



THE HEARTBEAT OF

The Remnant

July / August 2006 Volume 12 Number 3

**Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.
Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee.
Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.
Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.
Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.**

Proverbs 4:23-27

... is Pondering the Path of our Feet

The Heartbeat of
The Remnant

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In Open Heart and Home

by Rachel Weaver



“Company’s coming! Company’s coming!” This joyful call often echoes through our house. We all wait in anticipation and welcome our guests at the door. This call and the anticipation that goes with it has always been a part of my life. As a young child my parents had a never-ending stream of guests in their home. I loved looking forward to our guests and visiting with them. Singles, families and elderly, they were all interesting. Sometimes there was a special menu, sometimes folks just dropped by and ended up staying for whatever we were having at the moment. The food always reached and one theme ran throughout each event.

That theme was “Gracious Hospitality.” My father and mother always made folks feel welcome. Ideas were exchanged, doctrines discussed and friendship shared. Often we spent time singing with our guests or sent them off with a song as we stood by their car. I will never forget some of these special times. Only last week I met lady that we had known when I was seven or eight. “How is your mother?” she asked. “I would come to your home sometimes when we were newly married and your mother was such an inspiration to me. I loved to watch how she worked with all her little ones. You were so close in age and she worked with you so sweetly.” The sweetness of that testimony lasted more than forty years! What a ministry!

My parents passed that love of people on to me. There are few things more satisfying than to fill our home with people, fellowship, singing, laughter and food. We love to bring folks home to share whatever we have. Sometimes we share a meal and sometimes we just fellowship. Sometimes we share our home for a few months or a few years with someone who needs it. We always want our home to be a place where folks come when they need a shoulder to cry on, a listening ear or just a friend. We always seek to share the love of Jesus, for His love was a sharing, serving, giving love.

The New Testament carries a strong message about sharing and hospitality and giving. Look with me at the following verses: Luke 4:18 “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the cap-

tives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised....”

This was the precise purpose that Jesus came to the earth for and He has passed that mission on to us. What better way can we follow His example than to begin in our homes, offering what we have to share? Paul experienced this sharing through Aquila and Priscilla while they disciplined him and we have all benefited from their love and generosity through Paul’s epistles. Acts 18:26: “...whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.” He teaches this principle again and again throughout the rest of the New Testament.

An open heart is an essential ingredient for hospitality. An open heart will bring about an open door in an open home. Each of us has a home to share, however small or humble. I will never forget one family that we visited who lived in a very small house on a very low income. Things were neat and tidy but very, very simple. They served us soup and bread and applesauce with no apologies. They did it cheerfully and warmly and we were made to feel like honored guests. It is not the food or the house that makes hospitality. It is the heart. 2 Cor 9:7 “Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.”

I am convinced that if we learn to open our hearts and our homes in a sweet, simple way, we can reach far more people for the Master and lift many more burdens than the church at large is presently doing. If we must wait until the house is perfectly cleaned, or the budget can stretch to make an elaborate meal we will miss many, wonderful opportunities. The stay-at-home mother can be a missionary in her own home if she learns a few valuable lessons from the Master. Jesus met people wherever they were and served them there with out any fanfare. He gave what he had even if it was only fish and bread.

Another ingredient of hospitality is to give what you have when the need arises. Usually, for us that means having our children sleep on the floor so we can give their beds to our guests. Often we only have time for a little cleanup and things look just like they do every day for us. We serve them granola for breakfast and soup for lunch and we have lots of fun together. One time we had a family of fourteen for a week while the dad attended a week of meetings here. Beds were on the floor here and there with crowded conditions everywhere. The two bathrooms were kept quite busy and the food was plain. But we had lots of fun. We read together and sang together and did simple crafts while the dads went to church all day. We will never regret the wonderful days we spent together. That family has become like family to us.

Another aspect of this sharing is that your children learn to give, to share and to minister to others, if you do it willingly. It is so easy to give in to the temptation to grumble and complain about the extra work and the burden of needing to provide for others. Perhaps that is why Peter sagely advises us, “...Use hospitality one to another without grudging.” How many, many times I have failed this lesson. One day, a few years ago, the phone rang. It was a couple in distress, planning to come to our church to find help. We were maxed out at the moment with health problems and our married children were due to arrive with their families that

weekend to stay for a few days. I apologetically declined to serve them, but they did not get the message. They were on their way and they were coming. I sighed a big sigh and wondered what we would do with them and how we would meet their needs. I really did not want company then. They came and we loved them and they stayed for more than a few days! Finally they found a house here to move into and we have a wonderful friendship. What a blessing we would have missed if we had not entertained these dear people in their need.



“Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.” Rom 12:13

“...they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints...” (What a blessed addiction!) I Cor 16:15

“A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality...” Titus 3:2

“...But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men....” Titus 1:8

“...Use hospitality one to another without grudging.” I Peter 4:9

Another weekend when it really was not convenient, we kept a family that wanted to visit the church and they proved to be angels unawares. Our baby was experiencing unusual health difficulties and these dear folks provided some answers which greatly improved his health. God does move in mysterious ways and so often He provides and unexpected blessing when we are faithful to His commands.

Finally, we must do it unto the Lord. When we serve this way we can reach across cultural, nationality and age barriers. We can play a significant role in preaching the gospel to the poor; healing the broken-hearted, delivering the captives, restoring sight to the blind, and setting at liberty the bruised. The world, and unfortunately, the church, is full of people who need to see the love of Jesus lived out in shoe leather. A Christian home in today's world is a miracle that must be shared. When we give in Jesus' name He sanctifies our simple gift of love and our kitchen table becomes an altar where fires are lighted that burn in other's souls. We can share the Bread of Life and the Living Water while we share our meal and fellowship. "We saw Jesus in your home," wrote one guest. "We did not know that families could live together like that. Our lives are changed forever." That is reward enough. I remember with fond memories, the guests from the rescue mission that stayed in our home one weekend during our revivals. That was a real cross-cultural experience for all of us. But it yielded wonderful fruit. The mother was born again during the meetings and her young son came to live in our home for the next few years. He was so thirsty for the truth and so hungry for the stability and love. Today he is 22 and living his life completely different from the sin and drunkenness and drugs of the inner city.

When we yield ourselves to God and open our hearts to His Spirit we discover with delight that He has given us wonderful tools to aid us in the "mission He has called us to. And wonder of it all, we are

all able to carry out this ministry in one way or another at some time in our life. We do not need a special college degree, unusual abilities or an immaculate home. We only need a sanctified open heart and an open home. When we open our homes like this we pass on to our children the wonderful heritage of hospitality and make it much, much easier for them to serve in the same way. How often I have heard folks exclaim, "We don't know how to do it! Where we came from, hospitality is not the norm." Sadly enough, this is true.

Most American Christians do not open their homes to each other anymore. After church, if they want to get together they often go out to eat. When

there is occasion to celebrate they go out to eat. When they go to another area, they stay in motels. No one would think of opening his home to a stranger. What has happened to the biblical injunction, "I was a stranger, and ye took me in." Matt. 25:35

Jesus knew that our homes would provide a way to minister freely to a person, body, soul and spirit. Our homes are uniquely us, and they should be a warm, comfortable place where hearts can open and be free. This nurturing atmosphere allows us to draw others closer to our Master and make a great impact spiritually. It is a wonderful tool in discipleship.

One author challenged me by saying that she takes a bit of time to go aside and prepare her heart for her guests. When she prays for them and for help to minister to their needs she finds that things go so much better. I have found this to be true, though I confess that I do not always remember to

apply that lesson. Our Father is not slack concerning His promises.

There are some practical things that you can do to make spontaneous hospitality easier. First, begin to have some order in your daily life. Make it a habit to keep the dishes washed or stacked neatly ready to wash. Sweep the floor after meals and quick-shine the



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bathroom when you use it. Teach your children to clean up the toys they are playing with. When they are big enough to get toys out, they are big enough to put them away. Unclutter and dejunk your house. An uncluttered house is much easier to clean and keep clean. Lower your standard a bit. You do not need to have a Better Homes and Gardens house and yard to minister through your home. In fact, that may actually hinder your ministry.

Learn to keep a few items on hand for simple meals that can be made quickly. Each family can develop their own favorites, but here are a few that we use:

- ◆ **Burritos and salad**
- ◆ **Chicken soup and hot muffins**
- ◆ **Chili and cheese over baked potatoes**
- ◆ **Hot ham and cheese sandwiches and soup**
- ◆ **Stir fried vegetables and rice**
- ◆ **Beans and rice**

There are many, many other possibilities. We do enjoy making really special food sometimes, but we mostly try to keep it simple and easy. That way it is not hard on our budget or our time. Paper place settings help a lot if your budget can handle the extra cost. If not, rinse the dishes quickly and stack them until later or make dish washing time a time of fellowship. Everyone washes dishes at their house, so do not hesitate to allow them to help you do yours. After all, it is one way they can help to repay you for the time you spent serving them.

Involve your children in the picking up and food preparation. Children love to set the table nicely. Train them in the days and weeks before to arrange things neatly and add a small bouquet of flowers from the flower garden or light a candle or use nice napkins by each plate. Learn to arrange the food attractively. Our children take a great delight in making a fruit tray a colorful, artistic arrangement. They experience a real sense of accomplishment when they turn a simple veggie tray into a work of art. Even the seven-year-old begs to be allowed to try his hand at it. And he can do a good job!

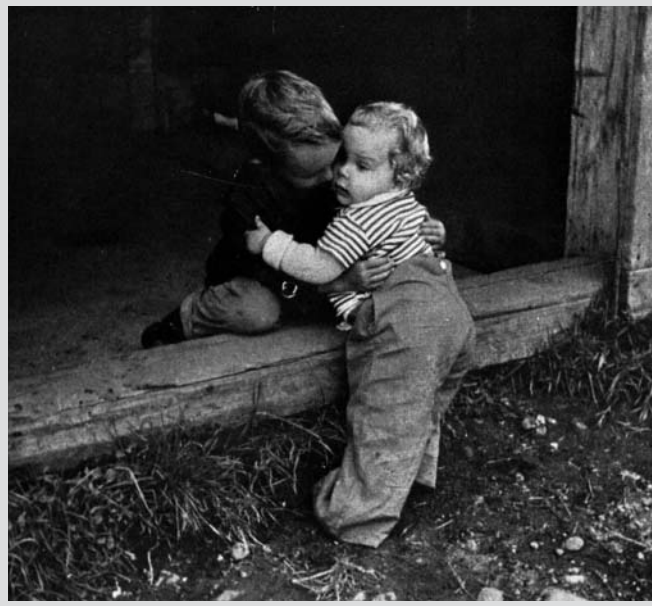
Use your everyday dishes if that is all you have and do not be apologetic. I do not have a Sunday set and that is just fine. I have plenty of Corelle plates from when we were married thirty years ago and sometimes I use paper plates. Add a smile and a joyful song, serve with love and your guests will be blessed. Put away anything that little ones could break or destroy so that both you and the guests will be relaxed and enjoy the visit.

Welcome your guests warmly and make them feel comfortable. Do not rush around after they are there if you can help it. Sit down and enjoy them. Learn to know who they are and share a bit about your journey in life if it is appropriate. Do not expect your visitors to necessarily have the same convictions and standards that you do. Remember that this is a ministry. You will have a far better experience if you plan ahead to keep the children well occupied and supervised. It takes only a few short minutes for things to happen that are very difficult to undo. If you have an

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older child take turns supervising the children. That way you both can have some time to minister and fellowship. Visit while you supervise the little ones. It is a good way to observe and learn to know your guests. Let the circumstances be vehicles for useful and up-building conversation.

Do not fret or feel tied down by your children. Use the little difficulties that come up as teaching tools and do not be ashamed to train your children sweetly while guests are present. Last week someone laughingly reminded me of her first visit at my house eleven years ago. My tiny one had grabbed a toy from her little girl. She says I called my little one to my knee and said, "Mama must smack your hand. It grabbed a toy...."

She had never seen a mother correct a child that way and she was taking lessons. I do not remember it but the story sounds very likely. Living is always the best way to disciple. I love to see Christianity put in shoe leather.

Finally, send your guests on their way with a blessing or a bit of prayer and a song. Go out with them to their car or at least as far as the porch and wave cheerily as

they pull out. This makes them feel special. Our family has wonderful memories of visiting another family years ago who was very warm and enthusiastic. They welcomed us so pleasantly and then when we left they waved and waved and blinked the porch lights as we drove out the lane. We have never forgotten that and sometimes we do it for our guests.

And last, but not least, your hospitality must begin at home. Our children and husbands deserve the same grace and the same love that we extend to others. We greet a guest with a warm welcome. Our children however, are often welcomed with, "take off your muddy boots, or pick up your toys immediately." They need to do these things but we need to

temper our commands with sweetness and love. Kindness and respect for our own families every day is a prerequisite for true hospitality. Like the statement "Charity begins at home," so does hospitality. May it be said of us, as we serve our brothers and sisters in Christ...." "...they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." 1 Cor 16:15

□



A Message To The World

by Evan Roberts

(Fresh from the Welch Revival of 1904)



The Power of the revival in South Wales is not of men, but of God. He has been close to us and has shown us the way.

There is no question of creed or of dogma in this movement. The work that is being done has the support, I believe, of all Christian people and Christian churches in our country. I have merely

preached the religion of Jesus Christ as I myself have experienced it.

God has "made me glad," and I am showing others the great joy of serving Him, a joy so great and so wonderful that I shall never be able to express it in its completeness. We are teaching no sectarian doctrine, only the wonder and the beauty of Christ's love, the love of man for Him, and the love of man for man.

I have been asked concerning my methods. I have none. I never prepare the words I shall speak. I leave all that to Him. I am not the source of this revival. I am only one agent in what is growing to be a multitude. I am not moving men's hearts and changing men's lives; not I, but "God worketh in me." I have found what is, in my belief, the highest kind of Christianity. I desire to give my life, which is all I have to give, to helping others to find it also. Many have already found it, thank God, and many more are finding it through them.

This is my work as He has pointed it out to me. His Spirit came to me one night, when upon my knees I asked Him for guidance, and five months later I was baptized with the Spirit. He has led me as He will lead all those who, conscious of their human weakness, lean upon Him as children upon a father. I know that the work which has been done through me is not

due to any human ability that I possess. It is His work and to His Glory. "I was not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou should'st lead me on. I loved to choose and see my path, but now lead Thou me on."

I desire nothing but to be allowed to continue this work that has begun. "The Lord is my Shepherd. I fear no want." All things necessary He has provided, and will provide. I wish no personal following, only the world for Christ.

Some things have been said about our meetings, and about me which are not true; but God's truth has not been hurt by these misstatements, and they, therefore, matter little. I believe, too, that He has put it into the hearts of those who have written of the revival to say helpful things, for some of the papers have carried our message to many whom we have not personally reached.

I believe that the world is upon the threshold of a great religious revival, and I pray daily that I may be allowed to help bring this about.

I beseech all those who confess Christ to ask Him to-day, upon their knees, if He has not some work for them to do now. He will lead them all as He has led us. He will make them pillars of smoke by day and pillars of fire by night to guide all men to Him.

Wonderful things have happened in Wales in a few weeks, but these are only a beginning. The world will be swept by His Spirit as by a rushing, mighty wind. Many who are now silent Christians, negative Christians, Christians whose belief means little to them and nothing to anyone else, will lead in the movement. Groping, hesitating, half-hearted Christians will see a great Light and will reflect this Light to thousands of those in utter darkness. The whole world will hear His message of "peace, goodwill toward men," and listening, will be blessed. Thousands upon thousands will do more than we have accomplished, as God gives them power. This is my earnest faith, if the churches will but learn the great lesson of obedience to the voice of the Holy Spirit. Obedience! Obedience!! Obedience!!! □

“A revitalized pastor, renewed in heart and spirit, to serve God fully”

The Reformed Pastor

by Richard Baxter

A Book Review and Ministry Challenge from Dean Taylor

The *Reformed Pastor* by Richard Baxter was one of those books that I kept bumping into and hearing about for years, but never actually got around to reading it. To be honest, the word “reformed” in the title probably scared me. However, shortly after my ordination a year ago, the Lord placed this book upon my heart and I can honestly say without hesitation that this book has marked my ministry and changed my life in many ways.

Richard Baxter was an interesting man. Born in 1615 during the controversial times of Reformation England, Baxter became an influential pastor of the small town of Kidderminster. Even though he wrote over 130 books, his pastoral heart of devotion, instruction, guidance, and counseling to his flock was the epitome of relentless, non-compromising commitment and service. George Whitfield, who came

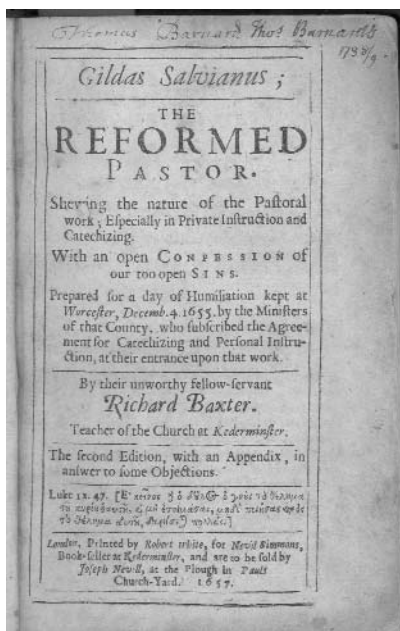
through Kidderminster 50 years after Baxter’s death said, “I am greatly refreshed to find what a sweet savor of good Mr. Baxter’s doctrine, works, and discipline remain unto this day.” The book *The Reformed Pastor* is known to have personally influenced such men as John and Charles Wesley, George Whitfield, and Charles Spurgeon. Spurgeon said that he often had his wife read it aloud to him on Sunday evenings to “quicken his sluggish heart.”

Baxter’s Theology

To completely pin down Baxter’s theology is difficult. The Calvinists called him an Armenian in disguise because of his teaching that faith must be received and practiced to be effectual, and because

some of his teachings seemed to affirm the idea that a person could possibly “lose” his salvation. Baxter simply considered his theology Biblical, without the constraints of having to fit into exact theological modes of his day. To describe himself and his teaching he coined the phrase “Mere Christianity.” J.I. Packer, in his doctrinal dissertation on Baxter, finally summed up his theology as “Baxterianism.” Interestingly, the preface to my Multnomah Press edition of *The Reformed Pastor* says, “By ‘Reformed,’ Baxter did not mean Protestant or even Calvinist; he meant a revitalized pastor, renewed in heart and spirit to serve God fully.”

Baxter simply considered his theology Biblical, without the constraints of having to fit into exact theological modes of his day. To describe himself and his teaching he coined the phrase “Mere Christianity.”



Baxter, The Man

Putting aside all the theological technicalia so common in his day, Baxter had a faith, life and ministry that was profoundly inspirational. Baxter preached an hour twice a week, every Monday and Thursday. It was said of his preaching that he had enormous energy. But more than being just a good preacher, perhaps the most impressive part of his ministry was his pastoral heart, seen acted out in weekly personal visitations. Twice a week, he and an assistant started at one end of town and went through the town visiting families. They would stay with each family for approximately an hour, giving them counseling and instruction. He averaged 15-16 families a week, until he had visited all 800 families of his church, and then he would start the cycle again!

The Book

The inspiration for the book *The Reformed Pastor* was spurred by a meeting held in 1655 for the pastors of the English Churches. The vision for the meeting was to invite the pastors to come together and publicly repent for the sin of spiritual neglect of the Church of Christ. Furthermore, they wanted to make commitments to each other to better pastor, teach and council those souls that God had entrusted to them. Richard Baxter could not make the meeting and out of the burden of his heart for this meeting this book was spawned, so he sent the book in his place.

The book focuses on the challenging scripture found in Acts 20:28, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

He divides this topic into two sections, "yourselves" and "the flock". He says that a pastor's first duty is to take care of himself. He stresses that a pastor's own spiritual needs must be met before he can have the inspiration and anointing to minister to others. Mere studying for a sermon is not enough—to be effective the pastor must have a true relation-

ship with God. He said, "Perspiration is no substitute for inspiration. If fervency then is not also accompanied with reverence to God, it will have little effect on the hearers."

He warns, "It is possible also that many a man has warned others not to come to that place of torment which they have hastened to themselves. Is it possible also that many a preacher is now in hell who has called upon his hearers a hundred times to use their utmost care and diligence to escape its dark destiny? Believe it brethren, that God never saved any man for being a preacher!"

When the church does not respond properly to the sermon he encourages the pastor to look for reasons within himself saying, "How many sleep before us, because our hearts and tongues are all so sleepy! And we do not even have enough skill and zeal to wake them up!"

One of the biggest qualities that he said the pastor must work the most to maintain all through his life and ministry is was that of humility. He said, "For God who thrust out a proud angel, will not tolerate a proud preacher either...The very heart of the Gospel is the need to be self abased. The work of grace is only begun and sustained by humility...When we rebuke a drunkard or a fornicator and state that they cannot be saved without repentance, have we not greater reason to tell ourselves we cannot be saved unless we become humble? Indeed, pride is a greater sin than whoredom and drunkenness...So we must study

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humility, preach it, as well as possess and practice it."

In the second part of the book he focuses on the flock. His practical advice throughout these chapters is very instructive. As of primary importance he stressed the salvation of souls. He said "The work of conversion is the first and most vital part of our ministry. For there are those who are Christian only in name, who have need to be truly 'born again.'" He puts such an emphasis on this that he said we must do it even if it meant that the pastor must live in poverty

to do it. He said, "Is it not better to live in reduced economic circumstances than that your parishioners are damned? Your bread is not more important than their eternal salvation, is it?"

Baxter cautioned that the pastor must see how the families react to one another in their homes. He said, "Get information about how each family is organized, and how God is worshiped there." He also said that the pastor should encourage the fathers of homes to have an active ministry to their children. He wrote, "Moreover, the master of a family needs to preach to his own family, as a school-master does to his students."

Throughout the pastoral portion of the book he identified many needs that certain types of Christian's possess. The new Christian and the experienced, the contentious and schismatic, the people-pleaser and the lukewarm all require different types of instruction, and he gave some insight on how to pastor these needs.

If time is lacking he recommended gathering people into small cell groups for instruction. He wrote, "If you are limited on time, take several together. This is much better than to be hasty with individuals and superficial in your contacts with them. Be sure those you bring together are common friends so they will hold each other's confidences while you talk with them."

Sadly lacking even in his age, Baxter mentions the problems caused by a lack of discipline. He said, "We corrupt Christianity itself in the eyes of the world when we give the assumption that: (1) To be a Christian is merely a matter of opinion, or (2) the Christian religion demands no more holiness than the false religions of the world. If, then, the holy and unholy alike are all permitted into the same sheep-fold without Christ's name to differentiate them, then we defame Christ... We also make good men separate themselves from our churches by our laxity of discipline when we permit the worst of men to remain uncensored."

Finally, Baxter's constant cry throughout the book is that this all must be done out of love and devotion to Christ. With stirring words he exhorted, "Let us

hear the words of Christ, whenever we feel the tendency growing in us to become dull and careless. 'Did I die for them and you will not look after them? Were they worthy of My blood, and yet they are not worthy of your labor? Did I come down from heaven to earth, to seek and to save that which was lost, and will you not go next door or to the next street or village to seek after them...Have I done and suffered so much for their salvation, and was willing to make you a coworker with me, and yet you refuse that little that lies within your hands?'"

Judging from the quotes mentioned above it is plain to see how seriously Baxter took his calling. He clearly saw himself as being a co-laborer with God. He saw his pastoring as a vital means of grace for his flock. With this in mind he said, "personal conversion involves two things: a well informed judgment of basic issues, and the change of will that is brought about by this truth." Being a minister who did so faithfully, Baxter could justly be called a true "Reformed Pastor." "If bishops will do this work, I will see them as *Reformers*. If elders will do so, I will also take them to be *Reformers*. Those that neglect and hinder it, I will only see as *Deformers*."

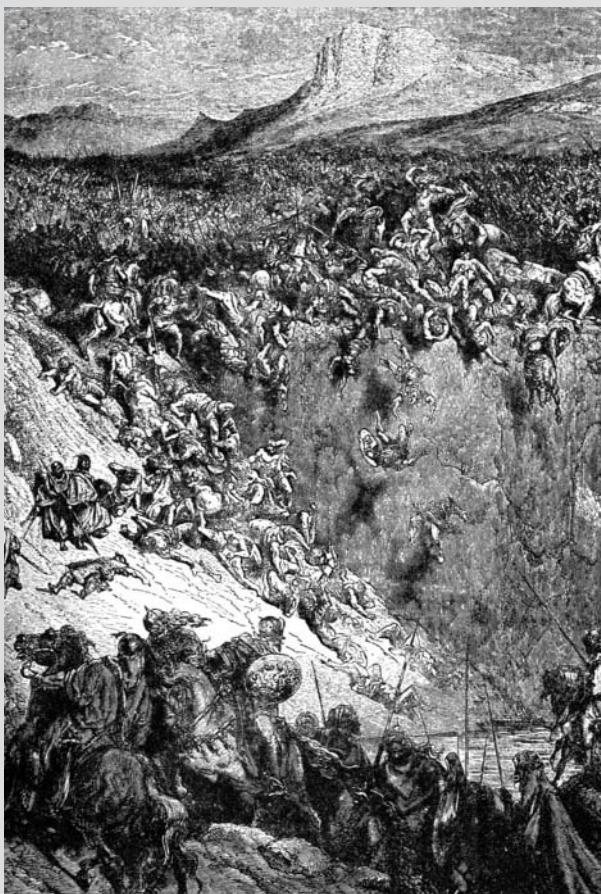
The Challenge

Since our new church has begun here in Terre Hill, Mark Brubaker and I have by God's grace sought to incorporate at least a portion of what Baxter has suggested. Most every Tuesday night, Mark and I, along with our wives, try to visit two families from the fellowship. During these visits we are able to share hearts and encourage the brethren. During one of our first visits one brother got saved who had been attending our church for over 9 years! I can testify that much of what Baxter is suggesting in his book has greatly affected my personal life and the life of our church. So don't let the name scare you! Grab a copy of *The Reformed Pastor* and allow his challenges and encouragements to mold your life or ministry after the example of our good pastor and shepherd, Jesus Christ. □

'Did I die for them and you will not look after them? Were they worthy of My blood, and yet they are not worthy of your labor? Did I come down from heaven to earth, to seek and to save that which was lost, and will you not go next door or to the next street or village to seek after them...Have I done and suffered so much for their salvation, and was willing to make you a coworker with me, and yet you refuse that little that lies within your hands?'

From Whence Come Wars and Fightings Among You?

by Dean Taylor



With the ever increasing occurrence of wars, terrorist attacks, and political corruption, even the secular world is beginning to ask the question—what’s going on? Not that war and corruption are anything new, but more and more, many are beginning to notice an exponential increase. Compounding this anxiety is the fact that modern society is finding fewer areas to place the blame. In the past, the church took the blame; but as America moves farther and farther away from Biblical-based principles of right and wrong, and deeper into a neo-Christian, humanist-based secular society, the only ones they have left to blame are themselves.

After the so-called Great Enlightenment of the 18th Century, the humanists exploited the failed testimony of the state church and blamed all wars, corruption, and bloodshed on Christian doctrine. The humanists felt that mankind, working together as a democracy, could do a better job of judging morals and ethics, without the interference of Biblical influences which they saw as mere ancient fantasies and archaic fables.

In the latter part of the 18th Century secular humanism flourished, offering to the world the idea that mankind was better off without the nuisance of any religious absolutes. It taught that man was a better pilot of his destiny, and therefore launched philosophical attacks on what it saw as naive holdovers from the “dark ages.” However, their attack on Christianity and particularly, their attack on the authority of God’s Word, has ironically done more damage to their own secular world than it ever did to the Church.

The settlers and founders of this country lived and governed by the basic premise that their world was ordered by the hand of God. Even though many of the founders were humanistic unbelievers themselves, they at least lived under the borrowed influence and popular understanding of the time—that the Bible was the ultimate source of truth and morality. Although this minimal acknowledgment was far from God’s perfect way, even a bygone shadow of God’s Law gave the society some sense of absolutes. However, now that this foundational presupposition has mostly vanished, the only thing remaining from which to determine right from wrong are the arbitrary judgments and laws passed to protect our soci-

ety's own happiness. In this world of collected values, based upon majority opinion, faith decisions and morals are thrown off as idiosyncrasies of the individual. Instead of basing decisions upon the guiding principles of the Bible, ethics are forced to change and adapt to the comforts and pleasures of all persons currently involved. Inevitably, these

irresolute ethics must constantly evolve with each case, adapting to the given situation.

A simple definition of pragmatism is this: "whatever works—is what is right." Utilitarianism can be defined as: "what is right—is whatever is best for the greatest number of people." Both of these concepts imbibe the idea of expediency which is: "what is right—is what is appropriate for the immediate situation."

Within our utilitarian society, justice and equality must constantly be in flux to facilitate the greatest percentage of societal happiness at the time. The majority dictates that life decisions and moral dilemmas be decided in the spirit of utilitarianism to benefit the popular vote. With no set value underlying these decisions, democracy itself easily becomes the



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only real value that is underlying the society as a whole. In the end, all that is preserved is democracy itself, and means nothing. The very nature of an absolute democracy, as fair as it may seem, without an underlying guiding principle, is meaningless. Something deep in the collective soul of a society dies when attempting to represent every-

one; no one and no thing really ends up being represented. As Christians, we do have an absolute underlying principle, and that is nothing other than to glorify God. Furthermore, we have an absolute standard by which we can live out this absolute principle, and that is to live by the truths and promises of God's Word. We Christians need not apologize for the dogmatic claims our Bible makes. The world is in darkness, and it is up to us show forth the light.

Built right into the American psyche, these three ideologies—pragmatism, utilitarianism, and expediency—now reign as philosophical fundamentals. As a good American boy, these concepts were well ingrained in me. My childhood dreams were full of ideas of climbing the ladder of success. Growing up, I felt that getting ahead, making the grade, and paying



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my dues would lead me on the path to achieving the American dream—'life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.' Later in my life, however, I discovered that if I actually wanted to experience the fulfillment of the promises of God in my life, these pragmatic ideologies were three giants that needed to be slain.

To turn away from this type of thinking was not easy for me. When I was first coming to the Lord, I soon discovered that everything around me, my culture, my friends, and my profession, had all been dictated more by expediency than anything else. I found my own society's life-blood flowed to the beats and demands of valueless pragmatism.

Francis A. Schaeffer in his book, *How Should We Then Live?* said, "...men have presuppositions and will live more consistently with these presuppositions than they themselves know. People's presuppositions rest upon that which they consider to be the truth of what exists... With no base for the dignity of the individual, only arbitrary expediency gives whatever dignity is given. And being only arbitrary, expediency can twist and turn at will. Men tend to act ultimately with remarkable consistency to their presuppositions—their world view."

When biblical absolutes are lost and the ultimate goal of our society becomes personal gratification and the pursuit of happiness, pandemic-nationwide selfishness is the only natural result. With this mindset, conflicts and wars are inevitable. If the pursuit of happiness is the ultimate goal, then naturally, when another person or society threatens to interfere, any measures necessary to preserve this end appear justifiable. Hence, nuclear equipped armies called "Peace keepers," or multi-layered national task forces labeled "Home Land Security," become reasonable

means to achieve these ends, regardless of the moral or financial cost.

This type of moral ambiguity and uncertainty is all understandable coming from a people who believe they are no more than 'organisms', evolved from cosmic space-matter, or from faithless unbelievers whose final hope is only in this life—but coming from the people who claim to follow the only living, personal, and benevolent God, it is an inexcusable tragedy.

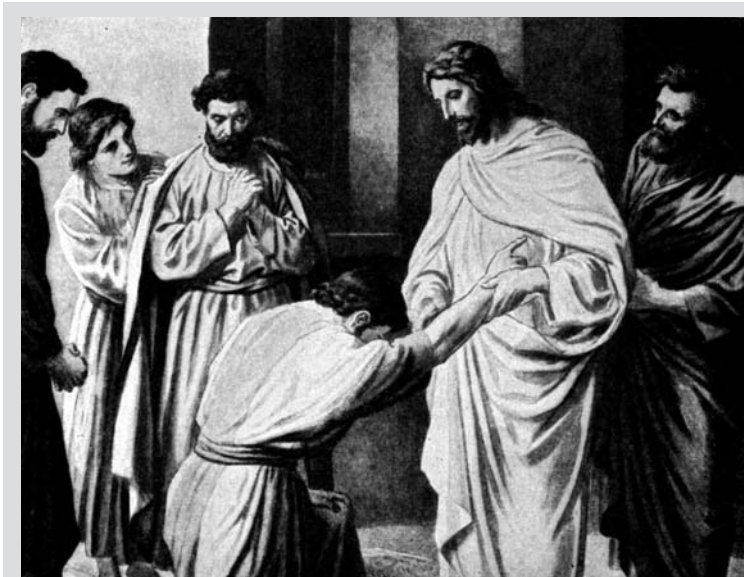
The book of James asks the question, "From whence come wars and fightings among you?" Since the days of Cane and Able the reply has never changed—"Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have,

and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts" (James 4:1-3).

When Jesus came to earth he spoke and taught often of "the Kingdom of God." Jesus revealed to the world a radical, diametrically different, underlying, and guiding principle that was much more than personal gratification and the pursuit of happiness. In His Kingdom, the all-encompassing goal in our life is our all-out pursuit to love God and to glorify Him with every bit of our lives. In His Kingdom, our entire lives, including our ambitions,

happiness, decisions, and desires are consumed to this end—to glorify God. When the angels proclaimed the birth of Jesus they sang, "Glory to God in the Highest!" The Apostle Paul said, "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen" (Romans 11:36).

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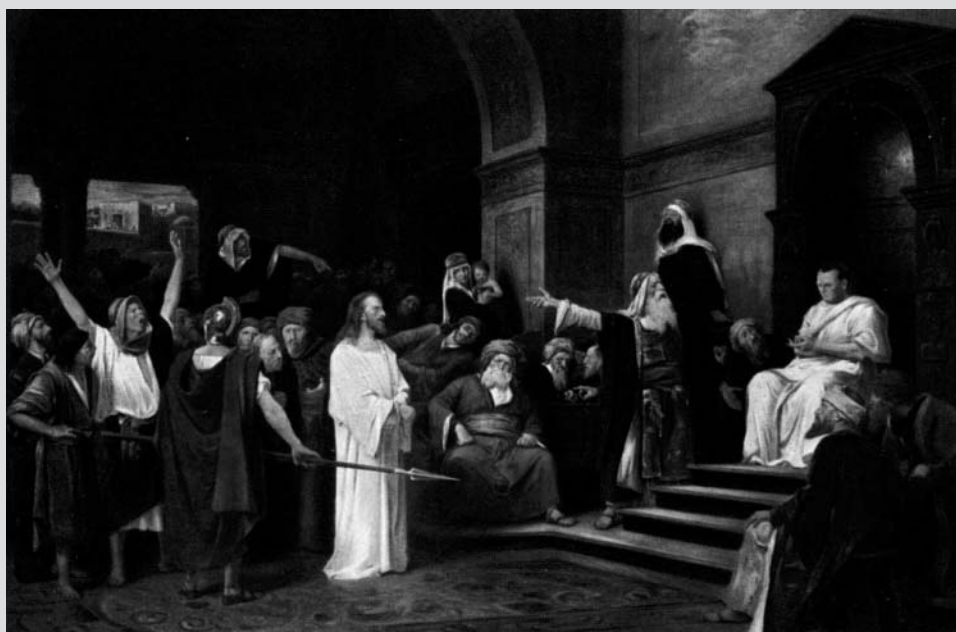
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show forth a better way. Empire after empire has come and gone; nations have raised and nations have fallen, but the Kingdom of God has remained the same. The Meads, Persians, Greeks, and Romans have all died out. The pride and schemes of powerful leaders such as Alexander the Great, Attila the Hun, Genghis Khan, Caesar Augustus, Napoleon, Mussolini, Hitler, and Stalin have amounted to nothing more than noisy confusion and needless bloodshed.

Over 700 years prior to the New Testament era, the Old Testament prophet, Isaiah, foretold of the triumphant, eternal nature of the Kingdom of God say-

ing, *"For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this."* (Isaiah 9:5-7)

This Kingdom was ushered in 2000 years ago by its King, Jesus Christ. Remarkably, unlike earthly



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monarchs, who historically have taken great pleasure in the weakening and exploitation of their subjects, Jesus gave up His life, nobility, and heavenly privileges to give strength, power, and eternal life to his subjects. By so doing, He also left us an example that we should follow:

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phil 2:5-8). Here Paul is showing that we are to have this same sacrificial mindset, this same selfless world view, if we are to have the mind of Christ.

Jesus said, *“Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves.”* And the Apostle Paul also echoed this saying, *“For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter” (Matt 10:16; Romans 8:36).* These words can seem rather discouraging to some. But when pleasing God truly becomes our ultimate end, then things like war, lawsuits, and all other worldly striving suddenly becomes meaningless. Ironically, such a spiritual resolve actually brings great release and happiness! However, that happiness is only a byproduct, but not necessarily the ultimate goal. As long as glorifying God remains the ultimate goal, a person

can suffer and even die and still reach his goal. The apostle Paul tells us:

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:35-39).

The cross of Jesus Christ stands as an eternal witness to the futility of man’s strength, resources, and good ideas. In his letter to the Corinthian church, warning them about the foolishness of fleshly resources, the apostle Paul taught that the way of Christ is not won by our own strength, but by laying our life down, even to the point of death. He wrote: *“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written,*

I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world. (I Corinthians 1:18-20)



As we struggled over getting out [of the Army], I read through many books attempting to justify the Christian’s place in war and self-defense. Yet, in spite of all the rationale, as much as I tried, I just could not let go of the simple, albeit unpractical words of Jesus—“love your enemies, do good to them that hate you.”

When I was converted I began to understand for the first time the nature of God's Kingdom. At that time, my wife and I were soldiers in the U.S. Army. In obedience to God's command to "love our enemies" we decided to seek legal release from the Army as **C o n s c i o u s** Objectors. As we struggled over getting out, I read through many books attempting to justify the Christian's place in war and self-defense. As I read these military, theological, and historical books, war was often likened to the surgeon's knife or the farmer's hoe. The need to defend the innocent, the helpless, and the "just" outweighed all the evil acts of war. Even questionable acts, such as the nuclear bombing of civilian women and children in

Hiroshima and Nagasaki during WWII, were defended as being "just" and "right."

Yet, in spite of all the rationale, as much as I tried, I just could not let go of the simple, albeit unpractical words of Jesus—"love your enemies, do good to them that hate you." But now, as we endeavored to walk out these 'new' ideals for the first time, our commitment to them was being challenged right from the start. When my wife and I finally made up our minds to leave the Army, we were met with the overwhelming reality that we had suddenly lost all of our support. Losing our careers was just the beginning. As we had thought it through, we had realized that we would be



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many others who had gone before us.

During this time I believe God was taking me beyond the surface of the mere doctrines of peace and war, down to the recognition of a deeper need in my life—the need for security and self-sufficiency. As I continued reading the Scriptures and praying, it became clear to me where some of my confusion was coming from. I slowly began to realize that I had allowed 'pragmatic thinking' to creep in and destroy many areas of my life by minimizing the promises of God and teachings of the Bible. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt 6:33) had always been a

giving up all that we had labored so hard to accomplish. Yet we still trembled as we watched our lives seemingly fall apart before our very eyes. It wasn't easy to say goodbye to our health insurance, retirement, college money, rent payment, bank account, church, friends—all of life as we had known it. And as time went on there were moments we were really tempted to despair. But as the anxiety from this realization began to mount and at times loom over us, we were forced to take ahold of God's promises. We had no choice but to either turn completely back, or take the Lord at His Word. And we certainly were not the first Christians to find ourselves in this place. It was inspiring to remember that we were simply following in the footsteps of

beautiful verse to me—one that I knew by heart—but it wasn't a reality in my life.

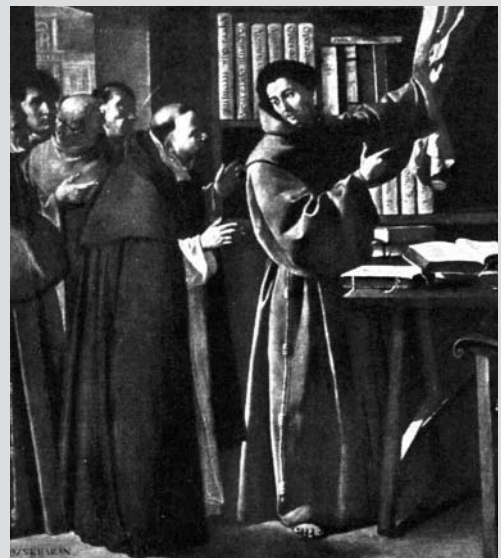
My flesh, or human instincts, argued that a lesser evil could be done to bring about a better good. But as I studied the Word of God, I found that God was vehemently opposed to such teaching. My flesh cried out, "the end justifies the means!" But I found that God was just as concerned with *how* I did things as He was with *why* I was doing them. Proverbs 16:25 says, "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Paul, writing to the Christians in Rome stated, "And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just" (Romans 3:8).

Throughout Bible history God's heart has desired to have a people who would put their trust completely in Him. In the early days of the nation of Israel, God called Abraham at a very old age to leave his home, friends, and way of life, and follow Him through unknown lands based on promises from God—promises that He would give him a son and take him to a land "flowing with milk and honey." God was so pleased with Abraham's faith that He gave Abraham the name "friend of God." The Apostle Paul, speaking of Abraham's powerful trust in God's promises said of him, "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness" (Romans 4:20-22). History has demonstrated time and time again that when the Church has stopped trusting in God and begun to trust in its own strength and resources, failure and compromise have always followed.

There is a very pointed, although merely legendary account from the 13th century, of a surprise meeting between the famed theologian Thomas Aquinas and Pope Innocent II. One day Aquinas came upon the pope while he was inventorying some of the church treasury. The pope was right in the middle of counting a few large stacks of silver and gold coins when Aquinas came walking in. Looking up to Aquinas the pope quipped, "You see, Thomas, the church can no longer say 'silver and gold have I none.'" "This is true," replied Aquinas, "but neither can she say, 'arise and walk!'"

As the corruption of our society continues to 'come in like a flood,' the Church must stand all the more resolutely on the principles of God's Word and 'raise up a standard.' The reason for wars, fighting, lust, and corruption is the same now as it always has been—it results from putting man first. All the passions, pleasures, and pride of man will never form a peaceful society, regardless of how liberated and democratic it may claim to be. Right and wrong are not a matter of popular opinion or majority vote. Our morals, ethics, and beliefs are given to us solely by divine revelation of the Word of God. We should never apologize or feel sheepish about the dogmatic claims of God's Word. James finishes his rhetorical question "whence come wars and fightings among you?" with this strong admonition, "whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (James 4:4-6). I certainly do not want to be an enemy of God! I want to be like Abraham—to fully and even foolishly trust in the Promises to the point that I, too, may be called a friend of God. □

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Source of Power

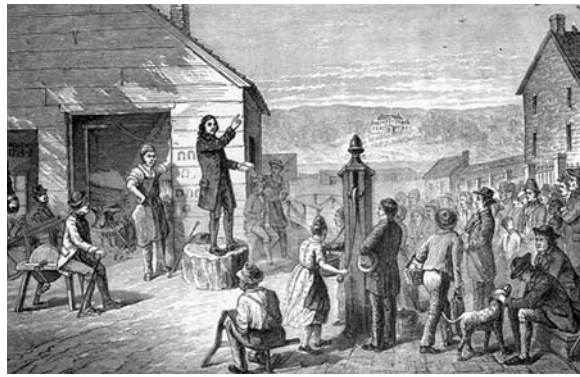
by J. Hudson Taylor

*"God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this,
that power belongeth unto God" (Ps. 62:11).*

God Himself is the great source of power. It is His possession. "Power belongeth unto God", and He manifests it according to His sovereign will. Yet, not in an erratic or arbitrary manner, but according to His declared purpose and promises. True, our opponents and hindrances are many and mighty, but our God, the living God, is Almighty.

Further, God's power is available power. We are supernatural people, born again by a supernatural birth, kept by a supernatural power, sustained on supernatural food, taught by a supernatural Teacher from a supernatural Book. We are led by a supernatural Captain in right paths to assured victories. The risen Saviour, ere He ascended on high, said: 'All power is given unto Me. Go ye therefore'.

Again, He said to His disciples: "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you". Not many days after this, in answer to united and continued prayer, the Holy Spirit did come upon them, and they were all filled. Praise God, He remains with us still. The power given is not a gift from the Holy Spirit. He Himself is the power. Today He is as truly available, and as mighty in power, as He was on the day of Pentecost. But since the days before Pentecost, has the whole Church ever put aside every other work, and waited upon God for ten days, that that power might be manifested? We have given too much attention to method, and to machinery, and to resources, and too little to the source of power.



God Uses Clean Vessels

by T. K. Hershey
From "The Evangelist"

Tobias Kreider Hershey was born here in Lancaster County in 1879. At eight years of age he felt the desire to become a missionary. He was converted at age 17 and the next year was appointed superintendent of a nearby mission Sunday School. In 1917 he and his family, together left for mission work in Argentina under the Mennonite Church. T. K. served in central Argentina as a pastor, bishop, evangelist, superintendent of the Argentine Mission. He also worked as financial agent, and printer. The Hersheys retired from the Argentine mission service in April 1948. In 1949 they served one year as church workers in Puerto Rico. After returning to the United States, T. K. and Mae Elizabeth were active in missions, evangelism, discipling, church planting, and Bible teaching in the United States and Canada.

The Bible has much to say with respect to the qualifications and character of spiritual leaders. God can use in an effective way a clean man. He has three outstanding tools with which to accomplish His work among men; namely, the Spirit of God, the Word of God, and a redeemed life. The latter is the instrument, because it is through the redeemed life that the Holy Spirit functions. We can at once see the need of that life being clean and holy, consecrated to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

In a revival, the evangelist must be a fellow worker with God. Someone has said, "Any ordinary housewife would not use a dirty pan for milk, nor cook a choice bit of food in an unclean pot." "A farmer," says another, "would find it most difficult to do good

plowing with a rusty plow." To do good work, no one would work with unclean tools. Everyone desires clean tools to work with; so does God. He uses tools in proportion to the cleansing. "Those things which proceed out of the mouth...defile the man, for out of the heart proceed evil thoughts" (Matt.15-18,19). Read also Mark 7:20-23.

Many evangelists work hard in evangelistic campaigns and often conclude that there were no visible results because of this, or that, or the other reason that he may have manufactured. It is not God's fault that men are not used by Him in a greater way. The fault, more or less, lies with themselves. Perhaps they have not measured up to God's requirements with respect to cleansing. They are not permitting Him to cleanse them and to keep them clean. Remember what Jesus said in John 15:2, "Every branch that beareth fruit, he cleanseth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." God wants to cleanse, but many evangelists continue to battle with the sins in other people's lives, and are not successful because they themselves are not clean, and will not allow God to cleanse them so that they may bring forth more fruit. Those who allow God to "purge them" testify how mighty the power of God is and rejoice at the additional fruit of their labor.

Temples for the Holy Spirit

"Know ye not that your body is temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God,

and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body" (I Cor. 6:19,20). When Jesus was in Jerusalem, He saw that the Temple of God was being defiled. What did He do? He cleansed it. How much more important that our body be clean, for it is the temple in which the Holy Spirit dwells.

I fear there are evangelists who live on the low level of the people whom they are attempting to lead to Christ and who commit as gross and outstanding sins and are as unclean in their temple, thought life, and often action, as the lost in the world are. Such have forgotten the admonition in II Peter 1:9 (R.V.): "For he that lacketh these things is blind, seeing only what is near, having forgotten the cleansing from his old sins." Yea, many Christians forget this also, and are as "the sow that was washed, returneth to her wallowing in the mire." The result is that the evangelist is powerless and his mouth is sealed.

Uncleanness in the life of God's fellow workers—God's tools—seals their mouth and hinders their usefulness. How can an evangelist tell a slave to sin, how to get victory over that particular sin if he himself is a slave to the same sin? It is impossible to preach with power that Jesus is able to save and to keep from sin, if the preacher continues in sin himself. Let us all remember that Christ so loved the church that He gave Himself for it. Why? "That he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word" (RV). We find in God's Word what pleases and what displeases Him. When we see ourselves as Isaiah saw himself, a man of unclean lips, and at the same time we see the holiness of God, it is then we, too, will cry out, "Woe is me!" It is then that we will see the people around us just like we were. Isaiah said, "I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." Why did Isaiah complain about the lips being unclean? Because there lay the besetting sin. I can hardly imagine that he used profane language, or that he soiled his lips with filthy stories, but evidently he was not using them to the glory of God. There are

people who profess God with their lips but do not honor Him with their life. God wants both. Especially must an evangelist be an example of having cleansed, purified lips. When the live coal from off the altar touched the lips of the prophet, he was a changed man and God used him in a might way. Brother Evangelist, has the Holy Spirit purified your lips and life? He wants to use you mightily as a spiritual adviser, but cannot unless you submit to His cleansing power. Clean lips come from a clean heart. To have a clean temple in which the Holy Spirit desires to dwell is to drive out the filth and dirt that has been stored there for a long time.

One thing is certain: The Holy Spirit will not dwell in a dirty, filthy temple. "Wherefore brethren, having these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh." Each one of us has our part in this temple cleansing. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Do your part and the Holy Spirit will do the rest.

I repeat that God uses clean tools. Every evangelist who was used mightily in revival work was a clean man. Study the lives of great church leaders that you may know of and you will find that they were individuals who were living holy, godly, pure, clean lives.

Bishops, ministers, deacons, evangelists, missionaries, Sunday-school superintendents, Sunday-school teachers and laity in general, do you want to see a real revival in your church? This is possible only as we represent not a filthy, dirty, rusty, impure, corrupt, polluted temple, but a purified, honest, cleansed dwelling place for the Holy Spirit. If there has not been the desired results in your series of meetings, make a self-examination of your own life. Do it now. Look at your own self for the cause.

The fault does not lie with God. It is nine times out of ten because sin reigns in the body of God's fellow workers. May God help us to be clean tools for Him and for the church. □

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A Word to Parents

by Arthur W. Pink (1886-1952)

One of the saddest and most tragic features of our twentieth-century "Civilization" is the awful prevalence of disobedience on the part of children to their parents during the days of childhood, and their lack of reverence and respect when they grow up. This is evidenced in many ways, and is general, alas, even in the families of professing Christians. In his extensive travels during the past thirty years the writer has sojourned in a great many homes. The piety and beauty of some of them remain as sacred and fragrant memories, but others of them have left the most painful impressions. Children who are self-willed or spoiled, not only bring themselves into perpetual unhappiness but also inflict discomfort upon all who come into contact with them, and auger, by their conduct, evil things for the days to come.

In the vast majority of cases the children are not nearly so much to be blamed as the parents. Failure to honor father and mother, wherever it is found, is in large measure due to parental departure from the Scriptural pattern. Nowadays the father thinks that he has fulfilled his obligations by providing food and raiment for his children, and by acting occasionally as a kind of moral policeman. Too often the mother is content to be a domestic drudge, making herself the

slave of her children instead of training them to be useful. She performs many a task which her daughters should do in order to allow them freedom for the frivolities of a giddy set. The consequence has been that the home, which ought to be—for its orderliness, its sanctity, and its reign of love—a miniature heaven on earth, has degenerated into "a filling station for the day and a parking place for the night," as someone has tersely expressed it.

Before outlining the duties of parents toward their children, let it be pointed out that they cannot properly discipline their children unless they have first learned to govern themselves. How can they expect to subdue self-will in their little ones and check the rise of an angry temper if their own passions are allowed free reign? The character of parents is to a very large degree reproduced in their offspring: "And Adam lived a hundred and thirty years and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image" (Gen. 5:3). The parent must himself or herself be in subjection to God if he would lawfully expect obedience from his little ones. This principle is enforced in Scripture again and again: "Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?" (Rom. 2:20). Of the bishop, that is, elder or pastor, it is writ-



Instruct Your Children

We have space to mention but four of the principal duties devolving on parents. First, it is your duty to instruct your children. "And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" (Deut. 6:6, 7). This work is far too important to allocate to others; parents, and not Sabbath School teachers, are Divinely required to educate their little ones. Nor is this to be an occasional or sporadic thing, but one that is to have constant attention. The glorious character of God, the requirements of His holy Law, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the wondrous gift of His Son, and the fearful doom which is the certain portion of all who despise and reject Him are to be brought repeatedly before the minds of your

little ones. "They are too young to understand such things" is the Devil's argument to deter you from discharging your duty.

"And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). It is to be noted that the "fathers" are here specifically addressed, and this for two reasons: (1) because they are the heads of their families and their government is especially committed to them; and (2) because they are prone to transfer this duty to their wives. This instruction is to be given by reading to them the Holy Scriptures and enlarging upon those things most agreeable to their age. This should be followed by catechizing them. A continued discourse to the young is not nearly so effective as when it is diversified by questions and answers. If they know they will be questioned on what you read, they will listen more closely, and the formulating of answers teaches them to think for themselves. Such a method is also found to make the memory more retentive, for answering definite questions fixes more specific ideas in the mind. Observe how often Christ asked His disciples questions.

Be a Good Example

Second, good instruction is to be accompanied by good example. That teaching which issues only from

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that he must be "one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity. For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?" (I Tim. 3:5, 6). And if a man or woman knows not how to rule his own spirit (Prov. 25:28), how shall he care for his offspring.

God has entrusted to parents a most solemn charge, and yet a most precious privilege. It is not too much to say that in their hands are deposited the hope and blessing, or else the curse and plague, of the next generation. Their families are the nurseries of both Church and State and according to the cultivating of them now will be their fruitfulness hereafter. Oh, how prayerfully and carefully should you who are parents discharge your trust. Most assuredly God will require an account of the children from your hands, for they are His, and only lent to your care and keeping. The task assigned you is no easy one, especially in these superlatively evil days. Nevertheless, if trustfully and earnestly sought, the grace of God will be found sufficient in this responsibility as in others. The Scriptures supply us with rules to go by, with promises to lay hold of, and, we may add, with fearful warnings lest we treat the matter lightly.

the lips is not at all likely to sink any deeper than the ears. Children are particularly quick to detect inconsistencies and to despise hypocrisy. It is at this point that parents need to be most on their faces before God, daily seeking from Him that grace that they so sorely need and that He alone can supply. What care you need to take, lest you say or do anything before your children that would tend to corrupt their minds or be of evil consequence for them to follow! How you need to be constantly on your guard against anything which might render you mean and contemptible in the eyes of those who should respect and revere you! The parent is not only to instruct his children in the ways of holiness, but is himself to walk before them in those ways, and show by his practice and demeanor what a pleasant and profitable thing it is to be regulated by the Divine Law.

In a Christian home the supreme aim should be household piety—the honoring of God at all times. Everything else must be subordinated to this high purpose. In the matter of family life, neither husband nor wife can throw on the other all the responsibility for the religious character of the home. The mother is most certainly required to supplement the efforts of the father, for the children enjoy far more of her company than they do of his. If there is a tendency in fathers to be too strict and severe, mothers are prone to be too lax and lenient; and they need to be much on their guard against anything which would weaken their husband's authority. When he has forbidden a thing, she must not give her consent to it. It is striking to

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that the exhortation of Ephesians 6:4 is preceded by instruction to “be filled with the Spirit” (5:18), while the parallel exhortation in Colossians 3:21 is preceded by the exhortation to “let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly” (v. 16), showing that parents cannot possibly discharge their duties unless they are filled with the Spirit and the Word.

Discipline Your Children

Third, instruction and example is to be enforced by correction and discipline. This means, first of all, the exercise of authority—the proper reign of Law. Of “the father of the faithful” God said, “For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which He hath spoken of him” (Gen. 18:19). Ponder this carefully, Christian fathers. Abraham did more than proffer good advice; he enforced law and order in his household. The rules he administered had for their design the keeping of “the way of the Lord”—that which was right in His sight. And this duty was performed by the patriarch in order that the blessing of God might rest on his family. No family can be properly brought tip without household laws, which include reward and punishment, and these are especially important in early childhood, when as yet moral character is unformed and moral motives are not understood or appreciated.

Rules should be simple, clear, reasonable, and inflexible like the Ten Commandments—a few great moral rules, instead of a multitude of petty restrictions.

One way of needlessly provoking children to wrath is to hamper them with a thousand trifling restrictions and minute regulations that are capricious and are due to a fastidious temper in the parent. It is of vital importance for the child's future good that he or she should be brought into subjection at an early age. An untrained child means a lawless adult. Our prisons are crowded with those who were allowed to have their own way during their minority. The least offense of a child against the



rulers of the home ought not to pass without due correction, for if he finds leniency in one direction or toward one offense he will expect the same toward others. And then disobedience will become more frequent till the parent has no control save that of brute force.

The teaching of Scripture is crystal clear on this point. "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him" (Prov. 22:15; and cf. 23:13, 14). Therefore God has said, "He that spareth the rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes (speedily)" (Prov. 13:24). And again, "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying" (Prov. 19:18). Let not a foolish fondness stay thee. Certainly God loves His children with a much deeper parental affection that you can love yours, yet He tells us, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten" (Rev. 3:19; and cf. Heb. 12:6). "The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame" (Prov. 29:15). Such severity must be used in his early years, before age and obstinacy have hardened the child against the fear and smart of correction. Spare the rod, and you spoil the child; use it not on him, and you lay up one for your own back.

It should hardly need pointing out that the above Scriptures are by no means teaching that a reign of terror is to mark the home life. Children can be governed and chastened in such a way that they lose not their respect and affection for their parents. Beware of souring their temper by unreasonable demands, or provoking their wrath by striking them to vent your own rage. The parent is to punish a disobedient child not because he is angry, but because it is right—because God requires it, and the welfare of the child demands it. Never make a threat which you have no intention of executing, nor a promise you do not mean to perform. Remember that for your children to be well informed is good, but for them to be well controlled is better.

Pay close attention to the unconscious influences of a child's surroundings. Study how to make your home attractive, not by introducing carnal and worldly things, but by noble ideals, by the inculcating of a spirit of unselfishness, by genial and happy fellowship. Separate the little ones from evil associ-



ates.

Watch carefully the periodicals and books which come into your home, the occasional guests which sit at your table, and the companionships that your children form. Parents often carelessly let others have free access to their children who undermine the parental authority, overturn the parental ideals, and sow seeds of frivolity and iniquity before they are aware. Never let your child spend a night among strangers. So train your children that your girls will be useful and helpful members of their generation and your boys industrious and self-supporting.

Pray for Your Children

Fourth, the last and most important duty, respecting both the temporal and spiritual good of your children, is fervent supplication to God for them; for without this all the rest will be ineffectual. Means are unavailing unless the Lord blesses them. The Throne of Grace is to be earnestly implored that your efforts to bring up your children for God may be crowned with success. ... it is the privilege of faith to lay hold of the Divine promises and to remember that the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Of holy job it is recorded concerning his sons and daughters that he "rose up early in the morning and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all" (Job 1:5). A prayerful atmosphere should pervade the home and be breathed by all who share it. □

Thine All in All

**Art thou weary, heavy-laden?
Hear thee now sweet words of peace;
"Come unto Me and rest."**

**Dost thou struggle to rise above thy trials?
Have cares of life been thrust upon thee?
"Fear thou not, for I am with thee."**

**Hast all security been uprooted,
From thy life, thy home, thy heart?
"I am unchanging, rest in Me."**

**Dost thou continually seem to fail,
In conquering temptations 'round thee?
"Take heart, for I will help thee."**

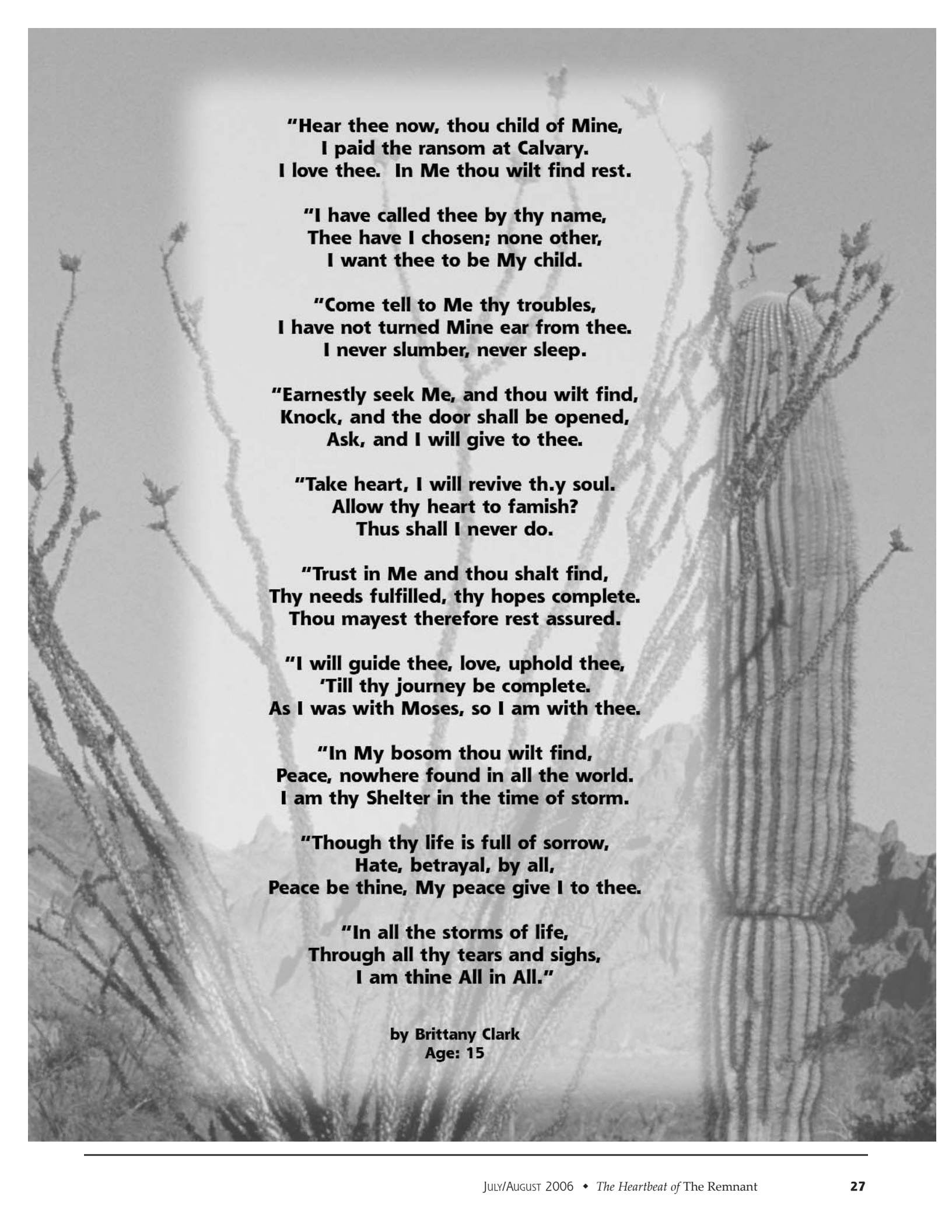
**Hast thou been forsake, betrayed,
By thy friends, perhaps thy loved ones?
"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, child."**

**Art thou in the depths of despair?
Does the road ahead look bleak?
"Never fear; I will hold thine hand."**

**Hast thou been wounded, hurt, dismayed,
Disappointed by life's trials?
"I will never disappoint thee."**

**Art thou crushed beneath a grief,
Perhaps the passing of a loved one?
"Do not grieve thus; in Me they rest."**

**Dost thou feel burdened with sin?
Art thou soul-sick, weary, dismayed?
"'Twas for such as thee I came to die."**



**"Hear thee now, thou child of Mine,
I paid the ransom at Calvary.
I love thee. In Me thou wilt find rest.**

**"I have called thee by thy name,
Thee have I chosen; none other,
I want thee to be My child.**

**"Come tell to Me thy troubles,
I have not turned Mine ear from thee.
I never slumber, never sleep.**

**"Earnestly seek Me, and thou wilt find,
Knock, and the door shall be opened,
Ask, and I will give to thee.**

**"Take heart, I will revive thy soul.
Allow thy heart to famish?
Thus shall I never do.**

**"Trust in Me and thou shalt find,
Thy needs fulfilled, thy hopes complete.
Thou mayest therefore rest assured.**

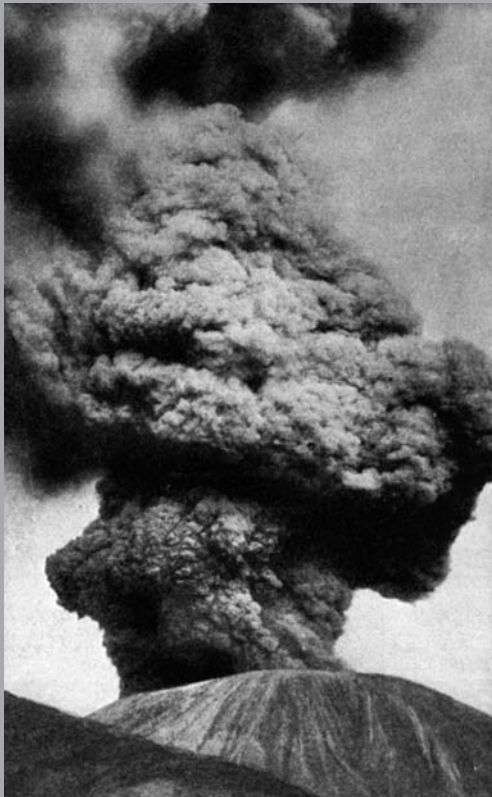
**"I will guide thee, love, uphold thee,
'Till thy journey be complete.
As I was with Moses, so I am with thee.**

**"In My bosom thou wilt find,
Peace, nowhere found in all the world.
I am thy Shelter in the time of storm.**

**"Though thy life is full of sorrow,
Hate, betrayal, by all,
Peace be thine, My peace give I to thee.**

**"In all the storms of life,
Through all thy tears and sighs,
I am thine All in All."**

**by Brittany Clark
Age: 15**



PREPARE

TO

DIE

*Taken from the CD Gospel tract
found at
www.altarofpraise.com*

The date was December 15, 1989. There was a volcanic eruption in Alaska that shot ashes miles & miles into the sky, filling the atmosphere with dust and ashes. A Boeing 747 jumbo jet was flying in that area with 231 passengers on board at 18,000 feet. They did not know about the volcano and the pilot unknowingly flew the aircraft into the eruption cloud. As the pilot attempted to climb out of the cloud, tiny ash particles stalled all four engines. The pilot announced on the public address system, “All four engines have stopped and we are GOING DOWN!”

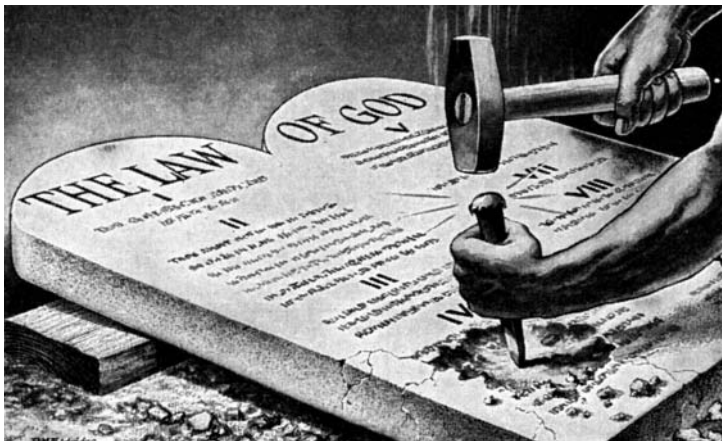
Imagine yourself on that airplane! What do you think was going on in the cabin of that aircraft? Suddenly nothing else mattered any longer, but the stark reality that we are all going to die! Do you think anyone requested drinks, food or magazines? No one did! “We are all going to die!” Suddenly money, fame, pleasure and all those things that at one time were so important meant absolutely nothing!!!

For eight agonizing minutes that plane was simply gliding and lost 12,000 feet of altitude. You can be sure that people who never prayed began to pray in earnest. People who rarely cried were crying. In those horrifying moments there was fear and panic as they faced certain death. Their whole life passed before them as the plane was going down. For eight minutes they all tried to prepare themselves for death.

Suddenly, with only 6000 feet of altitude remaining the pilots were able to restart the engines and land the plane safely at Anchorage. After the plane landed safely on the ground there was great relief and much exuberance. **GOD HAS GIVEN US BACK OUR LIFE!!! WE HAVE ANOTHER CHANCE!!!** People who never thanked God before, thanked God that day.

My friend, this story is a picture of your life. We are all, as it were, on that airplane plunging toward certain death.

The Bible says “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Hebrews



“For all have sinned: and come short of the glory of God.” Sin is the transgression of God’s holy law. Sin stands as an ultimate barrier of separation between sinful man and almighty God. Because of His righteousness and holiness God is obligated to judge sin. No one is prepared to meet God with sin in the heart.

9:27). Just as the people in that airplane were attempting to prepare for their end, we must also prepare to meet death!

The Bible says “God created man in his own image, and his own likeness,” (Genesis 1:26) and he “formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” (Genesis 2:7) From the beginning it was God’s plan to have a close relationship with all people. Adam and Eve heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day. Man’s relationship with God was perfect and complete without any walls and hindrances or distractions. “And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. (Genesis 1:31) And God blessed them. (Genesis 1:28)

Then Adam and Eve sinned and the relationship was broken. The LORD God had commanded “Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” Genesis 2:16,17) They disobeyed God’s command and ate of the forbidden fruit. “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so

death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” (Romans 5:12)

Today the effects of sin are on every hand. The value of human life has been cheapened. People are dying from murder, war, terrorism and abortion. Families are being destroyed by hatred, alcoholism, drugs, violent entertainment, pornography and adultery. Children suffer for the sins of their parents. Millions of people suffer under the cruel tyranny of evil and selfish dictators. There is evil everywhere!!!

You may say, “I’m not like that. I’m a pretty good person”. The Word of God says; “There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.” (Proverbs 16:25) Most of us consider ourselves to be good people.

Let us take a little quiz:

Have you kept God’s commandants?
Let us consider a few of them.

“Thou shalt not steal.” (Exodus 20:15)
Have you ever stolen anything?

“Thou shalt not bear false witness.” (Exodus 20:16) Have you ever told a lie?
My friend, that includes stretching the truth. God says, “all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.” (Revelation 21:8)

How about this commandment? “Thou shalt not kill.” (Exodus 21:13) Have you ever killed anyone?
The Bible says; “he that hateth his brother is a murderer.” (1 John 3:15) Have you ever hated anyone?

Consider this commandment? “Thou shalt not commit adultery.” (Exodus 20:14) Are you guilty of adultery? Jesus said, “whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” (Matthew 5:28) Have you ever looked at another person with lustful desire?

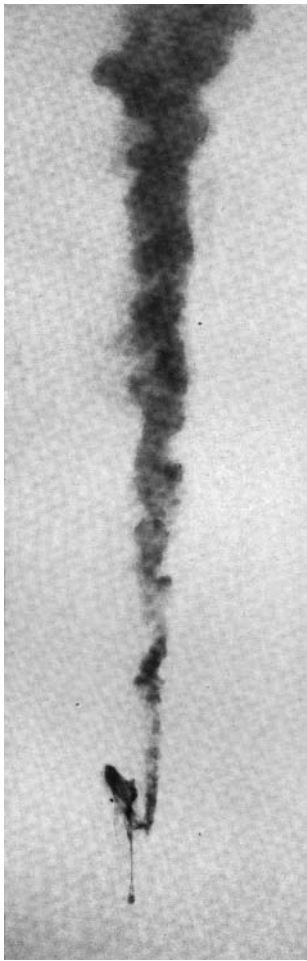
If you answer yes to any of these questions, you have broken God’s law and you will stand guilty before God on judgment day. “For all have sinned: and come short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23) Sin is the transgression of God’s holy law. “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” (Ezekiel 18:20) How does God feel about sin? “And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil

continually., and it grieved him at his heart." (Genesis 6:5-6) In another place the scriptures say; "I was grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways: (Psalm 95:10)... I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not thy word." (Psalm 119:158)

Sin stands as an ultimate barrier of separation between sinful man and almighty God. Because of His righteousness and holiness God is obligated to judge sin. "Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God." (Leviticus 20:7) No one is prepared to meet God with sin in the heart. The scriptures are clear that all will face the judgment of God.

"... it is appointed unto men once to die...but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27) "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. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." (2 Corinthians 5:10) No one shall escape God's judgment. The Bible tells us that the blatant disregard of God's law will be punished. "Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death." (Romans 1:32)

God wants us to be a pure and holy people. His desire is that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love. But how can we on our own strength reach to this flawless holy standard that God requires? The fact is, we can not. "There is none righteous, no, not one!" (Romans 3:10) No one can attain God's perfect standard through religious rituals, helping the poor, acts of charity or giving money. The Bible says, "The wages of sin is death," (Romans 6:23) and



God is not willing that anyone should perish.... When Jesus Christ was nailed to the cross, God the Father took all our sins and laid them upon Jesus. As Jesus shed His blood and died, the penalty of our sin was paid in full.

that death is an eternal hell separated from the presence of God.

But don't despair, there is good news. This same verse goes on to say, "but the gift of God is eternal life thru Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23) God is not willing that anyone should perish, but that all come to repentance and eternal life. That anyone means "You" my friend.

Knowing that we could not reach His standard and knowing that we could never regain our relationship with Him, God looked down on us with love and mercy. The scripture says; "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." (John 3:16,17) Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was born of a virgin and lived a holy life free from all sin. This same Jesus was unjustly condemned as a sinner, beaten, mocked and sentenced to die on a cruel cross. When Jesus Christ was nailed to the cross, God the Father took all our sins and laid them upon Jesus.

As Jesus shed His blood and died, the penalty of our sin was paid in full. The holy scriptures tell us; "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Corinthians 5:21) "...Jesus Christ, ...loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." (Revelation 1:5) After Jesus died, they placed His body in a tomb and after three days He triumphantly rose from the dead, defying death, hell and the grave! "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; ... And ...he was buried, and he rose again the third day." (1 Corinthians 15:3,4)

The Good News is that Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah, is alive and calling you to Himself. "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to

him, and will sup with him, and he with me.” (Revelation 3:20) “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30)

My friend, are you weary of your sinful life and long for peace and rest for your soul? Do you see yourself as a guilty sinner deserving death and in need of Jesus as your Savior? Imagine yourself on that airplane knowing you are about to die. Are you prepared for your appointment with death and judgment?

My friend, Here is what you need to do to prepare to meet your God:

1.
Acknowledge That You Are a Sinner in Need of a Savior.

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God!” (Romans 3:23)

2.
Believe in Your Heart That the Lord Jesus Christ Is the Son of God and That He Died for Your Sins.

The Bible says: “...if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” (Romans 10:9,10)

3.
Repent of Your Sin.

God commands; “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.” (Acts 3:19) Repentance is turning away from all sin and giving yourself totally to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

4.
Confess Your Sins In Prayer To God.

Be truly sorry for the sins you have committed against God and others. God already knows all about your sins and wants to hear you confess them from the heart to Him so He can forgive you and clear your

guilty conscience. God Promises in His word; “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9) “He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.” (Proverbs 28:13)

5.
Call Upon the Lord Jesus Christ Through Prayer to Be Saved.

“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” (Romans 10:13)

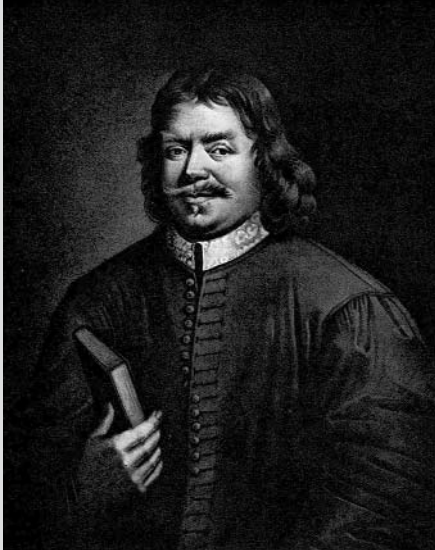
My friend, is there any good reason why you cannot prepare to meet God right now? You have no promise of another opportunity to prepare to meet God. The Bible says, “Today is the day of salvation, now is the accepted time, if you hear His voice calling you, harden not your heart.” (2 Corinthians 6:2)

If you see your self as a lost sinner and are willing to turn away from your sinful life and surrender your life fully to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, pray in this fashion; “Dear God; I acknowledge that I have sinned against You and am in need of your forgiveness. I am truly sorry for, and repent of all my sinful ways. I believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the son of God and that he died for my sins and rose again. I make you Lord and master of my life. In Jesus Name, Amen”

The Bible promises, “... as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” (John 1:12) “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” (2 Corinthians 5:17)

My friend, if you have trusted in Christ Jesus as your savior your whole life has just changed. Pray everyday, read your Bible, obey what it says and find a bible believing church that glorifies Jesus Christ. Our prayer is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message. ☐

If God has recently changed your life and you would like to speak to someone at our tape ministry please call 1-800-227-7902



The Progressing Faith of John Bunyan

The Author of Pilgrim's Progress

John Bunyan was brought up by his father in the craft of a brass worker. Although he was never a drunkard or a violent man, his special sins were profanity, Sabbath-breaking, and atheism. Before he was converted, he was notorious for the energy that he put into all his doings. He had a zeal for idle play and an enthusiasm in mischief that perversely manifested his forceful personality.

His biographer, Dr. Hamilton, gives the following description of Bunyan in his youth:

He is the noisiest of the party playing pitch-and-toss—that one with the shaggy eyebrows whose entire soul is ascending in the twirling penny. His energetic movements and authoritative exclama-

tions identify him at once as a ringleader. The penny has come down on the wrong side, and a loud oath at once bellows from young Bunyan. You have only to remember that it is Sabbath evening, and you witness a scene often repeated on Elstow Green two hundred years ago.

The only restraining influence that Bunyan then felt was the power of terror. He was often depressed by fear of the impending wrath of God, and he frequently had terrible nightmares that the reckless diversions of his waking day could not always dispel. He would dream that the last day had come and that the quaking earth was opening its mouth to let him down to hell. Or he would find himself in the grasp of fiends who were dragging him away.

As he grew older, his conscience grew harder. He experienced some remarkable escapes from death, but these providences neither startled nor melted him. He married very early, and his wife was the daughter of a godly man. Her whole property consisted of two small books, *The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven*, and *Practice of Piety*, which her father had left her on his deathbed.

Young Bunyan read these books, and his wife often told him what a good man her father had been. The consequence was that he felt some desire to reform his vicious life, and he began to attend church twice a day. At the same time, he became overrun with a spirit of superstition. The mere sight of a priest bewitched him. However, while enamored with the garb and ritual of worship, Bunyan continued to curse and blaspheme and to spend his Sabbaths in the same riot as before.

One day, however, he heard a sermon on the sin of Sabbath-breaking, and it haunted his conscience throughout the day. When he was in the midst of the excitement of that afternoon's diversions, a voice seemed to dart from heaven into his soul, "Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or have thy sins and go to hell?" His arm, which was about to strike a ball, was stopped, and as he looked up to heaven, it seemed as if the Lord Jesus was looking down upon him in rebuke and deep displeasure.

At the same time, he was overcome with the conviction that he had sinned so long that repentance was now too late. His desperate conclusion was that he was beyond hope. In fact, he became so persuaded that he had forfeited heaven forever that he decided to enjoy the pleasures of sin as rapidly and intensely as possible. One day, as Bunyan was standing at a neighbor's window cursing and swearing, the woman of the house protested that he was the ungodliest man that she had ever known in her life. Because the woman was herself a notoriously worthless character,

her reproof had a dramatic effect on Bunyan's mind. He was silenced in a moment. However, his swearing had become so habitual that he thought reform was impossible without returning to childhood and relearning how to speak.

Soon after this circumstance, Bunyan began to read the Bible. He took a special interest in the historical portions of the Scripture, and his outward life underwent much reformation. His own account of this period of his life says:

"I did set the commandments before me for my way to heaven and I strived to keep them. I thought I kept them pretty well sometimes which would bring me comfort. Yet now and then I would break one, and so afflict my conscience. I would repent and promise God to do better next time. I then thought I pleased God as well as any man in England. Thus I continued about a year and all my neighbors considered me to be a very godly man, a new and religious man, and did marvel much to see such great alterations in my life and manners. And so it was although I knew not Christ, nor grace, nor faith, nor hope. I was nothing but a poor painted hypocrite, yet I loved to be talked of as one that was truly godly."

About a year later, Bunyan went to Bedford on business. While walking along the street, he noticed a few poor women sitting in a doorway and talking together. Their conversation surprised him. Although he had by this time become a great talker on sacred subjects, their themes were far beyond his reach. They spoke in a personal and vital way about God's work in their souls, the views they had obtained of their sinfulness and of God's love in Christ Jesus, and the words and promises that had particularly refreshed them and strengthened them against the temptations of Satan.

Bunyan felt as if these women had found a new world. Their conversation made a deep impression on his mind. He saw that there was something real in religion that he had not yet understood. What John Bunyan heard in the society of these humble instructors suggested to him a sort of waking vision:

"I saw as if they were on the sunny side of some high mountain, there refreshing themselves with the pleasant beams of the sun, while I was shivering and shrinking in the cold, afflicted with frost, snow, and dark clouds. Between them and me, I saw a wall through which my soul did greatly desire to pass, but I could not find a passage. At the last I saw, as it were, a narrow gap, like a little doorway in the wall, through which I attempted to pass. After great striving, I pushed my body through. It showed me that none could enter into life but those who were in downright earnest, and

unless they left that wicked world behind them, for here was only room for body and soul, but not for body and soul and sin."

In quest of faith he went on a long and joyless journey and was wearied with the greatness of the way. There is scarcely a fear that can assail an inquiring spirit that did not at some stage of his progress arrest his mind. He was no longer a proud Pharisee but a deeply humbled sinner: "My original and inward pollution—that was my plague and affliction. I was more loathsome in my own eyes than a toad; and I thought I was so in God's eyes too."

His happiness was now as intense as his misery had been. He wished he was old that he might die quickly and go to be with Christ. But another period of fearful agony awaited him, and like the last, it continued for a year. The trial that beset him was a diabolical temptation to exchange Christ for the things of this life. The words "Sell Him, sell Him" would be impressed upon his thoughts for weeks at a time.

During this period, the tempter would not let him eat his food in quiet but flooded his mind with the notion that if he did not immediately leave the table in order to pray, he would displease God. When he refused to give in to this temptation, his conscience accused him of loving his food more than God. The fear that he had committed the unpardonable sin had such an effect on Bunyan that it not only distressed his mind but gave him severe stomach disorders.

Thus his mind continued for years, "hanging," as he expressed it, "as in a pair of scales; sometimes up and sometimes down: now in peace, and again in terror."

One day, as he was passing into the field, these words fell upon his soul, "Thy righteousness is in heaven." The eyes of his soul saw at the same time that Jesus Christ was at God's right hand, and "there," he said, "is my righteousness. I saw, moreover, that it was not my good frame of heart that made my righteousness better, nor my bad frame that made my righteousness worse; for my righteousness was Jesus Christ Himself, 'the same yesterday, today and forever'" (Heb. 13:8).

Now he was loosed from his afflictions and his irons. His temptations also fled away, and he went home rejoicing for the grace and love of God. The words "He is made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (see 1 Cor. 1:30) became the blessed truth that was his peace with God. He was complete in Christ Jesus, and although he was sometimes interrupted by disquieting thoughts and strong temptations, his subsequent Christian experience was one of growing comfort and prevailing peace. □



When You Preach

by S. S. Nelson

When you enter the pulpit make no apologies. You may not be a big preacher but you have just as big a Gospel to preach as any preacher who ever lived. If you have a God-given message, deliver it. If you do not, the spiritual people will soon discover that you are firing only a dud. No matter how well you clothe a sermon with golden rhetoric and fine sentences, it is not a golden tongue that counts but a tongue of fire.

Leave self out of the pulpit but take Christ in. Do not waste time with a long preface or introduction but reach the truths of your sermon as early as possible. Do not keep on talking after you have finished your sermon. It is better to keep the people longing than to send them away loathing. Do not harp too much on one string. A hard scolding rarely ever brings the anointing of God's spirit upon a meeting. Preach to the people and never at them, especially those who are absent. Be just as faithful on the rainy days and rough nights as when the auditorium is crowded. Take care of your character and let the Lord and the people take care of your reputation. Let the Lord and the people look after your needs.

Keep the faith even at the cost of losing your charge and everything else, even your life. Do not criticize the people for not liking you too well. Maybe you have too high an opinion of yourself. Remember that shouting and noise is not always spiritual power; and empty vessels may ring louder than one filled. Often lean and empty souls make

noise to keep up a pretense. Powder is not shot. Thunder is not lightning. Powder may be necessary for a shot and thunder may follow lightning but the shot and lightning do the hitting. Always be a friend of sinners but never of sin.

Be sure a sermon which does not bless the speaker will not bless the hearers. Be sure if you ride hobbies that finally you will be riding alone. Long stored

sermons are likely to be old and musty and mildewed unless revitalized by much prayer and waiting on the Lord. Rehashed sermons will not fill the bill for a spiritual church. Education is good but may be as cold as an iceberg in the pulpit unless it is saturated with heavenly fire. Do not preach for money. Many a good preacher has bowed to the dollar mark. Do not favor the rich more than the poor. Make no difference. Remember you belong to the Lord and are the servant of all whom you serve. Always preach with the knowledge that a call to preach is the highest calling that mortal man can receive this side of heaven.

Remember, this may be the last

message some one may ever receive or it might be the last one you may ever deliver.

No matter what training you may have received, no matter what your education may be, remember, the Lord is not looking for career preachers. No matter whose hands have been laid on you, if you have not been called by the Lord and anointed by the Holy Spirit to preach the Gospel, you are not the Lord's preacher. □

When you enter the pulpit make no apologies. You may not be a big preacher but you have just as big a Gospel to preach as any preacher who ever lived. Leave self out of the pulpit but take Christ in. Remember you belong to the Lord...if you have not been called by the Lord and anointed by the Holy Spirit to preach the Gospel, you are not the Lord's preacher.



Some interesting letters over the article "*The Lion, the Witch, and the Happy Meal*."

Many of our readers wrote concerning the Jan-Feb article entitled, "The Lion, the Witch, and the Happy Meal." Many voiced their agreement and appreciation. A young lady from Texas wrote, "I was impressed by it ... My parents have always been wary about reading Lewis's books and I was given a clear reason why in this enlightening article. Thank you for your insight. I look forward to printing the article in my own magazine, "His Wonders."

However, some readers disagreed. A man from Ohio wrote, "...it seems the primary focus of Mr. Taylor's article was to snobbishly dismiss the works of Lewis and others who have framed these simple truths in such a way as to be palatable to the intelligencer. Coming away from Taylor's article one almost think that he suggested that some people are simply too learned to be evangelized."

I genuinely appreciate this brother's concern. However, I think we need to be careful here. It was the Apostle Paul who said, "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" (1 Cor 1:26-27). In the Old Testament, Jeroboam also articulated his faith with great finesse when he swayed the northern tribes away from Jehovah, but tragically, the content of his doctrine was a false teaching and brought about the worship of a false god.

As a matter of apology, allow me to say that it really was not my intent to dismiss or discredit an intellectual presentation of Christianity. I, personally, am very edified by well thought out and well articulated expressions of our faith. Even if the writers are not from "our circles," I still feel that we can gain insight from many of their different perspectives--C.S. Lewis is no exception. Nevertheless, while a Jewish Einstein, a Pagan Aristotle, or an Evangelical Billy Graham may stretch and challenge our ways of thinking, that does not mean that we should ignore their shortcomings. It would be irresponsible to acquiesce to error simply because it was presented in eloquent prose.

As far as Lewis' personal salvation and faith in Christ is concerned, that is not for me to judge. Lewis had to come through a lot to believe in God at all. My intent in articles like this one is not to criticize intellectualism itself, but rather to raise the awareness of the actual content of what is being intellectualized. I still feel that the general piety that comes from Lewis and other Anglican writers of this era is, generally speaking, beautifully articulated but dangerously deficient. I also would admit that many of Lewis' works and apologetics are well done and even orthodox. However, I do want to emphasize the dangers of a faith and salvation that exists only in "creedal" or doctrinal mental consent. With this sort of "mental" faith, Lewis widened the door for divorce and remarriage, championed the place of Christians in warfare, and considerably contributed to world-wide ecumenism, particularly linking arms with the Roman Catholic Church. James warns us, "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble" (James 2:19).

Of Whom the World Was Not Worthy

by Rebecca Hansen

There are men alive on the earth today
Abhorred and despised by the world;
They live their lives in a quiet way—
No banners for them are unfurled.
They are not gifted in intellect,
Nor brilliant in pen or word;
But their faces the light of the Lord reflect
And their souls with His love are stirred.

There are men who walk on the earth today
Who bear no distinguishing sign;
They work for money their bills to pay;
Their houses and cars are not fine;
They have no letters behind their name,
No medals upon their walls,
And they do not appear in earth's halls of fame,
But they're mentioned in heaven's halls.

In a million years, when the world has passed,
And with it its pomp and its pride,
Man's fame and wealth will have all been cast
In the graves with the men who died.
The lofty thoughts of the very wise,
With their medals, will ashes be;
But the men with eternity in their eyes
Will live for eternity.


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