one means, but it is to something. It is to the glorification that awaits every blood-bought saint, and will in due time be our experimental standing before God.

Since our unconditional election is to this ultimate end, then so must be our justification, our calling, and our glorification in bodily resurrection. It is to this end that we have been predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. It is to this end **“that Christ died, yea rather that is risen again.”** It is to this end that we are secure. Our standing is in Christ, and is based upon the merit of His sufficient sacrifice. The blood of that sacrifice has been applied upon the mercy seat, in the presence of God, for us.

Because all God's decrees show forth His majesty and grace, then they are the means God is using to bring us into conformity with His precious Son. Therefore, when we are brought into conformity, we shall be fit subjects to stand before God. We shall then be vessels meet for the Master's use.

In Ephesians, Chapter 1, we find the reason stated as to the entire question. It is abundantly clear that whatsoever God has done is for His own honor and praise. It is here presented in a threefold manner, and upon this declaration we are assured and caused to be settled.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as

he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved” (Eph. 1:3-6).

God's unconditional election of His people, His predestination of them to conformity with His Dear Son, His blessing of them with all spiritual blessings, and their acceptance before Him provides an answer to our question as to why God saves sinners. Praise God, it is **“to the praise of the glory of his grace.”**

“In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we HAVE obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ” (Eph. 1:7-12) (emph. DT).

As God's eternal purpose has been to the praise of His glory, so has His providing our present standing in Christ. Our possession of redemption through His blood and the inheritance we now have in Him will and does rebound to

the praise of His glory.

“In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory” (Eph. 1:13-14).

God has never saved a single sinner for the purpose of that sinner being kept out of the lake of fire. To be sure, that is a marvelous benefit that accrues to the sinner, but it does not constitute a reason for God to perform His work of recovery.

All reason must be harmonious with God's eternal purpose. Since God's purpose is clearly set forth in Holy Writ, we must conclude that all motive is with God Himself. His righteous acts are always to His own honor, praise, and glory. **“This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise”** (Isa. 43:21).



The New Birth

(Continued from page 1) ♦

If the Bible is plain on any subject that we might name, it is certainly plain on the doctrine of the New Birth, and I forewarn you that the New Birth is a doctrinal subject; it is filled with the great doctrines of Jesus. It is needed, perhaps, in this hour of skepticism and unbelief more than it has ever been needed across 6,000 years of human history.

The reason that the New Birth is not being preached more today is because people rebel at the idea of the miraculous, denouncing and denying that God works a work in the human heart. It seems from the false premise that salvation is dependent upon a man's character

rather than the specific, direct work of God.

I believe, with all my heart, that if we would lay aside every preconceived idea and notion and with open hearts and minds examine these verses that I have read, accepting the truth of them, believing what Jesus Christ here tells us, we will be fortified against skepticism and doubts, grateful for this marvelous passage in the Book of God; rejoicing in the fact that we, as believers in Christ Jesus, the Lord, are twice born.

A great deal has been said about this third chapter of the Gospel according to John which is not true. First of all, I want you to notice why Nicodemus came to Jesus in the first place. Now we are not concerned with the time element that becomes involved (he came to Jesus by night), but we are concerned with the purpose of the visit itself.

Only recently, I noticed an editorial on “Why Nicodemus Came To Jesus” in a religious paper, and the writer said this: “Nicodemus came to Jesus to ask of Jesus the way of life.” Now there is not anything further from the truth than that. Here was a man of noble birth, steeped in the traditions of the Jews, who had completely gotten away from the spiritual side of the law; he was only concerned and only concerned himself with the moral issues involved in the law itself. The spiritual precepts set forth in the teachings of the law were overlooked and completely forgotten. He came to Jesus to court the favour of the Master and that only. He commended Him for performing the great miracles that He had performed, and here is what he said: **“...we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these**

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Narrow Paths

By Doug Newell IV of
Clendenin, West Virginia

"Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matthew 7:14).

NOT CONDEMNED

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:18).

The soul that trusts in Jesus Christ shall be saved, shall not perish nor be condemned. This verse is about your legal standing before God, not your good works. If I condemn someone, what am I doing? I am passing judgment on them and I have declared them guilty. If I find myself in court, and I hear, "Doug Newell, the court finds you guilty on all charges and sentences you to hang by the neck until dead," I am a condemned man. Some people might cheer, some might cry, but I am condemned. The trial is over and my fate is sealed. Jesus said, if you do not believe in Him, you are condemned already. Right now. Guilty. A condemned man.

But Jesus gives life and pardon. Jesus did not come to condemn because we were already condemned. Jesus came to save sinners who needed saving. He came to give life to those who did not have it. He came to give pardon to those who were due to perish. To see or enter in to the kingdom of God, a man must be born again. The natural man needs spiritual life that can only come by the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit of God. Whosoever has faith in the Son of God, shall not perish. But why would he perish? Because he is a sinner and has

broken the law. The natural man is dead in trespasses and in sins, born under a curse. We willingly break God's law and are unwilling to do right and the condemnation for law breakers is death. The wages of sin is death, and unless we are born again, we will not only die in the flesh but die the second death in the fires of Hell.

"But he who believes is not condemned," is present tense. That means those who believe have life, and the promise and hope of eternal life, but also have been justified. We have been found innocent. How can guilty sinners be found innocent? The righteousness of Jesus Christ has been imputed to our account by faith. Freed from the condemnation of sin that we deserved and declared innocent of all charges. We face judgment in the future because our sins have already been dealt with. The Father judged our sins in Christ Jesus, who was made sin for us. Jesus was declared guilty on my behalf, because he bore my sins and was punished on the cross in my stead. The Father was satisfied with the punishment and the debt of sin was paid. I was pardoned, forgiven. I also, by faith, received Jesus' righteousness. By faith in Christ, by God's grace, I am righteousness. I am innocent because I have been pardoned, forgiven, cleansed and then given the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

(Doug Newell IV is pastor of the Buffalo Valley Baptist Church of Clay, West Virginia.)



The New Birth

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miracles that thou doest, except God be with him" (John 3:2).

Where is the question? Where is the inquiry? Where do you find that Nicodemus asked the Master, "Lord, what about the way of life; will you tell it to me?"

The Bible is silent on that. It is foolhardy to read into the Word of God something that the Word of God does not say. The mind of the Spirit knew what He wanted us to learn from these passages, and that which He wanted us to learn is set forth in words easy to be understood. Therefore, Nicodemus came to court the favor of Jesus, and offered to Him words of praise and commendation.

Then I want you to notice the tactfulness of Jesus---those of you who do personal work can learn something from this. The Lord Jesus Christ, who knows all there is to know about us, knows our uprisings and our down sittings, knows the end from the beginning, and knows the thoughts and intents of our hearts, knew that the thing closest to the heart of Nicodemus was not his wealth, not his prestige because of the office he held, but the thing closest to the heart of Nicodemus was his birth, his background. He was a descendant of the great patriot---he was a man, therefore, of noble birth, and being a man of noble birth, he exulted in that fact; thus, Jesus knowing his heart, began to speak to him concerning a birth.

So we see the tactfulness of Jesus. When He talked to a man who derived his livelihood from the business of fishing, He talked to him about fishing---only on a spiritual plane. When He talked to a man about a spiritual thing He searched the background of

that man, reading his heart, and He would turn that which was closest to the man's heart into a spiritual fact; thus, gaining the man's attention and everlasting gratitude. To the rich man, He talked about riches; to the poor man, He talked about poverty, that He might win him, but always He directed His conversation in the channels of a spiritual nature just as He did here in the third chapter of John.

Here in the text, Jesus turns to Nicodemus and has this to say: "Ye must be born again; you have an illustrious background; you are a descendant of one of the twelve spies who spied out the land and gave an honest and true report. You have much of which to be proud, but in spite of your illustrious background, your good morals, ye need to experience another birth."

Jesus said, **"Ye must be born again."** And in the third verse of the text: **"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."** It makes no difference, beloved, how good you appear to be; it makes no difference about your background, what family you are from, Jesus would come to you and say, **"Ye must be born again."** There is no substitute for the New Birth. May I say, beloved, that there are no substitutes for the cardinal doctrine of the Book of God. When Jesus said, **"Ye must be born again,"** He meant just exactly what He said. There is no evading the truth; there is no denying the fact of the necessity of the New Birth. Men need not close their eyes to this great fundamental truth; they must face the inevitable fact that the New Birth is necessary; it is essential.

In order for you to have lived in this world, you had to experience

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The New Birth

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the birth that we call the birth of the flesh. Before you can live in the kingdom of God, you must experience the birth from God, the spiritual birth. Let me pause long enough here to throw this out for your consideration: did you do anything toward bringing yourself into the world? Did you have any part in your conception and birth? Certainly not. A power outside yourself, a power other than that which you had yourself, was the cause of your conception and your birth. Therefore, men cannot have any part in producing the new birth; they cannot work their way into God's creation. Regardless of how men try, regardless of the efforts they put forth, regardless of all their good intentions, they must be born again.

You can study the lives and characters of men, and you will not find a man in all the Book of God with a more illustrious background than Nicodemus, and yet Jesus said, "That is beside the point; ye must be born again."

Then we would notice the third thing: what the New Birth is not. You know, many people get the mistaken idea that they can turn over a new leaf. In just a little over two months we begin a new year. On New Year's Day people will make their resolutions. They will promise themselves: "I am going to be better this year; I am going to quit drinking, gambling, cursing; I am going to change thoroughly; I am going to be a new person." And they actually mean that. But a few weeks after those New Year's resolutions they drift back into the same old rut, because they found out that the reformation of life wrought no satisfaction and no peace; there was something

definitely lacking. So the New Birth is not the turning over of a new leaf. The New Birth is not New Year's resolutions. The New Birth is not the reformation of life, as some would have you believe.

In II Peter 2, and in the closing verses of this remarkable chapter, the Apostle Peter is describing false teachers and prophets. He points out those who follow after these deceivers, and then the Apostle Peter said, **"But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire"** (II Pet. 2:22).

That is the consummation of the reformation of life. Peter is discussing the person that tries to clean up and follow after that which teaches that salvation is by character; they make good resolutions; they try to reform their lives, but in only a little while, they are like the old "dog that turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

"But," somebody will say, "Brother Cox, that is a case of apostasy. Those people were actually saved and then they became lost."

I deny that. Since when does the Bible class God's people as "dogs and hogs"? When you find in the Word of God here the Holy Spirit has designated God's people as hogs and dogs, I will believe that apostasy is possible.

I have before me C. I. Scofield's reference Bible, containing the King James Version, put out by the Oxford Press. I think that C. I. Scofield's Bible is a fine Bible. It is fine on how that men are saved, it is sound on the security of the believer in Christ, it is sound on the New Birth, but it is rotten to the core on the doctrine of

the church. On church truth he missed the truth a country mile.

He speaks concerning the Lord's church and talks constantly about the church's apostasy, that the Lord's church would apostatize. I do not believe the first word of that---not the Lord's church. You are going to have to agree with the Divine Son of God and accept what Jesus said in Matthew 16:18-19, or disbelieve what the Master has said and accept the theorizing of men.

What did the Master say? Did He say that the church, His church, would apostatize? Did He say that His church would go so far from the truth that it would lose its identity? No! He said, **"... upon this rock (Christ Himself) I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it"** (Matt. 16:18). And in Ephesians 3:21: **"Unto him (that is God) be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."** The Lord's church apostatize? I hardly think so; for Jesus said, **"The gates of hell shall not prevail against"** My church." I believe that with all my heart. I believe that the council of the unseen world shall "not" prevail against the Lord's church.

And then we would notice another thing that the New Birth is not: it is not the reformation of life. May I repeat with emphasis: I would accept this as a strong passage teaching the individual case of apostasy (in II Peter 2:22) if God's Book designated God's people as hound "dogs and old sows that wallow in the mire." But here is exactly what the Apostle Peter is talking about: the person that made the resolution, reformed his life, quit his meanness and in a little while ran out of gas, did so because he did not have much to begin with. He reformed his life;

he was not transformed by Christ.

You can take an old sow, as the Proverb says, bring her into the parlor, cut her toe nails, trim her ears, paint her face, wash her until she smells like a baby; you can put powder all over her, wash and scrub her, clean her until she is cleaner than a human, put a ribbon around her neck and a few on her ears. She looks fine, but turn her loose and it will not be three minutes until she is right back wallowing in the mire. Why? Because it is her nature to do so. Her nature has not been changed in the least by all the cleaning on the outside. They washed her on the outside, painted her face, trimmed her hoofs, trimmed her ears, but her nature remained the same; she remained a hog, and that is why she returned to the mud puddle. So it is with men, women, boys and girls who decide to clean up their lives. They join the church---that is all there is to it, they think---and in just a little while they go back as the "dog to his vomit and the sow to her wallowing in the mire." And it is not a case of apostasy, beloved, but it is a case of never having experienced the New Birth. Their nature has never been changed.

Now you might ask me the question: "Brother Cox, what did Nicodemus mean?"

You know, I did not realize that people could err so much from the truth. The third chapter of John, first 10 verses, is just as plain as John 3:16. There is nothing different about it. There might be some things involved in the New Birth that you can not understand, but as far as the description laid down in the Book of God, there is nothing of a difficult nature about it. Yet I read one time where a man said that Nicodemus was so upset and disturbed because he did

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Small Drops

By Joseph M. Sidders of
Temperance, Michigan

"My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God" (Deuteronomy 32:2-3).



THE VICTORY HAS BEEN WON

Over the past several months, I have been asked by so many if these are the end times. Questions concerning Bible prophecy and the events detailed in the book of Revelation seem to be on everyone's minds right now. How should they react? How should they instruct their children? How do they deal with the myriad of losses (jobs, security, normalcy, death) affecting their loved ones? One particular question that comes up often is whether we are being called to forceful action, or if we should continue waiting patiently for relief from the hurting and confusion all around us.

In II Chronicles 20, Judah was under incredible distress as a great multitude began their approach. Fear fell upon their king, Jehoshaphat. What did he do? Scripture tells us he went to house of the Lord and prayed. He recited the promises of God the Father in verse 9 which said: **"If, when evil cometh upon us, as the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we stand before this house, and in thy presence, (for thy name is in this house,) and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help."** He was greatly outnumbered, with dangers on every side; there was nowhere to run nor man-made weaponry strong enough to save them. They needed their God's arm of protection. He was not frozen in indecision, he did

the only thing he knew to do: call on the name of the Lord.

We should indeed "arm up," but guns, anger, and fighting will only harm the flesh. Above losing our health, freedom, and lives to the chaos of a lost and dying world, I see folks daily on the verge of losing the very faith needed to provide the solace they seek to get through these trials. Jehoshaphat turned to the Lord, and a messenger was sent to deliver this message: **"...Thus saith the LORD unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's...Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the LORD will be with you"** (II Chron. 20:15, 17).

As we read the remainder of the chapter, we see the faith of Judah on display as Jehoshaphat delivers the message to his people. They sing praise unto the Lord for His faithfulness and to the beauty of His holiness. They celebrated the victory that had been promised BEFORE it was even delivered because they trusted their God. God is not surprised about the current state of our nation, and brothers and sister, we have already been promised victory. Have you celebrated it lately? If not, have you asked the Lord to heal you or those around you?

My advice during these

unsettling times is to be **"wise as serpents and harmless as doves"** (Matt. 10:16). Paul wrote to the church in Ephesus of the armor that we are to put on. He says, **"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked"** (Eph. 6:16).

This is not the time to take shots at those who are standing firm on the ground opposite of yours beloved, but rather it is a time to armor up and trust in the victory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(Joseph Sidders is pastor of the Grace Missionary Baptist Church of Temperance, Michigan.)



The New Birth

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not understand the New Birth, inasmuch at this particular time, was the first he had ever heard about the New Birth, that Jesus had introduced a new doctrine the Jews had never heretofore known anything about.

Now this is modernism pure and simple, and actually, as far as I am personally concerned, that is rank infidelity. It depicts one of two things: either a person disbelieves the Word of God or he has never read it. Notice what the 9th and 10th verses of John 3 have to say: Jesus, when Nicodemus asked Him the question, **"How can these things be?"** and **"Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?"**

Do you think for one moment of time that if Nicodemus had no way of knowing previous to this conversation he had with Jesus, that Jesus would have deliberately mocked and criticized him for not knowing something about which he could not have possibly known, had it not been taught? But it had been taught; it had been taught for 4,000 years. God introduced

it in the Garden of Eden--the doctrine of the New Birth. The doctrine of the New Birth is just as old as mankind; every person that has ever been saved, or ever will be saved, was saved when he experienced the New Birth.

It makes no difference what people believe or say or think, there is no way for men to be saved apart and separate from the New Birth. Jesus makes it plain in the text; for three times He said, **"Ye must be born again."** There is no substitute for it. It is a spiritual truth, not a fleshly birth. Jesus tells us in John 3:6-7 **"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I say unto thee, Ye must be born again."**

That which is born of the flesh is flesh, that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Man, you know, is a triune being: he has a body, soul and spirit. The body of man is that which makes him world-conscious; the soul of man is that which makes him self-conscious, or conscious of self, and the spirit of man makes him capable of being God-conscious, capable of communing with God. The spirit, that is the thing that is born of the spirit of God, the spirit inside of man, that which you cannot see--the spiritual birth.

I cannot pass up this text, John 3:5, without commenting on it. Jesus, the second time, said to Nicodemus, **"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."**

I wish to drive home this fact concerning this text: First, last and always the way that men enter the kingdom of God is through the new birth. He is born into the kingdom of God just as he is born into the family of God. But

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The New Birth

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notice there are some people who say that the 5th verse means that men are baptized into the family of God, but men are baptized into the church, not the family or kingdom of God (I Cor. 12:13).

But I want you to get this: the word "water" spoken of here in John 3:5 has no reference to literal water; it is used first; it precedes the word "spirit"; then, if you take it literally, man has to be baptized, and then he experiences the New Birth afterwards. Do you believe that? I do not; for the Bible does not teach it. I want you to get it now. In the first place, baptism is not a birth and we are talking about a birth. Where in all the Book of God can you find that baptism is a birth? Baptism is a burial in water. Romans 6:4 says, **"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."** We are buried with Him in baptism into death.

Baptism, therefore, is not a birth. If baptism were a birth then water would be the mother of the new born soul, but water is not my mother, thank you! But get this now: water is used throughout the New Testament to illustrate the Spirit. In John 7:37-39, **"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet**

glorified.)"

Therefore, water means the Spirit. So actually here is what Jesus said: "Except a man be born of water and (that word "and" is kai in the Greek, and it means 'even') or even the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

Let us notice the verse in its entirety. "Except a man be born of water "even" the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

I want you to notice the two agents God uses in producing the New Birth. They both work harmoniously; you cannot separate one from the other. They both have their own office, that is, the Word of God and the Spirit of God. God uses both agents to produce the New Birth, and God did not mean here in the text that He uses the Spirit as the only agent. He uses both the Word and the Spirit. Actually, the Holy Spirit is the agent and the Word is the instrument.

Then notice in the 16th verse that He speaks of **"believers."** And we might ask the question: how do men believe? **"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"** (Rom. 10:17). Paul writing to the Corinthian brethren said in I Corinthians 4:15, **"For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel."**

Again in I Peter 1:23, 25 **"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. . .this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."**

And then in James 1:18, **"Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures."**

Thus, it takes both the Spirit of God and the Word of God to produce the New Birth. Men experience the New Birth through the operation of the Spirit and the Gospel. **"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life...For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved"** (John 3:14-15, 17).

But faith is the effect of the New Birth, and not the cause. So men experience the New Birth when the Spirit with the Word imparts life to them. Jesus explained it. When men hear the truth of God then the Holy Spirit uses the Word, the Word of God, to bring lasting conviction to their hearts and gives them enabling grace to trust in Jesus Christ--and this enabling grace is the impartation of life by the Spirit of God. **"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ"** (Gal. 3:26), actually sons. One who is a child by birth is a son by faith.

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God..." (I John 5:1). Actually this should read: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God." So men believe in Christ as the effect of the New Birth.

Now we come to the last thought and that is: What are the results of the New Birth? Men become the children of God; they are born into the family of God. They have not been worked over; they have not been "overhauled," but they have been made new creatures in Christ Jesus, the Lord: these are the results of the New Birth.

"Therefore," said Paul, **"if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: Old things are passed**

away; behold, all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17).

If a man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature. Then what does the Master do on the inside of man? He does not reform; He transforms men's lives. There is a great deal of difference in self-reformation and the transforming power of God: He transforms. When men believe in Christ and experience the birth which is from above, they become the children of God, and they are born into the family of God, the kingdom, and it is the power of the Lord that transforms them; thus, they become new creatures in Christ Jesus the Lord. Their very life is changed. I want you to get it now: implanted in the believer's heart, implanted in the twice-born soul, is the very nature of the Divine Son of God. It is there, whether folk accept it or not. **"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust"** (II Pet. 1:4).

When is the Divine nature implanted in a man's heart? When he experiences the New Birth, because the nature of Jesus Christ that has been planted inwardly is that which transforms him, and he becomes a new creature. **"Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him"** (Col. 3:9-10).

He is a new man because he has been created in the very image of Him that created him. He takes on the likeness of God; implanted in his heart is the nature of Jesus Christ; he has been born into the

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Brief Truths

By Randy Johnson of
Texarkana, Texas



"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation" (Ephesians 1:13).

SALVATION IS MORE THAN FAITH

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

There are a lot of so-called Christians that believe this Scripture is absolute proof that salvation includes works. Well it would, if taken alone and out of context, but in context it is saying that a man without works is a lost man. How can God tell us in the Scripture that salvation is **"...not of works..."** (Eph. 2:9), and then tell us that works is part of salvation? There are a lot of scriptural examples that condemn the thought that works is in anyway part of salvation. Here are just a few, Ephesians 2:8-9, Galatians 2:21, Romans 8:3, Romans 11:6, James 2:10-11, and there are many more. There is not one single Scripture in the Bible that is as clear as Ephesians 2:9, not one!

People that believe in works for salvation cannot be saved or God saved them and they are really confused about the Scriptures. It is impossible for the writing of the Scriptures to be out of context because the Holy Spirit is the author of the Scriptures. The Scriptures were not written for the natural person to understand them, the Scriptures are like a parable to the lost person, they cannot make heads or tails of them. **"Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth;**

comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor. 2:13-14). This makes it impossible for a lost person to understand the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit does not teach non-truths just as He did not inspire people to write contradiction. **"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness"** (II Tim. 3:16).

So the very thought that Paul and James believed or wrote in contradiction is very ungodly and confusing. Therefore, the conclusion of what James is saying is, if a person is saved and they have no works in their life, then they are not saved. Because faith in Jesus Christ always brings works, always. A person may not be as much a worker as the strongest in faith, but there are works of truth in their life. **"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit"** (John 15:2).

If one pretends to believe in Christ and bears no fruit then they are not truly in Christ. God did not save that dead sinner to be fruitless, it is our fruits that glorify Jesus Christ and our Father and if there are no works then there is no glory to God. God left nothing up

to the creature to self-accomplish, or a person is not a bad Christian that has no works, God through the Holy Spirit accomplishes our works, therefore there are no bad Christians in Christ. **"For all this I considered in my heart even to declare all this, that the righteous, and the wise, and their works, are in the hand of God: no man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them"** (Eccl. 9:1). **"LORD, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us"** (Isa. 26:12).

Therefore, the conclusion must be that self-works for salvation is dead—that self-works in Christ is dead—because we are what God through the Holy Spirit hath made us. Great workers in Christ are great workers through the Holy Spirit's power, just as all Christian workers are. However, we must conclude that all in Christ will have works of righteousness because all in Christ must glorify God in some part of their life otherwise, they are dead branches. **"Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only"** (James 2:24), showing God's glory through your works.

Just because someone says they are a Christian does not make them a Christian. Just because a person appears to have good works does not mean they are a Christian. **"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity"** (Matt. 7:21).

A sinner must have faith in Jesus Christ as their Saviour, and if they do, they must have a show of their faith by some works to glorify God. **"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble"** (James 2:17-19).

Be careful in what you believe, there is only one truth and one salvation, and many lies of Satan. **"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me"** (John 5:39). They testify of Jesus as Saviour, not your works.

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The New Birth

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family of God, and the power of Jesus transforms his life. If the power of Jesus does not transform his life, he has not experienced the New Birth. This is the truth taught in the Word of God, and I am going to say with the old Negro preacher I heard many years ago---one of the greatest sermons I have ever heard---who asked in closing the question: "Have you been born again? Have you experienced the birth from above? Have you felt the power of God? Has the power of Jesus transformed your life? Have you been born again?"

That is what I would ask you. If you have not, may the Spirit of God take the Word and use it to implant life in you. Amen.



Little Valleys

By Timothy J. Hille of
Ashland, Illinois



"He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills." (Psalms 104:10).

HE WAS SENT ON FOOT INTO THE VALLEY

Judges 5:15

"And the princes of Issachar were with Deborah; even Issachar, and also Barak: he was sent on foot into the valley." The ancient hero of faith, Barak, was called upon to stand in the gap, to venture and risk himself for Israel, God's people's sake. He was called, and chosen, and faithful. **"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful"** (Rev. 17:14). Like in the times of our text, there is a warfare today. **"Now these are the nations which the LORD left, to prove Israel by them, even as many of Israel as had not known all the wars of Canaan; Only that the generations of the children of Israel might know, to teach them war, at the least such as before knew nothing thereof"** (Judges 3:1-2). The warfare of their day was both physical and spiritual. Ours is not a warfare against flesh and blood, and we had better not think to use the carnal weapons of this world, but instead put on the spiritual armor or light that God has supplied, and have gripped firmly in our hands both the shield of faith and the sword of the Spirit, which is the infallible, holy, and eternally abiding Word of God. We cannot tell by the way that many are living if they are aware that there is a warfare raging, a warfare of utmost consequence.

Not all stood and fought in the time of Deborah and Barak. Yet, there was on the side of God and righteousness, a champion, who went down into the valley against the many and mighty forces of the enemy, and prevailed.

I want you to notice that, first of all, Barak was sent. The Bible is very explicit and emphatic that none can serve God except they be sent. **"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things"** (Rom. 10:13-15)! Beloved, I thank God today that there is One who was sent, who was sent down to fight the enemy, and who was victorious, and led captivity captive. I thank God that He sent His Son Jesus Christ into the world to save sinners. **"He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me"** (Matt. 10:40). In the days of Deborah and Barak, God sent a deliverer, a captain, to lead the people to victory and deliverance from the oppression of their enemies. God has sent a Savior – and let me emphasize that God has sent one and only one Savior into the world – to save His people from their sins, the Lord Jesus Christ. **"Neither**

is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

Jesus sent His church into the world, to bear witness unto the world of Him. **"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you"** (John 20:21). The Lord's church is authorized, commissioned, and has official duties to perform, namely to preach the gospel to every creature, and to baptize and indoctrinate those who believe. **"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen"** (Matt. 28:18-20).

I want you to notice that Barak was sent on foot. His enemies had nine hundred chariots of iron. Barak and his men were mere infantry. They marched into battle on foot. They were at a disadvantage, as far as human military weaponry and tactics were concerned. Many today think that if we do not have the things of the false churches and religious organizations of the world, and if we do not employ the things that are wise and profitable in the eyes of the flesh, that we are at a disadvantage. Going afoot is not as fun, fancy, or fashionable as riding in a chariot. Riding in a chariot does not require as much exhausting and tedious labor as marching on foot. To the world, there is a better way to accomplish things than the

way Jesus has commanded and instructed, a better way than **"the foolishness of preaching"** (I Cor. 1:21) the pure and unadulterated gospel of the dear Son of God, and like Christ and His apostles, being **"made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day"** (I Cor. 4:13).

Beloved, our Savior was sent on foot into the valley. He humbled Himself to take on Him the likeness of sinful flesh, to be made a partaker of flesh and blood. He took upon Himself the form of a servant. Being on foot speaks also of weary treading. Being on foot exposes us to greater difficulty, danger, and weariness. When tempted with hunger, did Christ command the stones to be made bread? No. He never used His divine power for His own convenience or comfort. He was meek and lowly. He did not come in the radiant and majestic glory which He had as the second Person of the Godhead, and of which He was mindful when He prayed to His heavenly Father, **"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was"** (John 17:5). He did not even come as a prince or a person of high station, but came as the servant of the living God to do all God's will, and made Himself the servant of others to accomplish their salvation.

We, like our Savior, are sent afoot. We ride no gallant steeds, brave warhorses, or armored chariots. We follow in His steps. We walk by faith. We walk through the valley of the shadow of death. We are, it would seem, at a great disadvantage. But we are sent to be victorious, and the battle is the Lord's. We must not expect anything but that

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Little Valleys

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which our Savior experienced. The servant is not greater than his Lord. It is enough that the disciple be as his Master.

We long to be on the mountain top of glory. But at this present time we are sent into the valley. The warfare is in the valley. Is our God not **“God of the valleys”** (I Kings 20:28)? What was in this particular valley into which Barak marched on foot to fight the Lord’s battles? The river Kishon. Who created the rivers that are in the valleys? Who appointed the streams which feed those rivers, and the winter snows and rains in the mountains that feed those streams? Who turns the rivers of waters, as well as the hearts of men, withersoever He will? Our God! God had appointed that this river would wash away the slain of the enemy. **“The river of Kishon swept them away, that ancient river, the river Kishon. O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength”** (Judges 5:21).

Our Savior drank of the brook in the way. **“The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries. He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head”** (Ps. 110:4-7). He was exalted because of He suffered according to the will of God. He was victorious in His sufferings and death, drinking the awful cup of woe that the Father had appointed Him, that He might

save us from a destiny far worse than mere physical death, and bring us to God. Does He not call us to drink of the cup which He drinks, to partake of that which He partakes? **“If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together”** (Rom. 8:17). Our victory is in Him. Our victory is the way of the cross of our blessed Lord and Savior. Our path is to go afoot into the valley. He has sent us, let us go.

(Timothy J. Hille is pastor of the Pleasant Plains Baptist Church of Pleasant Plains, Illinois.)



The New Drug

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are viewing porn on the internet. 42.7% of internet users view porn.

I was at a homeschool convention and met a man: Barret Johnson. He was a speaker in one of the break out sessions. He started the session by saying, “What if I told you that of college students 88% of non-Christians are addicted to meth, cocaine, drugs; and that 80% of Christians of the same college students were also addicted? Would you think we had a problem on our hand?” He then went on to say that those are the numbers of college students who are having sex outside of marriage! 88% of people who claim to not be a Christian are having sex outside of marriage and 80% of professed Christians are also having sex. Now I am certain that in our day of easy-believism and decision regeneration that some of those “professed Christians” are nominal Christians. Nevertheless..those are some staggering numbers. Do not think that these numbers are unattached to the usage of pornography. There is a correlation between pre-marital sex and porn.

Here is another question he asked: “What is the average age of a boy and girl when they are first exposed to pornography?” In my head I thought, well 12, 13, 14 for a boy and a girl, I have no idea. WRONG! The average age for a boy: 8-10; The average age for a girl: 10-12. I am going to rewrite that because it bears re-writing. The average age that a boy is exposed to pornography is 8-10 years old. The average age that a girl is exposed to pornography is the age of 10-12 years old.

Now, I know what you are thinking, “Not my babies, not my kids...no, we go to church, we go to Sunday School, Sunday Morning, Sunday Night, we do not even have a TV (by the way I have a T.V.), my kids know better. Brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers...remember these are little sinners and do you remember what sinners do? They sin. No one is exempt from this sin. NO ONE!

A few years ago I was preaching and I mentioned the word “sex” from the pulpit. Later, after I had finished preaching, a member of the church, a wonderful man, who was full of faith, and sound in the doctrines of our Savior said, “I have never heard the word ‘sex’ in the pulpit before.” I replied, “Well, that sure explains how we got to where we are today.” No one is talking about it. Parents are not talking to their children about it; children are not talking to their parents about it. It is an uncomfortable subject for those of us who are parents today. I cannot speak for everyone, but I was not home-schooled. I went to a public school. And we had sex-education. Guess what? They do not teach what God says about sex in the Bible in the public school sex-education class. Also, if you are a home schooling

parent...YOU ARE THE SEX EDUCATION INSTRUCTOR. So you better get ready and prepared to talk about it. And this includes pornography.

Here is another staggering statistic: A survey taken by 1,300 pastors at pastors.com (a site I have never been to) revealed that 54% of pastors had been to pornography sites on the internet in the last year (a 2012 article), and 30% had looked at pornography in the last 30 days. Look, I know that these are most likely not Sovereign Grace, Landmark, Missionary Baptists, but let us not think that we are exempt because we put certain adjectives that describe our doctrine before our name. Every one of us in the pulpit are sinners (hopefully saved by grace, and called to preach by God).

LET US TALK MONEY

The pornography business is a \$13 Billion (with a “B”) a year industry. That is more than the top tech companies: (Microsoft, Google, Amazon, Yahoo, Ebay, NetFlix, EarthLink) COMBINED! Selling sex is one of the oldest businesses in the world and right now, business is good. In the United States alone, every 30 minutes another pornographic film is made; 89% of pornographic web pages are constructed in the United States. Another article: *The Valley Exposed* (from 2007) stated, “The 200 adult-entertainment companies operating in the San Fernando Valley rake in an estimated \$1 billion a year, but little of that makes it into city tax coffers. Tax exemptions granted to all types of movie production companies – including adult entertainment – allowed them to pay just \$1.4 million in city business taxes last year, a fraction of the \$435 million collected in the entertainment capital of the

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. Could you please comment on James 2:5?"

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James 2:5 states: **"Hearken my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?"**

The context of the verse in question is dealing with the sin of showing favor or partiality to the wealthy and well dressed over and above the poor in the congregation of the saints. Evidently some of the professing believers were judging others by their outward appearance and wealth. They would show preferential treatment by giving the wealthy man the best seat. James is clearly warning against such worldly and wicked behavior. The ground is level at the cross. Regardless of race, gender, social standing, or earthly riches all believers are washed in the same blood of the Lamb and indwelt by the same Holy Spirit. Galatians 3:28 states: **"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."** Colossians 3:10-11 is very similar: **"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision**

nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all." As such, all believers in Christ should treat one another with respect, love, and grace.

In James 2:5 the writer is urging his Christian readers, who he considers to be beloved brethren, to listen carefully to his admonition and rationale. He asks them a question that demands an affirmative answer. God in His sovereignty has chosen the poor, the despised, the foolish, and the weak to salvation and glory. If God did not choose us based on what He saw in us, then we should not make judgments about others based on their outward appearance or wealth. I Corinthians 1:26-29 declares: **"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence."**

James then makes the point that the poor of this world, whom God has sovereignly chosen to salvation and glory, are often rich in faith. They may not have the finest of clothes or the most money, but they have something worth far more. God has blessed them with the gift of saving faith

in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and has imputed to them the very righteousness of God. As such, they are accepted in the Beloved and are the recipients of all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. They have more real wealth than all the richest men of worldly means throughout history combined! They may have meager provisions in their earthly pilgrimage but they are happy and content in Christ, resting in Him and depending upon His grace. They understand that the circumstances of this life will soon give way to the eternal inheritance that Jesus Christ has freely given them. Romans 8:17-18 declares: **"And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."**

It is a fact presented in Scripture and recorded in history, that God has often been pleased to save and work with the poor and despised among men rather than the wealthy and popular. We would do well to remember that as we serve the Lord. It is not a man's worldly wealth and substance that makes him rich in the eyes of God. Rather, it is his humble faith in Christ and His promises that makes a man rich.

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"My brethren, have not the

faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called" (James 2:1-7)?

The contrast in our text is two men entering the assembly of God's people and one is perceptibly rich and the other is obviously poor. James is being used of the Holy Spirit to condemn any partiality in our thinking and ultimately our actions. Are we to judge the books by the covers, or by the content, beloved reader? And yet, that is our tendency, is it not? James calls it becoming **"judges of evil thoughts"**— not other folk's thoughts that we determine might be hate speech, but our own evil thoughts. Selah! Think about it!

How would the Lord choose for us to react to these two visitors of our churches? Unmistakably, the admonition would be to greet them both, cheerfully and graciously, but if we are to "judge our thoughts" as to whether those thought-verdicts are evil or holy,

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. Could you please comment on John 12:8?

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“For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land” (Deut. 15:11).

As you can see by the Scripture above, alms were commanded to be given to the poor when there was any in need. Jesus is not suggesting that they should stop doing this, but He was reminding them that, while the poor would remain (always be among them), Jesus would not always be with them. Not only is it stated here in John 12:8, but also in Matthew 26:11 and Mark 14:7. Mark's gospel makes it very plain. **“For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always”** (Mark 14:7). Jesus is saying, by all means give to the poor when you can, but this act of Mary's is out of respect, because I am not always going to be here with you as with the poor, that will always be around.

Looking at John 12:3-8 we can see that even though this ointment was very costly, Mary was performing the act of devotion to her Lord. But Judas wanted to make a big deal out of it because he held the bag, in other words he was the treasurer.

But as pointed out here, he was a thief and he cared nothing for the poor, but only his own belly. **“The righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul: but the belly of the wicked shall want”** (Prov. 13:25).

I believe there is a lesson for us here, in that, even though we have the poor and needy in our world and especially in the church, we should be mindful of them, but not at the expense of neglecting our devotion to the Lord our God.

Many try to take advantage of our love and our generosity as a church to get what they want, but they care nothing for Jesus. I have become wise to this kind of thing. I will be the first person to try and help someone in need, but I can usually see through their dishonesty.

Our focus should always be on Jesus first! I am sure Mary had a very kind heart and would have given to the poor, but she had such a love and devotion for Jesus, that He was first in her life. Should not Jesus be first in our life as well? God Bless!

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John 12:8 records: **“For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.”** The context of this statement by Christ comes after Mary had poured out a pound of extremely valuable spikenard and anointed the feet

of Jesus with it. Judas Iscariot objected to the act of devotion by saying that the expensive spikenard should rather have been sold and given to the poor. In reality, Judas cared nothing for the poor. He was the one who took care of the money and he was planning on stealing the proceeds from the sale. The Lord Jesus saw through the covetousness and evil intentions of Judas and exposed him as a thief and a fraud.

Jesus made it crystal clear that the world will always be populated by poor people. In fact, a majority of the world's population is poor. It should be noted also that poverty and riches are relative to where a person lives. For example, there are lots of people in the United States who make less than \$35,000 a year and are considered poor by many. Yet they have a cell phone, a place to live, a car to drive, and food to eat. To some in other countries the people who are considered poor by U.S. standards would be rich in Mexico or Venezuela.

The larger point Jesus was making is that He is worthy of the most expensive display of devotion and worship. The spikenard was worth an entire year's salary and was probably the only thing of real worth that Mary owned. Jesus then explained to His disciples that Mary's act of devotion was in preparation for His upcoming death. Mary had learned much by sitting at the feet of Jesus. She had learned that His mission as Messiah would end in suffering and death. Mary would be rewarded for her spiritual discernment and act of selfless devotion as Matthew 26:10, 12-13 reveals: **...For she hath wrought a good work upon me. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. Verily I say unto you,**

Whosoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.” Hence, Mary's sacrificial gift and worshipful act of extravagant love is recorded in the Scriptures for all time.

Jesus then urges the disciples to value the time left they would have with Him. They would always be surrounded by the poor, but the Lord Jesus would soon be physically leaving them after His death, burial, resurrection and ascension to Heaven.

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“There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein. Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this. For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always” (John 12:2-8).

The Lord says that there will
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Forum Question #1

(Continued from page 12) ♦

let us go a step further. What would be the tenor of our opening conversation with them? I trust we would inquire as to their faith. "How rich is your faith?" may not be the actual words, but should it not be the question upon our hearts, as to how we would "judge" this newcomer? When we get home to talk to our spouse about the "new guys" and compare notes about what we learned, would we be talking about the new BMW or the beat up Ford pickup? Would we be talking about the important people the "rich man" purportedly was associating with, or about the churches they had recently attended? What caught our attention most, the desire for the preaching of God's Word and the enthusiastic (if off-key) singing of the visitors or the potential of finishing our building project if these fellows tithed into our coffers?

James finishes up his "assessment" of the two visitors with a generalization (profiling is not just the purview of the FBI) that typically the rich visitors will turn out bad. (What?) They will end up choosing mammon over the things of God almost universally (excuse me!) They will end up blaspheming the name of God, rather than humbling themselves (That is not fair, James!). They will end up being your accusers at the world's judgment seats, even (I can not believe you are saying this!). And lest James can not be accused of being draconian in his evaluation, listen to the Word of God, elsewhere.

"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen

the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, ...That no flesh should glory in his presence" (I Cor. 1:26-29). The Apostle Paul says the same. Just look around you, he says. The evidence is overwhelming that the rich man is rarely saved by the call of the Gospel. God has not chosen to do so, beloved reader. Pull your head out of the sand and read God's Word concerning election and sovereign grace. That is how the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to see the main reason: **"That no flesh should glory in his presence."** Selah! Think about it!

Our Lord also gives His estimation in person: **"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible"** (Matt. 19:23-26).

Salvation is by grace alone, and no penury or poverty will give any man an advantage in "getting saved," but certainly the necessity of salvation is seeing that "we have need" of Christ, and the poor men and women in this world have less hindrances to reach that point of "trusting the God of our salvation." **"Blessed are the poor in spirit..."** (Matt. 5:3). Let us prove ourselves, that we are not

still trusting in things (or people) of the flesh. Lord, help us to walk (and greet visitors) by faith, and not by sight. Selah! Think about it!

MATTHEW STEPP



"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence" (I Cor. 1:26-29).

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him" (James 1:12).

Let us compare the above Scriptures with our Scripture text that is in question here; **"Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?"**

This speaks to me as God's sovereign grace at its highest peak. James here intends the kingdom in its present sense of the scope of salvation—those over whom Christ rules—as well as its future

millennial and eternal glory.

This is simply the doctrine of election. **"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus"** (Eph. 2:4-7).

Israel is our great example of God's mind concerning why He saves (chooses) certain people. **"The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations; And repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face. Thou shalt therefore keep the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which I command thee this day, to do them"** (Deut. 7:7-11).

It was God that called (elected, chose) Abraham. **"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which**

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Forum Question #1

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he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went" (Heb. 11:8). Why did Abraham obey God? Because he believed God. **"And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God"** (James 2:23).

Is not that what James is saying in (2:5)? **"Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith?"** Abraham had faith because God chose him before the foundation of the world. How is it that Abraham loved God and **"had received the promise"**? How is it that we are loved of God and have faith in Him? **"We love him, because he first loved us"** (I John 4:19).

I was born into this world a poor wicked wretch! **"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us..."** (Eph. 2:4). I am poor in material things, but because of God's mercy, I am rich beyond measure and I will live in the kingdom with His Dear Son and my Saviour Jesus Christ forever (for eternity).

After all my years as a Christian, I am still perplexed at how some will still not give God all the credit for their salvation, and cannot see that they had no part in it! Is not that what Free-willism teaches?

We have love, faith, and obedience because God was merciful to us by giving us the Holy Spirit (the new birth) that we may have the ability do so. Without Jesus Christ we have nothing and are nothing. God Bless!

ROGER REED



Forum Question #2

(Continued from page 13) ♦

always be poor folk amongst us and He even gives the commandment (and example) of caring for them; not just with charitable alms, but also by effort and sacrifice of our time and talents. **"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me"** (Matt. 25:34-40). What did our text say? **"...me ye have not always..."** Maybe not, but the Christian heart desires to do the will of our tenderhearted Christ. To that degree, we have opportunity to sanctify our Lord. Selah! Think about it!

We have a responsibility to the poor, particularly those in our churches. **"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith"** (Gal. 6:9-10). God's people are not normally lacking the necessities

of life, however, because of His sufficient graces being poured upon us as we trust Him to care for our families. **"I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread"** (Ps. 37:25). But there do come times of persecution and/or catastrophes where there will be opportunities for the Lord's churches to pull together amongst themselves (Rom. 15:26; Acts 11:29-30, 4:34-35).

Families have the first responsibility to care for their own: **"Honour widows that are widows indeed. But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God. Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day... If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed"** (I Tim. 5:3-5, 16). The Lord's churches will step in to minister to these **"widows indeed."** The creation of deacons in Acts 6, shows there will be a generational need to care for our poor ones.

But making one last point, notice that the gospel writer, Luke, concludes the same event in our Johannine text with Luke 10:41-42: **"And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her."** **"The poor always ye have"** (John 12:8), but the more pressing part, **"that good part"** of Mary was her intimate worship of her Saviour,

while she still had time and opportunity. The anointing of Christ's feet was costly (deprived many poor folk of alms, as Judas pointed out), but it was more imperative to the heart of this godly woman. It should be also to us, beloved reader. Certainly, we ought to help out the ubiquitous poor around us, but it should never be to the detriment of our worship and veneration of our Lord and Saviour. Social gospels and soup kitchens are not to be the preeminent focus of the Lord's New Testament Baptist churches. Our marching orders are to 1) Disciple all nations; 2) Baptize believers into dynamic, growing churches; and 3) Inculcate the teachings of Christ into our membership. Amen? Amen! May the Lord help us to choose the **"good part"** and to exalt the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Selah! Think about it!

MATTHEW STEPP



The New Drug

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world." One chart from a previous mentioned article gave these numbers:

- 1) Pornography—low estimate (\$6 Billion in annual revenue)
- 2) NBA— (\$7.4 Billion in annual revenue)
- 3) Hollywood—(\$11.1 Billion in annual revenue)
- 4) Netflix—(\$11.7 Billion in annual revenue)
- 5) Viacom—(\$13.3 Billion in annual revenue)
- 6) NFL—(\$14 Billion in annual revenue)
- 7) Pornography—mid estimate (\$15 Billion in annual revenue)

While tax dollars are not really
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The New Drug

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being generated from the actual industry, the revenue that those participating in it does create tax dollars when it is spent. So do not look to the politicians in your state capital or in the congress/parliament or the office of the president. More than likely, with the numbers we posted earlier, they are probably engaged in viewing pornography.

More than 200,000 people in the United States spend more than 11 hours per week looking at pornography. 58% of those who watch pornography suffer considerable financial losses and one-third have lost a job.

PORNOGRAPHY WITHIN THE GENDERS

Pornography is a male dominated sin. However, you may be surprised at the rising numbers of the females involved in Pornography. Visitors to pornography sites: 72% Male; 28% Female. Males are 6 times more likely to view porn and spend more time viewing it. 17% of women say that they struggle with a pornography addiction. We stated earlier that the average age for boys being exposed to pornography is 8-10 years of age and for girls it is 10-12 years of age.

PORNOGRAPHY AND MARRIAGE

There is a profound effect on the marital relationship. Marital infidelity is increased by more than 300% due to pornography. 56% of divorces include one party having an obsessive interest in internet porn. The divorce rate in the United States is hovering at around 50%. That means that about 25% of marriages are ending in divorce with an obsessive interest in internet

pornography being a sited issue in the paperwork.

PORNOGRAPHY AND THE BRAIN

Dr. Jeffrey Satinover of Princeton University describing porn's effect to the United States Senate, "It is enough that we have devised a form of heroin 100 times more powerful than before, usable in privacy of one's own home and injected directly to the brain through the eyes." Pornography has a similar effect on the brain as cocaine. Cocaine and opioids make users feel high by triggering our brains to unleash dopamine at extremely high levels. Want to guess what else does? Porn! Yet, the pornography of today is so much different from that of years ago. Thanks to the internet, pornography now mixes the most powerful natural dopamine release the body can produce with and endless stream of variety, and every time the high starts to fade, you can flip to an new image to keep dopamine levels elevated for hours.

PORNOGRAPHY AND THE BIBLE

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:19-21).

The word **"fornication"** is the translation of the Greek word *"Porneia"*. It is from the Greek word *"Porneia"* that we get our English word Pornography from. Pornography is a work of the flesh. There is nothing spiritual about it.

It in no way glorifies the Lord. It in no way edifies the saint spiritually.

Just like any sin, pornography can be overcome. It is one more thing that we can have victory over though our Lord Jesus Christ. There are men who were once drunkards, but the Lord saved them. Men who at one time smoked cigarettes, used other drugs. Yet some men having been saved never had a desire to drink, smoke, or use drugs again. Others have stated it was a daily challenge to overcome such things. Such is the same case with pornography. Yet, it is the blood of Christ that cleanses us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

THE NEW DRUG

The ease with which porno-

graphy is accessible today makes it the new drug. I remember at school hearing of a boy who had a magazine. But now with the internet and especially the smart phone, pornography is but a "click" away. There is a disconnect between parents and children over the dangers of this drug and the easiness of access to it. I want to encourage pastors, to equip the parents with the dangers of pornography. That we preach a sermon upon it, if the Lord leads. That we at minimum address it with the parents that they might be aware of the reality of this danger in our present day lives. AMEN.

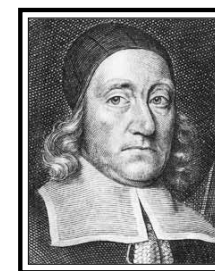


An Exposition of Job 19:25 Part Five

By Joseph Caryl
(1602 - 1673)

The Redeemer shall be the Judge.

Though the three persons in the glorious God-head, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, concur in every work upon the creature; yet some works are specially appropriated to each person. This great work of Judgment is appropriated to the Son as a part, or as the completion of His mediatorial office. (John 5:22, 27) **"For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son"**; that is, the Father alone (as they imagined) without the Son; judgeth no man; for as He created all, so He judgeth all by the Son: **"And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man"**; For being the Son of man He will be visible to all (Rev. 1:7) and so most fit to be the Judge. Peter speaks this



as a special doctrine which he was called to preach (Acts 10:40-42) **"Him God raised up... and shewed**

him openly; ...Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God...And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he that is ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead." As the saving of man by Christ is founded in the will and ordination of God, so also is the judging of man by Christ. The Apostle Paul (Acts 17:31) stirs up and awakens all to the duties of holiness and repentance, **"Because he (God) hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that**

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Job 19:25

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man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."

Some may object that of Christ Himself (John 8:15) as a disclaimer of this office; **"...I judge no man."** The answer is at hand; **"Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man";** that is as ye do, "after the flesh," or by outward appearances (as He speaks John 7:24) I judge the Spirit, and after the Spirit, mine is righteous judgment. Again, **"I judge no man";** that is, my perfect work is to save, and to preach salvation, my work is to tender conditions of peace, and to call sinners to repentance, that is my perfect work; My second coming is for judgment. But though Christ be Judge, yet it seems He is not the only judge; Himself saith that He had associated His disciples (Luke 22:29-30) **"And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."** I answer; They shall judge not authoritatively, but doctrinally. As the word which Christ spake, so the word which the disciples of Christ spake (or which any of His faithful ministers speak according to the truth of Christ) shall judge him (that hath heard it) **"in the last day"** (John 12:48). The Word is the rule of judgment, as Christ is the Person judging. Yet, I conceive, that text in Luke imports some special personal honour and privilege, which the twelve Apostles shall have in the Judgment of the great day, beyond the rest of saints. Of whom the Apostle speaks (I Cor. 6:2) **"Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?"**

All the saints shall judge the world as approvers, they shall vote as it were with Christ, and say, This is a just and righteous sentence; but the Apostles shall judge (if I may so express it) as assessors with Christ, to Whom alone the commission as Judge is given. **"The queen of the south** (saith Christ) and the Ninivites) **shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them:..."** (Luke 11:31). That is the example of the Queen of the South, who took so long a journey to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and the example of the Ninivites, who repented at the preaching of Jonah, shall be produced as evidence for their conviction and condemnation, who have heard and refused the wisdom of a Greater than Solomon, and the preaching of a Greater than Jonah. The Great Judgment shall be carried on by many, as Assessors, as Approvers, and as Witnesses, but the Redeemer only shall be the visible and determining Judge.

This day of Judgment will be very terrible; Christ who at His first coming was revealed in flaming love, shall be then revealed **"in flaming fire"** (II Thess. 1:8). This Judgment will be very glorious; the first appearing of Christ was so obscure, that it was an appearance but to very few; many who saw "the man" did not "see the Saviour"; but His second appearing will be so full of luster and glory, that as all shall "see the man," so all shall "see the Judge." Thus the Apostle describes it (Titus 2:13) **"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."** It is said of Agrippa (Acts 25:23) that he came to the judgment-seat and Bernice with great pomp; we may render the text thus, he came with "affected vanity." When the

Lord Jesus Christ shall come to His Judgment-seat, it will be with great pomp indeed, but it shall be serious as well as glorious pomp; For He shall come **"in the glory of his Father with the holy angels"** (Mark 8:38). Christ shall have a train of angels; as the arch-angel shall give the summons, or cite the world to appear at the bar (I Cor. 15:52; II Thess. 1:7-8) so there shall be thousand thousands of angels attending the Judge. He shall come **"in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."** The first coming of Christ was in the **"form of a servant"** (Phil. 2:7). Yea the Prophet saith (Isa. 53:2) **"he hath no form nor comeliness."** In His first coming, He was followed by fishermen, or men of inferior quality, but His second coming will be in the glory of the Father; His glory will be such, as the Father's glory is; and His followers shall be greater than the greatest of men, and these not a few but many, even all His holy angels.

All is but equal that judgment should be put into the hand of the Redeemer, and that He should come in all this glory, when He comes to sit in judgment, because He hath been judged, and condemned, because He hath borne shame, and dishonour, while Himself stood in judgment. Christ did not only die for us, but He was condemned to death as an evil-doer; there was not only pain in His death, but shame; He in this humbled Himself indeed, and which is more, He became obedient, and (which is the lowest obedience) He became obedient unto death, and which is the lowest and most ignominious death, the death of the cross. The Apostle makes this threefold humiliation, the ground of His threefold exaltation (Phil. 2:9-10) **"Wherefore God also**

hath highly exalted him...." He exalted Him above the grave in His resurrection, above the earth in His ascension, above the heavens in His session at the right hand of Him the Father, **"That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."** Indeed if God be so careful to redeem the honour of His saints and servants, who have suffered reproach, if He will get them fame in every land where they have been put to shame, and make the sons of those that have afflicted them to come bending to them, and to know that the Lord hath loved them; and if whereas they have been hated, God will make them an eternal excellency, surely then, much more will God be careful of the honour of His Son; He that will not let His servants honor lie in the dust, but will repair their credit and take off the reproach which they have born for His Name, how can He be unmindful of His Son? or reinvest Him in that glory of which He stripped and unclothed Himself, that He might perfect the work of our redemption.

This honour of Christ the Redeemer, to be Judge of the world together with the glory in which He shall appear when He comes to judge the world, carries a twofold effect in it, according to that twofold distribution of those who are the objects of this judgment, good and bad, the Godly and the wicked.

First, It carries terror to the wicked, who know not God, and who have not obeyed the Gospel. What more terrible to unbelievers, than to be judged by Him, Whom they have not believed? What

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Job 19:25

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more terrible than to be judged by Him Whom they have neglected, to be judged by Him whose grace and mercy they have refused? What more terrible than to be judged by Him Whom they have despised, and said (at least in their hearts) "This man shall not reign over us"; How terrible will it be to those wicked men, to stand before Christ as their Judge, Whom they have trampled underfoot, and counted His blood (the blood of the Covenant) as an unholy thing, and have done despite unto the Spirit of Grace?

There is nothing in condemnation more dreadful, than to be condemned by a Redeemer; They who are without Christ, are without hope, how hopeless then and helpless are they who are cast out by Christ? By whom shall they be saved, who are condemned by a Saviour? As the love of Christ is most desirable, so His wrath is most insupportable. Who can stand before His wrath as a Judge, Who as a Redeemer came to deliver us from the wrath which is to come.

There are five things in this Judge, which makes His wrath most dreadful.

First, He is such a Judge as the power of the most powerful cannot daunt.

Secondly, He is such a Judge as the wealth of the wealthiest cannot bribe.

Thirdly, He is such a Judge, as the wit and subtilty of the wisest and most subtle cannot delude.

Fourthly, He is such a Judge, as there is no appealing from His sentence.

Fifthly, He is such a Judge, as there is no repealing of His sentence. What He sets down shall stand forever. All which

Job applies to his friends in the last words of the chapter: **"Be ye afraid of the sword: for wrath bringeth the punishments of the sword, that ye may know there is a judgment."**

Secondly, This carries comfort, and speaks joy to saints. How sweet is it to remember, that their Redeemer is their Judge. For as the Apostle argueth, **"Who shall condemn, it is God that justifies;"** so may they, Who shall condemn? it is Christ that judgeth us. The time of the Judge is coming, is the time of their refreshing. So the Apostle Peter calls it in his sermon, (Acts 3:19-21) **"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;"** What these times are is expressed **"And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things..."** When Christ shall restore and set all right, which sin hath disordered (which will be a time of judgment question-less, if not the time of the last Judgment) then it will be a time of refreshing to all the people of God, even of such refreshing (and infinitely more) as the weary labourer or tried traveler takes in his repose under the coolest shades (as the word there used implies) which fetcheth up his fainting spirits, and renews his strength. When God came at once to judge, and restore Adam after his fall, he came **"in the cool of the day"** (Gen. 3:8). And when Jesus Christ shall come to judge and perfect the restoration of man, though it will be the heat of the day, or a day of heat to all his enemies, yet it shall be the cool of the day, or as the refreshing shadow after heat to all His saints. That Christ is

Judge, cannot but be a rejoicing to the saints. For

First, He being Judge, the Judge is their friend.

Secondly, The judge is their kinsman, their brother; For though (as we ought not now II Cor. 5:16 so) Christ in that day will not know any man after the flesh, yet all believers who are His flesh, shall then be known, that is, accepted with Him.

Thirdly, The Judge is also their Priest and Propitiation; He shall judge them, Who hath satisfied for them, and knows how all reckonings and accounts stand between God and their souls; for He it is that hath by His own blood balanced and made them up.

Fourthly, The Judge is their Advocate and Intercessor; He shall judge them, Who hath often moved for them, Who hath poured out His soul in prayer for them, as well as He once poured out His soul an offering for them. Surely He Who hath spoken so much of them, will not (though He hath cause to blame them for many things) speak or pronounce any thing against them.

Lastly, The Judge is He Who was judged in their behalf; and seeing He was condemned bearing their sins, He will not lay those sins again upon them who have laid hold on Him, and so condemnation.

All these considerations laid together, show how sweet it is for saints to remember that the Redeemer shall stand upon the earth to judge them. And hence the saints are described.

First, No fearing but hoping for His appearing, (Tit. 2:13) where it is called not only the hope, but the **"blessed hope"**. **"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus**

Christ;" it is the blessed hope, because the thing hoped for being once attained, we shall be forever blessed.

Secondly, They are described (not fearing but) loving the appearing of this Judge (II Tim. 4:8) **"Henceforth (saith Paul) 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 all them also that love his appearing."** To be a lover of the appearing of Christ in judgment, is the character and almost the definition of all true believers. None can love it but they, and they cannot not but love it.

Thirdly, They are described (not fearing but) praying for it, and that not coldly but earnestly and importunately (Rev. 22:17) **"And the Spirit and the bride (that is, the Spirit in the Bride saith, or the Spirit presseth and provoketh the Bride to) say, Come."** Who is thus invited to come, and for what to come? The person invited to come, is Christ, and He is invited to come to fulfill all the prophecies of that Book revealed to John, and therefore to come to judgment, which as it is there prophesied, so it will be the utmost fulfilling of all the prophecies. And to show that Christ approved and accepted this earnest prayer of the Bride for His coming; he answers (at the 20th verse) **"He which testifieth these things"** (and that is none but Christ,) **"the Amen, the faithful and true witnesses"** (Rev. 3:14) He (I say) answers, and **"saith, Surely I come quickly,"** (Rev. 22:20), and this is the third time that He saith it in this chapter; for He had said, verse 7 and again in verse 12 **"behold, I come quickly"**. Which threefold promise of His coming

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Job 19:25

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quickly, is sealed up with, **"Amen"**, and the prayer of John, seconding the churches prayer, **"Even so, come Lord Jesus."** What longing is there for His coming, who having been prayed to come, promiseth to come quickly, and is yet again prayed to come. The preparations and prognostics of the coming Christ, are dreadfully set down, to the amazement of the world, (Luke 21:25-27) **"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations...Men's hearts** (that is, the hearts of the men of the earth, or of earthly-minded men) **failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming**

in a cloud with power and great glory." This glory and terror of the coming of Christ, which shall dazzle the eyes and astonish the hearts of all that know not God, shall be a delight to the eyes, and rejoice the hearts of all that obey Him. These Christ bespeaks in the 28th verse, **"And when these begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads;** (looking up and lifting up the head, is a posture of confidence and of joy) **for your redemption draweth nigh.** That is, you shall soon receive all the fruits of your redemption, or redemption is full. Our Redemption was wrought when Christ came first into the world, but we reap not all the benefits of our redemption till Christ comes the second time into the world.

Then they who are dead shall be redeemed from the power of the grave, and they who shall be found alive, shall be redeemed from all the troubles and sorrows of this life. Then Christ will wipe all tears from the eyes of every afflicted (Job); then He will heal all the sores of his (Job's); then He will supply all the wants, and restore the broken estates of his (Job's); then He will repair the credit and honor of his (Job's); then He will rightly interpret the actions and speeches, the works and words of his (Job's); then He will give his (Job's) a full estate, a double estate, a seven-fold estate to all that they had before; then He will make his (Job's) like himself; they that lay on the dunghill,

scraping their sores with a potsherd, when Christ appears, **"shall appear with him in glory"** (Col. 3:4). The diseased and leprous bodies of his (Job's) shall be fashioned like the glorious body of Jesus Christ, by that mighty power by which He is able to subdue all things to Himself; Yea, when the Redeemer shall stand upon the earth in the latter day, He will marry all his (Job's)

to Himself, He will take them from the dust, and lay them in His bosom forever. Therefore well might Job, and well may any saint in his, or in a worse condition than his (if worse may be) rejoice and triumph in this faith; **"For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand in the latter day upon the earth."**



The Word of God's Grace

By Rosco Brong
(1908 - 1985)

God uses His Word to save, build up, and give inheritance to His people.

"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" (Acts 20:32).

Grace means favor, and the Word of God is here called the Word of His grace. Paul was speaking to the elders of the church of Ephesus. They were to see His face no more, but they could still look to God and to the Word of His grace. Human messengers of God, prophets, apostles, and preachers, come and go, but God and His Word remain the same. So it was to God and to His Word that the great apostle commended his brethren in this farewell address.

WHY WORD OF GRACE

Why does the apostle refer to the Bible, or perhaps especially to the gospel message contained in the Bible, as the Word of God's grace? We may note the least three good reasons for this description of God's Word: His Word is in itself an act of grace, an expression of grace, and a means of grace.



AN ACT OF GRACE

That the infinite God should condescend to speak to His finite creatures is in itself an act of

grace. Even under conditions of the partial democracy of our land and time, we recognize that men of high position and power, burdened with great responsibilities, cannot take time to converse with every individual citizen, or even to speak in great detail publicly, concerning all the duties and problems of society or government. In countries ruled by absolute monarchs or dictators, for such a ruler to interest himself in and show concern for the affairs and needs not only of the rich and strong but of the poor and weak among His subjects, is a mark of great condescension.

But the gap between the mightiest monarch of this world and the weakest beggar is nothing as compared with the immeasurable chasm between Creator and creature. Yet, God has bridged this chasm not only in the mediatorial work of His Son but in the spoken Word given to

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ANSWER TO BIBLE CONUNDRUMS (August)

"REJOICE EVERMORE." I Thess. 5:16

Ruth	Ruth 2:2-3
E lihu	Job 32: 2
Joel	Joel 1:1
O badiah	I Kings 18:4
I bzan	Judges 12: 8
C ornelius	Acts 10:1-2
E leazar	Exodus 28:1
E lisha	II Kings 8:7
V ashti	Esther 1:9
E noch	Genesis 5:21
R aguel	Numbers 10:29
M icaiah	I Kings 22:8
O had	Genesis 46:10
R euben	Genesis 29:32
E lab	II Kings 15: 30

The Word of God's

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direct men to this one Mediator.

EXPRESSION OF GRACE

So the written Word of God is well called the Word of His grace because it tells us of man's need, of God's grace, and of this grace provided in Christ. The Bible reveals man to himself and, to those who will receive its message, the Bible reveals the true person and character of Christ, through Whom grace and truth came into this sin-cursed world.

Men and angels may praise their Creator through endless ages, but they can never give full expression of His grace and power except as they observe and fulfill the expression of grace in His Word.

MEANS OF GRACE

Further, the Bible is called the Word of God's grace because it is God's appointed means of bestowing grace upon His people and of their receiving it. This is true of God's grace in our salvation---past, present, and future.

It was by means of the "exceeding great and precious promises" of God's Word that we became "partakers of the divine nature" (II Pet. 1:4). We are "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26). And the Bible plainly declares that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17).

That true Christian's progress in their salvation, being sanctified by the Word of God, as they learn and heed this word, probably no one will dispute.

That this same Word of God, the Word of His grace, must find fulfillment in the completion of our salvation and in the making new of all things when our Lord

returns, is another fact recognized by all true believers of the Bible.

ABLE TO BUILD UP

Speaking to brethren who were already saved, the apostle naturally emphasized the present and future effects of the Word of God's grace for those who truly believe. So as to this present life he says that this Word is "able to build you up."

It is just as true of the saved man as of the unsaved that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Saving faith, whether for justification or for sanctification, always looks to the living Person revealed through the written Word. That we cannot believe in promises we have never read or heard is surely obvious enough.

Moreover, it is through the Scriptures, the Word of God's grace, that we are built up in patience, comfort, and hope. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15:4).

In short, all our spiritual growth as God's children is derived from the Word of His grace, so that we are told to "desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (I Pet. 2:2).

Small wonder that so many Christians are spiritual runts! They have not grown, they have not been built up, because they have not given heed to that Word of God's grace which is able to build them up.

TO GIVE INHERITANCE

God's children are called His heirs, "and joint-heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17).

Their inheritance includes the gift of everlasting life, which has its beginning in the individual believer when he is born again,

but will find full expression only in the resurrection (John 5:24-29).

AMONG ALL THE SANCTIFIED

This gift of eternal life is the common heritage of all God's children. So the apostle speaks of "an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

In New Testament usage, the expression "the sanctified," sometimes also called "saints," includes all the true children of God---not, as mistakenly supposed by many Christians, a small and select number of God's children.

INCREASED INHERITANCE

The gift of life, however, is only part of the heritage provided for God's people in Christ. This heritage includes rewards for faithful service in addition to the life freely given to all that believe. These rewards will differ as the hope and faithfulness of God's children differ. So we read, "That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:7).

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (II Cor. 5:10).

Now, it is as we give heed to God's Word that we do the things that will please Him and that He has promised to reward when He comes: "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:12).

Christians who fail to learn and heed the Word of God fill their lives with "wood, hay, stubble" and "shall suffer loss" (I Cor. 3:12-15).

In accord with the commendation of our text, may lost sinners learn the Scriptures "which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (II Tim. 3:15), and may all true Christians give heed to the Word of God's grace, "which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

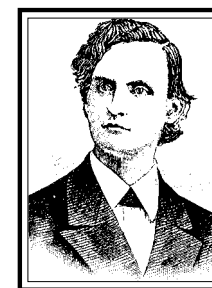


Humility and Its Counterfeits

By J. B. Hawthorne
(1837 - 1910)

"Walk humbly with thy God" (Micah 6:8).

Before the ministry of Jesus Christ began, humility, or its Greek equivalent, was a word of contempt and rebuke. It signified meanness of spirit. To call a man humble was to characterize him as cowardly and weak. Christ has redeemed this word from the uses which the ancients made of it and made the despised virtue which it expresses so beautiful, so exalted, that men everywhere seek



it and cultivate it. Wherever civilization is permeated with Christian truth and influence, to call a man humble is to praise him. But no sooner did Jesus exalt this virtue to its rightful place and make it the crowning grace of human life than men began to counterfeit it.

Let us look at this virtue. Humility means a low estimate of one's self. When we come to

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Humility and Its

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the task of estimating the value of anything we must have a standard of value with which to compare it. We cannot tell how big anything is unless we compare it with something else. When I was seventeen years of age I was as tall as I am today, and my schoolmates of the same age thought, as I felt, that I was a giant. One day I went to a show and stood beside a human monstrosity who was eight feet high. Then I felt that I was a pigmy. A country school teacher in the midst of thirty or forty rustic boys and girls imagines that he is another Solomon, but if he will meet with the faculty of Harvard, or Oxford, and hear them discuss some great scientific or philosophic question, he will soon be cured of his conceit and plead guilty, perhaps, to a charge of idiocy.

Christianity is primarily a revelation of God. It makes Him, Who is the Creator and Ruler of all things, clear and vivid to the minds and hearts of men. Jesus, by His incarnation, showed God to man. He stood beside man's work; He towered above man's life; He entered into men's closets and took possession of their hearts. The result of this revelation of the Supreme Being is that God in the world must be the standard of the world. Human greatness must be measured by Him. Not until a man stands beside Him and sees himself in the light of His presence can he know how small he is.

Here is a business man who goes out some day and meets a group of other business men, and when he measures himself against them he finds that he is superior to them. He can command more business; he is quicker in a bargain and more skillful on an argument.

Overtopping his competitors he thinks himself very high. That man is destitute of the grace of humility. The Peaks of Otter have never seen the Alps, and looking down on the smaller mountains about them they imagine that they are the summits of the world. Where there is the petty supremacy of a small man over still smaller men, humility does not exist. The small man must come into contact with larger men before he can even see what humility is. Let the small man become a Christian; let the narrow walls of his life be broken down, and let him see God in the matchless Man of Galilee, and you will discover at once a radical change in all of his conceptions of himself. In the consciousness of his littleness he prostrates himself in wonder and adoration before that which is truly and eternally great.

But Jesus Christ has given us more than a revelation of God's greatness. If He had shown us only that, the sense of our insignificance would be too heavy to bear. The sight of His infinite wisdom, His omniscience, His omnipotence, and nothing else, would paralyze and crush us. In utter despair we would exclaim, "What ant-hills we are and must ever be before this gigantic mountain!" But the revelation of Jesus Christ includes the love of God. The majesty which He reveals to us is the majesty of a Father Who takes our littleness into His greatness, fosters it, trains it, honors and glorifies it. When we get this conception of God there is begotten within us the grace of true humility. We are then humble, but not crushed. We are not paralyzed, but stimulated and strengthened by the inspiration of a great and gracious truth. We then feel that we are something. We feel that we are great, but realize that all our greatness comes from God. This is the philosophy

of true reverence and humility.

It is not good for any of us to live always among people who are inferior to us. Sometimes our laziness or pride tempts us to seek association and companionship only with those who are inferior to us in knowledge, culture and natural endowment. It requires no exertion to lift ourselves above those who are weaker than we. We would rather be big men among small men than small men among big men. Sometimes this feeling will move a woman who has money enough to wear a silk dress and own a horse and carriage to choose for her social arena a community of women who cannot afford to wear silk dresses and keep a horse and carriage. In a circle of poor women she would feel her superiority; in one of richer women than herself she would realize her inferiority. It is not always a benevolent motive that moves a man of some knowledge, culture and financial ability to identify himself with a community of poor, ignorant and obscure people. It is sometimes indolence---an indisposition to exert himself. He can be a big man among such people without effort, and he would rather be superior in a circle of ignorance and rudeness than inferior in one of intelligence and refinement.

Such men are not only selfish, but unwise. Any man's intellectual and moral stature will be dwarfed who avoids association with men that are intellectually and morally superior to him. Isolation from better and greater men will deprive him of any opportunity to cultivate humility. One of the wisest men of this generation has said, "If I could choose a young man's companions, some of them should be weaker than himself, that he might learn patience and charity; many should be as nearly as possible his equals, that

he might have the full freedom of friendship; but most of them should be stronger than he, that he might ever be thinking humbly of himself and be tempted to higher things." Now this principle, which should govern men in choosing their associates and companions, is elevated to its perfect application when a man stands in the presence of God, as He is manifested in the man Christ Jesus, and in the light of that presence sees not only his infinite inferiority to God, but God's greatness imparted to his weakness and lifting him towards all that is true and noble and great.

Before the revelation of Christ the only way for men to be humble was to stoop until they were lower than the men and things above them. But now, to see how small he is, a man has only to stand at his highest and look up to the infinite God revealed in Jesus Christ. The true way to be humble is not to stoop until you are smaller than yourself, but to stand at your real height before some higher nature that will show you how small your greatness is. The humility that is ever going about singing its miserere, depreciating human nature, and darkening the atmosphere of every circle that it touches with the gloom of its pessimism, is a counterfeit. True humility is born of a sense of God's greatness, is full of love and adoration, and is inspired by a sense of God's fatherhood to rise into the closest and highest fellowship with him.

The Lord Jesus promotes the growth of humility in us not only by setting our littleness against the infinite height of God, but by asserting and magnifying the essential glory of our humanity. Christ convicts us of sin, but at the same time reveals to us the essential worth of our being. He

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Humility and Its

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shows us what a surpassingly grand thing it is to be a man. He shows us that the human may be joined to the divine; He shows us that the human soul is worth all that He suffered for it on the cross; He so magnifies and glorifies human nature that we stand before it with adoring rapture. It is in this way that He teaches man his true place and clothes him with humility. He makes us humble by showing us what we were made for, by revealing to us the sublime possibilities of our being, and by permitting us to see how mean and wretched we are in comparison with what we ought to be.

Here is a man in the store, or the bank, or the law office, who is not humble. He is conceited, proud and self-sufficient. I succeed in implanting in the breast of that man the grace of humility. But how do I accomplish the work? I get his ear in some lull of his noisy work and tell him the story of a being whom God values and loves. I tell him about powers meant to grapple with eternal things. I describe to him a love that is made to love the lowest. I open the gates of immortality and show him life opening, climbing, soaring and brightening forever and ever. I tell him that the being of whom all this is true is leading a sordid and groveling life, and is every day fretting, worrying, growling, cursing and sinning over things in this world that will soon perish and be forgotten. While he is wondering who this being is, I look straight into his face and say, **"Thou art the man."** At once he matches himself against himself; at once he compares what he is with what he might be and with what the great God wants him to be. In the light of this new conception--

--this divine revelation--he strips himself of pride and puts on the garment of humility.

Here is a successful politician--a smart, cunning, proud and unscrupulous man. To him there is nothing in all the world so fine and complete as the sort of life he is leading. How can you make that man humble? You may hold up before him the most luminous characters the world has ever seen. The whitest names on the pages of history do not abash him. He counts himself superior to the best and greatest of them. You can never humble that man until he becomes conscious of a purer and nobler self--until God has in some way shocked and broken his life and made him see what he might have been and what he might yet be. When he discovers that better nature within him--those higher faculties which relate him to God and a limitless future--and the sublime possibilities which lie dormant in that higher being, then, and not till then, will he be humbled. When some dauntless and divinely-inspired preacher stands before him and with graphic earnestness paints a picture of heaven and another of hell, and makes him see that the soul which he has kept truckling for dollars, or for office, is capable of climbing to the highest throne in heaven and of sinking to the lowest cavern in hell, and begets within him a sense of his awful responsibility for the gifts with which God has endowed him and the golden opportunities with which providence has blessed him, and he sees how unworthily, selfishly, wickedly and shamefully he has lived, then he will be humble.

It is a sad fact that false pride may enter the heart of man who has been forgiven of sin and who cherishes the hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ. That false

pride may grow until it dominates his life and deters him from the performance of the most obvious religious duties. There are such men who stubbornly refuse to submit to the ordinance of baptism. They readily admit that it is a duty imposed by divine commandment, but they refuse to perform it because they regard it as an act of humility. Never will they obey God in this ordinance until this false pride is ejected from their hearts; and this can be done only by setting before them the example of Him who came into the world to reveal God to man and man to himself. No one who believes the testimony of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, doubts that Jesus was baptized; that He went down into the midst of the Jordan and was laid beneath the yielding waves, and that, as He rose from the liquid grave and came up straightway out of the water, the spirit of God descended upon Him and a voice from heaven exclaimed, **"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."** But why was Jesus baptized? That ordinance is for forgiven sinners, and He was never a sinner. He was baptized to illustrate that humility which is ever expressing itself in some act of obedience to authority. Standing there in the presence of the multitude to be baptized of John, He said, **"Thus it becometh us to fulfill all obedience."** That act was prophetic of His approaching death, burial and resurrection. By becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, He would purchase forgiveness and redemption for every penitent and believing sinner. By raising from the dead He would give victory over the grave to every believer in Him. In that act of Christ there is a revelation not only of the humility of the divine Son

of God, but of God's conception of the culminating virtue and glory of human character and of the immortality and blessedness awaiting those who in this life reproduce the virtues which make Jesus, the Incarnate Son of God, the **"one altogether lovely."** Nothing but the contemplation of that revelation will ever make the proud man humble enough to be "buried with Christ in baptism."

I have tried to make clear to you what it is to be humble before God, but I must also tell you what it is to be humble before your fellow-man. It is not to believe that you are weaker, duller, more corrupt and more wicked than any man you have ever known. The facts will not warrant any such opinion of yourself, and you are foolish if you attempt to entertain it. You are not to believe that you are worse than all other men, nor are you required to humble yourself only before those who are wiser and better than yourself. While you are not to believe that you are no higher and better than the meanest and worst of men, you are to humble yourself before the lowest and most degraded.

This humility will consist of the clear perception that it is God Who has made you better than some other men, and that without His help you would have been, perhaps, worse than they. It will consist also in a recognition of the essential worth of all other human beings, a belief that God loves them as He loves you, that He sent His Divine Son into the world to suffer and die for them, and that they are infinitely worthy of your love and of all that you can possibly do for the betterment of their present and eternal welfare. If you have this conception of your fellowman, and believe that there is nothing in you too good to be

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Humility and Its

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employed in the divine work of helping human wanderers back to God, then you have really learned the humility of Christ.

The disciples had fallen into an untimely dispute as to which of them should be called the greatest. In the midst of their quarrel their Divine Lord, Maker and Ruler of heaven and earth, rose up and tied a towel around His waist and stopped down and washed their feet. In performing that act He said, **"If I, your Lord and Master, wash your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet."** Did He, in the performance of that menial service, confess that He was inferior to those whom He thus served? No. He was in every respect superior to them and he was conscious of it. The significance of His conduct was that He saw something in every one of them that was worthy of any service He could bestow upon them. If we receive this truth we shall have the spirit of Christ, and having that spirit we shall recognize in the poorest, meanest, and most degraded of the human race something that is worthy of our ministry, and find our highest exaltation and joy in serving those who stand on the very lowest level beneath us. That was the spirit that made Paul great. That was the spirit of the men who turned Rome from the worship of pagan deities to the service of the true and living God. That was the spirit of Augustine, Wickliffe, Savonarola, Luther, Bunyan, Carey and Judson. That has been the spirit of every man who has made any real contribution to the progress of God's kingdom of truth and righteousness. That spirit is heaven-born; it is from God, and its true name is

humility. The conduct of the man who has it is not determined by his commercial interests, nor his political affiliations, nor his literary tastes, nor his social affinities. His supreme aspiration is not for wealth, nor for office, nor for social power and pleasure, but for usefulness to God and man. He stands girded for service--- service anywhere that the Master may please to send him, whether it be to city, or country, to Italy, or South America, or China, or Africa; to the rich, or the poor, to the learned or the illiterate, to the decorated and perfumed pageants of fashionable circles, or to the unwashed and filthy occupants of dens of vice and crime. His spirit is the spirit of humility. Him will God exalt. He shall sit upon a throne high above the highest of the archangelic throng. He shall wear a crown brighter than the blended glories of a thousand suns.



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The True Token

By James Smith
(1802 - 1862)

"Give me a true token" (Joshua 2:12).

This was the request of the harlot Rahab. Jericho was threatened with destruction; its doom was fast approaching; its danger was now imminent; the spies came to her house, and she received them, for she believed that God would give the place into the hands of Israel; her concern

for the salvation of herself and family was great and natural; her precaution was wise; she wanted a token, one which she could trust, which would inspire confidence; she asked it, and her request was granted. She used a scarlet-coloured rope to let down the spies, and they said, **"Thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by."** And she collected all her family together into her house, **"and she bound the scarlet line in the window."** This was to mark the house, to remind the spies, to support her hope, and preserve her family. It was visible, being of a scarlet colour; it was useful, being the cord by which the spies escaped. It was the means of the salvation of the family; for when Jericho was destroyed, Joshua said, **"Go into the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath, as ye sware unto her:"** and they did so.

Now let us improve the subject. The world is threatened with destruction, as Jericho was; its doom is fast approaching; the danger is near and imminent; we should be concerned for our safety, and the salvation of those connected with us; we should not be satisfied with a "Peradventure we may be safe," but should seek **"a true token."** The Lord gives such, many enjoy them, and others possess them without being satisfied respecting them. The life of God in the soul is a true token of safety; if quickened by the Holy Spirit, if God dwells in us, and occupies our thoughts, engages our affections, and separates us from sin and folly, it is a clear proof that we are the Lord's. The fear of the Lord, by which men depart from evil, is also **"a true token."** If a person fears to offend

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BEREA BAPTIST BANNER

Financial Report

7-1-2020 to 7-31-2020

Beginning Balance	\$1,944.17
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	300.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL	60.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX	50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV	200.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	150.00
Carol Willett, Cottonwood Shores, TX	70.00
Citrus M. B. C. Inverness, FL	25.00
Emmanuel B. C., Oldtown, KY	100.00
Faith B. C., Lynn, AR	25.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	200.00
Grace B. C., Gladwin, MI	50.00
Grace B. C., Rural Hall, NC	50.00
Grace Missionary B. C. Tulsa, OK	50.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV	100.00
The Lord's Church, Goose Creek, SC	50.00
Michael Sherman, Ashland, KY	35.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH	100.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN	100.00
Parkway Landmark B. C., Springfield, OR	100.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	100.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR	50.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX	30.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Wellington, KS ..	1,100.00
Timothy J. Hille, Ashland, IL	10.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	25.00
Subscriptions	60.00
Anonymous	200.00
Dividing checks	150.00
Sub Total	\$3,590.00
TOTAL	\$5,534.17

EXPENDITURES:

Printing	490.00
Postage	571.46
Supplies	0
Wages	2,300.00
FICA	175.90
Dividing checks	150.00
Bank charge	13.00
Total Expenditures	\$3,700.36
ENDING BALANCE	\$1,833.81



BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST

Financial Report

7-1-2020 to 7-31-2020

Beginning Balance	\$3,235.26
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	100.00
Calvary I. B. C., Sumas, WA	100.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	200.00
.....	625.00
TOTAL	3,860.26
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time	363.98
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	363.98
.....	3,496.28
Interest	+0.02
ENDING BALANCE	\$3,496.30

Gleanings

(Continued from page 23) ♦

God and desires above every thing to please Him; if, with this end in view, every man is formed, every purpose executed, and every duty attended to, it is a scriptural evidence of union to Christ. The spirit of prayer is also “**a true token.**” If we are taught our need of the blessings God has promised, if we experience the irrepressible desire after them; if we are frequently prompted to retire to pray for them; if we are assisted in pleading with God for them, with fervour, zeal, a importunity; if prayer becomes natural to our souls, like breathing to our bodies; if it is our relief in trouble, our solace in sorrow, our delight in joy, and is felt to be our privilege, it is clear that we are born from above. True repentance is “**a true token.**” By which we mean heartfelt sorrow for sin, because it is an offence against God and grievous in His sight; accompanied with a loathing of sin and departure from it, on account of its filthiness and evil character. Such repentance is the gift of Jesus, the production of the Holy Spirit, and the distinguishing mark of an Israelite indeed. Faith in Jesus is “**a true token.**” That is, not only giving credence to His Word, but resting upon His perfect work for acceptance with God, looking to His mediation as the only ground of hope and comfort, and presenting and pleading His atoning blood before God for all we need. Faith always fastens the scarlet line in the window, or sprinkles the doorposts with the blood of the paschal lamb, that the inhabitants may be safe from the sword of justice and the wrath of God. Love to the saints is “**a true token.**” Loving them because

they are holy, and because Jesus loves them; loving them though poor, afflicted, persecuted, and despised: loving them so as to be willing to do any thing for them, for Jesus’ sake. A holy life, flowing from faith in Christ, is “**a true token.**” If we are united to Jesus, the root being holy, we shall be holy too; if Jesus dwells in us, He will sanctify us, and we shall breathe His spirit, imitate His example, and aim at His glory. Reader, have you “**a true token?**” Is it visible as the glowing scarlet, and useful as the cord which let down the spies? Has it secured others, as well as benefited yourself? Are you seeking a true token? If so, follow it up, be not easily satisfied, neither be discouraged. Pray, “Give me a token for good.” Is the line in the window? Does the whole family unite?

*“When God’s own, arm, His power to shew,
Threw down the walls of Jericho,
In Rahab’s house was safety found,
For there the scarlet thread was bound.*

*‘Come, kindred, here, make haste,’ she cried,
‘Destruction waits on every side:
No harm shall enter where we dwell,
The scarlet thread secures us well.’*

*Like Israel safe, whose favour’d door
Was sprinkled well with paschal gore;*

*The sacred sign was just the same,
The scarlet thread, or slaughter’d lamb.*

*But we can nobler wanders tell,
By Jesus’ blood redeem’d from hell;
Secured by this from wrath divine,
We bless the sacred, peaceful sign.”*



ANNOUNCEMENTS

On August 17th, 2020 Elder James Edward Hobbs Sr., went home to be with the Lord.

Elder Hobbs was pastor of Kings Addition Baptist Church of South Shore, KY for over 42 years. He traveled to many countries preaching the Gospel. He mentored and fathered many young preachers over the years. He was also a forum writer in The Baptist Examiner from February 1964 until it ceased publication in December of 1998.

Elder Samaroo Sookraj would like to make known the need for help in completing the meeting place of the Landmark Grace Baptist Church in Trinidad. Please prayerfully consider this need to be met.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Elder Samaroo through Facebook Messenger, Facetime,

or telephone: 1-868-338-5339, or Email: ssookraj@hotmail.com.

The Grace Landmark Baptist Church of Buckhannon, WV, is seeking a pastor. The church is Sovereign Grace and Landmark in doctrine and practice. Any interested called pastor of like faith may contact Brother Brad Butcher at (304) 669-4738 or (304) 745-6226.

The Stephens Branch Baptist Church of Martin, Kentucky is in need of a pastor. They are an Independent, Sovereign Grace, Landmark, Missionary Baptist church holding to the doctrines of grace and the King James Bible. If you are interested in being considered or would like more information on the church you can call Brother Lonnie Edwards at (859) 629-1413 or write the church at: Stephens Branch Baptist Church, 1025 Stephens Branch Road, Martin, Kentucky 41649.

The Lord’s Baptist Church in Tacoma Washington is in need of a pastor. For more information please contact Gaylen Russell at 360-879-5565 (home) or 253-495-4567 (cell) or by Email: gaylenr@rainierconnect.com.

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Caldwell, KS is in need of a pastor. For more information please contact the church in writing at SGBC, 400 N. Main St., Caldwell, KS 67022, or by phone Brother Darin Wiley 620-863-2431.

The Victory Baptist Church of Chehalis, Washington is in need of a pastor. Any interested brother may call Gerry Greisen at (360) 985-7975, or Mark Fenison at (360) 751-2929.

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