

The Heartbeat of

The Remnant

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Why Revival Leaves

"Why, when a people have experienced a genuine presence and outpouring of the living God, would they turn away from it and choose another way?"

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PRIDE

The Sly and Subtle
Insinuating Enemy

*"It is a contradiction in terms,
to be a Christian,
and not to be humble."*

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The Remnant

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From the Editor...

Greetings to all in Jesus' name! This last quarter has certainly been a busy one! In November I had the opportunity to travel to Scotland and England with Bro. Denny and two of my sons to speak at a revival conference, hosted by Sermon Index. It was a real blessing in many ways. Bro. Denny preached a powerful message at one of the main services entitled "The Secret of Paul's Strength." I had the opportunity to preach a message entitled "Why Revival—Leaves" to a small group of people. In addition to the preaching, Greg Gordon allowed us to pass out "The Heartbeat of the Remnant" to each person as they registered at the door. The revival meetings were very inspiring. It was also encouraging to meet many Europeans who seemed to have a real desire to follow after God.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the trip was touring many old revival sites. The burden of my heart already was bent on the theme "Why Revival Leaves". After visiting these old revival spots, sanctuaries, and museums, the burden only intensified. In Scotland, we went to the home and church of the Scottish Protestant reformer, John Knox. This was the man who started the Presbyterian Church. Visiting his church, we were surprised to find that years ago the city had put a parking lot around the courtyard. Later, historians found out that the parking lot was placed over an old graveyard. Later still, the historians realized that this parking lot contained the resting place of their historical reformer. All that remained of John Knox was "Parking space #23." Amazing! (Picture on front cover)

In London, we were able to visit John Wesley's house and church. A nice man showed us through the museum with the usual quaint an-

ecdotes—Charles Wesley's organ, John Wesley's pulpit, and numerous letters and memorabilia behind glass. As I was reading John Wesley's gravestone, I noticed that I was standing on Adam Clark's tombstone, so I moved to the side. The tour guide mentioned that in the 1980s they were considering knocking the whole place down; but the Methodists decided to collect enough money to do restorations and build some offices around the back. In the house, we asked the tour guide for a moment alone, as my two sons (Stephen and Christian) and I knelt in Wesley's prayer closet...and prayed.

From there, we took a train to Loughor, Wales to see the birthplace of the Welch Revival. For our lodging we stayed in Evan Roberts' house. Evan Roberts was the young man that God used to help send revival to Wales in 1904. His house is now a bed and breakfast. The house gave us mixed emotions. On the wall by the parking space is a plaque commemorating Evan Roberts' birthplace. However, on the front door was a comical-looking beast with the inscription "Beware the Dragons." Hmmm... That night I sat in the tiny dining room which was once the prayer meeting room of the great Welch Revival—and again, I prayed.

In the morning we made our way to Moriah Chapel. This was the place where the Welch Revival actually happened. It was a nice service. They no longer have a regular minister, so a lay Presbyterian minister makes his rounds between Moriah and a few other Presbyterian churches. Besides our group, about twelve nice elderly ladies gathered there that Sunday morning. One very dear man, Dyfrig Griffiths, gave us a tour of the chapel and museum. When he spoke of the revival, tears ran down his face. He prays for revival again at Moriah, and speaks of the old days with fondness. As I sat there taking it all in, again my heart cried out. . . "Why does revival leave?" Hence, much of the burden of this issue of "The Heartbeat of the Remnant" will focus on this very question. May God bless you as you read!

~Bro. Dean



Why, when a people have experienced a genuine presence and outpouring of the living God, would they turn away from it and choose another way?

WHY REVIVAL

LEAVES

by Dean Taylor



Late in the 1950s Leonard Ravenhill wrote a book that quickly became a classic on the subject of revival entitled *Why Revival Tarries*. It addressed the perplexing question: If God earnestly desires to pour His gracious Spirit onto all flesh, then what is preventing it? In other words, what is stopping us from experiencing this outpouring, and what would it take for us to experience real revival like we have read about? I think it is a question that does indeed challenge each of us as we long for more from God and desire to see true revival in our day. But perhaps the thought that should vex us even more than why revival tarries, is the question—*why does revival leave?* Why, when a people have experienced a genuine presence and outpouring of the living God, would they turn away from it and choose another way?

As I have studied revival and church history, the question that often troubles me when looking at a particular work of God is—what happened that made this group lose every trace of all that God had done through them? Why does the glory of God leave? The Lancaster revivals of the 1950s, the Wesleyan revivals of the 1700s and 1800s, the East African revivals of the 1940s, and even the famous Welch Revival of 1904 are all for the most part gone. *Why?*

Ichabod

In the Old Testament, there was just one word that described this tragic state that occurred when the glory of God had departed—Ichabod. In 1 Samuel 4, the Scriptures take us to a tragic scene in Shiloh. It was here that the ark of God and His tabernacle had remained for over 340 years. Through good times and bad, faithfulness and backsliding, God's "glory", at least in some measure, was always there dwelling over the mercy seat of the ark. But that would soon change. The idolatry and the wickedness of God's people, and especially the sins of Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas, had grieved God to such an extent that He allowed them to be defeated by their enemy. *"And the Philistines put themselves in array against Israel: and when they joined battle, Israel was smitten before the Philistines: and they slew of the army in the field about four thousand men"* (1 Sam 4:2).

Just as we often are today, the Israelites were completely baffled by God's reproof saying, "Why has the LORD defeated us today before the Philistines?" Then (again, as we often do today) they resorted back to old religious sentiments and grabbed the ark of God and ran into battle with it. They seemed to believe this would fix everything. There was loud shouting and excitement; some might have even called it a revival. *"And when the*

ark of the covenant of the LORD came into the camp, all Israel shouted with a great shout, so that the earth rang again" (1 Sam 4:5). However, the rejoicing soon turned to "the noise of the crying" and "the noise of tumult" when the city of Shiloh heard the news that the ark of God was gone and now in enemy hands.

As Eli, now 98 years old, "heavy", and with poor vision sat on a lookout point to hear the noise of battle, he heard the crying and moaning coming from the city below. When the messenger finally made his way to Eli the old priest already must have expected the worst, "Israel is fled before the Philistines, and there hath been also a great slaughter among the people, and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead" (1 Sam. 4:17). As bad as

the news of losing his sons was to him, as well as the shameful defeat of Israel, it was the last part of the news that was more than he could bear, "and the ark of God is taken." Scripture states distinctly that when Eli heard the news that the ark of

God had been taken he fell off the wall and died.

Following this sad report the Bible records that Eli's daughter-in-law was near her time to deliver a child when the news made her give up all hope of life. In her pangs, she delivered a son and her midwife tried to encourage her by telling her, "It's a boy." However, over the grief of the loss of God's glory, she didn't even look at the child; but as if vexed with the omen of death, she named the child Ichabod. "And she named the child Ichabod, saying, The glory is departed from Israel: because the ark of God was taken, and because of her father in law and her husband. And she said, The glory is departed from Israel: for the ark of God is taken" (1 Sam 4: 21-22).

It is sobering how seriously these Old Testament people took it when they realized that the glory of God had departed from them. Oh, if only they had taken heed sooner; all of these tragedies could have been avoided—but at least they mourned. Today when

groups lose God's presence, it often comes with a sigh of relief. The fire and crucible of the earlier days give way to easy lives and halfhearted commitments. Revival is replaced with ritual, and sanctification with sanctimoniousness. Confession is replaced by worldly obsessions and prayer is replaced by play. But what caused these powerful historic works of God to go down and lose their first love? Why does revival leave?

"You Don't Want Him"

In a Keswick meeting preached in the year 1912, Jonathan Goforth rebuked a complacent British congregation about their loss of desire for genuine revival. He had recently come from Wales, and he reported that the revival there was already gone. He had been there in the revival of 1904 and now he had recently returned—that's only eight years after it had begun! Listen to his words speaking about the 1904 revival:



"(In 1904) God was there; you could not mistake it. They have hindered God in Wales since then. It was not God's will to let things go down in Wales. God never got weary in well doing. There was sinning somewhere that hindered God's movement in Wales. God is the same as ever. Why did not you believe that He could do the same for England and Scotland? Did not Scotland need Him then? Did not Ireland need Him then? Did not your life need Him then? He was not acceptable here, so He went away to India. He was acceptable in the Kassia Hills. Beloved, since He moved in Wales, He has moved in those hills among a down-cast people. They had prayed two or three years for Him. The natives speak of His coming as an "explosion." It was not where the foreign missionaries were leading, but the natives were seeking Him in outstations. The heathen were led to fall prostrate at His feet. They cried out, "God is in this place!" and many of them were converted. In two years more than 8,000 men and women gave themselves to God from hea-

Today when groups lose God's presence, it often comes with a sigh of relief. The fire and crucible of the earlier days give way to easy lives and halfhearted commitments. Revival is replaced with ritual, and sanctification with sanctimoniousness. Confession is replaced by worldly obsessions and prayer is replaced by play.

thenism. You heard about that. You let God go to India; you did not want Him. I wonder that, when you heard how He had moved the Indians' hearts, you were not so smitten before God that you invited Him back to England, to your homes and hearts. But you did not. Those who went to Korea had heard of His power in Wales and India; and they humbled themselves before Almighty God, and got rid of hindering things. God came to the city of Ping Yang in 1907, and more than two thousand were converted in two months. The hearthen walking through the streets were awed. God was in that place with tremendous power, and overthrew all opposition. In one year 30,000 were saved in Korea; last year there were 50,000 saved; and this year they are praying for a million. And still you will not believe God.

Do you believe that you need God? Remember that as good churches as ever England knew have gone down in awful night. All along in North Africa, every ten or twenty miles, you will come upon the ruin of a church if you dig deep enough in the sand. Once they had the Holy Spirit, whom they honoured and magnified. In North Africa and around Damascus many churches have also been blotted out. Even Capernaum, which was exalted to the skies, now has not one stone left upon another. We need not think that the churches of Great Britain will be free from the wrath of God, if they obey Him not. There is nothing to protect us but God Himself. God's Spirit broods over us.

Pride



When the historical accounts are reviewed, it seems time and time again that one of the biggest reasons for revival to leave is pride. When God pours His Spirit and power onto a life, or even a church, the tendency is very great that they begin to take some of the credit to themselves. The Apostle Paul recognized his fleshly tendency to take glory in what God had given him; and so he actually saw his sicknesses as a gift from God to crush his pride. *“And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure” (II Cor. 12:7).*

Too often we men (or even churches) can somehow begin to think that God cannot go on without us. We soon forget that, *“For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now*

if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it” (1 Cor 4:7)? When the glory is robbed from God and given to any man, church, movement, or denomination then it is not long before Ichabod is written across the front door. *“I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images” (Is 42:8).* As Jesus Himself said, *“He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him” (John 7:18).*

Another catastrophe of pride is that it causes the praying to stop. And when the praying stops, so does the revival. In the Lancaster revival of 1951, Bro. Maurice E. Lehman, the praying pastor at the beginning of the revival, encapsulated the secret of the Lancaster revival and all other revivals when he said, *“We believe that it was prayer that brought the revival; and it will take prayer to continue it.”*

Pride in The Ministry

The 17th century preacher Richard Baxter made a scathing rebuke about pride in the ministry that still rings in the ears of earnest pastors today, over 350 years later. Writing his warnings in the book *The Reformed Pastor*, Baxter says:



Oh what a constant companion, what a tyrannical commander, what a sly and subtle insinuating enemy, is this sin of pride! It goes with men everywhere they go: to buy a home, to buy clothes, etc. It chooses the clothes one wears, their trimming, and fashion. ...And I wish that this were all the damage it does to a minister, or the worst. But, alas! How frequently does it go with us to our study, and there sit with us and do our work! How often does it choose our preaching subject, and, more frequently still, our words and manner of preaching!

BUT EVEN THIS IS NOT ALL, NOR THE WORST, IF IT CAN GET ANY WORSE THAN THIS! Oh, that ever it should be said of godly ministers, that they are set upon popular air, and on sitting highest in men's estimation, that they envy the talents and names of their brethren who are preferred before them, ... as if God had given them his gifts, to be the mere ornaments and trappings of their persons, that they may walk as men of reputation in the world, and as if all his gifts to others were to be trodden

God gives us nothing that we can simply slide into our pocket and say, “OK, now I’ve got it…” and walk away from a constant need of His presence.

down and despised, if they seem to stand in the way of their own honor!

The more I live my life and walk with the Lord, the more I am convinced that God does not give us anything that we can possess apart from Him—I mean *anything*—be it revival, holiness, sanctification, wisdom, or even salvation. God gives us nothing that we can simply slide into our pocket and say, “OK, now I’ve got it…” and walk away from a constant need of His presence.

Sin

One of the more obvious killers of revival, which Goforth already mentioned in the quote above, is sin. One of the reasons God sends revival in the first place is to call His people to deal with sin. Jesus, speaking about what happens when He sends the Holy Spirit says, “*And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment*” (John 16:8). When revivals stop dealing with sin, and start focusing on personalities and entertainment, Ichabod once again rears his ugly head.

Dealing with sin hurts. Just like dealing with a physical disease, it takes faith to believe that a surgeon, by anesthetizing you and cutting you open, is actually going to do you good. Likewise, trusting the searching hand of God to cut into your secret and hidden areas, also takes trusting faith. The loss of preaching about sin in modern conventions and seminars has been a death-blow to genuine, lasting revival. “*Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the LORD*” (Jer 8: 7).

Dealing with sin in our life is fundamental. Jesus said that to ignore sin is the very judgment call that will send someone to hell. “*And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather*

than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God” (John 3:19-21). We all say we want the “fire”, but we soon forget that the fire only comes down when we stay on the altar.

No Church

Finally, one of the most common reasons why revival leaves is when people forget why revival comes in the first place. Revival is a means, not an end. Let me say that again—revival is a *means* not an *end*. Revival comes to usher in the Kingdom of God—the Church. Remember that Pentecost, as recorded in the second chapter of Acts, was not the birth of seminars, conventions, or even men’s support groups. Pentecost was the birth of the Church—with everything that Jesus meant her to be.

We all remember that Jesus said in the end of Matthew’s gospel, “*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost...*” But He also followed that command with the equally important directive, “*Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen*” (Matt 28:19-20).

The damage that has been done by taking only a part of Jesus’ words is incalculable. Discipleship is an essential component of a successful revival. This is seldom a problem in the early days of a genuine spiritual outpouring. Discipleship and

intensive counseling are simply the expected norm during such times. Stories abound with things like all-night prayer meetings, reconciliations, ungodly jobs and habits forsaken, time spent searching the Scriptures, hungrily seeking God’s will, etc., etc. However, if a called-out assembly of believers—a church—does not rise up and continue with that same accountability and discipleship,

Dealing with sin in our life is fundamental. Jesus said that to ignore sin is the very judgment call that will send someone to Hell. (John 3:19-21)

then the revival never accomplishes what it was sent to do in the first place.

Lessons from History

I believe that one of the most drastic examples of incomplete revival would be the famous revivals of East Africa during the 1930s and 1940s. By all accounts that I have read, these revivals were powerful, life-changing, and genuine. God poured out His Spirit in these places. The East African Revival spread from Rwanda and Uganda, to Kenya and parts of Tanganyika. After the revivals some were even calling Rwanda and Uganda “Christian nations”. However, what followed these revivals was discouraging.

By the 1940s one of the things the Africans were fed up with was Western colonization and control. With a Gospel message tightly bound with the State, Western “Christians” had exploited the Africans for centuries. Crippled by such things as the slave trade, hard labor camps, broken treaties, and land stealing, it was hard to distinguish the missionaries from the mercenaries. The colonizing style of 19th century missionaries had left a poor testimony.

Consequently, when reading the historical accounts of the revivalists and missionaries of the 1930s and 40s, one of the things you quickly pick up on in the discussions and sermons is a lot of emphasis on not making the Africans “Western”—and who could blame them! However, as it often does in history, it would appear to me that the pendulum swung way over to the other extreme. Along with their caution of not “Westernizing” the Africans, also came a strong reluctance to disciple them at all. It was repeatedly said that the Western church “could not be the Africans’ Holy Spirit.” It was taught that they should simply let the Africans figure out things on their own—almost as if the job of the preachers and missionaries was merely to drop the Gospel message and run. This often resulted in evangelism without discipleship. Was it the way of Christ? Did they “*Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you...*” (Matt. 28:20)?

The outcome was heartbreaking.

One of the saddest accounts I read actually came from the Mennonite missionaries sent from Lancaster County during the 1940s. Admittedly, these early Mennonite missionaries had a hard job. Finding their way be-

tween Lancaster County culture and genuine biblical truths was a real challenge for them. Soon after the revivals broke out, many Lancaster County missionaries started to feel that their biblical doctrines of life were merely “Mennonite denominational distinctives”. David W. Shenk reports in *Mennonite Safari* that even fundamental Anabaptist teachings such as nonresistance and nonparticipation in warfare were left out of the indoctrination of new African converts. Furthermore, as these Mennonites linked up more and more with Evangelicals, the job of discipleship became only further remote.

The consequences were tragic. Not long after the revivals, WWII broke out and multitudes of young African converts, including scores of Mennonites, joined up with their country to fight in the war. After the war, the bloodshed did not cease. Just at a time when a true Christian witness could have made an international testimony, the generation following these revivals was bathed in blood, full of countless disastrous civil wars and battles in these very regions.

In 1994 Rwanda, the country that was actually beginning to be identified by some as a “Christian nation”, broke out into heinous acts of violence, culminating in a genocide of Old Testament proportions. 800,000 people were slaughtered between two rivaling tribes, the Hutu and the Tutsi.

On some days during the worst of the fighting, it is reported that over 1,000 bodies a day floated down the Kagera River as an act of racial cleansing.

Today, as Living Hope Christian Fellowship and Harmony Christian Fellowship scout out some of these Tanganyikan territories in modern Tanzania, we find

ourselves upon the scene of scores of unreached nationals, or completely untaught and confused Christians. Recently, when one of the missionaries challenged an African Mennonite why they allow their young men to go off to war, the African Mennonite answered that they had bigger issues to deal with, like gross immorality.

The Lesson

Now, I’m certainly not putting the blame for these atrocities on the Evangelical and Mennonite revivalists and missionaries. But I don’t want to lose the lesson from this tragic bit of history. While I don’t blame them, I do look back with remorse that a church on which God had so obviously poured His Spirit, did not take better ad-



vantage of the Pentecost example, and follow revival with true Christian discipleship. Could it have been different if the revivalists and missionaries would have continued to teach “all things of Christ”? Could it have been different if the Gospels were opened up and the words of Jesus were bellowed from the housetops with Holy Spirit anointing and passion?—We will never know.

What about us now? We often miss this point in American revivals as well. Let me say it again— revival is a *means*, not an *end*. Pentecost is the birth of the Church, not a social club or a prayer breakfast. In some ways the East African example demonstrates that a partial Gospel is worse than no Gospel at all. Breaking up their way of life without establishing Christ’s Kingdom in its place is to make havoc of their entire society.

“It suited the white man to break the tribe...”

In a novel written during the tumultuous years of apartheid and severe racial segregation, Alan Paton wrote a book entitled *Cry, the Beloved Country* in which he portrays the story of an old, black Anglican priest who has come to Johannesburg in search of his prodigal son and wayward sister. All around him he sees his little village deteriorating. He grieves deeply as he sees sin and wickedness proliferate among his people. In his weak moments, he blames the Western influence. In one particularly touching scene the old priest cries to another minister from Johannesburg about the inner turmoil he is experiencing. The reply from the other minister is profound...listen to this scene:

“...My friend, I am a Christian. It is not in my heart to hate the white man. It was a white man who brought my father out of darkness. But you will pardon me if I talk frankly to you. The tragedy is not that things are broken. The tragedy is that they are not mended again. The white man has broken the tribe. And it is my belief—and again I ask your pardon—that it cannot be mended again. But the house that is broken, these are the tragic things. That is why children break the law,

and old white people are robbed and beaten.”

He passed his hand across his brow.

“It suited the white man to break the tribe,” he continued gravely. But it has not suited him to build something in the place of what is broken. I have pondered this for many hours, and I must speak it, for it is the truth for me. They are not all so. There are some white men who give their lives to build up what is broken. “But they are not enough,” he said. “They are afraid, that is the truth. It is fear that rules this land.”

“It suited the white man to break the tribe, ... But it has not suited him to build something in the place of what is broken.” When real revival comes it must not only break down that which is wrong, it must likewise build up that which is right. As the prophet Jeremiah put it, “See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant” (Jer 1:10).

Let us never stop praying for revival. But when God, in fulfillment to His Word, stoops down from heaven to heal our land and pour on us another Pentecost—let’s go all the way. Let’s not ever forget Shiloh. God’s glory is nothing to be trifled with. If we walk in the ways of Christ, He has promised us “*I will be with you, even unto the end of the age*” (Matt. 28:20).



Why does revival leave?

To answer this God told us to go to Shiloh, and remember what was done there—remember their mistakes—remember the consequences—remember Ichabod—and most importantly, He told us to go to Shiloh to remember—His PROMISES.

*But go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel... But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: **and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you**” (Jer 17:12, 23).*



Why does revival leave? To answer this God told us to go to Shiloh, and remember what was done there—remember their mistakes—remember the consequences—remember Ichabod—and most importantly, He told us to go to Shiloh to remember—His PROMISES.

Some Lessons of the Revival

by A. T. Pierson

A transcribed sermon from the Keswick convention of 1905



Five weeks have been spent in the personal study and investigation of the great revival movement in Wales, being providentially called to speak to the converts in the revival centres, in hopes to lead them to a deeper experience and knowledge of Christ; and that investigation has left the profound conviction

that the Holy Spirit is speaking to the Churches with tremendous emphasis, and that God's injunction is that sevenfold command in the 2nd and 3rd chapters of the Book of the Revelation: "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches." I desire that not one word of mine may interrupt this voice of the Spirit to the Churches.

First of all, I am impressed with the fact that the Holy Spirit is showing to us the *sovereignty of His operations*. Nothing is more marvellous about the work in Wales, than the fact that the Holy Spirit has divided to every man severally as He will. This Divine wind has blown where it listed, and we have heard the sound thereof, but could not tell whence it came, nor whither it went. He has been choosing the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty, that no flesh might glory in His presence. The *times* and the *ways* in which He has wrought, and the *methods* He has followed, and the personal *instruments* He has chosen, have all been unique. He has passed by those whom

men would have selected, and He has taken as the prominent leader in this movement a collier student yet in his very youth, and having no qualities that, to the eye of man, would have fitted him for this great service, yet singularly filled with the Holy Ghost and qualified by Him for this leadership; most of all, remarkable in his humility, in his own obedience to the Spirit, and in his insistence upon obedience to the Spirit on the part of others in all his operations in the assemblies.

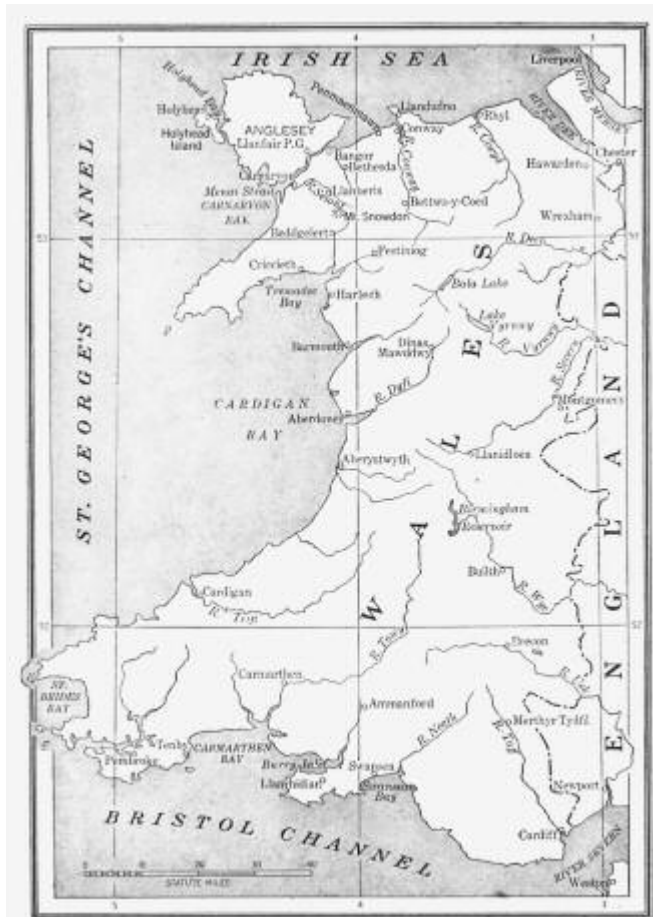
Again, the Holy Spirit is speaking to us and reminding us that He is the *Presiding Officer* in every assembly of the saints. The ships, though they be great, are moved by a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth; and it is quite time that we had our hands off the helm of the Church of God, and remembered the Divine Pilot, the Governor of the ship—the Holy Ghost, in the assemblies of the saints. Our notions of propriety, how oftentimes they interfere with His conceptions! What is disorder to us is often sublime order to Him. How He scorns our rigid and frigid programmes, and tramples them in the dust when He mightily moves! How marvellous are all His ways of working! How singular is the authority that He exhibits and manifests where He has full control, where we are willing that He should control in everything; where we are willing that He should set us aside, if to set us aside will glorify Him more than to use us as we had expected and purposed. I would not dare to speak here with the conviction I have of His presidency in this assembly, if I were not willing to break down in



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your presence, and like Peter, never get through with my purposed address, if He might be honoured more by such failure than by apparent success. Let us be ready to fall that He may evermore be honoured. Let Him occupy the chair, whoever formally presides; and let us look past the human chairman, to the invisible presiding Presence that makes this place the house of God—dreadful because of such Presence, yet sublimely privileged because of such Presence.

The Holy Spirit has been teaching us that marvellous lesson that Dr. Cynddylan Jones so beautifully describes: He says that the Holy Spirit has been teaching us the difference between “human mechanics and Divine dynamics.” He has been teaching us the source of all true power. We are too apt to forget that power is only in God, and not in us. We have taken that old heathen maxim, “Magna est veritas, et proeualebit” (great is the truth, and it will prevail); but it is not absolutely true. Truth is great, but truth does not prevail; it is not prevailing in the earth today. Error prevails rather. Truth itself is not the source of power, apart from the Spirit of Truth. Even the truth of the Gospel does not actually convict and convert without the Holy Ghost. We may preach the truth for forty years and not make a convert, if the Holy Ghost is not behind the truth we preach. Let us remember, therefore, that it is not truth alone, but *truth plus the Holy Ghost*, by which the world is to be brought to Christ. The Welsh revival has taught us this lesson—that our power is not found in *eloquent sermons*. There are some sermons so eloquent that



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has seen whole villages transformed by the power of the Spirit of God. And God is teaching us that He can take the simplest testimony of a converted soul that can scarcely speak “five words with the understanding,” and make it more mighty for the progress of His Kingdom than five thousand words spoken with our university training and fine delivery, with our polished rhetoric and worldly eloquence. God forbid that I should say a word against preaching of the best character; but I tell you, beloved, that as long as our dependence is upon the intellectual, we shall never wield the mighty power of the spiritual.

I have often thought that some of the addresses delivered from this platform are too fine for the Holy Ghost

there is no spiritual power in them—sermons very finished, but they do not penetrate; there is plenty of learning and logic, but no love; the sword is not keen at the edge, or burning at the point; the blade is polished, but it has no thrust to the very vitals, to the very joints and marrow, discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart. God has shown us, not only that even the truth itself without the thrust of the Spirit is unsuccessful, but that where the Holy Ghost really does work, there is a heavenly dynamic working that changes human lives, that brings men out of darkness into light, and from the power of Satan unto God; that breaks up habits of drink and takes away the appetite for drink; that brings men out from the power of lust—that most imperious of all the appetites that control sinful man. He alone delivers them from the baser passions, and makes them servants of Almighty God. Wales

to use as He would like to use them. There is too much of the tendency, on the part of many of us, to exploit ourselves, to depend upon that which is merely intellectual and rhetorical and scholarly, instead of falling back forevermore in helplessness upon the Almighty arm.

Then, the Holy Ghost has been teaching us that, if we want His blessing, we must devoutly *honour His inspired Word*. I thank God, for that pointed and powerful utterance, condensed into a few words, just heard from my fellow helper in the truth, Mr. Moore. I have noticed this fact—and I do not hesitate to say what I think, thus standing in the view of eternity—that not one solitary church in which the modern notions of the “Higher Criticism” are regnant, has had any revival of religion in this country or in America. They stand frigidly, rigidly locked up under the frost; while other churches enjoy the tropical sunshine of summer. And it is a remarkable thing that when the Holy Ghost, in these latter days, would revive the fire of Pentecost, He has taken that part of the British dominions which is comparatively untouched by the Rationalistic Criticism of this century. It is a remarkable thing, and I think I can see the philosophy of God in it. For the Holy Ghost not only *honours His own inspired Word*, but He *depends upon the Word*, and upon the acceptance of it as the inspired Word of God.

Even when Paul was speaking to Agrippa, he challenged his confidence in the prophets, saying “I know that thou believest”; and, before Felix, he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come. If

with the double armour of unbelief and *disbelief*; and how difficult it becomes to make an impression for God, when they turn aside the sharp arrows of His Word, by lack of confidence even in its inspiration, authority, and infallibility. I have had a man come to me during this last period of preaching in London, and say to me: “I was greatly impressed by your sermon tonight, but, then, look at what other preachers have said.” I read the other day, as coming from such a man as Dean Fremantle, that there is no authentic proof of Christ’s miraculous incarnation or of His miraculous resurrection. Men come to us saying “What shall I believe?” The report of such sentiments appear in the newspapers, and men take up these insinuations of doubt on the part of God’s own people, and use them to turn off the arrows of truth from their own souls. God cannot honour a community, a church, or a minister where such questions about the inspiration of His Word and such doubtful views are promulgated in the hearing of the people.

The Holy Ghost has also been laying mighty emphasis upon *the power of believing prayer*. This whole Welsh revival began in prayer, in the hearts of some men who have prayed, not for a year or eighteen months, but for as much as eleven and thirteen years, for a revival in Wales and for a baptism of the Spirit in their own lives; and this spirit of prayer has been the grand secret of the *extension* of the work. You know how this work has been carried into other districts, hitherto unaffected, by the most simple methods, on the part of little companies of



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those men had had access to some modern works on the “Higher Criticism,” Agrippa might have said: “It is all very well to appeal to the prophets, but we have long since concluded that they did not prophesy of Christ at all”; and Felix might have said: “Your reasoning is well enough, but we have long learned that sin is only a fall forward, a part of the process of evolution, and that there is no judgment to come.” Men meet the Word of God, as it is preached, not only with the shield of *unbelief*, but

believers who went to the extremities of the villages, and began to hold house-to-house meetings, moving toward the centre; and by the time the centre was reached God’s power was exhibited afresh in the new locality.

Then the Holy Spirit has been teaching us that we have to *get hindrances out of His way*. “Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight His paths. Gather ye out the stones.” Evan Roberts, in his message to the churches, has given a fourfold motto or rule for guid-

ance, which shows spiritual insight: First, every *sinful* thing must be put away. Then every *doubtful* indulgence must be sacrificed for the sake of holiness. Third, there must be prompt *obedience* to the voice of the Holy Ghost. And, then, last of all, there must be *public confession of Christ* before all men.

Those have been the four mottos of this great revival work—everything sinful put away, everything doubtful surrendered, the Holy Spirit obeyed, and confession of Christ publicly made. In almost every case, the work has begun in the removal of obstacles in the mind and heart of the pastor himself. The “priest” of the Lord has prostrated himself “between the porch and the altar,” and has besought God for a renewal of spiritual power in his own heart and life; and

then he has gone forth to secure, under God, another state of things in his church and congregation. So promptly has the Spirit begun to work when favourable conditions have been secured, that oftentimes *immediate reviving* has resulted, so that in the very assembly itself which had met under conditions unfavourable to the Spirit, whenever there has been rectification, then and there the blessing has begun, even in the conversion of souls, though not a word had been directly addressed to the ungodly. Comp. 1 Cor. xiv, 23-25: When an unbeliever, coming into the assembly, is convinced of all, judged of all, and the secrets of his heart are made manifest, he is constrained to worship God, &c.

All through Professor Finney’s ministry he insisted upon this “*getting right with God*”; and it was from him that Dr. Torrey obtained the motto.

A friend of mine, a pastor, after preaching on parental fidelity, made a public confession of his own sin in this respect; his wife rose in the pew to join him in such confession; and at once the spirit of confession took hold of the entire congregation, and a revival began then and there.

Another case of a similar character occurred in the west of New York. A minister had been bewailing the

awful failure of his ministry. He had been comparatively dead and formal, preaching intellectual sermons without dependence upon the Holy Ghost. He made public confession, saying: “Here I empty myself of all my self-sufficiency, and I pray God to bestow His blessing upon my church and congregation.” One of the elders stood up, and said: “I sympathize with you; but there will be no revival in this church while I and brother S__ do not speak to each other.” These men had not spoken to each other for three years; but he stepped across the aisle and shook



One of the elders stood up, and said: “I sympathize with you; but there will be no revival in this church while I and brother S__ do not speak to each other.” These men had not spoken to each other for three years; but he stepped across the aisle and shook hands with the other. Before that assembly dispersed, a mighty work of God had begun...

hands with the other. Another man stood up in his pew, and said: “There will never be a revival while we say smooth things to our minister before his face, and evil things behind his back, as I have been doing.” A third stood up, and said: “There will never be a revival here while my wife and I do not live in peace,” and then he kissed her before them all. Before that assembly dispersed, a mighty work of God had begun which extended for scores of miles in every direction. Over and over again, similar scenes have been witnessed in the principality of Wales. People have come together, without any thought of a special work by God; wrongs between them and God, and between one and the other, have been confessed; and when these things have been rectified on the spot, the Holy Ghost has marvellously wrought; and without one word having been spoken to the unconverted, they have been brought to Christ, then and there, by the new atmosphere created in the assembly of God’s saints.

I am profoundly convinced that there should be an after-meeting tonight, and that it should take the form of personal confession; and I here begin this confession, from this platform, by saying that God has shown me today, what has been comparatively hidden from my eyes hitherto, that I have been unduly emphasizing personal

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comfort in my service for Him, and selfish ease, and other things that should not enter at all into the question. I should not come here and speak tonight until I had first emptied myself before God, of all personal care for my own comfort and ease in the service of God, for the future. I believe that such after-meeting should not be deferred to the end of the convention, but that we should hasten to get right with God.

Need of Widespread Confession

There is a need of widespread confession from this platform and in this assembly, of things which have hindered the power of the Holy Ghost. Nothing do I crave more than to see this whole congregation bowed down before God in sobs, tears and profound penitence, that the Holy Ghost might, tonight, begin His mighty work among us, in this convention of 1905.

Whatever address I have to give this week, have been suggested to me by this marvellous work of God in Wales. There is much that I have left out of this address, because the time does not allow, of which I purpose specially to speak at other addresses appointed to me to make, particularly of the Holy Ghost in the assembly, a theme upon which I have only touched tonight.

One word in conclusion—the Holy Spirit has been distinctly saying to us that it is quite a possibility for us to be in the midst of great Divine manifestations that has not been paralleled, perhaps, since Pentecost, and *not to know the time of our visitation*. “The stork in heaven knoweth her appointed times, and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgement of the Lord.” “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem... how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate, because thou knowest not the day of thy visitation.” I have seen in Wales, side by side, two churches, one ablaze with the Holy Ghost power, the other like a frigid Artic iceberg. It is possible for you and for me to live in the midst of revival, and yet not know the time of God's visitation. I have noticed, in the course of a long ministry, that men and women who have passed through powerful revivals of religion, unsaved, are very unlikely ever

to be converted. I remember one man, who died a few weeks ago, a member of the congregation to which I ministered for years. In the midst of a revival that brought hundreds of souls into various churches, he stood unsaved and unaffected.

I pleaded with him, and I have his letter among the relics of my ministry, in which he says: “Discharge yourself of all responsibility for me; you have done your duty.” He died, having passed the age of seventy years: and he never had, as far as I know, any moving of God upon his soul after that time. In a church near which I lived, a minister said, on one occasion, when a revival was passing through the other churches: “I don't want any revival in this church”; and that church has never had a revival unto this day. Dr. Gordon told of a church in New England which went down so low that the building was sold to a coloured congregation at a nominal figure. It was the more remarkable because a large number of converted coloured people had besought this church to admit them to membership, years before, but had been refused, simply because they were black—and the building passed over to be the property of these very people who had been refused admission to membership, thirty years before.

Let me now gather up the lessons God has been teaching us on this great revival.

1. The sovereignty of the Spirit's operations.
2. His supremacy in the Christian assembly.
3. Our absolute dependence upon Him for all Spiritual power.
4. The honour He puts upon the inspired Word.
5. The use He makes of believing and united prayer.
6. The necessity of putting away all hindrances to His working.
7. The immediateness of blessing when conditions are favourable.
8. The danger of missing the time of His visitations.

Let us come at once into the right attitude before God. Let there be such prostration of soul before Him that it shall be possible for God now and here to begin to bless us. Let wrongs be righted, pride and self-sufficiency be put away, and every hindrance removed. God waits to bless—how willing are we to be blessed? □

PRIDE

The Sly and Subtle Insinuating Enemy

by Richard Baxter (1615-1691)



One of our most heinous and palpable sins is PRIDE. This is a sin that has too much interest in the best of us, but which is more hateful and inexcusable in us than in other men. Yet is it so prevalent in some of us, that it influences our discourses, it chooses

our company, it forms our countenances, it puts the accent and emphasis upon our words. It fills some men's minds with aspiring desires, and designs: it possesses them with envious and bitter thoughts against those who stand in their light, or who by any means eclipse their glory, or hinder the progress of their reputation.

Oh what a constant companion, what a tyrannical commander, what a sly and subtle insinuating enemy, is this sin of pride! It goes with men everywhere they go: to buy a home, to buy clothes, etc. It chooses the clothes one wears, their trimming, and fashion. Fewer ministers would ruffle it out in the fashion in hair and habit, if it were not for the command of this tyrannous vice. And I wish that this were all the damage it does to a minister, or the worst. But, alas! How frequently does it go with us to our study, and there sit with

us and do our work! How often does it choose our preaching subject, and, more frequently still, our words and manner of preaching!

God commands us to be as plain as we can, that we may inform the ignorant; and as convincing and serious as we are able, that we may melt and change their hardened hearts. But pride stands by and contradicts all, and produces its toys and silly trifles. It pollutes rather than polishes; and, under pretence of praiseworthy ornaments, dishonors our sermons with childish gauds: as if a prince were to be decked in the habit of a stage-player, or a painted fool. It persuades us to paint the window



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that it may dim the light of Scripture: and to speak to our people that which they cannot understand; to let them know that we are able to speak unprofitably...Cannot you ministers speak soberly and moderately? And thus does pride make many a man's sermons; and what pride makes, the devil makes; and what sermons the devil will make and to what end, we may easily conjecture. Though the matter be of God, yet if the dress of the sermon matter, and manner, and end be from Satanic pride, we have no great reason to expect any success.

And when pride has made the sermon, it goes with us into the pulpit, it forms our tone, it animates us in the delivery, it takes us off from that which may be displeasing, however necessary, and sets us in pursuit of vain applause. In short, the sum of all is this, it makes men, both in studying and preaching, to seek themselves, and deny God, when they should seek God's glory, and deny themselves. When they should ask: "What shall I say, and how shall I say it," to please God the best, and do most good. Instead, it makes them ask: "What shall I say, and how shall I deliver the message, to be thought a learned able preacher, and to be applauded by all who hear me?" When the sermon is done, pride goes home with them, and makes them more eager to know whether they were applauded, than whether they did prevail for the saving of souls.

Were it not for shame, they could find in their hearts to ask people how they liked them, and to draw out their commendations. If they perceive that they are highly thought of, they rejoice, as having attained their end; but if they see that they are considered but weak or common men, they are displeased, as having missed the prize they had in view.

BUT EVEN THIS IS NOT ALL, NOR THE WORST, IF IT CAN GET ANY WORSE

THAN THIS! Oh, that ever it should be said of godly ministers, that they are set upon popular air, and on sitting highest in men's estimation, that they envy the talents and names of their brethren who are preferred before them, as if all were taken from their praise that is given to another; and as if God had given them his gifts, to be the mere ornaments and trappings of their persons, that they may walk as men of reputation in the world, and as if all his gifts to others were to be trodden down and despised, if they seem to stand in the way of their own honor!

What? Is not every true Christian a member of the body of Christ, and therefore, partakes of the blessings of the whole, and belongs to each particular member? And

does not every man owe thanks to God for his brethren's gifts, not only as having himself a part in those gifts as members of one body, but also because his own ends may be attained by his brethren's gifts, as well as by his own gifts? For if the glory of God, and the Church's happiness in Christ, be not his end, he is not a Christian in the first place! Will any workman malign another, because he helps him to do his Master's work? Yet, alas! How common is this heinous crime among the ministers of Christ! They can secretly blot the reputation of those that stand in the way of their own glory; and what they cannot for shame do in plain and open terms, lest they be called slanderers, gossips, and liars, they will make malicious intimations against another brother's character, raising suspicions where they cannot fasten accusations.

And some go so far, that they are unwilling that any one who is abler than themselves should come into their pulpits, lest they should be more applauded than themselves. A fearful thing it is, that any man, who has the least fear of God, should so envy God's gifts in another brother, and should prefer that his car-



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nal hearers should remain unconverted, and the drowsy unawakened, than that it should be done by another who may be preferred before him. Yea, so far does this cursed vice prevail, that in large congregations, which have need of the help of many preachers, we can scarcely, in many places, get two of equality to live together in love and harmony, and unanimously to carry on the work of God...Nay, some men are so far gone in pride, that when they might have an equal assistant to further the work of God, they had rather take all the burden upon themselves, though more than they can bear, than that any one should share with them in the honor, or that their interest in the esteem of the people should be diminished.

Hence also it is that men do so magnify their own opinions, and are as censorious of any that differ from them in lesser things, as if it were all one to differ from them as it is to differ with God himself! They expect that all should conform to their judgment, as if they were the rulers of the Church's faith; and while we cry down papal infallibility, too many of us would be popes ourselves, and have all agree with our determination, as if we were infallible.

So high indeed is the opinion of ourselves, that when it becomes the duty of any one to reprove or contradicts us, we are commonly impatient both of the matter and the manner. We love the man who will say as we say, and be of our opinion, and promote our reputation, though, in other respects, he be less worthy of our esteem. But he is perceived as ungrateful to us who contradict us and differs from us, and deals plainly with us as to what are our own miscarriages and faults. Especially in the management of our public disputations and disagreements, where the eye of the world is upon us, we can scarcely endure any contradiction of our teaching....Our pride makes too many of us think all men contemn us, that do not admire us, yea, and admire all that we say, and submit their judgments to our most palpable mistakes. We are so tender, that a man can scarcely touch us but we are hurt; and we are so high-minded, that a man who is not versed in complimenting, and skilled in flattery above the common man, can scarcely tell us the truth about ourselves.

Brethren, I know this is a sad confession, but that pride should exist among us, should be more grievous to us than to be told of it! We have dishonored ourselves by idolizing our honor; we print our shame, and preach our shame, thus proclaiming it to the whole world. Some will

think that I speak over-charitably when I call such persons who have such pride as this godly persons; those men in whom so great a sin does prevail. I know indeed, that where pride is predominant, not hated, and bewailed, and mortified in the flesh, there can be no true godliness; and I beseech every man to exercise a strict jealousy and search of his own heart. But if all be graceless that are guilty of any, or of most of the fore-mentioned discoveries of pride, the Lord be merciful to the ministers of this land, and give us quickly another spirit; for grace is then a rarer thing than most of us have thought it to be!



Humility is not a mere outward ornament of the Christian, but an essential part of the new creature united to Christ by faith. It is a contradiction in terms, to be a Christian, and not to be humble.

Oh that the Lord would lay us at his feet, in the tears of continuous sorrow for this sin of pride! Brethren, may I expostulate this case a little with my own heart and yours, that we may see the evil of our sin, and be reformed! Is not pride the sin of devils—the firstborn of hell? Is it not that wherein Satan's image does much consist? Is pride to be tolerated in men who are so engaged against him and his Kingdom as we are—ministers of his Word? The very design of the gospel is to debase and humble us! The work of grace is begun and carried on in humiliation. Humility is not a mere outward ornament of the Christian, but an essential part of the new creature united to Christ by faith. It is a contradiction in terms, to be a Christian, and not to be humble.

All who will be Christians must be Christ's disciples, and "come to him to learn"—and the lesson which he teaches them is to "be meek and lowly" like himself! Oh, how many precepts and admirable examples has our Lord and master given us to this end! Can we behold him washing and wiping his servant's feet, and yet be proud and lordly still? Shall he converse with the meanest of people, and shall we avoid them as below our notice, and think none but persons of wealth and honor fit for our society? How many of us are found more often in the



The fame of a godly man is as great a snare as the fame of a learned person. But woe to him that takes up the “fame of godliness” instead of godliness itself!

houses of gentlemen than in the cottages of the poor, who most need our help?

Alas, what is it that we have to be proud of anyway? Is it our knowledge and learning? Why, if we have any knowledge at all, we must certainly know how much reason we have to be humble; and if we know more than others, we must know more than them the fact that we know very little! How little is it that the most learned know, in comparison of that of which they are ignorant! To know that things are past your reach, and to know how ignorant you are, one would think should be no great cause of pride! Our very business is to teach the great lesson of humility to our people; and how unfit, then, is it that we should be proud ourselves? **WE MUST STUDY HUMILITY, AND PREACH HUMILITY; AND MUST WE NOT POSSESS AND PRACTICE HUMILITY?** A proud preacher of humility is at least a self-condemning man.

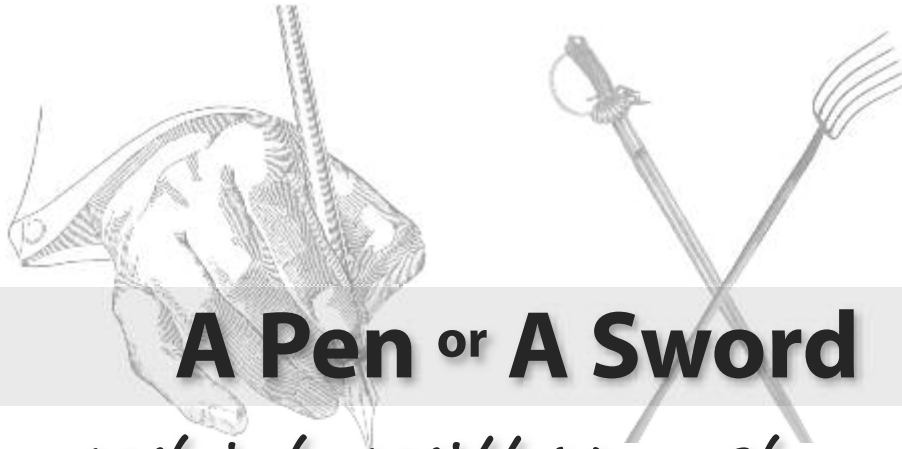
What a sad case is it, that so vile a sin is not more easily discerned by us, but many who are most proud, can blame and find pride in others, and yet take no notice of it in themselves! The world takes notice of some among us, that they have aspiring minds, and seek for the highest room, and must be the rulers of the world at all costs, and bear the sway wherever they come, or else there is no living or acting with them. In any consultations, they come not to search after truth, but to dictate to others, who, perhaps, are fit to teach them. In a word, they have such arrogant domineering spirits, that the world rings of it, and yet they will not see it in themselves!

Does anyone more than the proud man live for himself? Does the proud not live more for himself and therefore less to God? And may not pride make a preacher study for himself and pray and preach, and live to himself, even when he seems to surpass others in the work? It is not the work without the right principle and end

that will prove us to be upright in the eyes of God and the world. The work may be God’s, and yet we may do it, not for God, but for ourselves. I confess I feel such continual danger on this point, that if I do not watch, lest I should study for myself, and preach for myself, and write for myself, rather than for Christ, I should soon miscarry God’s work; and after all, I justify not myself, when I must condemn the sin.

Consider, I beseech you, brethren, what baits there are in the work of the ministry, to entice a man to selfishness, even in the highest works of piety. The fame of a godly man is as great a snare as the fame of a learned person. But woe to him that takes up the “fame of godliness” instead of godliness itself! “Verily I say unto you, they have their reward!” When the times were all for learning and empty formalities, the temptation of the proud did lie that way. But now, when, through the unspeakable mercy of God, the most lively practical preaching is in credit, and godliness itself is increasing, the temptation of the proud is to pretend to be zealous preachers and godly men. Oh, what a fine thing it is to have the people crowding to hear us, and affected with what we say, and yielding up to us their judgments and affections! Be on your guard, lest pride build Christ’s Kingdom without special grace from God!

Therefore, be jealous and watchful of yourselves; and, amidst all your studies, be sure to study humility. “He that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” I commonly observe that almost all men, whether good or bad, do loathe the proud, and love the humble. So far indeed does pride contradict itself, that, conscious of its own deformity, it often borrows the homely dress of humility. We have the more cause as ministers to be jealous of it, because it is a sin most deeply rooted in our nature, and as hardly as any extirpated from the soul. ◻



A Pen or A Sword

Which Will You Choose?

by Mike Atnip



You see two men, armed to the teeth, warring for righteousness. One is looking left, the other right (on purpose, for the composite I made). They are real historical figures, etched as a relief in stone. On the left is John, on the right is Peter. No, they are not John and Peter the apostles. They are men you likely never heard of—John Zizca and Peter Chelcicky.

John and Peter hailed from medieval times, in the early days of the 1400s. Both of these Bohemians (now called the Czech Republic) had a zeal for God, and a desire that the church of Jesus recover from the Roman Catholic apostasy. John picked up his sword to defend against the Catholic crusaders. Peter picked up his pen.

Look at the above picture.

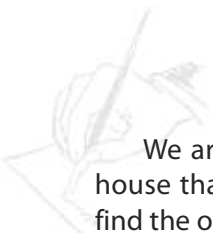
One-eyed John Zizca was a formidable man to war against. Five times he and his peasant warriors repelled

Catholic crusaders who had come to squelch the “heresy” that was spreading like a prairie fire across Bohemia. With their farming tools and what small weapons they could scrounge up, they became known as the “terror of Europe”. Spinning in glee from the successful defense of their homeland, they even took to the offensive and made a few raids into neighboring countries.

They had a mission—a God-ordained mission—at least in their own minds. The Roman Church had turned from the original paths of the New Testament, and these “warriors of God” were set for the defense of the true Gospel. When the Pope called for a crusade and sent an army to squash them, one of

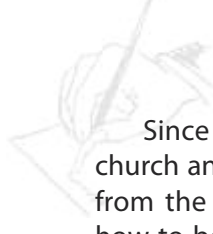
them declared: “The time to wander with a pilgrim’s staff is over, now we shall have to march, sword in hand.” So John and company grabbed swords, pitchforks, clubs and whatever else one could use to fight for the truth, and went to war for God.

Except Peter Chelcicky. Standing almost alone, he picked up his pen. Writing to the “warriors of God,” he told them, “You will not bring the kingdom of heaven to earth as long as the hell of hatred burns in your hearts.” Occupying his time in his little homestead and writing, Peter eventually wrote some fifty articles and books. Most of them are still in Bohemian, but a few have been translated to other languages. Several centuries after the death of his body, Peter’s writings still live and produce fruit. The following quotes are a few of the gems:

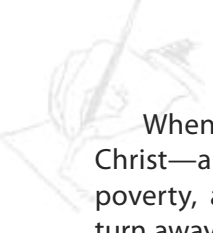


We are like people who have come to a house that has been burnt down and try to find the original foundations. This is the more difficult in that the ruins are grown over with all sorts of undergrowths, and many think that these undergrowths are the foundations, and say, "This is the foundation..." so that in the novelties that have grown up, they think to have found the foundation, whereas they have found something quite different from and contrary to the true foundations.

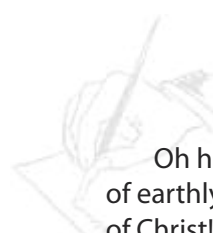
This makes the search more difficult, for if all said, "The old foundation has been lost among the ruins," then many would begin to dig and search for it and to really begin a true work of building upon it; as Nehemiah and Zerubbabel did after the destruction of the temple. It is much more difficult now to restore the spiritual ruins—so long fallen down—and get back to the former state, for which no other foundation can be laid than Jesus Christ, from Whom the many have wandered away and turned to other gods and made foundations of them.



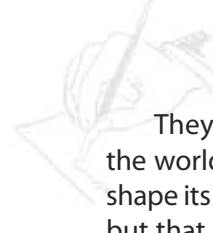
Since (the time of Constantine when church and state united) all live in hypocrisy, from the least to the greatest, figuring out how to be Christian while doing everything their flesh desires. Everyone seeks the honor of the world and flatters it with pleasant talk. Everyone wants peace with the world to avoid suffering its persecution in any way—so to compare today's Christianity with that of the early church is like comparing night to day.



When a people wise in this world see Christ—abandoned, dressed in the garb of poverty, and surrounded by danger—they turn away from Him and follow after wealthy and popular men who serve God with great learning in cathedrals, in armies, with civil authority, with thumbscrews, city halls, pillories and gallows. The whole wise world runs after them, but only "fools" dare follow Christ and suffer the ridicule of all.



Oh how small and barren is the dominion of earthly kings compared with the dominion of Christ! Earthly rulers heap burdens and suffering on their subjects instead of freedom and consolation. By way of contrast, the kingdom of Christ is so powerful and perfect that if the whole world accepted Him, it would have peace and all things would work together for good. There would be no need of temporal rulers anymore, for all would live by grace and truth.



They prepare Christ as a sweet sauce for the world, so that the world may not have to shape its course after Him and His heavy Cross, but that they may conform to the world; and they make Him softer than oil, so that every wound may be soothed, and the violent, thieves, murderers and adulterers may have an easy entrance into heaven.


In the Czech Republic today, you can find the above-pictured reliefs as memorials to John Zizka and Peter Chelcicky. John died from the plague, leaving the wish that his skin should be used to make drums so that he could still lead his soldiers onward, even after his death. Peter died in obscurity: no one knows the details of his final days.

- Two soldiers.
- Two methods of battle.
- Two gospels.
- Two distinct kingdoms.
- A pen or a sword: *which will you choose?*



Taken from
The Birth, Life, and Death of the Bohemian Revival
available online at www.primitivechristianity.org

**...to compare today's
Christianity with that of the
early church is like
comparing night to day.**



*It can be a powerful friend that will work for you,
or a dangerous enemy that will work against you.*

A Very Important Ingredient

by Elmo Stoll

Godly insights on what happens when we don't allow for one of the "primary ingredients" in our witnessing, child raising, and other aspects of the Christian life

Few of you will find the following story easy to believe:

Adam Smith was determined to be a farmer, and now, as he finished planting the field in potatoes, a great hope swelled within him. Maybe he would be a successful potato farmer. He had tried so many crops before, and each time he ended in failure. He had tried growing wheat, but ended up reaping not a grain. Next he had planted corn. Again a total crop failure. Now this year he had done his research well, and he decided he would try potatoes. It required more of an investment for seed, but if he had a good crop, maybe he could make up for the losses of the previous years.

That night Adam hardly slept. Part of the night, he was kept awake by his excitement and hope at the prospect of all the potatoes he would harvest. They were selling at such a good price, and if they yielded as well as the books said... The rest of the time he couldn't sleep for worry and dread when he remembered previous attempts at farming. What if, after all, this turned out the same, and he would have just another loss.

Very early the next morning, Adam raced to the potato field. The nearer he got, the stronger became the feelings of conflict between eagerness and dread. At the spot just before the field came into sight, he almost stopped and turned back, so strong was the conflict. But he had to know the truth, so he rounded the bend. Alas, his heart sank. There was the potato field just exactly as he had left

it the evening before. Not a single plant had grown. Sadly he returned to the barn. He might as well get the plow ready and plow down the field after breakfast. He would have to admit that he simply was not a farmer—nothing grew for him. Nothing ever even came up.

I warned you at the beginning that you would not find the story easy to believe. Of course no farmer would be as foolish as I have pictured Adam—to expect an instant harvest when seeds are sown. Every farmer knows that the most potent ingredient in growing a crop is *time*. It simply takes a certain amount of time for a crop to grow.

The Bible makes a comparison between the farmer sowing seed and a man proclaiming the message of the gospel. The words of the Good News are like good seed. Yet, many times we are like Adam Smith. We sow the seed one day, and by the next day we expect to reap a bountiful harvest. Or even the same day! We forget the important ingredient: the passage of time.

This same thing is true in many areas of our lives. I have seen parents come to recognize that they have been neglecting their children. Maybe something has now happened to convict them that they have been lax in discipline or that they have not been spending the time with their children that they needed to. And they resolve to do better, and, indeed, do better. But a week later they became discouraged because they do not yet see the results they desired, or hoped for. In such times, they need to remember the farmer sowing seed. Some crops cannot

continued on page 26

Day by Day

by Rachel Weaver

"As thy days, so shall thy strength be." Deut. 33:25b

Day by day and with each passing moment
Strength I find to meet my trials here.
Trusting in my Savior's wise bestowment
I've no cause for worry or for fear.
He whose heart is kind beyond all measure
Gives unto each day what He deems best
Lovingly, its part of pain and pleasure
Mingles toil with peace and rest.

Every day the Lord Himself is near me
With a special blessing for each hour.
All my cares He fain would bear and cheer me,
He whose name is Counselor and Power.
The protection of His child and treasure
Is a charge that on Himself, He laid.
"As your days, your strength shall be in measure,"
This the pledge to me He made.

Help me then in toil and tribulation
So to trust Thy promises, O Lord.
That I lose not faith's sweet consolation
Offered me within Thy holy Word.
Help me Lord, when toil and trouble meeting,
E're to take as from a Father's hand,
One by one, the days, the moments fleeting,
Till I reach the Promised Land.

—Lina Sandell

What a beautiful thought! Each day brings enough strength for the things we have to face. If we look back at Exodus 16:4, this thought is exemplified for us in the manna given to the children of Israel.

"Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no. {Heb. the portion of a day in his day}"

When they picked up more, it got wormy and was not available for the next day. But every morning except for the Sabbath, there was manna in abundance for that day!

This priceless principle is still true for us. We can "gather" or use the portion of grace that God gives to us every day. He never gives us grace for tomorrow's worries. There is only enough for today.

As I was reading and meditating on that thought, I realized what an unspeakable comfort it was. This takes away all care for tomorrow. Only the cares of today are yours; tomorrow is your Father's. What value that thought has! Too easily, we neglect today as we look ahead at the future and worry and fret. We forget that the value of each day, and how we spend it, is so

important in the whole picture of the years to come. God does not ask us to carry tomorrow's load, today. In fact He offers to carry our load today if we will allow Him to. He has promised us... "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." Deut. 33:25 Taken simply, this means there will always be enough strength for today. Maybe that is all there will be. You may not have extra, but you will have enough. What an amazing consolation!

It is when we learn to understand this concept that we begin to grow in grace. We begin to understand that our own limitations do not matter so much as long as we know God, depend on Him, and obey Him. God has taken the moments and the days and bound them together so that we might begin to take the measure of them. When we look ahead in the morning or look back over the day that we have finished, and weigh the moments, we learn to value and use them more carefully. We learn that our Father was always there with us. We find that His promise was true and there was enough for that day. We learn to know ourselves better and see where we did not fly to Him for grace and strength. We learn what happens when we do not use our moments as He intended us to use them.

Just as God did for the children of Israel, He gives us new manna every morning. He gives us a new day, new strength, new hope, and the promise to be with us. "This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness." Lamentations 3:21-23 God did not give us one, long, unbroken stretch of time to live in. If He had, we would become weary, more weary than we have ever been and we could not have made it. Instead, He graciously broke our time up into days and nights. Each day we can rise again and walk with Him. Yesterday and its sorrows are past. Today is a new day and its mercies are new. We walk through the day—then He brings the night for our weary bodies and minds to renew and recharge themselves. When we wake, let us wake and thank the Lord for the "new" day.

When I began to learn that

lesson, even a sleepless night, or an interrupted night took on a different feel. Here was a bright new day to live for Jesus. No matter how tired I was, I began to wake and thank God for the new day and the new mercies that He was going to have for me. That change of attitude made so much difference in my day. I woke with a thankful heart. That thankful heart made each trial and trouble seem smaller. Thankfulness is one of the keys to a victorious Christian life. You see it all through the Word.

Ps 69:30 "I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving."

Ps 95:2 "Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms."

Ps 100:4 "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name."

Col 2:7 "Rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving."

Col 4:2 "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving..."

Each day we can rise again and walk with Him. Yesterday and its sorrows are past. Today is a new day and its mercies are new. We walk through the day—then He brings the night for our weary bodies and minds to renew and recharge themselves. When we wake, let us wake and thank the Lord for the "new" day.



A thankful heart allows God to have His way with us. He inhabits the praise of His people. Whether you wake to a day of health or sickness, joy or sorrow, struggle or victory, let it be with this in mind, "This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." Psalm 118:24 I will trust God to do with my day what He desires and learn to walk with Him more closely than before. "I will trust and not be afraid." Isa. 12:2

Along with the new day, the new strength and the abundant grace, God also sends blessings. Have you ever experienced the special touch of God's hand that comes through another person? Perhaps it is an encouraging phone call, an unexpected visit

from a friend, a card in the mailbox, or just a verse of song that your daughter is singing as she does her chores. These little gifts are rays of sunshine, treasures that are not to be lightly esteemed. As I learn to look for the blessings that God leaves in my way, I become more thankful. These blessings are strewn along our pathway far more often than we know.

- ▲ *Health to do the work at hand—some of my friends are not blessed with good health*
- ▲ *A lovely sunrise or sunset to remind me of God's greatness*
- ▲ *A great big hug from my child and a warm "I love you, Mom"*
- ▲ *The car filled up with gas by my thoughtful husband*
- ▲ *Just enough of flour in the bucket to finish my baking — God cares about details.*
- ▲ *An encouraging call from a friend I had not heard from for a long time*



- ▲ *Time to sit and read with the whole family — each day together is a gift from God!*
- ▲ *Special time in prayer with my Father where my heart is strengthened.*
- ▲ *Enough gas to get me to the gas pump when the gauge was on empty!*
- ▲ *A basket of goodies on my table from a busy friend whom I love dearly*
- ▲ *A talk with a loving, respectful young person — there are still some around!*
- ▲ *A verse in my devotions that specifically ministered to my need — God is speaking into my life!*

Make it a habit to look for the lovely things in each day and attribute them to the loving hand of God. It not only changes your day, but it will change your life. Thankfulness as a daily habit makes us into stronger Christians.

Today I was reminded of a small story that I had read about ten years ago.

The Thorn Story

by George Matheson

Sandra felt as low as the heels of her Birkenstocks as she pushed against a November gust and the florist shop's door. Her life had been easy, like a spring breeze.

Then in the fourth month of her second pregnancy, a minor automobile accident stole her ease. During this Thanksgiving week, she would have delivered a son. She grieved her loss. As if that wasn't enough, her husband's company threatened a transfer. Then her sister, whose holiday visit she coveted, called saying that she could not come. What's worse, Sandra's friend infuriated her by suggesting her grief was a "God-given" path to maturity, that would allow her to empathize with others who suffer.

"Had she lost a child? NO—she has no idea what I'm feeling." Sandra shuddered.

Thanksgiving? "Thankful for what?" she wondered. "For a careless driver whose truck was hardly scratched when he rear-ended her? For an airbag that saved her life, but took that of her child?"

"Good afternoon, can I help you?" The flower shop clerk's approach startled her. "Sorry," said Jenny, "I just didn't want you to think I was ignoring you."

"I...I need an arrangement," said Sandra.

"For Thanksgiving?"

Sandra nodded.

"Do you want 'Beautiful but Ordinary', or would you like to challenge the day with a customer favorite I call the 'Thanksgiving Special'?"

Jenny saw Sandra's curiosity and continued, "I am convinced the flowers will tell stories, and that each arrangement insinuates a particular feeling. Are you looking for something that conveys gratitude this Thanksgiving?"

"Not exactly," Sandra blurted. "Sorry, but in the last five months, everything that could go wrong has." Sandra regretted her outburst, but was surprised when Jenny said, "I have the perfect arrangement for you."

The door's small bell suddenly rang. "Barbara, hi!" Jenny said. She politely excused herself from Sandra, and

walked toward a small workroom. She quickly reappeared, carrying a massive arrangement of green bows and long-stemmed thorny roses; only the ends of the rose stems were neatly snipped, no flowers. "Want this in a box?" Jenny asked Barbara.

Sandra watched for Barbara's response. "Was this a joke?" she thought. "Who would want rose stems with no flowers!" She waited for laughter, for someone to notice the absence of flowers atop the thorny stems, but neither woman did.

"Yes, please. It's exquisite!", said Barbara. "You'd think after three years of getting the special, I'd not be so moved by its significance, but it's happening again. My family will love this one! Thanks."

Sandra stared. "Why so normal a conversation about so strange an arrangement?" she wondered. "Aaaaaaaa", said Sandra, pointing. "That lady...just left with...."

"Yes?" replied Jenny.

"Well...she had no flowers!" blurted Sandra.

"Yep, that's the special. I call it the 'Thanksgiving Thorns Bouquet.'"

In spite of herself, Sandra chuckled and said "But why do people pay for that?"

"Do you really want to know?"

"I couldn't leave this shop without knowing! I'd think about nothing else!"

"That might be good," said Jenny.

"Well," she explained, "Barbara came into the shop three years ago, feeling very much like you feel today. She thought she had very little to be thankful for. She had lost her father to cancer, the family business was failing, her son was into drugs, and she faced major surgery."

"Ouch," said Sandra.

Jenny continued, "That same year, I lost my husband. I assumed complete responsibility for the shop, and for the first time, spent the holidays alone. I had no children, no husband, no family nearby, and too great a debt to allow any travel."

"What did you do?"

"I learned to be thankful for thorns."

Sandra's eyebrows lifted as she asked, "Thorns?"

Jenny replied, "I'm a Christian, Sandra. I've always thanked God for good things in life, and I never thought to ask Him why good things happened to me. But when hard times hit, did I ever ask! It took time to learn that dark times are important. I always enjoyed the flowers of life, but it took thorns to show me the beauty of God's comfort. You know, the Bible says that God comforts us when we are afflicted, and from His consolation, we learn to comfort others."

Sandra gasped, "A friend read that passage to me, and I was furious! I guess the truth is, I don't want comfort. I've lost a baby, and I'm angry with God." Jenny started to ask Sandra to "go on", when the door's bell diverted their attention.

"Hey Phil!" shouted Jenny, as a balding rotund man entered the shop. She gently touched Sandra's arm, and moved to welcome the customer.

"I'm here for twelve thorny long-stemmed stems!" Phil laughed heartily. "I figured as much," said Jenny. "I've got them ready." She lifted a tissue-wrapped arrangement from the refrigerated cabinet.

"Beautiful," said Phil. "My wife will love them!"

Sandra could not resist asking, "These are for your wife?"

Phil saw that Sandra's curiosity matched his when he first heard of the "Thorn Bouquet."

Sandra said, "Do you mind me asking, 'Why thorns?'"

"I'm glad you asked," Phil replied. "Four years ago, my wife and I nearly divorced. After forty years, we were in a real mess: but we slogged through, problem by rotten problem. We rescued our marriage...our love really. Last year, at Thanksgiving, I stopped in here for flowers. I must have mentioned surviving a tough process, because Jenny told me that for a long time, she had kept a vase of rose stems...stems!...as a reminder of what she learned from 'thorny times'. That was good enough for me! I took home stems! My wife and I decided to label each one for a specific 'thorny' situation, and give thanks for what the problem taught us. I'm pretty sure this 'stem



review' is becoming a tradition."

Phil paid Jenny, and thanked her again, and as he left, said to Sandra, "I highly recommend the Special!"

"I don't know if I can be thankful for the 'thorns' in my life," Sandra said to Jenny.

"Well, my experience says, that 'thorns' make roses more precious. We treasure God's providential care more during trouble than at any other time.

"Remember, Sandra...Jesus wore a crown of 'thorns', so that we might know His love. Do not resent 'thorns'."

Tears rolled down Sandra's cheeks. For the first time since the accident, she loosened her grip on resentment. "I'll take twelve long-stemmed thorns, please."

"I hoped you would," Jenny said. "I'll have them ready in a minute. Then, every time you see them, remember to appreciate both good and hard times. We grow through both."

"Thank you, what do I owe you?" asked Sandra.

"Nothing. Nothing but a pledge to work toward healing your heart. The first year's arrangement is always on me." Jenny handed a card to Sandra, saying "I'll attach a card like this to your arrangement, but maybe you'd like to read it first. Go ahead, read it."

My God, I have never thanked Thee for my 'thorn'! I have thanked Thee a thousand times for my roses, but never once for my 'thorn'. Teach me the glory of the cross I bear. Teach me the value of my 'thorns'. Show me that I have climbed to Thee by the path of pain. Show me that my tears have made my rainbow.



Take the challenge—lean on God and learn to be thankful for each day, for each thorn.

Then go a step farther and help someone else to see God in each passing moment. That is what God has placed us here to do. "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." Deut. 33:25b □

continued from page 21, A Very Important Ingredient by Elmo Stoll

be grown overnight, or even in a week. We may not see any results at all immediately. And when we do finally see some results, they may be so little that it is hardly noticeable.

But a good farmer is not alarmed that seedlings, when they first peep through the soil, are hardly noticeable. And he is not alarmed that he won't be able to see a detectable difference from one day to the next. He has the confidence that if he sows good seeds, keeps the weeds down, and applies the needed nutrients, God will see to it that he gets a harvest.

The same is true in a marriage relationship. A husband and wife may need to make changes in their behavior toward each other. But in addition to those changes, they may need to add that very important ingredient—time. Some miracles in life simply do not happen overnight. But they can happen!

The simple element of time can be a powerful ally to help us when we sow seeds of truth and virtue. But the reverse is also true. Too many times we underestimate the power of time to produce evil. The Bible warns us to stay away from associates that are ungodly. But the danger seems to be overstated when we meet and talk briefly with an ungodly person. We may even work with him a

week or two, and be confident that we are not being influenced by him. But in very small ways, hardly perceptible, we are being influenced by him. And, given enough time, we will become more like him.

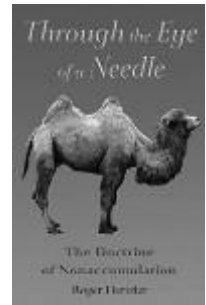
The Apostle Paul recognized the damage time can do, when it is added to some seed of wrong. "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath," he warned. Well, what is so wrong about letting the sun go down when we are angry? The passage of time. Anger is bad enough, but if time is added to it, it will turn into a grudge, and bitterness and resentment will poison our souls. In many cases, this will make reconciliation very difficult. Many a feud, many a quarrel, if left to go on over a period of time, becomes deep-rooted. What might have been forgiven and forgotten easily—if apologies had been sincerely made when the offence first occurred (before the sun set)—instead become deep roots of bitterness, by which many are defiled.

May God grant us all a new grasp of the importance of time. It can be a powerful friend that will work for you, or a dangerous enemy that will work against you. So when you sow a seed, for good or ill, do not forget to take into account what the passage of time may do with it. □



Through the Eye of a Needle

by Roger Hertzler



Some book topics make quick and easy successes. It is no mystery why titles such as *Your Best Life Now* by Joel Osteen made a quick jump to the top of the Christian best-seller lists. Tickling ears will always be popular. Roger Hertzler, on the other hand, has written a book that probably won't make the best-seller lists any time soon. *Through the Eye of a Needle* is a challenging book that hits western Christians where it hurts—the accumulation of wealth.

Basing the title of his book on the challenging words of Christ, “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God,” Hertzler’s book touches on areas such as retirement, investment accounts, covetousness, and the whole idea of “laying up treasures” in general. Hertzler encapsulates this doctrine in the simple phrase “the doctrine of nonaccumulation”.

Right at the outset, let me say that many of our readers will have difficulty with some of the things written in this book. But even though you may not agree with every single point, there is no doubt that Hertzler’s words are much needed in our modern American, materialistic culture.

Two Pillars

Early in the book, Hertzler introduces the foundation of Jesus’ teaching of nonaccumulation by describing two doctrinal pillars. The first pillar is a bit

controversial. In general, most Americans would probably say it’s OK to have “treasures” on this earth, as long as your heart is not in them. Hertzler argues that this thinking is completely backward. He quotes Jesus’ words from the Sermon on the Mount, “Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth” (Matt 6:19). In much the same practical way that the Anabaptists would view the Sermon on the Mount teachings on war and divorce, Hertzler argues that Jesus’ teaching is much more than just an attitude. He argues that regardless of whether we think our heart is in our treasures or not, Jesus simply tells us not to have “treasures”, whether they be bank accounts, investments, properties, or a bunch of excess stuff.

The second pillar is perhaps even more controversial. Hertzler quotes Jesus’ words, “Sell that ye have, and give alms.” What makes this verse so controversial is that Hertzler reminds the reader that in this passage, Jesus is not speaking to the rich young ruler, but to his disciples.

“But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Luke 12:31-34).

The doctrine of nonaccumulation, therefore, means more than simply “don’t accumulate.” It also means, according to Luke 12:33, that we are to practice lavish generosity. There are many people who...have stopped laying up treasures on earth, but have not started laying up treasures in Heaven. They simply are not laying up treasures *anywhere*.

Further into the book, Hertzler does not just leave the reader with negative overtones and guilt trips. One of the most refreshing things about the book is his excitement over our “investment opportunities” in the heavenly bank account. Following up Jesus’ words about not storing up treasures on earth, Hertzler emphasizes that Jesus went on to say, ‘But lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven.’ Hertzler says, “In today’s terminology, then, He is telling us to *accumulate wealth* in Heaven, to *invest* in Heaven, to *save for retirement* in Heaven. He is telling us, in essence, to make investments in Heaven in much the same way that people of this world make investments on earth. But how do we do this? What do we physically have to do to lay up treasure in Heaven? Luke 12:33 gives us the answer. ‘Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a *treasure in the heavens* that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.’ So it’s by *giving alms* that we can make a real investment in a real place called Heaven! And this investment is totally secure from all the problems (thieves, rust, recessions, inflation, and stock market corrections) associated with earthly investments! What’s more, the rate of return is far better than that which any mutual fund manager has ever been able to consistently produce (‘a hundredfold’ according to Matthew 19:29).”

The challenging thing about Hertzler’s positive attitude is that he tells us that simply being “poor” in itself is not enough. There are plenty of self-righteous poor people in religious circles. He goes on to say that the positive part of this command is very important. Hertzler writes,

The doctrine of nonaccumulation, therefore, means more than simply “don’t accumulate.” It also means, according to Luke 12:33, that we are to practice lavish generosity. There are many people who don’t accumulate earthly wealth, but at the same time do not really

practice biblical nonaccumulation. Perhaps because of either laziness or else excessive spending, they simply do not have any resources available to accumulate. Maybe they have even read Jesus’ command not to lay up treasures on earth, and in response have cut back on their work, or have started to live in luxury, or have otherwise begun to squander those funds that they formerly had been putting into a savings account each month. In other words, they have stopped laying up treasures on earth, but have not started laying up treasures in Heaven. They simply are not laying up treasures *anywhere*.

Ouch!

Hertzler proceeds from the teachings of Christ up through the Apostles, and then on into Acts and other related passages of Scripture to support his view. Further, he trails through church history, quoting many early Moravians, Anabaptists, and other committed Christians who also embraced this doctrine.

Concluding the book, Hertzler portrays an imaginary scenario entitled “Frank the Wise Investor.” In this scenario, it is 1986 and Frank has invested in a new little company called Microsoft. He shows how Frank spends all his life saving his pennies to invest everything he could into his account. Some even made fun of how hard he worked, and how frugal he was, putting all his money away in that little account. Finally, at the end of his life, Frank was one of the wealthiest men in the world. Everyone nodded their head in agreement and said, “Frank was a wise investor.” Completing the analogy, Hertzler lays the question to us from a heavenly perspective, asking the fundamental question that I think sums up the heart of this book:

“Are we ‘wise investors’ in God’s account?” □

This book can be read online at: www.elcristianismoprimitivo.com/througheyofneedle.pdf
www.watchmangospelsigns.com/resources/Through_the_Eye_of_a_Needle.pdf

Or you can purchase the book for \$5.95 from: Scroll Publishing Co.
P.O. Box 122, Amberson, PA 17210
www.scrollpublishing.com



INTRODUCTION

Youth Bible School 2008—the largest year ever. There were 667 students in attendance. We received much teaching and many challenges. Since YBS, I have heard several testimonies from youth whose lives were influenced and changed by the week. Praise the Lord for what He did!

One common theme this year was living a life of obedient faith. Mose Stoltzfus related to us the life of Moses, which was a life full of obedience to and trust in God. Denny Kenaston reminded us of the walk of faith and obedience that the first-generation Christians (our parents) took and urged us to continue in that walk and to go further. John D. Martin sketched profiles of people's lives in the Bible who chose to live the life of faith, and those who chose to go the way of folly. In this article, I will share the main thoughts, as well as highlights, from the week.

MOSE STOLTZFUS: THE LIFE OF MOSES

Brother Mose Stoltzfus shared on the life of Moses, focusing on his birth through the Exodus. I especially enjoyed hearing messages about Moses' life, as he is one of my favorite characters in the Bible. I am amazed at his

closeness to God. Moses spoke to God and heard God speak clearly to him, over and over again.

Brother Mose explained how Moses grew up in a royal setting. He had wealth, affluence, an excellent education, and access to everything else Egypt had to offer, including its sin. However, he chose to make a complete break from Egypt and turn his back on it. He decided to

follow God, not Egypt. Brother Mose challenged each of us to also make a clear break from the world. In order to be fully-committed disciples of Jesus, we must follow Him alone, not Him and Egypt.

Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt around the age of eighty, and died at one hundred twenty. This means that for the first eighty years of his life, or two thirds of his entire life, he was

in preparation. Brother Mose shared that we must be patient with God and allow Him to take His time preparing us for the work He is calling us to. It is very important that we be teachable and yielded to the Lord.



IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT WE BE TEACHABLE AND YIELDED TO THE LORD. STUBBORNNESS WILL PROLONG OUR PREPARATION TIME—AND WE DO NOT WANT TO SPEND TWO THIRDS OF OUR LIFE PREPARING IF WE DON'T HAVE TO!

It is also imperative that if we will someday be leaders, we must learn how to follow and how to be a servant-leader. Stubbornness will prolong our preparation time—and we do not want to spend two thirds of our life preparing if we don't have to! The more flexible we are, the easier it will be for God to prepare us.

Moses trusted God and obeyed Him implicitly. Over and over, God gave Moses clear commands that seemed ludicrous from a human perspective. But Moses kept proving his belief in God by his absolute obedience. True, he did have a couple of failures, but the overwhelming testimony from his life is “obedience.” Brother Mose challenged us to be obedient to God. God wants to lead

us, but we need to follow. He cannot effectively use someone who is disobedient.

I very much appreciated Brother Mose Stoltzfus' overview on the life of Moses. I was very challenged to be pliable and moldable in God's hands so that He can prepare me for service in His kingdom. I want to follow Moses' example of obedience to and trust in the Lord, so that I can be as close to Him as Moses was. May God make each of us like Moses!

JOHN D. MARTIN: PROFILES OF FAITH AND FOLLY

In each session, Brother John D. Martin taught on a pair of characters—one wise and one foolish. He covered Abraham and Lot, Jacob and Esau, Elijah and Ahab, Leah and Rachel, and Paul and Demas. We saw that those who choose to live a life of obedience and faith are greatly blessed and make a difference in the world, whereas

those who live a foolish life often face tragic consequences, and at best their lives are wasted.

One example of these contrasts is Esau and Jacob.

Esau seemed like a “nice guy” to the average onlooker, while Jacob seemed to be more of a “rough character.” However, God viewed them differently. Jacob was spiritually receptive, while Esau seemed totally unconcerned about the spiritual realm. Jacob responded to God, and, in spite of his many mistakes, he followed God and God was able to create His chosen people from Jacob. Ultimately, he became the progenitor of the Christ. In contrast, what did Esau have to show for his life at the end?

On Friday, Brother John D. contrasted Paul and Demas. He shared how Paul was willing to suffer and sacrifice incredibly for Jesus. He persevered through stress, beatings, imprisonments, and other persecution. He never gave up. Paul left the Church an incredible legacy through his writings

and the testimony of his life.

What about Demas? There is very little information in the Bible about Demas, but we know that he was a companion of Paul at one time. It seems, however, that when the opposition became very great, Demas threw in the towel. He wasn't willing to sacrifice past a certain point. Brother John D. said that Demas did not necessarily forsake Christianity, he just left the heat of the battle. We read this tragic report from Paul: “Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world.” This is the legacy of Demas. This should be frightful to us. While we may not forsake Christianity, are we shrinking from suffering? Do we want to leave a legacy like Paul or Demas?

There was another point that Brother John D. discussed on Friday which made that message the highlight of his series for me. He talked about the “mystery of faith” which the Apostle Paul introduced to the world and for which he was severely persecuted. I had never thought of this concept in this way. (See Eph. 3)



WILL WE TAKE THE PATH OF FOLLY
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PATH OF FAITH AND OBEDIENCE AND
MAKE OUR LIVES COUNT FOR
GOD'S KINGDOM?

In the Old Testament, there were many prophecies of the coming Messiah. Many aspects of Jesus' ministry and of God's new plan for His people were prophesied. It was even prophesied that God wanted to redeem the whole world, including the Gentiles. However, there was one aspect of God's plan that had never been mentioned: that God would eliminate the distinctions of "Jew" and "Gentile" and create a totally new class of people! To be God's chosen, a Gentile does not become a Jew, and a Jew who chooses to follow Jesus does not truly stay a Jew. They both become Christians—a totally new entity. In Christ, there are no more separations—we are all one: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28).

Unity in the Church is a very important matter to God. It is so sad that we see so many walls and so much fighting, mistrust, and separations in the Church today. Brother John D. said that the differences that the Jews and Gentiles struggled with were greater than the differences that separate us from each other. And if they could come together and be unified, so can we (see Jn 17)!

Which road will we choose? Will we take the path of folly and, like Esau, have nothing but a bowl of lentils—or perhaps far worse—to show for it at the end? Or will we choose the path of faith and obedience and make our lives count for God's Kingdom?

DENNY KENASTON: THE FAITH OF YOUR FATHERS

This series was directed to the second-generation Christians, who made up the majority of the students at

YBS. During the first few days, Brother Denny Kenaston focused on what we have received from the first generation. He used the account of the Israelites conquering the Promised Land. There were mountains and lands full of enemies—many of them mighty giants—that needed to be conquered. It wasn't easy. In much the same way, the first generation had to fight many hard battles to gain the spiritual mountains that they have now. In many ways, we have simply grown up taking for granted what our parents have fought for. Brother Denny encouraged us to be grateful to the first generation for all they have given us, not to take anything for granted, and not to throw off what our parents agonized to gain.

Then he turned his attention squarely to us—generation two.

It is a natural tendency for us to become complacent and, frankly, very lazy. In a powerful message on Thursday, Brother Denny addressed what could be called the "easy chair syndrome." He illustrated this problem vividly by sitting on a lawn chair on the platform with his feet up. He showed us the danger of just settling in and getting comfortable, enjoying the Christian environment that we have grown up in.

He then jolted us with Jesus' parable of the talents. The servant who was entrusted with one talent did not lose what he had been given. In fact, he kept it perfectly safe and offered it back to the master at the proper time. What was so bad about that? Yet Jesus indicated that he was an utter failure. If we merely keep all that has been given to us but do not go forward and gain more, can we expect to be judged any differently than the complacent servant?

There is much more land to be possessed. What we have is not nearly all that is available for us! We must get off of the chair, kick it (as Brother Denny did on the platform), and march forward. Much has been given to us; therefore, much will be required from us.



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CHRIST—ONCE AGAIN
TURNING THE WORLD
UPSIDE DOWN.



IN ACTS, WE READ THAT OPPONENTS OF THE CHURCH COMPLAINED THAT IT WAS TURNING THE WORLD UPSIDE DOWN. THAT IS THE THERMOSTAT CHURCH. I BELIEVE THAT CHRISTIANITY SHOULD AFFECT EVERY ASPECT OF SOCIETY. UNFORTUNATELY, WHAT WE SEE TODAY IS MORE LIKE THE WORLD HAVING AN EFFECT ON EVERY ASPECT OF THE CHURCH!



There are many mountains that we can see outlined in the distance, such as prayer, missions, revival, and church unity. (John D. Martin specifically encouraged us as the second generation to go after the mountain of church unity.) We are very blessed to have what we have now, but if we compare our Christianity to the New Testament, we will quickly discover that God wants to give us far more. Since God is infinite, how can we expect to ever gain all that He has for us?

We as the second generation are the future of the Church. We must strive for a Christianity that is holy, uncompromising, loving, unified, ablaze with God's Spirit, saving the lost, influencing the world for Jesus Christ—once again turning the world upside down. (Dean Taylor urged us to catch this vision in his message on Tuesday evening. See below.)

CHORUS

As always, chorus was a highlight of YBS for me. The songs chosen were beautiful and inspiring. Brother Earl Fox did an excellent job directing us—in spite of the fact that there were nearly one hundred more of us this year than last year!

EVENING MESSAGES

We received very challenging and evangelistic messages in the evenings from Emanuel Esh, Dean Taylor, David Mast, and Mel Esh.

On Tuesday evening, Brother Dean Taylor shared a powerful message in which he posed this question to us: are we thermometers, merely recording the temperature of the culture and changing with it; or are we thermostats, setting the temperature? There is a huge difference between those two objects. All too often, we

find ourselves in the thermometer category. And because we are in this state, the Church today is in danger of being cast aside as an “irrelevant social club.” The true, Spirit-filled church is the opposite: in Acts, we read that opponents of the Church complained that it was turning the world upside down. That is the thermostat Church. I believe that Christianity should affect every aspect of society. Unfortunately, what we see today is more like the world having an effect on every aspect of the Church! (Brother Dean quoted Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s very revealing assessment of the Church in his letter from Birmingham Jail. This letter can be accessed at www.stanford.edu/group/King/frequentdocs/birmingham.pdf.)

In many ways, revival is a return to “thermostat Christianity.” Brother Dean quoted four points from Evan Roberts (a young man used mightily by God in one of the Welsh revivals) on preparing for revival:

1. Every sinful thing must be put away.
2. Every doubtful indulgence must be sacrificed for the sake of holiness.
3. There must be prompt obedience to the voice of the Holy Spirit.
4. There must be public confession of Christ before everyone.

Let's return to original, biblical, thermostat Christianity!

CONCLUSION

Now there is a fork in the road. Will we choose to live in Egypt or to “suffer with the people of God,” the way of faith or the way of folly, the way of ease and complacency or the way of conquering more mountains? Which path will we choose? □



The Anti-Church

by Roger Hertzler

In the early days of Christianity, there was one passage of the Bible which held special significance for Christ's followers. This was Matthew chapters 5 through 7, which is commonly called the Sermon on the Mount. This sermon was used as a catechism for new believers, and it formed much of the foundation for early Christian doctrine and practice. These first Christians believed that this sermon was meant to be taken literally and obeyed explicitly, and it became a defining factor of the very essence of Christianity.

But if you could imagine with me for a moment, I'd like to ask you a question which may shock you at first. What do you think would happen if we would form a church which, rather than trying to *follow* the Sermon on the Mount, purposed instead to *violate* it? What would happen if we would look at each major issue dis-

cussed in this sermon and then do the exact *opposite* of what it teaches? How would such a church look?

Let us take a brief look at just a few of the topics discussed in the Sermon on the Mount and try to imagine what a deliberate violation would look like. Then let us, in light of this list, take an honest assessment of our own Christian lives, of our church, and of American Christianity as a whole.

- * When the Sermon on the Mount says that God's blessings belong to those who are poor in spirit, meek, and hungry after righteousness, we would fill our pews with proud, self-satisfied members.
- * When the Sermon on the Mount says we should be salt and light in this world, we would do our best to

“fit in” with the unbelievers around us so as not to offend them.

- ✱ When the Sermon on the Mount says that “he who looks at a woman lustfully commits adultery”, we would put up with a high percentage of our church’s leaders being addicted to pornography.
- ✱ When the Sermon on the Mount condemns divorce as evil, the divorce rate in our church would be as high or higher than that of the non-Christians around us.
- ✱ When the Sermon on the Mount forbids the remarriage of divorced persons, our church would both perform marriages of those who were previously divorced and also receive into membership remarried individuals with former spouses still living.
- ✱ When the Sermon on the Mount says we should “swear not at all,” we would willingly take oaths without a twinge of conscience.
- ✱ When the Sermon on the Mount says “let your yes be yes and your no be no”, we would tolerate blatant dishonesty whenever that was the most convenient path.
- ✱ When the Sermon on the Mount commands us to love our enemies, our church would be among the strongest supporters of our nation’s military power.
- ✱ When the Sermon on the Mount commands us to “resist not evil”, we would encourage our members to keep weapons in their homes for use in self-defense.
- ✱ When the Sermon on the Mount says “when (not if) ye fast”, members of our church would almost never practice fasting.
- ✱ When the Sermon on the Mount forbids us to lay up treasures on earth, we would encourage our members to accumulate wealth in savings accounts, retirement plans, and other investments.
- ✱ When the Sermon on the Mount commands us to lay up treasures in Heaven (by giving to the needy), we would deny or ignore the fact that helping the poor is an integral part of true Christian faith.

- ✱ When the Sermon on the Mount says that we cannot serve God and mammon (wealth), we would teach that God expects His children to be rich in earthly possessions.
- ✱ When the Sermon on the Mount speaks of the road to Heaven being strait and narrow, our church would teach that anyone who has ever prayed a sinner’s prayer will certainly make it into Heaven.
- ✱ When the Sermon on the Mount says that the difference between building on the rock and building on sand is *obedience* to Christ’s commands, our church would teach that mental assent and verbal profession to a creed (with no real change in our life) would be all that was needed to be “on the Rock”.

As you meditate on these thoughts and allow God to speak to you through them, please consider these words from His Holy Word:

Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? (Luke 6:46)

Hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. (1 John 2:3-4)

And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write . . . because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. (Revelation 3:14-17)

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. (2 Corinthians 6:17-18)





Charity Ministries
 www.charityministries.org
 A Ministry of Charity Christian Fellowship
 and Ephrata Christian Fellowship

The Heartbeat of
The Remnant



Tape Ministry Report and 2008 Financial Report

Greetings in Jesus' Name! It is the time of the year again to give accountability to you. We have received much again this year, thus making us responsible for much. We have, in all good conscience, tried to use the monies you have given for the purpose that you intended when you gave it. It has resulted in sending out over 200,000 messages all over the world, with most of those, of course, going to the US. We also sent out over 16,000 Remnant magazines in 2008. Almost 15 percent of those went to international countries.

This effort to spread and share the Gospel has been made possible by those of you who have labored to give to this cause. It has been very rewarding to receive the notes of appreciation and encouragement from many that have testified of spiritual enrichment in their lives from the messages. But it is our utmost desire that God would receive the glory and praise. We have done nothing except that which was our duty to do. We thank you and may God reward you for your prayers, financial support, and blessing over the past year. As God leads you, please continue to do so this next year.

Thank you!

*Charity Gospel Tape Ministry
 The Heartbeat of the Remnant Magazine*

Year-End 2008 Financial Report

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| 01/01/08 Beginning Balance | \$15,172.34 |
| Receipts | |
| Tape Ministry Donations | \$197,391.03 |
| Remnant Subscription Donations | \$32,565.85 |
| Total Receipts | \$229,956.88 |
| Disbursements | |
| UPS & Postage | \$24,059.59 |
| Tapes, Albums, CD's & Labels | \$46,829.97 |
| Equipment & Software Purchases | \$6,251.90 |
| Equipment Maintenance & Repairs | \$1,248.96 |
| Mailing & Office Supplies | \$4,582.45 |
| Rent | \$9,750.00 |
| Telephone | \$3,247.30 |
| Website Development & Maintenance | \$2,654.22 |
| Building Improvements | \$0.00 |
| Miscellaneous | \$1,916.34 |
| Payroll Expense | \$68,100.04 |
| Books & Catalogs | \$2,228.33 |
| Remnant Publishing & Mailing | \$26,176.42 |
| Total Disbursements | \$197,045.52 |
| 12/31/08 Ending Balance | \$48,083.70 |
| Difference | \$32,911.36 |

The Heartbeat of

The Remnant

Charity Christian Fellowship

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Life that is aimless is both restless and forceless. How many a trumpet hangs on the walls of society, useless, voiceless and rusty! It has no luster and gives forth no music, and is losing the power to emit sound. What an hour of redemption, when some brave warrior lays hands on the long unused instrument, puts it to his lips and blows a bugle blast!

Young men—you whose life hangs idle, aimless, mute, while the right is battling with the wrong, would to God that some hero-spirit might set you quivering and resounding with the clarion-peal of a holy purpose to serve God and man! No work is so wearisome as doing nothing, and no self-sacrifice is so costly as self-indulgence. Could you wear the “magic skin” which makes sure the gratification of every selfish whim, it would shrink with every new carnal pleasure and so at last crush out all true life.

A.T. Pierson from “The New Acts of the Apostles”