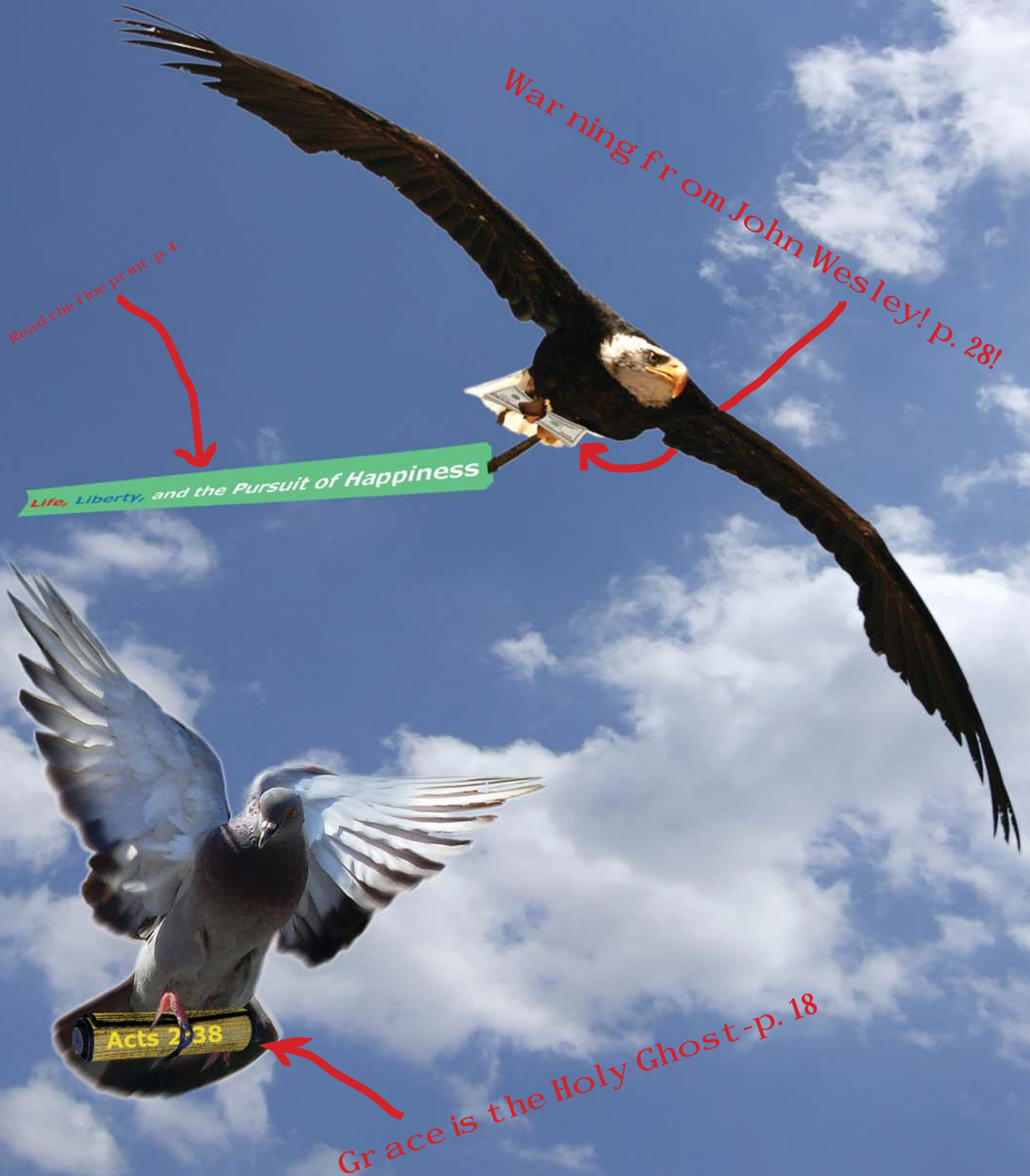


## Two kingdoms ... two kinds of promises and gifts



The Heartbeat of

## The Remnant

*Publisher*

Ephrata Christian Fellowship  
400 W. Main St. Ste. 1  
Ephrata, PA 17522

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*The Heartbeat of the Remnant* is published bimonthly by Ephrata Christian Fellowship. Subscription is available upon request, at no cost. *The Remnant* is financially supported by the gifts of God's people as they respond to the promptings of His Holy Spirit. We request your prayerful consideration of this need. Send subscriptions or contributions to the above address, or call 1-855-557-7902 or 717-721-7775.

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God will  
never reveal more  
truth about Himself  
until you have obeyed  
what you know  
already.  
~Oswald Chambers

## Flying Too High?

In Greek mythology exists a strange fable of a man who met his death because he flew too close to the sun. The man's name was Icarus. As the story goes, Icarus and his father were put in prison on the island of Crete. The father, being a master craftsman, designed a way of escape by building them each a set of wings using feathers, wood, and wax. Before the escape, his father gave a set of wings to his son, but warned him that the feathers were attached only by wax. Because of this wax, he warned his son that if he flew too close to the sun, the wax would melt and the feathers would fall off. Starting their escape, the father and son flew easily out of the prison. However, as they flew into the air the son Icarus was so thrilled with the feel of flying that he began to fly higher and higher. Forgetting the warning, Icarus flew too close to the sun and eventually the inevitable happened: under the heat of the direct sun, the wax melted, the feathers fell off, and Icarus plunged to his death in the sea below!

It's an odd story and full of lots of scientific impossibilities. However, this story is often used as a fable to teach us a lesson about the dangers of dreaming too high. The lesson teaches us that if you dream too big, you are going to crash to the ground and be sorry.

To be honest, sometimes I feel a lot like Icarus. I have found it true that dreaming high comes with a price, and often that price means falling flat on my face. Someone once said that, "You are as young as your dreams, and as old as your cynicism." I think there is a lot of truth to that. What is it about a positive, visionary person that is so life-giving? In the same regard, what is it about being around pessimistic, cynical people that is so draining?

So what is the right biblical attitude to the idea of dreaming big? The encouraging truth is that actually "vision" and "dreaming" are part of the inheritance that we received when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the church at Pentecost. The book of Acts records:

But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and **your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:** And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. Acts 2:16-18

If you read this like I do, the book of Acts seems to be saying there are—right along with anointed power and prophe-

sy—the Holy Spirit blessings of dreams and visions. Notice that the book of Acts says that it is the young men that are given "vision," but, interestingly, it goes on to say that it's the "old men" that dream—wow! The Spirit gives us vision as young men, but then He doesn't stop there. Instead of growing pessimistic and cynical as we grow older, the Holy Spirit keeps us dreaming even into old age! What an encouragement this is, and what a contrast to the "retirement" mindset that permeates our American culture today.

With this thought I can imagine two possible scenarios for my future. The typical American scenario would be that as I grow older and more "wise" in the ways of the world, I would see that my youthful ideas were radical and naive. I would realize that my time on this earth was getting short, so I should enjoy the "good things of life" with the remaining time that I have left. With my accumulated bank account, I could spend my time doing something like touring America in a mobile home or taking various overseas vacations. Perhaps I would even chuckle at some of the enthusiastic ideas I had as a youth ... and I would be careful not to waste any more time on wild ideas. Instead, I would be sure to spend my time on *me*.

But this is not the image that the book of Acts gives me as it describes the "older men." In the Pentecost account, the old men, full of the Holy Spirit, keep on dreaming! In this context I get a wonderful picture of an anointed, elderly man of God, who, thinking over his life as a young man, doesn't smirk at his visionary edges. This man rather blesses the Lord for the vision that was given to him by the Holy Spirit when he was young. Furthermore, now that this man is older he keeps on wanting more of God and dreaming of new horizons that he and his younger brethren could accomplish if they would just allow God to have His way in them.

This is the life that I want, but I have to admit that often I feel more like the Greek fable Icarus than I do this anointed, dreaming, elderly man described in the book of Acts. That's when I need to remember that those gifts of "vision" and "dreams" spoken of on the day of Pentecost were not the product of self-help-positive-thinking-good-attitude stuff,



Icarus comes crashing down.

*Continued on page 9*



## Enemy or Ally?

### *Taking tribute from the Canaanites*

Based on the outline of a sermon by Michael L. Overholt.

**G**od had delivered the land of Canaan into the hand of the Israelites. The only requirement for keeping the land was obedience. I say “the only requirement,” but that one requirement involved their whole life. It involved their goals, their ambitions, and their dreams.

God had promised victory over the enemies. He had even promised to drive the enemy out with hornets if Israel was just faithful in their part of the covenant (De. 7:20).

Joshua, that great man of God, was dead. His work was finished. He had been faithful. He had led this rag-tag group, these sons and daughters of slaves, into battle. He had turned them into tough, seasoned warriors. He had been there, a strong figure, someone to lean on when things got bad. Now he was gone.

Joshua was gone, but the work was not done. There were still enemies around. The people whom God had commanded to be driven out were still living on the back doorstep. Their idols still hung over the doorposts in many homes. Their idolatrous practices were still being acted out in their pagan temples. Their lifestyle was still a threat to the people of God. The work was not finished; it had just changed hands, from Joshua to the next generation. It was now time for Deuteronomy 7:1-6 to become reality:

When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou; 2 And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, *and* utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them: 3 Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. 4 For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly. 5 But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire. 6 For thou *art* a holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that *are* upon the face of the earth.

What happened? How did it all play out?

### **Chariots of iron**

Judges 1:16-36 tells us the story of the Israelites getting bested by their enemies on several fronts. Due to space constraints we will not print those verses here, but please familiarize yourself with them. What we want to focus on for the moment is verse 19. Judah could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley because the inhabitants had “chariots of iron.” What did chariots of iron have to do with it?! We read in Joshua 17:18 that having chariots of iron was of no significance at all in the conquest of Canaan:

But the mountain shall be thine; for it *is* a wood, and thou shalt cut it down: and the outgoings of it shall be thine: for thou shalt drive out the Canaanites, though they have iron chariots, *and* though they *be* strong.

Our victory does not hinge upon the strength of the adversary; our victory hinges upon the promises of God!

Continuing on in Judges 1, we find in verse 21 that Benjamin did not drive out the inhabitants of Jerusalem. In verses 27-36 we also find the sad commentary that the Israelites had the upper hand on their enemies. They could have destroyed the enemy, but they didn’t. Why?

Perhaps Israel judged themselves to be strong in their own might. They had won battles. They knew how to fight. Maybe they had learned how to talk and reason as well. Why destroy all the enemies? Why not put them to



tribute? Could the enemy not serve us better in that capacity than if they were dead?

In many ways, they *were* strong. The men of Israel had experienced many things. They recalled hearing their fathers tell stories of Egypt, and of the Great Deliverance. (Those aged 45-65 had experienced it firsthand.) They knew of the plagues. They knew the stories of the crossing of the Red Sea. They had firsthand knowledge of the complaining ways of their parents and they knew of the awful punishment brought upon them. They had lived under the terrible desert sun and choked on the desert dust. They had held their fathers and mothers in their arms and watched them die in that horrible wilderness. With their last breath, many of those parents had once again recounted to their offspring the “why” of it all—“We disobeyed God.”

These men had seen the walls of Jericho come down. They had fought with the enemy and won. They were conquerors. They had come up from the bottom. Sons and daughters of slaves, they were now owners of their own vineyards and fields. Their fathers had felt the whips from the taskmasters in Egypt. (They had heard these stories around the campfire at night.) Now the whips were placed in their own hands. And it felt good. They were strong; they were in charge of their own destiny.

But they failed to reckon with one thing: The life of their posterity hung in the balance, and that life hinged upon their obedience to God.

### That the land spue you not out

The Israelites should have taken heed to Leviticus 20:22:

Ye shall therefore keep all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them: that the land, whither I bring you to dwell therein, spue you not out.

Sadly, that is exactly what happened. The original Israelite conquerors could survive in a land where the enemy dwelt. They were indeed strong enough to pull it off. But that did not stop the consequences. Their children had not had those same unique experiences that had made the original conquerors strong. They could not stand.

Judges 2:7 and 3:5-6 tell us “the rest of the story.” The children of Israel ended up with enemies living among them. The seed sown by the parents, by the strong conquerors, took root downward, and bore fruit upward. But

the fruit was not the desired fruit! They had planted the wrong seed!

### And us?

That was them and then. But let’s talk about us and now. Do we at times make the same mistake? We have been brought into a land that flows with milk and honey. We have been given much. But the land which we have been given is never ours entirely by inheritance. Each generation is responsible to deal with the enemies that threaten this good land. Each generation is responsible to maintain the borders, because that is where the battle is fought ... at the borders.

But each generation is also tempted to make alliances with the Canaanites. And each generation faces the temptation to “take tribute” from the enemy instead of putting the enemy outside the camp. We are tempted to take of the forbidden

fruit and turn it into a tributary, something we can use for our personal satisfaction and, hopefully, for God’s glory.

God has called us to leave some things untouched. But God’s people are still afflicted with the same disease the Israelites had 3,400 years ago. It feels good to be in charge of our own destiny. It feels good to take that which is dangerous, hold it in our hands, fondle it, and eventually place it next to our bosom. It feels good to take the forbidden, hold it, and wring a little bit of tribute out of it—and hope it doesn’t bite our hearts.

### Burnt with fire

Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Pr. 6:27

Too often we take what we should identify as our enemy and call it our ally. We take that which should be cast out of the camp, and instead of dealing decisively with the issue, we take it, hold it, and put it to tribute, trying to force the unholy to serve us in a holy cause. But those decisions make the life of our posterity to hang in the balance.

What am I talking about? Any example I give, I give at the risk of being a bit simplistic. There are seldom, if ever, single issues that turn the whole ship about. But so that you know where I’m coming from—what I believe to be happening—I’ll risk it and get a little practical. The following examples are areas in which I fear we’ve bor-



### What did chariots of iron have to do with losing a battle?

rowed from the enemy camp. We've looked at the enemy, admired their organization, their way of doing things, and we've attempted—whether consciously or unconsciously—to bring those borrowed items into our camp. We have attempted to put to tribute that which possibly should be cast totally out of the camp. Many of these issues touch at the heart of my (and my parents') generation. I wish to be sensitive, but I also wish to be honest.

## Canaanite Values

1. **More is better.** God has given us specific commands concerning our money and our wealth. We tend to ignore those commands. We are strong. We can handle it. It will be our servant. Can we take and hoard material possessions, wring a little tribute out of them, and come out on top? Are we aware that many of our children are walking out the door, disillusioned by what passes for Christianity? It worked like this for the Israelites. The parents had seen hard times. They had seen God at work in marvelous ways. They somehow survived in spite of their disobedience to God in certain areas. Our parents and grandparents went through hard times. Their testimony is always the same: "Those hard times were good for us." My generation grew up somewhere in the middle. We certainly didn't come close to the easy times of today. Our testimony is pretty much the same: "Those things we did without were for our good." Our children are growing up in good times. And we are trying our utmost to spare them of those very things that helped make our parents and grandparents strong!
2. **Retirement entitlement.** God forbid that we should seek to retire at 70, go to Florida, and while the time away playing shuffleboard! Life is a battle! We need all our soldiers! Consider Luke 12:19: "Thou hast many goods laid up for many years ..."
3. **View of education.** Is our education designed so that we make more money, or so that we make better servants?



**God forbid that we should seek to retire at 70, go to Florida, and while the time away playing shuffleboard!**

## Canaanite Lifestyle

1. **Life-owes-me-a-vacation mentality.** For example, thinking we need two weeks on the mountain regardless.
2. **High-stress/high-speed lifestyle.** Work hard, play hard. Ponder Is. 30:15: "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength."
3. **Mobile lifestyle.** I remember as a boy keeping track of how many nights our neighbors were home. We'd watch the vehicles and count the nights they were home. They were home very few evenings. One year my wife and I kept track of our own evenings. At the end of the year I looked back and was shocked.

I was gone far too often. No, it wasn't to the ball games and such like. But I had taken the Canaanite lifestyle, accepted it, but just went to good places instead of the not-so-good. My neighbor's lifestyle ended in their divorce. I want my ending to be different. I'd better change my lifestyle!

## Canaanite Programs

1. **Insurance.** How about our mutual aid programs? Ga. 6:2 What has happened to old-fashioned deacon work and the idea of brothers hurting with each other? Do I really hurt when your house burns if you are just able to turn the bill in to some faceless mutual aid or insurance plan? How does my insurance affect the size of house I build, the kind of vehicle I drive? I propose that these plans are weak

substitutes for the real "bearing one another's burdens" for these reasons:

- \* They operate with fees and dues. If you can't pay, you won't get help.
- \* While the stated purpose is always to help others, the "help" comes through coercion, not free-will giving. Real scriptural giving comes from the heart, not from a forced you-pay-or-you-get-cut-off program. (2 Co. 8:12; 9:7)
- \* Since many mutual aid programs operate largely like any commercial insurance, typically they foster the American insurance mentality: "I've paid, so I will collect when I can."

- \* It hinders God's working in my heart through my finances. When financial losses occur, I'm not forced to reconsider my values and my accumulation of "stuff." Instead, I can pat myself on the back for having a good mutual aid or insurance plan, go out, and purchase the same "stuff."
- \* It hinders the demonstration of God's people working together in times of disaster.
- \* 2 Chronicles 31:10 lends support to the old saying, "God's work, done God's way, will never lack God's resources."

**2. Government aid programs.**

When it comes time for the draft, and you are called to give account, will you be glad you took everything from the government that you could, or will you be glad that you stayed clear of such programs?

**3. Counseling methods.**

God bless those who invest their lives in helping others. Let's be faithful to the Word of God in our counseling. Typically, the church should have within the brotherhood sufficient resources for the troubled. This is not to say that all "professional" counseling is wrong. This example is given merely to point us back to the Bible. We live in the age of "experts." The "expert" fixes the car. The "expert" fixes the leak in the sink. And, too often, we believe it takes an "expert" to offer a troubled brother lasting help.



The average American adult spends five hours online at home every day.

In her book *40 Acres and No Mule*, Janice Holt Giles describes the lifestyle and character of the Appalachians, those people in the mountains of Kentucky whom we often refer to as hillbillies. She has this to say about the advent of TV in those rugged hills (written in the prologue in 1967): "But the strangest change in the ways and habits of our people has come about through a strange medium—television. Almost every home has a television set nowadays, and its visible, tangible impact has been greater than a hundred years of preaching and teaching. Not all of its

impact is good, but it has helped change diet, habits of dress; it has brought new standards of beautification around and inside the homes, it has brought a different kind of speech and music into the homes, even a different concept of religion. **Bought for entertainment, television is a most subtle and powerful educator. In one decade, ten short years, I have seen our people changed more by television than by any other medium.**" (p. 29-30)

[Emphasis mine.]

**Price tag: \$100.** Fine print: This item will educate you in the ways of Sodom and Gomorrah. It will desensitize you to evil. It will cause you to call good what God has called evil.

**b. Movies:** God has given us commands concerning purity

in all our life. Can we use the movies, sort through the filth and vileness, and wring a little tribute out of them, or are those things better left untouched? Will we, against all odds, come out on top, with our families unharmed?

2. **Technology.** Tools for both sides of the battle. A tremendous tool. How are we going to deal with it? Some say "no" to anything newer than the 1900s. Some say yes to everything new. How can we find our way? These items take special grace and wisdom. I will merely say that we do well to order our lives by what is wise and unwise, not only by what is "right and wrong." Be willing to make personal choices and sacrifices even when it hurts.

**Canaanite Stuff and Fluff**

**The bold print giveth**, but the fine print taketh away.

Everything comes with a price tag. However, there are two price tags on every item we purchase. One is the price that goes to the clerk at the counter. The other is the price we pay forever. What is the fine print on our abundance of gadgets? After we read the fine print, *can we afford to purchase what our pocketbook can stand?*

**1. Media (Ps. 101:3)**

**a. Television:** Some Christians take the TV. "We can use it. We are strong. It can be our servant." And they take it. And they use it. And their children are walking out in droves.



**a. Internet.** The average American adult spends five hours online at home every day.<sup>1</sup> Every one of those hours is an hour that could have been spent with the people next to them. How many men must we lose before we say it is enough? How many boys must we help free from pornography before we are satisfied that some things are better left outside the camp? Sure, I know your business needs the Internet



## Would Abraham feel at home camping on my grounds?

“By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob ...”

as a means of survival. I still ask the question:

**Can you afford all that your pocketbook can stand?**

**b. Cell phones.** How many phones does one family need? The average American household has three cell phones.<sup>2</sup> Where are we in this? Does every youth really need his own phone? Sure, the price from AT&T is \$55 per month. That is the bold print. Your pocketbook can stand it. If you were able to read the fine print, what might it say?

*Warning: this gadget may cause your child to sit in the van riding to church with the family, but be in conversation with his distant friend.*

*Warning: this gadget may cause its owner to talk to his friend in Florida instead of telling his child a Bible story while on the way to town.*

*Warning: text messaging may cause the owner to tune out to the conversation at the supper table.*

<sup>1</sup> *Reader's Digest*, March, 2011, poll conducted in October 2010, by Ipsos OTX MediaCT

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*

**Can you still afford what your pocketbook can stand?**

**c. Facebook.** Can we really afford what that will do to me? Is it really okay to drop what I'm doing 10 times throughout the day just so I can read that my distant acquaintance has now potty-trained her toddler? Or that she baked a blue cake and put pink frosting on it?

I suggest that our obsession with distant contacts, those faceless individuals, has robbed us of the joy of real relationships. We have fallen in love with unreality. Technology can make us feel like we have 200 friends, when in reality we aren't able to relate properly to the friend at our elbow. **Can we afford everything that our pocketbook can stand?**

**3. Big houses.** Every decade sees the church with smaller families, but with bigger houses. Many families can all live comfortably under the same roof, but in virtual isolation from other family members. Consider:

- Forced air heating and cooling (and I'm not saying forced air systems are sin) has taken away the need of sitting in the living room together on a winter evening after supper. With the old pot-bellied wood stove, family interaction on a winter evening was mandatory.
- Each child has his own bedroom, so the need of working together in that arena is gone.
- Many times each child also has his own bathroom, so the need of give and take in that is gone.

**Sure, I know your pocketbook can stand the price, but can you afford it?** Can I afford to build a \$200,000 home when a \$75,000 home will suffice? If you could read the fine print, what would it say? Let me put it in question form.

- a. Will this house make it easier or harder for me to convince my neighbor that Christians are called to be strangers and pilgrims?
- b. Will this house make it easier or harder for me to teach my children the joy of placing little value on earthly things?
- c. If my house burns today, will I have lost my house or my identity?
- d. Would Abraham feel at home camping on my grounds? “By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a



city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” He. 11:9-10

## Canaanite Theology

1. **Accept the free gift of salvation vs. repentance and amendment of life.** While God’s gift of salvation is indeed a free gift, modern Christendom has taken that principle, divorced it from real Christian living, and sold it as the whole gospel. God does indeed care about how we live. Our emphasis needs to reflect the heart of God as revealed by Scripture.
2. **Emotion-packed evangelism vs. discipleship.** Perhaps we’ve been in reaction mode, reacting to some of what we perceive as coldness in some of our more traditional Anabaptist groups. Evangelism is good, but its goal is to make disciples, not merely to accumulate commitments.

## Conclusion

These applications may seem stringent. Maybe you don’t agree with some of the applications I have made in this article. That is okay. Don’t let your quibbles with my applications stop you from seriously considering the principle at stake here. The principle simply stated is this:

Taking tribute from the Canaanites comes at a tremendous cost. That which God identifies as my enemy is my enemy, no matter if the enemy dresses in silk.

Lest we leave you with a bleak picture, let me show you two pictures from Scripture that give a different view on life. Judges 1:20 gives us a glimpse of the “other side” of this message:

And they gave Hebron unto Caleb, as Moses said: and he expelled thence the three sons of Anak.

The sons of Anak were giants. That didn’t stop Caleb. By this time he was an old man, 85 years old. The numbers of giants had increased since he had first offered to fight them. But he had no eyes for the enemy. He had only eyes for God. He didn’t stop to ask questions. He didn’t stop to reason this thing out. He didn’t stop to ask if he might not be better off to save them alive so they could work for him as slaves. (What muscles those guys must have had! They could surely be put to work ...) He knew the promises and commandments of God. He had a work to do. He simply got to work. His obedience profited not only him, but his posterity.

1. His daughter married a conqueror (Js. 15:14-17).
2. His son-in-law became the savior of Israel (Jg. 3:9).
3. Hundreds of years later, one of his posterity was one of the captains in David’s army (1 Ch. 27:15)

2 Chronicles 15:8-9 tells the story of another man who did what God said to do concerning idols:

And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage, and put away the abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the cities which he had taken from mount Ephraim, and renewed the altar of the LORD, that was before the porch of the LORD. And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon: for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when they saw that the LORD his God was with him.

God’s people have always had to make hard choices. Dealing with giants and idols is nothing new. Let us, like Caleb, rise up with strength and courage to deal with current issues that threaten God’s kingdom. And let us, like Asa, deal decisively with the idols that threaten our hearts. When we do, we will see God’s kingdom grow and prosper, both now, and in our future generations. ~

*Continued from page 3*

rather they were the product of committed prayer and the infilling of the Holy Spirit.

When I feel tempted to pessimism, cynicism, and doubt, I have to remember that those negative attitudes are not the fruit of a Spirit-filled life. There are visions and dreams that are gifts from God and they are promised to anyone who genuinely asks for them. (Luke 11) As a child of God, it is within my inheritance to ask the Holy Spirit for vision and to keep on asking Him for dreams right to the end of my life.

I want to fly. But I want to fly, not with wings of wax and feathers, but by His Spirit. Flying like this is different than what the Greeks spoke of when they talked of flying. The biblical account of flying says that when we fly, we do so because God is lifting us from underneath. Most importantly, He tells us the whole purpose of all of this is to bring us to Himself ... “how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself.” Ex. 19:4 I want to fly with God, to dream higher than this world, and do all the things that God wants for me in my life. I know that only by His Spirit do I even have a chance.

In this issue we address this initiation into walking in the Spirit. We must needs be born of the Spirit, or our Christianity is but a mere form. We also take a look at how we handle ourselves with the Canaanite culture all around us, and how to handle that most dangerous part of our American Canaanite culture—money.

May this issue of *The Heartbeat of the Remnant* cause you to dream and fly high with Christ in heavenly places.  
~Bro. Dean



# The Humble Man Feels Small

John M. Brenneman

John Brenneman was an American Mennonite preacher in the mid and late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Shortly after the Civil War he wrote a series of articles on pride and humility which were published in *Herald of Truth* magazine and later compiled into a booklet. This article is the latter part of that booklet. Due to its length we chose not to publish the first part, which deals more with describing pride.

John was tireless in his travels, and his life story would be worthy of retelling. He walked and rode many miles to struggling frontier settlements to further the kingdom of God, sometimes to the neglect of his own farm. In a time when self-assertion is deemed a virtue, this article will indeed seem like a piece of antiquity. And it is ... as the virtue of humility is as old as God himself.

**T**he humble man feels small, poor, bowed, cast down, and unworthy within himself, and esteems others more highly than himself. He never boasts or exalts himself or despises others, as did the proud and conceited Pharisee; but much rather laments his weakness, his failings, and imperfections. He “minds not high things, but condescends to men of low estate.” He does not conform to this world in all manner of empty pomp, and pride, and sinful wantonness. He is usually of a quiet, meek, and gentle disposition, knowing when to be silent and when to speak. He is at all times willing to give place and opportunity to others to express their opinions. In company he observes due modesty, and does not seat himself in the most honorable, but much rather in the lowest place at table. In his deeds, actions, and pursuits, he does not indulge in vain ostentation: his utensils, furniture, and apparel in general being simple and modest, free from useless ornament and decoration; for he feels no pleasure or gratification in such outward splendor; but much rather dissatisfaction, disgust, and abhorrence, knowing that such things are sinful, transient, and vain; and he strives rather to secure the inward ornamenting of the soul by the putting on of the spiritual and divine virtues.

In their corrupt nature, men are generally not humble; but they are more or less disposed to pride from their youth up, which is very displeasing to God. Though they were in the beginning created good and noble in the image of God, exalted and set over all other creatures, yet, by their fall through transgression, they became the poorest and most wretched of all creatures, and notwithstanding their depraved and dangerous state they still frequently imagine that all is well with them, whilst they are even miserable, poor, “blind and naked.”

But God is too merciful to leave them in this wretched condition without help: He is calling, reproofing, and convincing them through His Spirit and other means of grace, in order to awaken them from their sleep of sin; and as soon as a man hears and truly heeds this calling voice, and being convicted, sees that he is a poor, lost, and guilty sinner, and feels that his sins are a burden to him too heavy to be borne, he becomes so much oppressed and bowed down by this burden that he becomes small and poor within himself. Such a person feels then like David, who exclaimed, “I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long. All the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears.” He feels as though he were the poorest and unworthiest of all men. Nay, he thinks he is no more worthy to be called a son or a child. He is glad to be reckoned as one of the least, or as a hireling. He can then, and will with a true heart, like the poor publican, smite his breast and pray, “God, be merciful to me a sinner;” or, like David, “create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.”

A man, thus truly penitent and humble in heart, truly turning to God, sincerely seeking Him day and night in prayer and supplication, wholly offering himself in sacrifice to Him, humbly submitting to His powerful hand, and desirous henceforth to live and continue faithful in His service to the end—such a man is, in the Scriptures, called an humble man; and such are they to whom God gives grace.

For example, the woman who was a sinner and humbled herself at the feet of Jesus, washing them with tears and wiping them with the hairs of her head, unto whom He said, “thy sins are forgiven. Thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace.” All such penitent and humble sinners, seeking grace, shall obtain it of God through Jesus Christ. For “where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” “Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ,” and “of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace,” says John. Grace is, therefore, the opposite of merit; for when a man gives me that which he owes me, and which I have earned by labor, he gives it to me, not out of grace, but out of

indebtedness. But if any one bestows on me good gifts, which I have not merited and which he does not owe me, he bestows them on me purely out of grace. Such a person, therefore, I might call gracious, inasmuch as he has bestowed on me his grace or made me a partaker of his grace; that is, he has given or granted me grace.

In like manner God has made us partakers of His grace, for He does not owe us anything; but on the other hand we owe Him ten thousand pounds, and have not one farthing with which to pay this great debt. But God will remit it out of pure grace, if we but with true penitence of heart humble ourselves before Him and confess our sins before Him, feel sorry on account of them, and from our heart pray to Him in the name of Jesus for pardon; then “he giveth grace” to us. It is through grace, therefore, that such humble, penitent sinners are saved, and made “accepted” through His dear Son. “And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace.” Ro. 11:6. Through grace we are regenerated, and born anew, and accepted through Jesus Christ as children, and made heirs of His eternal and heavenly kingdom; that is “he giveth grace to the humble.”

He gives grace to them even in this life, inasmuch as He pardons their sins and blesses them in body and soul with all manner of good gifts; and in the life to come He bestows on them eternal and heavenly gifts and possessions, and eternal joy, rest, and happiness. Oh how unspeakably great is this promise, “He giveth grace to the humble!” For the grace of God is of ten thousand times greater value than the whole world with all its pleasure, pomp, honor, and glory can ever be.

“My grace is sufficient for thee,” He said to Paul—as much as to say, “My grace supplies all your wants; you have need of nothing more.” I believe sincerely that whoever cannot content himself with the sufficiency of God’s grace can never have any real enjoyment; for the grace of God is sufficient for us in time and in eternity. If we are partakers of His grace and confide in it, we have all that we need in order to become happy, glorified and blessed

in this world and in the world to come; and what more can we wish?

But bear in mind, this grace is given only to the humble. O humility, noble virtue! how needful is it! It is worth more than gold and wealth, and worldly glory. Without humility we have no promise of the saving power of grace; and without this saving grace no one can be a child, and consequently neither an heir, of God. Oh how necessary it is that we candidly examine ourselves



**The publican felt small before God.**

whether we are in possession of this indispensable virtue, since on humility alone is bestowed this promise of grace. Without true humility of heart we have no promise of grace; but on the contrary we are threatened with God’s resistance, and His threatenings stand equally as firm as His promises; for the words of Jesus are firm and unchangeable. “Every one that exalteth himself (like the proud Pharisee) shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself (like the publican) shall be exalted.”

We have great cause to humble ourselves: First, on account of our sins, through which we have separated ourselves from God, who is so good, so holy, and so kind. O sin, what a detestable vice! It should cause us to bow down, to humble

ourselves in the dust, and with shame to repent in sackcloth and ashes. Oh! that we were not so obstinate and stiffnecked, and would no longer hesitate to humble ourselves and to bow under the mighty hand of God, since we are nothing at all without God’s grace. Will we then wantonly continue to sin against the grace of God, since we have not for one moment any security of our life? Oh how great the long-suffering of God toward man, since he does not desire that anyone should be lost, but that everyone should repent of his sins, confess them, amend his life, and humble himself.

Secondly, we have cause to humble ourselves, because Christ has commanded it. “Seek righteousness, seek humility: it may be you shall be hid in the day of the Lord’s anger.” Zp. 2:3 “He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”



Mi. 6:8 "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God." 1 Pe. 5:6 "In lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." Php. 2:3 "Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love." Ep. 4:1-2 "Be clothed with humility." 1 Pe. 5:5

Thirdly, on account of God's precious promises. "He giveth grace to the humble." He has also promised to dwell with them. "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." Is. 57:15 "He shall save the humble person." Jb. 22:29 "With the lowly is wisdom." Pr. 11:2 "Honor shall uphold the humble in spirit." Pr. 29:23 "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted." Lu. 18:14

Fourthly, the threatenings of God. "He resisteth the proud." "He hath scattered the proud in the imaginations of their hearts." Lu. 1:51 "Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord: he shall not be unpunished." Pr. 16:5 "A man's pride shall bring him low." Pr. 29:23 "Every one that exalteth himself shall be abased." Lu. 18:14 "Be not high-minded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee." Ro. 11:20-21

Fifthly, the example of Jesus Christ. He is "meek and lowly in heart." Behold, what an unparalleled example of humility He left us, when He, the Lord of lords and King of kings, washed His disciples' feet! How condescendingly our Lord and Master stooped and humbled himself. Greater humility, it seems to me, could not have been manifested than Jesus manifested on the occasion, when He said, "If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."

Are we, then, all perfectly willing thus to stoop and to humble ourselves in conformity to the example of Jesus? Oh, how many Christian professors there are who refuse to do this! We should not, however, when we wash one another's feet, expect thereby to gain our salvation, nor is it for the purpose of washing away outward impurity from the feet; but simply to show obedience, love, and humility; and to show that we are not ashamed of Jesus and of His words. For, if we perform merely the outward act of washing one another's feet, and have not a genuine humility of heart and sincere love towards each other, we shall not in the least be benefitted by it; but rather thereby bring on ourselves greater sin. In lowliness of mind we

should each esteem another better than ourselves. The richest and most highly esteemed should not think himself too good to stoop and wash the feet of the least and the poorest member. If Jesus had bid us do "some great thing," would we not do it? How much rather, then, since He has said, "Ye also ought to wash one another's feet," inasmuch as He has given an example that we should do as He has done; and says, "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart."

"He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Phl. 2:8 Oh! consider, then. For if Jesus, the Lord of Heaven, thus stooped and humbled himself, took on Him the form of a servant, was spit upon, scourged, and crucified for us, to reconcile us and to redeem us from the curse and from death; how it becomes us to imitate His example and to follow His footsteps in humility!

Now, dear readers, having seen the great difference between the proud and the humble, what will we do? The former God resists, but He gives grace to the latter. Which, then, will we choose? God's grace, or to be resisted by Him? I hope we will choose His grace. Though it is not otherwise to be obtained than by passing through the valley of humiliation, let us not on that account be frightened back; but truly bend and humble ourselves.

Remember, Jesus was humble, He did not exalt himself. Oh what should we not therefore willingly do, to obtain the grace of God? We should humble ourselves before Him with fasting, with weeping, and fervent prayer, till He hears us and gives us grace. My brethren and sisters, allow me to speak freely to you. In what condition do we find ourselves? Are we humble at heart? It will not profit us in the least, if we only assume an outward, dissembling form of humility, without genuine and unfeigned humility of heart; for this alone is valid in the sight of God. "For the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." 1 Sa. 16:7. Yea, He is a Searcher of hearts, and all our thoughts are open to His sight and known to Him.

But if we are truly humble in heart, then, without doubt, "that which is highly esteemed among men," and which "is abomination in the sight of God," will also be abomination to us. For, if we are truly humble, we have also obtained His grace; and if we have His grace, we have also His Spirit; and if we have His Spirit, we are also His children; and if we are His children, we are also partakers of His divine nature, and, if we are partakers of His divine nature, it is indisputably true that "that which is highly esteemed among men," and which "is abomination in the sight of God," must also be abomination to us. Let

us, then, candidly as in the sight of God examine whether we do not still take too much pleasure in those things which are highly esteemed among men. God the Searcher of our hearts knows what is in our hearts: we cannot deceive Him. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked."

However humble we may appear outwardly, yet as long as we approve of the needless and vain ornamenting and decorating of our houses and our families, and do not use our utmost diligence to prevent and to do away with such abominations, I cannot possibly believe that "that which is highly esteemed among men," is abomination to us; and if such vain and worldly aspirations have not yet become abominations to us, we have not yet been made partakers of the divine nature, and consequently cannot be children of God; for the children of God partake of the nature and character of God, which no one can deny.

Oh! who should not seriously reflect on it, when beholding the wickedness and pride of the world. The majority seem to hurry willfully with the great tide of worldly ambition on the broad road to the abyss of ruin. How frightfully they pervert their being, so that they scarcely appear like human beings. It seems that they are not satisfied any more with the form which God gave them. We are forced to think of many that they do not fear God nor regard man.

Should this now come before the eyes or ears of anyone who finds himself sunk and enveloped in the wickedness of pride, I would say to him: "Haste! haste! and deliver your precious soul: flee out of Babel! Flee! Flee, I pray you, out of the Sodom of this perverse and sinful world, that you be not partakers of its plagues. Oh! forsake hastily the broad road of vice, and humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, before it is forever too late. Oh! repent quickly and be converted that your sins may be blotted out. Abase and humble yourself as did the penitent publican, and you will also obtain mercy for your poor soul. Seek grace in humility and not in pride; for again I say unto you, 'God giveth grace to the humble,' and not to the proud. Oh! come, then, I entreat you, everyone who may read or hear this, if you have not already come. Hearken, ye can still find grace: come, all things are ready. 'Come boldly unto the throne of grace, that you may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.' Come now and do not wait for a 'more convenient season.' 'Look diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God.' Heb. 12:15. 'The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.'"

I feel as though I could hardly cease to warn you, O wretched man! Examine yourself seriously and critically by the mirror here placed before you, and consider well what is your character and to which class you belong, whether to the proud or the humble. Oh! examine yourself: it is not a small matter. You may soon, very soon and unexpectedly, be removed from this world, to receive the rewards of God's eternal grace, or to receive "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish," which shall be to "every soul of man that doeth evil." If you find yourself still in the way of the proud, turn, oh! turn, and have compassion on yourself, O man! Be admonished that the indignation of God be not your eternal lot. Permit yourself, I entreat you, to be persuaded.

In conclusion, I hope my readers will receive in love my humble exhortation and examine it closely, and if they find the truth therein brought before them I wish they might heartily embrace the cause and assist me to contend against pride, and to inculcate humility. Especially would I wish to invite my fellow laborers to take the privilege and opportunity to make further remarks on this subject, to improve or supply what is needed to fill up any deficiency that may yet exist.

I wish with my whole heart to all the readers the saving grace of God, the love of Jesus, and the communion of the Holy Ghost. But know, I say again, that God gives this grace only to the humble. May He make this exhortation a blessing to many hearts, that they may thereby be brought to reflect, and in humility to turn to God, if they have not already done so, and to entreat Him for grace while grace is yet offered, that He alone may thereby be honored through Jesus Christ. Amen. ~

A sword against the enemy, is humbleness of heart:  
From him who hath a humble mind he quickly must depart:  
His haughty, proud, ferocious mien humility disdains,  
He cannot even think to be where meekness humbly reigns:  
It wounds him—cuts him to the heart—to see a humble mind,  
Because his nature's haughty, proud—quite otherwise inclined.



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That they may teach the  
young women ...

## *Ponderings for Daughters*

*Dear daughters,*

You are living in a unique generation (although every generation has had its hardships and temptations for the daughter of the King) where you are constantly being bombarded by all that the world has to offer you. Women are encouraged to get through school and then go on to higher education in the hopes of embarking on some exciting career that will bring them fame and fortune, and—most of all—“liberate” them from the dark “confines” of keeping the home. Oh, I beg of you (as one who was once a daughter and failed miserably in living God’s design for that part of my life) to consider God’s design for you in this blessed time of your life.

If you are living with parents who fear the Lord, then this letter is very much for you. Why? Well, first of all, while your parents are not perfect, you should thank the Lord daily that they have chosen to fear Him and to honor Him as they grow in their walk with Him. Many girls do not have this privilege. I encourage you to lay down your will and your wants and to love the Lord your God with your all. Lamentations 3:27 tells us that it is good for you to bear the yoke of discipline while in your youth. I encourage you to daily embrace that discipline from the authority of your parents. They watch for your soul, and they must give an account for you. Please submit yourself and joyfully love being in your place as a daughter.

Learn all that you can about being a woman of God. Read His heart for you in the Word of Truth. Observe His heart in women who obey the Word with godly fear. Ask questions of your mother and any other mature godly sisters in your life. Have a teachable spirit, which requires humility, a complete surrender of your own will in order to hear the words of instruction from those God sends into your life to teach you. Be thankful for this, dear daughters. It is a gift from God!

Learn what you can about God’s design for you in daughterhood. It is often thought that the Lord is silent about things concerning daughters specifically, but I am here to tell you that His Word has much just for you. Besides all the things that pertain to you growing in character, in wisdom, and in Christlikeness, here are a few things to stir your heart:

- Philip the evangelist had four daughters, and they all prophesied (shared the Word of God and what to do about it—of course staying within God’s boundaries of not teaching men). I am sure that in order to prophesy, they had to first be living the Word. My heart warms at the thought of Daddy Philip, out evangelizing, being confident of his daughters at home ministering to the family, the neighbors, and those whom he would bring home for supper that night, telling of the LORD both in their deeds and in their words.
- Nehemiah records details of those who worked together to repair the broken walls and the burned gates of Jerusalem. Read Nehemiah 3:12 sometime. My heart leaped with joy when I read those words one Sunday as the Word about Nehemiah was being preached. Girls, you have a mighty task to fill in your father’s house, helping to build up the testimony of your family as being one who fears God, all for His glory. Pray for your parents. Tell them what things the Lord has been teaching you as you read His Word. Sing praises to Him as you work. Help your siblings to honor the Lord by honoring your parents. Bless the people who come through your home by serving alongside your mother in humility and genuine care of your guests. Write encouraging letters to sisters in the Lord. Serve the sisters and busy moms in your congregation, who would perhaps find a box



of prepared meals left in their vehicle after services a welcome relief from the hard work of mothering little ones.

- Rachel and Rebekah both tended their fathers' flocks; Rebekah gives a good example of hospitality and service, even to a stranger, and was used of God to be the godly wife of Isaac. She was called to go afar for that task, when a suitable wife could not be found for him in all the neighboring communities.

- The Rechabites (daughters are specifically mentioned, too) followed their father's direction to not drink wine, and to dwell only as strangers in the land all their days. They are recorded in Scripture as those who honored their father, even though it would have seemed strange not to plant and harvest, to not live in houses, and to not drink wine. The Bible clearly mentions (Je. 35:19) that a blessing from God was upon them for this.

Psalm 144:11-15 speaks of the people of God turning away from strange practices and people, protecting their sons and daughters, and having plentiful blessings with which to do God's work. It speaks of daughters being cornerstones, polished in the likeness of a palace. This is God's design for you, and what a beautiful design it is, daughters, if you but follow it! Cornerstones help to hold up the roof of a building. Think on that, will you? You are a cornerstone in your father's house. How are you helping to keep it fitly joined together?

It might be hard for you to understand today why you should lay down your desire to go out and make money and have a career, starting on your "life's work" (what the world would have us think is your life's work). But I submit to you that you can and should obey and keep pursuing God on this point, because it is His heart for you to understand and take your place in His design for families.

The truth is, God designed you to be a keeper at home and to find joy in making that your life's calling, in whatever way He chooses to bring it about. Learn of your mother and others how to cook delicious, nutritious meals. Learn to enjoy tidying up the home and to keep it clean. Go out of your way to do more than you are asked

to do. Learn to see things that need to be done, and then willingly apply yourself to do them. Jesus came not to be served, but to serve. Make this your life's motto, and you will find great joy in fulfilling God's design for you.

As a daughter who failed miserably in living God's design for me during that time of my life, I would like to share these things that I learned after I had missed my opportunities to walk in this way. I can only wish I had known and lived this way, thankful for the mercy of God to forgive me of my unrighteousness and to allow me to come back to share with His children the lessons I learned

by failure. He is a gracious Father and loves to show the seeking heart the beauty of His plan.

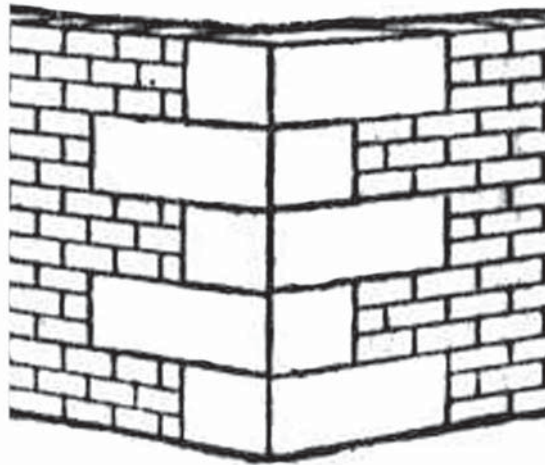
God's design for daughters to be keepers at home is a beautiful way of providing protection and an environment in which to become skilled at this life's calling. If daughters embrace it and joyfully walk in His Way, the result is best described in Psalm 144:15.

Happy is that people, that is in such a case:  
yea, happy is that people, whose God is the LORD.

If you are a daughter, provided with a family to care for and to walk with in the fear of

God, then I encourage you to embrace this with joy and put your heart into letting Jesus perfect you daily in being a keeper at home. Seek your father's heart in this. Perhaps he will give you some specific ways that you can help in your family and with his particular work. Maybe he will have you go to the local grocer for helping to supplement the family income. Maybe he will ask you to go help another mother in your congregation from time to time. Maybe you come from a large family and your parents' desire your help in keeping the home. Maybe you live on a farm and you are needed to help with chores. Maybe there are busy mothers who would appreciate your offer to sew dresses for their daughters in any extra time you might have. I encourage you to be scheduled and to not languish in ease and hours of free time, but to fill up extra time (not encroaching on Bible study and prayer, and family life, of course) with service in whatever capacity your parents can approve.

Whatever the case may be, please do not let the lies of feminism tell you that you are a slave to your parents



**Cornerstones (which Psalm 144 compares to daughters) help to hold up the roof of a building.**

if you do these things, that it is drudgery, and that you are in bondage because you are not “out there” getting more education and a career. Don’t believe the lie that it is more enjoyable or needful to go “out there” and get a job that will financially aid some man other than your father. Don’t believe the lie that it is more noble to get involved in daycares and hospitals helping some other children, meanwhile neglecting the siblings and/or nieces and nephews God gave you (or the children in your congregation), whether it is helping with their schooling or their daily needs. While fields of service outside the home may be someone’s life’s work (some may not have any “home needs” to fill and are thus needed in other areas), please know that God gave you a family, an environment where you may learn to serve and die daily to your own selfish wants and wishes.

The world has nothing of lasting value to offer you. You are being protected from heartache and loss by not walking the path of feminism. There are women today who can tell you that going to school and becoming a nurse destroyed their desire to walk with the Lord, as they chose a career that daily put them in the company of unbelievers, and the unwholesome work environment that mixes male and female in close proximity, wearing down their spiritual vitality and crossbearing. There are women who will tell you that leaving homes in their young teen years to daily work a 9-5 job destroyed their sense of responsibility in family life. There are girls who will tell you that they wish they had been wholly involved in keeping the home before they married and became entirely responsible to keep that home, unprepared for the high calling that it is.

Like the wise man who wrote Proverbs, I entreat you as a mother. “My daughter, hear my instruction; forsake not the counsel of your mother/sister in Christ.” You will never regret having walked in the beauty of God’s design for you. I am not “making laws” here, but to walk in the beauty of God’s heartbeat for His children means that homes rise up and become strong beacons of light, units of togetherness that witness to a world darkened by sin that JESUS LIVES there, and that there is hope for them, too. These homes (strong families being very much God’s heartbeat for His people) can then unite with other family units and servants of God who are also walking in His beauty, spreading the good news of salvation in the communities in which they live, thus “going into all the world and teaching all nations ...”

Will you rise to the challenge? Will you in your generation build up the walls that are broken down, testimonies that are clouded by worldly ambition and selfish desires?

Will you stand up and be different? Will you take up the call of God for your life as a daughter and help to keep the home where He has placed you?

God bless you, daughters. May you grow up in Him, walking in His footsteps each day. Tomorrow you will be the mothers, grandmothers, perhaps a Dorcas, or maybe even a widow, in God’s work. I bid you today, be daughters of honor, preparing for tomorrow, as God tarries.

In His service, and because He lives,

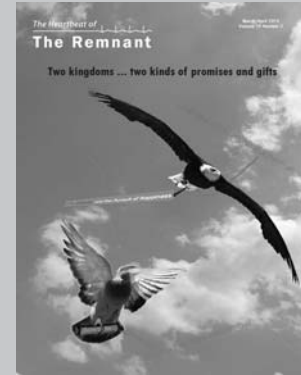
*Marcia Zimmerman*

**Disturb us, Lord,** when  
we are too well pleased with ourselves;  
When our dreams have come true  
Because we have dreamed too little;  
When we arrived safely  
Because we sailed too close to the shore.  
Disturb us, Lord, when  
With the abundance of things we possess  
We have lost our thirst  
For the waters of life;  
Having fallen in love with life,  
We have ceased to dream of eternity;  
And in our efforts to build a new earth,  
We have allowed our vision  
Of the new heaven to dim.  
Disturb us, Lord, to dare more boldly,  
To venture on wider seas  
Where storms will show your mastery;  
Where losing sight of land,  
We shall find the stars.  
We ask You to push back  
The horizons of our hopes;  
And to push into the future  
In strength, courage, hope, and love.

~Sir Frances Drake 1577

## 4th Quarter and Year-end 2012 Financial Report

*Thank you for your support!*



### 2012 4th quarter

### 2012 Totals

10/01/12 <b>Beginning Balance</b>	\$2,971.18	01/01/12 <b>Beginning Balance</b>	\$7,471.38
<b>Receipts</b>		<b>Receipts</b>	
Tape/CD Ministry Donations	\$23,018.10	Tape/CD Ministry Donations	\$93,440.56
Remnant Subscription Donations	\$13,168.57	Remnant Subscription Donations	\$44,733.51
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>\$36,186.67</b>	<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>\$138,174.07</b>
<b>Disbursements</b>		<b>Disbursements</b>	
UPS & Postage	\$1,197.96	UPS & Postage	\$7,856.68
Tapes, Albums, CDs & Labels	\$5,692.38	Tapes, Albums, CD's & Labels	\$20,549.58
Equipment & Software Purchases	\$79.91	Equipment & Software Purchases	\$1,011.70
Equipment Maintenance & Repairs	\$78.00	Equipment Maintenance & Repairs	\$293.00
Mailing & Office Supplies	\$661.82	Mailing & Office Supplies	\$1,208.36
Rent	\$2,250.00	Rent	\$9,000.00
Telephone	\$895.92	Telephone	\$3,055.10
Website Development & Maintenance	\$649.52	Website Development & Maintenance	\$2,296.99
Building Improvements	\$0.00	Building Improvements	\$0.00
Miscellaneous	\$69.22	Miscellaneous	\$335.95
Payroll Expense	\$7,900.00	Payroll Expense	\$39,380.67
Books & Catalogs	\$137.50	Books & Catalogs	\$1,502.09
Remnant Publishing & Mailing	\$8,490.96	Remnant Publishing & Mailing	\$48,100.67
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>\$28,103.19</b>	<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>\$134,590.79</b>
12/31/12 <b>Ending Balance</b>	\$11,054.66	12/31/12 <b>Ending Balance</b>	\$11,054.66
<b>Difference</b>	<b>\$8,083.48</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>\$3,583.28</b>



## Introduction

To be redeemed means to be rescued. Redemption is often spoken of in terms of a hostage. When the hostage is set free he is said to be redeemed, whether that redemption came by paying a ransom in money or by someone of superior strength simply liberating the hostage by force.

In this article we are not going to redeem a person, but rather a precious doctrine and Christian experience, from those who have taken it hostage and are forcing it to say and do things that it was never intended to say and do. We are speaking of the baptism of the Holy Ghost and its captor, Pentecostalism.

The mere mention of the baptism of the Holy Ghost sets some people into jitters. They have seen and heard so much commotion and unbiblical practice associated with the Holy Spirit that they automatically get suspicious just hearing the phrase “the baptism of the Holy Ghost.” We understand that concern and have felt some of that same jitteriness. But at the same time, we must not react and throw out either the doctrine or the experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We simply need to rescue it from those who have mangled it so badly that it is hardly recognizable. Like Abraham who rose to the occasion and redeemed his nephew Lot from Amraphel and his three sidekicks (Ge. 14), may we rise up and rescue this precious truth and experience from those who have taken it captive.

In the recent issues of *The Heartbeat of the Remnant* we have focused pretty heavily on the kingdom of God and the neglect of the kingdom teachings in today’s “gospel.” The salvation aspect of the kingdom has been separated from the kingdom itself, and a “gospel” has been made out of Jesus dying on the cross for our sins. This is a false gospel, because it almost totally neglects the teachings of Jesus about the kingdom of God. In the same way, some have taken the biblical teachings about the baptism of the Holy Ghost and separated it from the kingdom teachings. In reaction, it is possible to just toss completely the doctrine and experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Rather than *react*, we want to *act* and rescue this much-twisted teaching and experience from perversions.

Let God be true and every man a liar. We will use extensive quotes from early Anabaptism in this article. The Anabaptists spoke more about the work and power of the Holy Spirit than any other Reformation-era group. Pilgram Marpeck, for example,

# Redeeming the Baptism Pentecostalism

Mike

seems to mention the Holy Spirit on an average of about once per page in his writings. Yet, he was not even remotely a “Pentecostal.” We use these quotes not because they are Anabaptists and we are trying to be like the early Anabaptists, but rather because they reflect a biblical view of the work and experience of the Holy Spirit among God’s people.

In 1527, in the very earliest days of the Anabaptist revival, some Anabaptists told the Zurich council, “[Believers are those] who have died to the will of the flesh and are now walking in the will of the Spirit, with the fruit of the Spirit.” Amen! ~

## The problem and the promise

The problem is quite simple to define: sin. When man willfully and knowingly disobeys God, God has to leave. God and sin cannot coexist in the same place.

So what do we do to remedy our situation? By nature we are all born corrupted, that is, with a self-centeredness that is contrary to the nature of God. This self-centeredness causes us to sin, to do actions that are contrary to God’s will. But beyond these actions is the problem of human nature: the very nature of man and the nature of God cannot mix. So how do you reunite man and God?

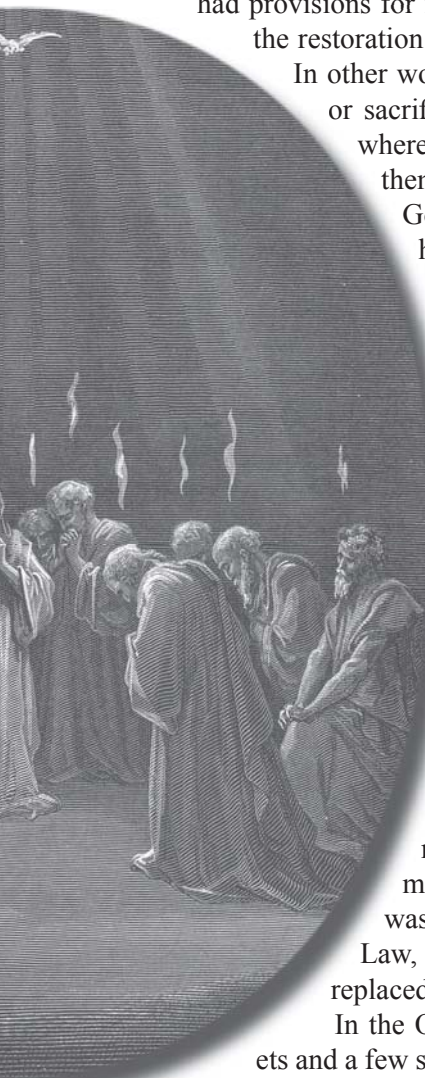
In an effort to get man to see his sin, God gave Moses a set of laws. These laws gave a basic—but incomplete—framework of what God had declared as the right way for man to live. These laws even became known as “God’s righteousness” to those who held to them.

So now man knew—in a provisional form—what God expected of them. The “schoolmaster” was given to teach



# of the Holy Ghost from ostalism

Atnip



them these things. But a problem still existed. These laws had provisions for forgiveness of sins, but not for the restoration of the life of God within man.

In other words, there were no ceremonies or sacrifices given in the Mosaic Law where the final result (upon doing them) would be the infilling of God's Spirit back into the human heart. There was not a ceremony of which the end result was that God said, "When you do this ceremony just right, I will pour My Spirit back into you." Paul wrote to the Galatians:

Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.

There was simply no law given, no sacrifice or ceremony available, which could fill a man with the Holy Spirit. That was the weakness of the Mosaic Law, and that was why it had to be replaced by something better.

In the Old Testament, only the prophets and a few select other people are ever spoken of as being full of the Spirit. But there were promises given of a time when the Spirit of God would be poured out on every believer. Let's look at some of them briefly, in the order they appear in our Bibles.

- *Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.* Ps. 104:30 This verse's context is of the creatures in the sea. But the part we want to focus on is how that the sending of the Spirit of God "creates." The last Adam is called a "quickening spirit." 1 Co. 15:45 The word quickening is old English for life-giving or life-imparting. This verse references the fact that the Messiah would impart life through His Spirit. Of course, He would

not be doing it to the fishes in the sea, but to men dead in trespasses and sins. "And you hath he quickened ..." Ep 2:1

- *When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning. And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence.* Is. 4:4-5 We find in Isaiah 4 some promises for the gospel day. We find cleansing and purging "by the spirit of judgment ... and of burning." Then we find the promise of comfort and guidance. When the Messiah came, it was prophesied by John the Baptist that Jesus would baptize "with the Holy Ghost and with fire," as well as Jesus himself promising to send His Spirit to guide and comfort His people.

- *Until the spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest.* Is. 32:15 The context of this verse is an outpouring upon God's people that would bring about a change from barrenness and desolation to a fruitful and abundant life ... when "the spirit be poured upon us from on high."

- *And they shall come thither, and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the abominations thereof from thence. And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.* Ez. 11:18-20 The context is a restoration of God's people. We find a promise of cleansing, of unity, of a new spirit, and of a new heart. This would have to be a supernatural work of God, since a man cannot give himself a new spirit. The end result of this change of spirit/heart would be that the recipients would be obedient to God, and reunited with Him.

- *A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.* Ez. 36:26-28 It is hard to know where to stop quoting in this section of Scriptures! Such rich promises! But to keep the article short we will only quote these two verses. We again see the promise of a new heart, a soft heart. We



also find God motivating (causing) the recipients to obedience. And again we see a reunification between God and man.

- *And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD.* Ez 37:14

The context (which we will not print here for the sake of space) is a rebirth or resurrection of a bunch of old, dry bones. The powerful promise is that “ye shall live,” and the quickening (life-giving) force is “my spirit.” Again we see the Spirit of God imparting new life.

- *And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.* Joel 2:28-29

These verses are the most quoted in reference to the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The important point is the words “all flesh.” As mentioned earlier, before the coming of the Messiah only a few select prophets and other individuals were given the Spirit of God. With the coming of the Messiah, the ability to be baptized with that Spirit was opened to “all”; even lowly-valued slaves could be recipients.

- *Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts. Ze. 4:6*

The promise connected with this verse is the context of two olive trees which (as we learn later in Revelation) had a direct connection to the lamps. In other words, the lamps had a direct pipeline direct from the olive trees, a never-ending supply of oil straight from the source. This would be the power supply, so to speak, for the candlestick. The “energy” would be from God, not from man’s own abilities and efforts.

From these prophetic utterances we get a glimpse of the working and power of the Spirit of God. The Law also spoke in shadows of the Spirit, most clearly in the “anointing oil.” For this present study, however, we will skip over these types (for the sake of space) and move right into the time of the promise of the outpouring.

## Holy Ghost and fire

John could not have said it any plainer. He baptized with water, but Jesus would baptize His converts with something more powerful than water: the Holy Spirit and fire. I am sure that puzzled the hearers of those words when they heard them. Baptized with fire?

On the day of Pentecost it happened. Physical tongues of fire sat upon the first recipients of the above-mentioned promises. But something happened deeper than the physical flames. A fire of divine love was lit within them, purging out the old self-centeredness. Water can only wash off exterior filth; fire purifies the actual elements themselves. Wash a silver spoon in water and the food bits come off. Throw the same spoon in a fire and the impurities come out of the silver. In the same way, when a man was baptized with John’s baptism, he could have his sins remitted. But baptize that same man with the Holy Ghost and his sins would be burned out of his heart.

By saying He would baptize with fire, Jesus was using the illustration of the interior cleansing that the Spirit of God would work in a man. Of course, in the very initial outpouring a physical flame was also seen, but that was only a sign or symbol of the invisible flame kindled in the spirit of man. Those physical flames were not necessary to accomplish the interior cleansing, and very, very rarely (if ever)<sup>1</sup> have been seen again since the first outpouring.



**Water can only wash off exterior filth; fire purifies the actual elements themselves.**

## A second birth

But not only did the Messiah call it being *baptized with the Holy Ghost*, He spoke of being *born of the Spirit*. When a leading Jew came to him by night to check Him out, Jesus started talking about being born of the Spirit. He told Nicodemus that unless one was rebirthed, one could not enter His kingdom. When Nicodemus showed obvious confusion, Jesus explained that man’s spirit had to be born of God’s Spirit. In other words, there had to be a renovation on the inside before a man could enter the kingdom. Jesus also explained that although one cannot actually see the Spirit, one could see the results of His

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<sup>1</sup> There are reports of people seeing similar things, but I take a neutral stance as to if it has really happened again. There is nothing to prohibit God from having physical flames appear again when someone is baptized with the Spirit, and I would “put God in a box” to say He will never do it again. But it is beside the point to argue whether God has ever had physical flames appear again.



work ... just like the blowing of the wind. This teaching was not just a parable; the new birth was an actual, but unseen, spiritual birth experience that was just as real as a physical birth.

Jesus then moved right into talking about having eternal life. One thing to remember here is that the name Jehovah is not found in the New Testament. But it actually is there ... because Jehovah means “always existent.” When Jesus spoke of giving eternal life, He was speaking of giving Jehovah Himself, the “Eternally-Living.” Whoever would believe on Jesus would receive that Always-Existent Life as a free gift.

It is here that much of modern theology falls short. Too often people read Jesus as saying, “That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have *forgiveness*. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have *forgiveness*.”

Not so! Jesus came “that they might *have life*; and that they might have it more abundantly!” Jn. 10:10 (Note again that it doesn’t say *forgiveness*.) While forgiveness is needed and included in the gospel, we need to remind ourselves that being forgiven and being given the Always-Existent Life are not synonymous: being given Eternally-Existent Life goes way beyond a mere forgiveness. And that life is the Spirit of God, Jehovah himself, coming into man’s heart to dwell there. This was something the Mosaic Law had no provision for. Forgiveness could be obtained under the Law, but not a restoration of the life of God within the human spirit. What a difference! God and man so reconciled that God actually moves into, and becomes reunited with, the spirit of man!

### **This is that!**

Then it happened. Jesus had told them to stay in Jerusalem until a supernatural power would be poured into them. They waited, praying. Suddenly that “wind” blew and the promises of the Father—which we looked at earlier in this article—were fulfilled. The stony hearts were taken away, and soft, new ones given. A supernatural love was shed abroad in their hearts. There was meekness and brokenness, but at the same time a great boldness. This

was Eternal Life! This was a spiritual resurrection! This was a rebirth of their inner man, something they could never have worked up in their own strength. This was the grace of God!

And, of course, on that occasion there were special gifts given also, among them the ability to speak in languages they had never known before. And they could not but help to speak about “the wonderful works of God.” There were, on that occasion, also visible flames sitting above their heads. But these gifts and the visible flames and the roaring sounds were sort of beside the point. Something was happening here that had never happened in the history of mankind.

A kingdom was being formed, a kingdom where the King ruled from the inside, not the outside.

Eternal Life was being poured *into* them; Jehovah was sitting on His throne in man’s heart once again.

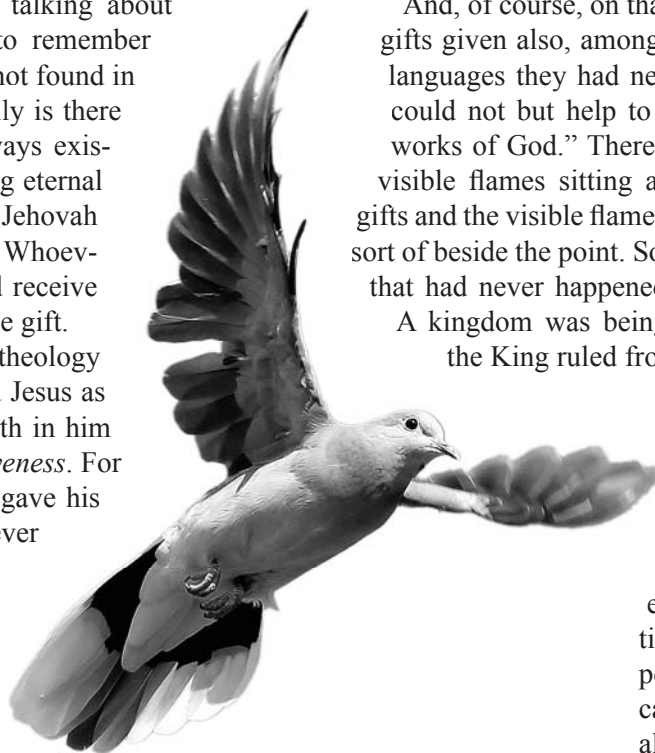
It was probably a very emotional scene, but the emotions were also beside the point. Many diverse things cause people to get emotional. The emotions of that day were “neither here nor there.” But evidently the emotional outbursts and the speaking in foreign languages caused the scene to appear as if they had just had a full-blown party

with too much whiskey and wine flowing.

Peter, who only a few days before had vehemently denied that he even knew Jesus, now was empowered to boldly stand in front of a crowd and proclaim, “This is that which the prophet Joel prophesied about!” When the crowd asked what they needed to do, Peter told them the simple steps to take: repent of their disobedience, be baptized in the name of Jesus (being “baptized in the name of Jesus Christ” implied a total submission to Him as King of their life) ... and they too could experience the baptism—the spiritual rebirth—of the Holy Spirit.

### **The fruits of that experience**

Beginning in Acts 2:41, which is right after the end of Peter’s sermon on that great day, we will pull out a list of results of that baptism of the Spirit: People added to Christ’s kingdom, steadfastness in pure doctrine, daily fellowship, prayer, unity, godly fear, healings, selflessness in sharing



**Receiving eternal life is the Spirit of God, Jehovah himself, coming into man’s heart to dwell there.**

of material possessions (freedom from materialism), joy, contentment, boldness for Christ ...

Paul, who was not involved in the initial outpouring of the Spirit, later laid out a list of fruit that one would see in the life of the recipient: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." Ga. 5:22-23

The thing to notice in this list is that all the fruit mentioned has to do with character attributes, something that takes place in the spirit of man. Let me say before proceeding any further that it is totally erroneous to say that "only the inside counts." Spiritually rebirthed people are not spiritual schizophrenics who lead a double life, a life where the inside doesn't match the outside. But on the other hand, it is possible to do the right things with the wrong spirit, or attitude. For example, a person can give all his goods to feed the poor, but he can do that because he really wants to get some praise from men. Or, because he wants to make himself feel good. So he can do the right thing, but from a wrong spirit. When a man is born again of the Spirit, he will begin to do the right things *with the right motive*.

### **Banjos for Jesus?**

Let's look, but very briefly, at what happens today in many places. A group of people gather. The music starts, the rhythm picks up, the bodies start swaying to the beat, a repetitious phrase rings out (even a very godly phrase), and soon the emotions are boiling fervently. Someone falls to the floor and starts rolling back and forth, back and forth, shrieking out something. The person falling to the floor may be living in adultery, married to someone

who has a living spouse from a previous marriage. He may be a member of the Air Force bomber squadron, or perhaps a Hollywood actor. Their jewelry flashes as they roll. As they roll back and forth shrieking, perhaps the pastor will announce, "Look, there are God's banjos!"<sup>2</sup>

After a while the emotions slow down. The music stops. Everyone goes home, including the "banjos," who go home to continue living in adultery or dropping bombs on innocent children. The "pastor"—dare we use that term for false prophets?—begs everyone to "give money to the Lord." He tells them that God intended for His children to live like kings, since they are kings and priests. That is why he drives a Cadillac and lives in a house worth half a million dollars. If you want, he will lay his hands on you and you too can experience being "baptized with the Holy Ghost" and become a banjo for Jesus.

### **Reactions to banjos**

For serious disciples of Jesus, the above-described scene is almost disgusting.<sup>3</sup> In *reaction*, we can easily come to the place where we don't even want to hear about the baptism of the Holy Ghost. But dear brethren! We must not let the false prophets steal a precious truth and experience from us. There is a genuine baptism of the Holy Ghost, a real rebirth of the human spirit, that Jesus told us that we must go through to enter His kingdom. And we must keep in mind that the kingdom is the goal, not the experience. Being born again by the Spirit is a means to an end, not an end in itself.

2 I have heard that very phrase, believe it or not.

3 Disgust is like anger, an emotion that we do not want to let rule our attitudes.

## **The Tongues Test**

In this simple test, we will ask a few questions concerning what the Bible has to say about speaking in tongues. The answers are so obvious that we will not even provide them. THINK about the answers.

1. Jesus said we shall know them by their (fruits, gifts).
2. We are exhorted to be filled with the Spirit, speaking to ourselves in (tongues, psalms and hymns and spiritual songs).
3. Tongues are for a sign (to the believer, to the unbeliever).
4. When Paul asked the question "Do all speak with tongues?" the implied answer was (yes, no).
5. The unbelievers in Acts 2 (needed an interpreter, did not need an interpreter) to understand what those speaking in tongues were saying.

## The genuine experience

For a look at the genuine experience of being born again of the Spirit, we will now turn to some quotes from the early Anabaptists. By using these quotes, we are not saying the early Anabaptists were a perfect people who understood and experienced the Spirit in a perfect way. But we do find their teaching and practice to match closely the biblical teaching and experience. We will start with Dirk Philips, who collaborated with Menno Simons.

Therefore, Christ also says he “who believes in me” has eternal life. Jn. 3:16; 11:25 Why? Because he has received a divine power, yes, a quickening power of eternal life—creating life in his heart which so thoroughly penetrates, purifies, and renews, and finally drives, leads, and transposes to the origin from which it has sprung, namely, eternal divine life itself.

So now if anyone who thus believes in Jesus Christ has received such a living power of God and who feels this throughout himself, he is a true believing Christian and confesses Christ according to the Spirit, for he is one Spirit with him. Jn. 3:18; 1 Co. 6:17. He also actually understands what the flesh of Christ is; for he himself is flesh of the flesh of Christ and bone of his bone. Ep. 5:30 In addition, he has in the Spirit and true faith eaten the flesh of Christ and drunk his blood. Jn. 6:54 Through this he has become united in one common nature with Christ. This knowledge<sup>4</sup> of God and of Christ is eternal life. Jn. 17:3

But whatever anyone says about Jesus Christ without such an inner power of God, without such an enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, and without such fellowship and impartation of the divine seed of the character and nature of Jesus Christ, this is idle chatter and like the speech of a blind person who (according to the common proverb) disputes and discusses about color which he has neither seen nor can see. For this reason we wish to have everyone who claims to be a Christian to be faithfully admonished that he thus learn to know Jesus Christ, believe in him, and receive him in order that Jesus Christ on the last day may confess him before God his Father

<sup>4</sup> The meaning of knowledge here is more than a head knowledge, but to “know Him personally.”

and before the elect angels for his brother, sister, and mother, and receive him into his eternal kingdom. Mt. 12:50<sup>5</sup>

Menno Simons puts the same thing in a bit different wording:

Regeneration ... is an inward change, which converts a man by the power of God, through faith, from evil to good, from carnality to spirituality, from unrighteousness to righteousness, out of Adam into Christ, which can in no wise take place with infants. The regenerated live by the power of the new life; they crucify the flesh with its evil lusts; they put off the old Adam with his deeds; they avoid every appearance of evil; they are taught, governed, and influenced by the Holy Ghost. Ro. 1:17.

Behold this is true regeneration with its fruits, of which the Scriptures speak, and comes through faith in the word of God, without which no one, who has arrived to the years of understanding, can be saved; as Christ says, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,” Jn. 3:3. **Yea, it is all in vain, if one were even baptized of Peter, or Paul, or Christ himself, if he were not baptized from above with the Holy Ghost and with fire.** Mt. 3:11 As Paul says, “In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature,” Ga. 5:6; 2 Co. 5:17. All who are thus born of God, changed and renewed in the inner man, and translated from Adam into Christ, are ready to obey the word of the Lord, and say with holy Paul, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” They deny themselves with all their minds and hearts; they submit to the word and ordinances of the Lord, without dislike or opposition; they receive baptism according to the command of the Lord, Mt. 28:19. They become and manifest themselves as fruitful branches of Christ, the true Vine, and joint heirs in the church of the Lord, John 15:5. They receive forgiveness of their sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Cornelius J. Dyck, William E. Keeney, and Alvin J. Beachy, eds., *The Writings of Dirk Philips*, (Herald Press, 1992), 149–50.

<sup>6</sup> Menno Simons, *Complete Works of Menno Simon* (Pathway Publishers, 1995), 27.

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Christ himself, if he were not  
baptized from above with the  
Holy Ghost and with fire.  
~Menno Simons



Concerning 1 Peter 3:21, Menno had the following to say:

Here Peter teaches us how the inward baptism saves us, by which the inner man is washed, and not the outward baptism by which the flesh is washed; for only this inward baptism, as already stated, is of value in the sight of God, while outward baptism follows only as an evidence of obedience which is of faith; for could outward baptism save without the inner washing, the whole Scriptures which speak of the new man would be spoken to no purpose. The kingdom of heaven would be bound to elementary water; the blood of Christ would be shed in vain, and no one that is baptized could be lost. No, no! **Outward baptism avails nothing so long as we are not inwardly renewed, regenerated, and baptized of God, with the heavenly fire and the Holy Ghost.**<sup>7</sup>

Peter Riedemann, sometimes called “the second founder of the Hutterites,” wrote a large explanation of his beliefs while imprisoned. Concerning whether the transformation of man is a work of man or a work of God, Peter explained it with these words:

Even though a person speaks with the tongue of angels, (1 Corinthians 13:1) if God does not speak through him, he does not speak God’s Word, (Jeremiah 23:21) because God is the Word. (John 1:1)

But when God speaks through a person and wishes to build his temple in that one, God first cuts away what is coarse and wild and is not fitting for his house. He does this through the preaching of repentance. (Luke 3:1-14 Mark 1:1-8 Matthew 3:1-12) When any receive the Word

**God works in the person who surrenders himself, and God gives proof of his power in the person’s renewal.**

~Peter Riedemann

and repent, God places them on the foundation of Christ, (1 Corinthians 3:11) provided they die to sin and become like him in death. They will then be revived through faith and restored to a new life, (Romans 6:1-4) which comes about not through human power (Zechariah 4:6 Deuteronomy 8:1-3) but by God’s grace and work. (Ephesians 2:1-10).

Since this is done not by human effort but by God’s action, (1 Corinthians: 15:20-28), Paul exhorts us as follows: “Yield your members to be instruments of God and his righteousness, so that they may be holy.”

(Romans: 6:19) If God is to do anything good in a person, that person must surrender himself to God. (Proverbs 1:22-31) Otherwise, the good cannot be done in him. Just as a person cannot do anything good of himself, so God does not want to do anything in him, unless he gives himself with all his heart to be God’s instrument. Then that person’s surrendered will interweaves itself with the divine will in such a way that the divine will and the human will become one. From now on, God desires, chooses, and works everything in that person. The person allows himself to become God’s instrument (John 15:4-5) and thus may say with the beloved apostle Paul, “Now I live no more, but Christ lives in me.” (Galatians 2:20) This is the way God works in people. On the other hand, if a person keeps back anything, chooses for himself, or wants or undertakes something on his own and not with God, God’s work is hindered and can make no progress. Such a person remains unprepared for this building and will not be suitable for it. God works in the person who surrenders himself, and God gives proof of his power (Deuteronomy 8:1-4) in the person’s renewal. (Titus 3:1-7) Through this work God enables the person to partake of his Son’s (1 Corinthians 2:9-10) nature and character, (2 Peter 1:3-8) and even, in part, of his unlimited power. This we read in the words, “All things are possible to the one who believes.” (Mark 9:23)<sup>8</sup>

### **The proof is in the pudding**

So how do we know that the spirit that comes upon us is really God’s Spirit? This is where Pentecostalism erred from day one. Someone decided that the proof of the baptism of the Holy Ghost was speaking in tongues; if the recipient did not speak in tongues he was not baptized with the Holy Ghost. Unfortunately, they seemed not to realize that the Bible is quite clear: “Ye shall know them by their fruits.” Mt. 7:16 Notice that it does not say, “by their gifts.” Nor, “by their emotions.” Nor, “by their zeal.”

None of the three things just listed are evil in themselves, and all three are desirable. Yet Pentecostalism as we know it today has been built upon the false premise that one has not been baptized with the Holy Ghost unless he speaks in tongues as proof.

There can be little doubt that the first outpouring of the Spirit mentioned in Acts was an emotional experience. Tears of joy were probably flowing quite freely. Loud

7 Ibid., 28.

8 Peter Riedemann and John J. Friesen, *Peter Riedemann’s Hutterite Confession of Faith* (Herald Press, 1999), 178-9.

shouts of victory may have resounded up the street. Yet Christians are not known by their emotions. In the same way that Pentecostalism was built upon a false premise, others have tried to say that unless you have an extremely emotional experience, you have not been baptized with the Spirit. Our emotional makeup is quite diverse, and we need to exercise extreme caution in trying to make other people respond emotionally just like we do. That said, it does seem strange to think of being forgiven, released from the power of sin, filled with joy, have love spread around in our hearts ... all that without some sort of emotion arising within us.

Most likely the men and women in that upper room were zealous (by nature) for God. But the gifts, the emotions, and the zeal are all beside the point. I have seen people who had an emotional experience, but who missed the baptism of the Holy Ghost. And I have seen extremely zealous people, zealous for God, who also missed the rebirth of the Spirit. It usually shows in the attitude, since many are zealous for biblical truths, and are practicing the correct ordinances, and have laid aside the gross sins of the flesh like drinking, swearing, and fornication. Many even practice modest dress, head coverings, and may have even taken up the doctrines of nonresistance and nonaccumulation of wealth. But Christians are not known by their religious zeal.

Zealots often fail in the sins of the spirit, in their attitudes. Others can try to talk to them about the spirit in which they operate and they just simply cannot see it ... they have not the Spirit of Christ within to “see the kingdom of God.” All they can see is that they have conformed themselves outwardly to many of Jesus’ teachings—which is wonderful that they have!

But the Holy Spirit does a work of transformation on the inside that cannot be imitated or worked up in the flesh. Great enthusiasm propels zealots onward and they mistakenly believe that they are being compelled by the Spirit of God, when in fact they are compelled only by their religious zeal. And I reiterate that there is nothing wrong with having a great zeal for God. Simply put though, great zeal and the Holy Ghost are not synonyms. Pilgram Marpeck, a South German Anabaptist, explained it this way:



**Our emotional makeup is quite diverse, and we need to exercise extreme caution in trying to make other people respond emotionally just like we do.**

Ah my brethren, how diligently and carefully we have to take heed that we do not consider our own impulse [to be that] of the Holy Spirit, our own course [to be] the course and walk of Christ. ...

I have experienced that in myself, also through the narratives of biblical writings, that natural piety hates evil, and is zealous about the good ... that [unconverted zealots] are overpowered therein and driven with zeal, exerting themselves considerably.

That is not therefore the compulsion of the Holy Spirit of Christ, nor do they become children through it. ... Even today ... many persons act because of zeal concerning good, who do not know or suppose otherwise than that they are driven by the Holy Spirit. ...

I write all this in order that each one may well see for themselves what drives them, from what source it flows, from what source their drive stems. This the servants do not know. The friends or children, however, know what their Lord does and why the compulsion of the Holy Spirit is in them.<sup>9</sup>

### **Partakers of the divine nature**

Thomas von Imbroich was a Swiss Brethren in the early days of the Anabaptist movement. Although he was martyred in his late 20s, he had preached and helped to start a number

of congregations up and down the Rhine River. While imprisoned he wrote a widely-used expression of his faith. He has the following to say about the proof of a rebirth by the Holy Ghost:

By these words [Jn. 3:6-8] Christ indicates that the regenerated person becomes spiritual and is born of the Spirit having a spiritual nature, as Peter says. (2 Pe. 1; Ro. 8; Acts 17; Jn. 14) “You may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and become partakers of the divine nature.” By this everyone may know whether he is born of the Spirit, namely, if he has the characteristics of the Spirit, just as the person who is born of the flesh has

9 William Klassen and Walter Klaassen, eds., *The Writings of Pilgram Marpeck*, New edition (Wipf & Stock Pub, 2000), 511–2.

the characteristics of the flesh—each in his sphere (Jn. 3; 1 Co. 15). Birds have their peculiar nature; so also, wild animals; likewise humans. Each person is minded according to that from which he is born. The person born of the Spirit is therefore spiritually minded (Ro. 8), as Paul says: “For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.”<sup>10</sup>

## God's grace is the Holy Spirit.

~Hans Betz, in an *Ausbund* hymn

Those who are thus born of this spiritual seed of Abraham will bring spiritual fruits; that is, all kinds of kindness, righteousness, and truth: They are obedient to their Father; they keep his commandments and follow his precepts (Ep. 5; Jn. 10, 14, 15; Is. 55); they abandon ungodly living (Ro. 12), and are not conformed to the world;

they seek the things that are above, where Christ is, and not those things that are on earth; they mortify and crucify their sinful flesh (Co. 3): they follow in the footsteps of Jesus (their predecessor) in grief, in wretchedness, in persecution, and are obedient to him unto death (Ga. 3; 1 Pe. 2; He. 11). We therefore say that those who are thus driven by the Spirit of God are the spiritual descendants of Abraham and are children of God (Ro. 4, 8).

Thus, all the scriptures cited above testify that no one is born of God who does not have such faith and has not received the Holy Spirit as a guarantee of our inheritance (Ep. 1).<sup>11</sup>

## Grace!

You have likely heard the typical definitions of grace. Hans Betz, an early Anabaptist who wrote a number of the songs that formed the core of the original *Ausbund*,<sup>12</sup> defined grace in simple terms. In song number 88 he writes:

God's grace is the Holy Spirit, Who is also called the Comforter ...

Now if the Holy Spirit leads you, So that you do not yield to sin, God has birthed you anew, In Jesus Christ His Son.

Now I am sure that Hans did not mean that grace and the Holy Spirit are *always* synonymous. Yet I challenge you to read through the New Testament and put “the Holy Spirit” in every place you read the word “grace.” For ex-

10 Leonard Gross, *Golden Apples in Silver Bowls* (Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society, 1999), 77–78.

11 Ibid., 98.

12 The *Ausbund* is a German language Anabaptist hymnal, still in use among the Old Order Amish.

ample, “For by the Holy Spirit are ye saved, through faith ...” Ep. 2:8 The Holy Spirit saves us in the true sense of salvation, which is to rescue or to salvage. By an infilling of the Holy Spirit, we receive power to conquer self, the flesh, the world, and even the devil himself. Now that is grace, truly a free gift! Ac. 2:38; 10:45

“For ye are not under the law, but under *the Holy Spirit* ...” Ro. 6:14 Remembering that the weakness of the Law was that it had no provision to be reunited in spirit with God, we can understand how that the New Covenant is so much superior than the Old. Now the believer can live *under the power of the Holy Spirit!* Under the Spirit, but over the Law!

## How to get the Spirit

One of the biggest battles of the early church was the battle against those Jews who did not understand that the Mosaic Law was not to be put on the Gentile believers. Called Judaizers, they felt that the Law was to be kept even after it had been fulfilled. In battling against this idea, Paul asked the Galatians a thought-provoking question: “Did you get baptized with the Holy Ghost because you kept the Law so perfectly, or did you get baptized with the Holy Ghost because you believed on Jesus?” Ga. 3:2

Of course, they all knew that the free gift of the Spirit was because of their faith in Jesus as the promised Prophet, Priest, and King; the Law had no provision to receive an infilling of the Spirit. Paul then followed the first question with a similar one: “The person who led you into the experience of the infilling of the Spirit, did he do that through preaching obedience to the ceremonial laws, or did he do that by preaching faith in Jesus?” Again, they knew it was because of Jesus, not because of keeping the ceremonial laws.

## Die to live

Hans Betz, the hymn writer mentioned earlier, had the following to say in one of his hymns:

Understand what's happening: when death occurs, as a man denies his flesh, **then man receives from Jesus Christ the life-giving baptism.** The same is called fire and spirit, John does tell us; this alone makes holy and pure and makes fellowship with God.

Whoever has this baptism is planted into the death of Christ; all his desires thus being crucified, he is thereby born anew. This birth has, in Jesus Christ, taken place through water and spirit.<sup>13</sup>

The secret to receiving the “life-giving baptism” of the Holy Spirit is to die; die to our own will in faith that Jesus

13 *Ausbund*, Song 108.



would lead him aright. This “formula”—if we dare even call it a formula—was foundational throughout early Anabaptism; we could probably fill this magazine with their quotes on the topic. They used the German word *gesehenheit* to describe it; a “letting loose” of our own will, placing that will into the hands of God. This is death to controlling our own life; we simply submit ourselves to obedience to whatever God, through Christ, has said. If you believe in someone, you will do what that person says.

This is also a renunciation of materialism, fame, and plain old-fashioned pleasure seeking. Jesus, to whom we submit our will, has told us that unless a man “forsake *all* that he hath,” he cannot be His disciple.

## The dearth in our day

That word “all” is the key to understanding the dearth of real Holy Spirit power in our churches today. Materialism runs rampant, so rampant that if anyone even suggests that Jesus really meant—I mean *really* meant—a renunciation of wealth, he may well get his ears boxed . . . even in conservative Anabaptist churches. To suggest that “all” means for youth (and older ones as well) to renounce sports and pleasure seeking may get a person tagged as “legalist.” To suggest that “all” really means “all,” and that “forsake” really means “forsake,” and that “cannot” means “impossible” seems to put one into the “fanatic” class.

But Jesus really did mean what He said. It is impossible to be His disciple without forsaking *all*. We may take up a zealous obedience to certain biblical teachings, yet never truly die to self. We may find the perfect theology and expound it ever so clearly, yet never die with Christ. We may go to the ends of the earth, preaching to the unreached tribes in remote corners, denying ourselves of the comforts of modern life . . . and yet never have forsaken *all*. Forsaking all is the cross we must take up, the cost we must count before becoming a disciple.

Leonhard Schiemer was an Austrian convert to Anabaptism. He lived but nine months as an Anabaptist before martyrdom, but managed to bring in about 200 others in that short span of time. While in prison he wrote several tracts and a letter to the congregation where he had been ordained as elder. In that letter, he says the following concerning taking up the cross:

“Whoever will be my disciple,” says Christ, “must follow me.” In another place He says, “Without me you can do nothing.” Peter says, “Whoever suffers in the flesh ceases from sin.”

The first light has been our schoolmaster until the other—Christ, who is the light of the world—came. When His Spirit enters me I am no longer under the

schoolmaster, but under grace. When this happens the law of works, sin, death, and members ceases, and the law of the Spirit, faith, life, and the heart begins.

**But this Spirit is given to no one except he first submit himself to the cross and the chastisement of the Lord.**

## Entering the kingdom of God

Dirk Philips wrote a long tract called “The New Birth and the New Creature.” He had the following to say as a conclusion, and he says it so well that we use that conclusion to conclude this article:

I say this in conclusion: the born-again children of God and new creatures in Christ Jesus are those who are born again out of God the heavenly Father through Christ Jesus and are renewed and sanctified through the Holy Spirit, who have become participants of the divine nature, of the being of Jesus Christ, and of the character of the Holy Spirit.

They are those who have died to sin and still daily die more and more, and experience righteousness; those who never boast in themselves but only in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world is crucified to them and they to the world; those who in true faith walk according to the rule of Christ and follow in his footsteps, who know no one according to the flesh; those who do not have an appetite for what is human but for what is divine.

In summary, these are righteous and do righteousness just as God out of whom they are born is righteous; these are minded like Christ Jesus and are motivated by the Holy Spirit.

**Where this takes place, there one sees the kingdom of God, there one comes into the kingdom of heaven; there is a new creature in Christ Jesus. ~**

**When His Spirit enters me I am no longer under the schoolmaster, but under grace.**  
~Leonhard Schiemer

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This article is far from being a complete exposition of the work of the Holy Spirit in the church. Much could be said of the continuing work He accomplishes; teaching, convicting, leading, and comforting. More could be said of the gifts of the Spirit. More could be said of the unity of the Spirit. More could be said of how the Spirit works in a congregation better than in an individual.

In short, this article focuses mostly upon the initial reception of the Spirit in the believer. This is the beginning, the birth, not the end! ~



# On the Danger of Increasing Riches\$

*John Wesley*

*If riches increase, set not thine heart upon them. Ps. 62:10.*

## Introduction

He was 87 years old, and felt himself (as he himself wrote) as one “with dim eyes, shaking hands, and tottering feet.” But he had a message to give yet. With a vehemence that seems even greater than his normal fervency, John Wesley warned of a great danger to his people—riches. From a small handful, his movement had grown to 135,000 members with over 500 itinerant preachers. His preaching was effective in noticeably changing the moral and ethical climate of England, to the point that he is credited with saving England from a bloodbath like later happened in the French Revolution. But a sinister evil lurked among his people, and Wesley used some of his last remaining strength to call this evil for what it was.

May we who are many times richer than the people of John Wesley’s day have ears to hear.

(Note that some of Wesley’s English has been updated and that the subtitles are not original. The signature under the title is a facsimile of his own signature.)

From that express declaration of our Lord, “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven,” we may easily learn that none can *have* riches without being greatly endangered by them. But if the danger of barely having them is so great, how much

greater is the danger of *increasing* them! This danger is great even to those who receive what is transmitted to them by their forefathers; but it is abundantly greater to those who acquire them by their skill and industry. Therefore, nothing can be more prudent than this caution: “If riches increase, set not thine heart upon them.” Ps. 62:10

It is true, riches, and the increase of them, are the gift of God. Yet great care is to be taken that what is intended for a blessing does not turn into a curse. To prevent this, it is highly expedient to consider seriously:

I. What is meant by riches; and when they may be said to increase.

II. What is implied in setting our hearts upon them; and how we may avoid it.

## What does “riches” mean?

Consider, first, what is here meant by riches. Indeed some may imagine that it is hardly possible to mistake the meaning of this common word. Yet, in truth, there are thousands in this mistake; and many of them quite innocently. A person of note, hearing a sermon preached upon this subject several years ago, between surprise and indignation broke out aloud, “Why does he talk about riches here? There is no rich man at Whitehaven, except Sir James L----r.”

And it is true there was none but he that had £40,000<sup>1</sup> a year, and some millions in ready money. But a man may be rich that has not £100 a year, nor even £1000 in cash. Whosoever has food to eat, and raiment to put on, with something over, is rich. Whoever has the necessaries and conveniences of life for himself and his family, and a little to spare for them that have not, is properly a rich man; unless he is a miser, a lover of money, one that hoards up what he can and ought to give to the poor. For if so, he is a poor man still, though he has millions in the bank; yea, he is the poorest of men; for:

The beggars but a common lot deplore;  
The rich poor man’s emphatically poor.

## Beware of judging

But here an exception may be made. A person may have more than necessaries and conveniences for his family, and yet not be rich. For he may be in debt; and his debts may amount to more than he is worth. But if this be the

<sup>1</sup> £ is the symbol for the British pound. Money values are somewhat difficult to determine across the centuries and cultures. But to give a general idea, a common laborer in England in 1780 may have earned £2-3/month. This would be comparable to making approx. \$300-400/month in the US economy today.

case, he is not a rich man, how much money soever he has in his hands. Yea, a man of business may be afraid that this is the real condition of his affairs, whether it be or no; and then he cannot be so charitable as he would, for fear of being unjust. How many that are engaged in trade are in this very condition! Those especially that trade to a very large amount; for their affairs are frequently so entangled that it is not possible to determine, with any exactness, how much they are worth, or, indeed, whether they are worth anything or nothing. Should we not make a fair allowance for them?

And beware of forming a hasty judgment concerning the fortune of others. There may be secrets in the situation of a person, which few but God are acquainted with. Some years ago, I told a gentleman, "Sir, I am afraid you are covetous."

He asked me, "What is the reason of your fear?"

I answered, "A year ago, when I made a collection for the expense of repairing the Foundry, you subscribed five guineas. At the subscription made this year you subscribed only half a guinea."

He made no reply; but after a time asked, "Pray, sir, answer me a question: Why do you live upon potatoes?" (I did so between three and four years.)

I replied, "It has much conduced to my health."

He answered, "I believe it has. But did you not do it likewise to save money?"

I said, "I did; for what I save from my own food expense will feed another that else would have none."

"But, sir," said he, "if this be your motive you may save much more. I know a man that goes to the market at the beginning of every week: There he buys a pennyworth of parsnips, which he boils in a large quantity of water. The parsnips serve him for food, and the water for drink the whole following week. So his meat and drink together cost him only a penny a week."

This he constantly did, though he earned then £200/year,<sup>2</sup> so that he could pay the debts which he had contracted before he knew God! And this was he, whom I had set down for a covetous man!

<sup>2</sup> As mentioned in the previous footnote, the average wage for a common laborer of that time was probably in the £30/year range.

## What about you?

But there are those who are conscious before God that they are rich. And, doubtless, some among *you* are of the number. You have more of the goods of this world than is needful either for yourself or your family. Let each consider for himself. Do *your* riches increase? Do not you understand that plain expression? Have you not more money, or more of money's worth, than you had 10 or 20 years ago, or at this time last year? If you keep any account, you can easily know this. Indeed you ought to know; otherwise, you are not a good steward, even in this respect, of the mammon of unrighteousness. And every man, whether engaged in trade or not, ought to know whether his substance lessens or increases.

But many have found out a way never to be rich, though their substance increase ever so much. It is this: As fast as money comes in they invest it, either in land or enlarging their business. By this means each of these, by keeping his cash assets low, can still say, "I am not rich." He can say that even though he has 10, 20, or 100 times more substance than he had some years ago.

This may be explained by a recent case: A gentleman came to a merchant in London a few years ago and told him, "Sir, I beg you will give me a guinea<sup>3</sup> for a worthy family that is in great distress."

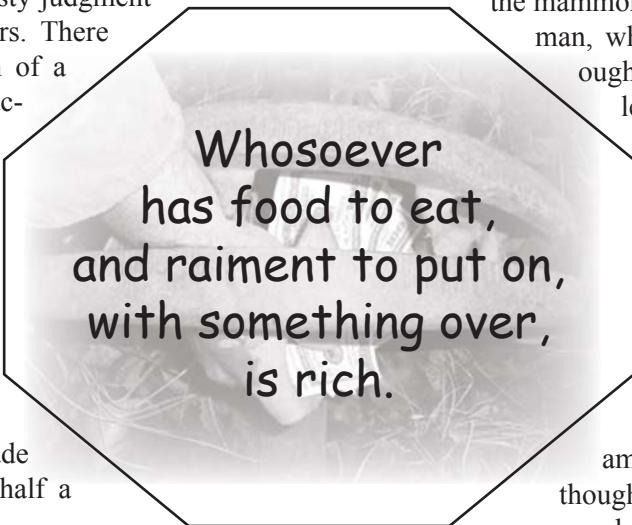
He replied, "Really, Mr. M., I cannot well afford to give you it just now; but if you will call upon me when I am worth £10,000, then I will give you ten guineas."

Mr. M., after some time, called upon him again and said, "Sir, I claim your promise; now you are worth £10,000."

He replied, "That is very true: But I assure you, I cannot spare one guinea so well as I could then."

It is possible for a man to cheat himself by this ingenious device. And he may cheat other men; for as long "as you doest good unto yourself, men will speak well of thee." "A right *good man*," says the Londoner, "he is worth a plum" (£100,000). But, alas! he cannot deceive God; and he cannot deceive the devil. Ah, no! The curse of God is upon thee already, and on all that you have. And tomorrow, when the devil seizes your soul, will he not say, "What do all your riches profit you?" Will they

<sup>3</sup> Approximately £1.





purchase a pillow for your head, in the lake of fire burning with brimstone? Or will they procure you a cup of "water to cool your tongue," while you are tormented in that flame?" O follow the wise direction here given so that God may not say unto thee, "Thou fool!"

This mental gymnastics, therefore, will not avail. It will not be any protection either against the wrath of God or the malice and power of the devil. You are convicted already of "setting thy heart" upon your riches, if you reinvest all you have above the conveniences of life, on adding money to money, house to house, or field to field, without giving at least a tenth of your income (the Jewish proportion) to the poor. By whatsoever means your riches increase, whether with or without labour; whether by trade, inheritances, or any other way; unless your charities increase in the same proportion; unless you give a full tenth of your substance, of your fixed and occasional income; you undoubtedly set your heart upon your gold, and it will "eat thy flesh as fire!"<sup>4</sup>

### The hardheartedness of the covetousness

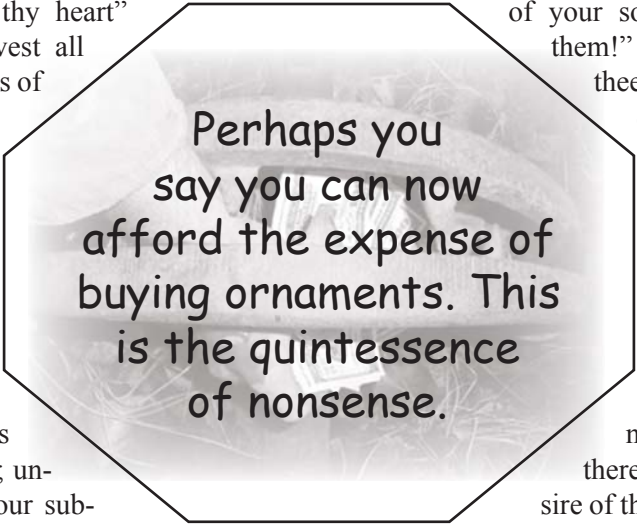
But O! who can convince a rich man that he sets his heart upon riches? For considerably above half a century I have spoken on this head, with all the plainness that was in my power. But with how little effect! I doubt whether I have, in all that time, convinced fifty misers of covetousness. When the lover of money was described ever so clearly, and painted in the strongest colors, who applied it to himself? To whom did God, and all that knew him, say, "Thou art the man!" If He speaks to any of you that are present, O do not stop your ears! Rather say, with Zaccheus, "Be-

<sup>4</sup> Wesley's mention of a tithe here can seem to be that he is only encouraging to give a regular tithe. But notice that the context is of "reinvestment." Many feel that they should reinvest profits so that they can then earn more, and hence have more to give later. Wesley doubts such "wisdom" and encourages a *minimum* of 10% to be given to the poor immediately rather than reinvested. The idea of reinvesting profits so as to have more to give later is loaded with temptation. Many seem to never get past reinvesting, and instead of giving more later they just reinvest again ... and again ... and again. And the money never does make it to the poor.

hold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have done any wrong to any man, I restore fourfold." He did not mean that he had done this in time past; but that he determined to do so for the time to come. I charge thee before God, you lover of money, to "go and do likewise!"

I have a message from God unto thee, O rich man! whether you wilt hear, or whether you wilt forbear.

Riches have increased with thee; at the peril of your soul, "set not thine heart upon them!" Be thankful to Him that gave thee such a talent, so much power of doing good. Yet dare not to rejoice over them, but with fear and trembling, "Beware you cleave not unto them, lest you be entangled and perish." Do not make them your end, your chief delight, your happiness, your god! See that you expect not happiness in money, nor anything that is purchasable thereby; in gratifying either the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, or the pride of life.



But let us descend to particulars; and see that each of you deal faithfully with his own soul. If any of you have now twice, thrice, or four times as much substance as when you first saw my face, faithfully examine yourselves and see if you do not set your hearts, if not directly on money or riches themselves, yet on some of the things that are purchasable thereby; which comes to the same thing. All those the Apostle John includes under that general name, *the world*; and the desire of them, or to seek happiness in them, under that form, "the love of the world."

### Defining "the world"

This he divides into three branches, "the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life." Fairly examine yourselves with regard to these.

- First, as to "the desire of the flesh." I believe this means *the seeking of happiness in the things that gratify the senses*. To instance in one: Do not you seek your happiness in enlarging the pleasure of *tasting*? To be more particular: Do you not *eat* more plentifully, or more delicately, than you did ten or twenty years ago? Do not you use more *drink*, or drink of a more *costly* kind, than you did then? Do you sleep on as hard a bed as you did once, supposing your health will bear it? To touch on one point more: do you *fast* as often, now that you are rich, as you did when you were poor? Ought you not, in

all reason, to do this rather more often than more seldom? I am afraid your own heart condemns you. You are not clear in this matter.

- The second branch of the love of the world, “the desire of the eyes,” is of a wider extent. We may understand thereby *the seeking our happiness in gratifying the imagination*, (which is chiefly done by means of the eyes,) by grand, or new, or beautiful objects (if they may not all be reduced to one head; since neither grand nor beautiful objects are pleasing when the novelty of them is gone). But are not the hollowest things pleasing as long as they are new? Do not some of you, on the score of novelty, seek no small part of your happiness in that hollowest of hollows—dress? Do you not bestow more money, or (which is the same) more time or pains upon it than you did once? I doubt this is not done to please God. Then it pleases the devil. If you laid aside your needless ornaments some years ago—ruffles, necklaces, spider-caps, ugly and unbecoming bonnets,<sup>5</sup> costly linen, expensive laces—have you not, in defiance of religion and reason, taken to them again?<sup>6</sup>

Perhaps you say you can now *afford* the expense. This is the quintessence of nonsense. Who gave you this addition to your fortune; or (to speak properly) *lent* it to you? To speak more properly still, who lodged it for a time in your hands as His stewards; informing you at the same time for what purposes He entrusted you with it? And can you

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5 Without a doubt Wesley is speaking of a certain stylish bonnet that he felt was ugly, not bonnets in general.

6 Wesley never does get around, in this message, to expounding the third aspect, “the pride of life.”

Do not you know that God entrusted you with that money (all that is above what buys necessities for your families) to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to help the stranger, the widow, the fatherless; and, indeed, as far as it will go, to relieve the wants of all mankind?

*afford* to waste your Lord’s goods, for every part of which you are to give an account; or to expend them in any other way than that which He hath expressly appointed? Away with this vile, diabolical chant! Let it never more come out of your lips. This *affording* to rob God is the very chant of hell.

Do not you know that God entrusted you with that money (all that is above what buys necessities for your families) to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to help the stranger, the widow, the fatherless; and, indeed, as far as it will go, to relieve the wants of all mankind? How can you, how dare you, defraud your Lord by applying it to any other purpose? When He entrusted you with a little, did He not entrust you with it that you might lay out all that little in doing good? And when He entrusted you with more, did He not entrust you with that additional money that you might do so much the more good, as you had more ability? Had you any more right to waste a pound, a shilling, or a penny, than you had before? You have, therefore, no more right to gratify the desire of the flesh, or the desire of the eyes, now than when you were a beggar. O no! do not make so poor a return to your beneficent Lord! Rather, the more He entrusts you with, be so much the more careful to employ every mite as He hath appointed.

### Employing mites as do the angels

Ye angels of God, ye servants of His that continually do His pleasure: our common Lord hath entrusted you also with talents far more precious than gold and silver so that you may minister in your various offices to the heirs of salvation. Do not you employ every mite of what you have received to the end for which it was given you? And hath He not directed us to do His will on earth, as it is done by you in heaven? Brethren, what are we doing! Let

us awake! Let us arise! Let us imitate those flaming ministers! Let us employ our whole soul, body, and substance according to the will of our Lord! Let us render unto God the things that are God’s; even all we are, and all we have!

Most of those who set their hearts upon riches increase when they increase, do it indirectly, as in some of the preceding instances I related. But there are others who do this more directly, being, properly, “lovers of money.” These love it for its own sake; not only for the sake of what it procures. But this vice is very rarely found in children or young persons; but only, or chiefly, in the

old—in those that have the least need of money, and the least time to enjoy it.

Might not this induce one to think that in many cases it is a penal evil; that it is a sin-punishing evil; that when a man has, for many years, hid his precious talent in the earth, God delivers him up to Satan, to punish by the inordinate love of it? Then it is that he is more and more tormented by that “that execrable hunger after gold” which can never be satisfied. No, it is most true, as the very heathen observes: “As money, so the love of money grows; it increases in the same proportion.” As in a dropsy; the more you drink, the more you thirst, till that unquenchable thirst plunges you into the fire which shall never be quenched!

“But is there no way,” you may ask, “either to prevent or to cure this dire disease?” There is one preventative of it, which is also a remedy for it; and I believe there is no other under heaven. It is this. After you have *gained* (with the cautions above given) *all you can*, and *saved all you can*, wanting for nothing; spend not one pound, one shilling, or one penny to gratify either the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, or the pride of life; or indeed, for any other end than to please and glorify God. Having avoided this rock on the right hand, beware of that on the left. Secondly. *Hoard nothing*. Lay up no treasure on earth, but *give all you can*; that is, all you have. I defy all the men upon earth, yea, all the angels in heaven, to find any other way of extracting the poison from riches.

### Wesley’s last advice

Let me add one word more. After having served you between sixty and seventy years; with dim eyes, shaking hands, and tottering feet, I give you one more advice before I sink into the dust. Mark those words of St. Paul: “Those that desire” or endeavour “to be rich,” that moment “fall into temptation.” Yea, a deep gulf of temptation, out of which nothing less than almighty power can deliver them. “They fall into a snare”—the word properly means *a steel trap*, which instantly crushes the animal taken therein *to pieces*—“*and into divers foolish and*

*hurtful desires, which plunge men into destruction and perdition.*” You, above all men, who now prosper in the world, never forget these awful words! How unspeakably slippery is your path! How dangerous every step! The Lord God enable you to see your danger, and make you deeply sensible of it! O may you “awake up after His likeness, and be satisfied with it!”

Permit me to come a little closer still. Perhaps I may not trouble you any more on this subject. I am pained for you that are “rich in this world.” Do you give all you can? You who receive £500 a year, and spend only £200, do you give £300 back to God? If not, you certainly rob God of that £300. You that receive £200, and spend but £100, do you give God the £100? If not, you rob Him of just so much.

### Excuses

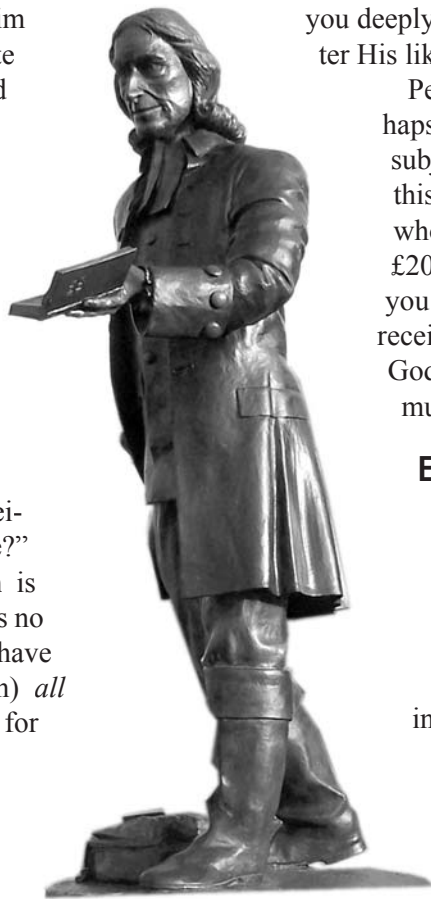
“Nay, may I not do what I will with my own?” Here lies the ground of your mistake. It is *not* your own. It cannot be, unless you are Lord of heaven and earth.

“However, I must provide for my children.” Certainly. But how? By making them rich? Then you will probably make them heathens, as some of you have done already.

“What shall I do, then?” Lord, speak to their hearts, or else the preacher speaks in vain! Leave them enough to live on, not in idleness and luxury, but by honest industry. And if you have not children, upon what scriptural or rational principle can you leave a groat behind you more than will bury you? I pray consider, what are you the better for what you leave behind you? What does it signify, whether you leave behind you

£10,000, or 10,000 shoes and boots?

O leave nothing behind you! Send all you have before you into a better world! Lend it, lend it all unto the Lord, and it shall be paid you again! Is there any danger that His truth should fail? It is fixed as the pillars of heaven. Haste, haste, my brethren, haste—lest you be called away before you settled what you have on this security! When this is done, you may boldly say, “Now I have nothing to do but to die! Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit! Come, Lord Jesus! Come quickly!” ~



**O leave nothing behind you! Send all you have before you into a better world!**





# Meditations on Judging and Doing

Loyal Martin—Philadelphia, NY

*Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another? Ja. 4:11-12*

*Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? Ro.14:4*

*Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. Mt. 7:1-2*

**O**ur Lord and Master—the one Lawgiver—primarily calls His disciples to be first of all doers and rightfully reserves the place of lawgiving and judging for Himself. Isaiah prophesied of the Savior in Isaiah 11:2-4:

And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

Again in Isaiah 42:1-4 the prophet shows the Father speaking of the work of our Lord:

Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.

We begin to personally and corporately experience the fulfillment of these prophecies when we believe on the Lord. We further look for the time when the One who has the right to rule will return to this earth, and the kingdoms of the earth will be broken to shivers and become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ. (Ez. 21:27, Ps. 2:9, Re. 2:27, Re. 5, Re. 11:15-17)

## Begin with ourselves

1 Peter 4:17-19 (speaking of the sufferings the saints endure) tells us:

For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely [through much difficulty] be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

1 Corinthians 11:31-32 warns us that if we fail to judge our own life properly, the Lord will judge us with chastening in order that we would “not be condemned with the world,” and Hebrews 12:5 exhorts us to “despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him.” The writer further encourages us that this chastening and correction is a blessing, in that it is a form of the Father’s love for us; it affirms our sonship. And, if we respond to it properly, our spirits will become subject to the Father of spirits and we will be partakers of His holiness, having the peaceable fruit of righteousness in our lives.

These verses all emphasize the place of our Lord as a faithful Father, the one righteous Lawgiver, and a wise and discerning Judge among His people. Hebrews further exhorts us that “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (10:31), and that there is no “creature that is not manifest in His sight” and “all things (even the thoughts and intents of the heart) are naked and opened before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do” (4:13). Whether He is allowing us to reap what we have sown in blindness and ignorance, or whether He is seeking our character development, producing in us the image of His sons, we can trust that our Father is with us, that He will not give us more than we can bear, and that He is working His great work of redemption in our lives. Blessed be His name!

## Every eye on Jesus

Because we are firstly responsible for our own life, and because it is impossible for us to help our brother to a place that we have not yet attained, God calls us each to

have our focus fixed on Him more than on each other. “Looking unto Jesus” we run this race. He is the Author of our faith—He is the One who first ran this race, and we are responding to His call to follow in His steps. He is also the Finisher—He has already finished the race “and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God,” and He will complete His work in us as we continue looking unto Him. Maintaining the attitude of “looking unto Jesus” and being careful to “lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us” helps us to stay in our proper place as doers, rather than usurping the place of our Lord in the lives of others. He.12:1-2

Romans 14:10-13 explains:

But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

Because we share together in a Father's love, and because we run the same race together, our Lord calls us to be helpers of one another in this race. We are called to lift up the hands which hang down, to strengthen the feeble knees, and to make straight paths for our feet, so that the lame would be healed rather than turned away. He.12:12-13

## Helpers and servants

This labor of love does call us to an involvement in each other's lives—not as self-righteous judges of one another, but as fellow doers who are helpers of each other's joy. It calls us to submit one to another in the fear of God, leaving

behind our self-seeking ambitions and worldly wisdom, and becoming servants—like our Master in heaven—who seek the well-being of those around us ahead of our own interests. We participate in our Lord's work of redemption in each other's lives when we stand beside one another helping one another to follow the Lord. A professed faith which does not produce this fruit becomes hypocrisy.

Many New Testament scriptures call us as believers to discern situations in life. 1 John 4:1 tells us:

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

Our Lord commended the Ephesian church because they had “tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars.” Re.2:2 In 1 Corinthians 5, Paul encouraged the Corinthians to not be presumptuous, but to “judge them that are within” so there would not be known sin among them. In 1 Corinthians 14:29 he taught that the other prophets should judge a teaching that is given. 1 Thessalonians 5:21 calls us to “prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” And 1 Corinthians 1:10 lifts up an almost incredible standard:

Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

According to the Scriptures, God is a God of judgment who loves clarity and sound discernment, and our lives are enriched if we are partakers of His wisdom. Proverbs 2:6-9 says:

For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly. He keepeth the paths of

## Running the Race Together

**W**hen the starter's gunshot was heard, all of the contestants started toward the finish line. Granted, they were not as fast as the regular high school racers. In fact, because of their handicaps, they were so slow that they even talked to each other along the way.

About ¾ of the way to the goal, something happened. Suzie fell and skinned her knee. She began to cry because it hurt. Carl, who was beside her, stopped and spoke kindly to her. All of those who were behind her, when they caught up, stopped also to add their condolences. Some called ahead to the rest of the gang to let them know what was happening. Because the others were not too far ahead, they heard the calls of those behind them and came back to be with Suzie too.

After a while, when she was feeling better, two of her friends helped her to stand up. Then the friends standing beside her and holding her arms said, “We will help you to the finish line.” All of the others also said, “So will we!” At that point, everyone held hands and made their way slowly down the track, keeping pace with limping Suzie. Then, as one big wide chain, they all crossed the finish line together! ~Author unknown

judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints. Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path.

To judge in self-righteousness is to defy the Giver of sound wisdom and to seek to operate in our own wisdom independently of His Spirit. To properly discern is to remain subject to Him receiving and applying the wisdom He alone can give. Our attitude toward those we share with is many times the indicator of which wisdom we are partakers of. James 3:13-18 tells us:

**Our attitude toward those we share with is many times the indicator of which wisdom we are partakers.**

Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual,

devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

Isaiah 5:20 pronounces woe on self-righteous independence: "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" Isaiah 59:8-15 also describes the pitiful results of this mistake:

The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace. Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness. We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes: we stumble at noonday as in the night; we are in desolate places as dead men. We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves: we look for judgment, but there is none; for salvation, but it is far off from us. For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions are with us; and as for our iniquities, we know them; In transgressing and

lying against the LORD, and departing away from our God, **speaking oppression and revolt**, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood. And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the LORD saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment.

It is not possible to speak words of oppression toward our brothers and sisters unless we are not in our place as obedient doers in God's kingdom and have become self-righteous judges. If we speak words of revolt, it indicates we are living in the same error.

### **Together ...**

May God grant to each of us the grace to walk together with our focus on Him, growing together in His wisdom. James 1:19-27 tells us:

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

What is true about our relationships in a local church is also true about relationships between churches as well. God calls us to exercise humility of mind and servant-heartedness one toward another in His omnipotent working as we relate with fellow congregations.

To the **only wise God** our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen. Ju. 1:25 ~

The author of this article welcomes feedback.



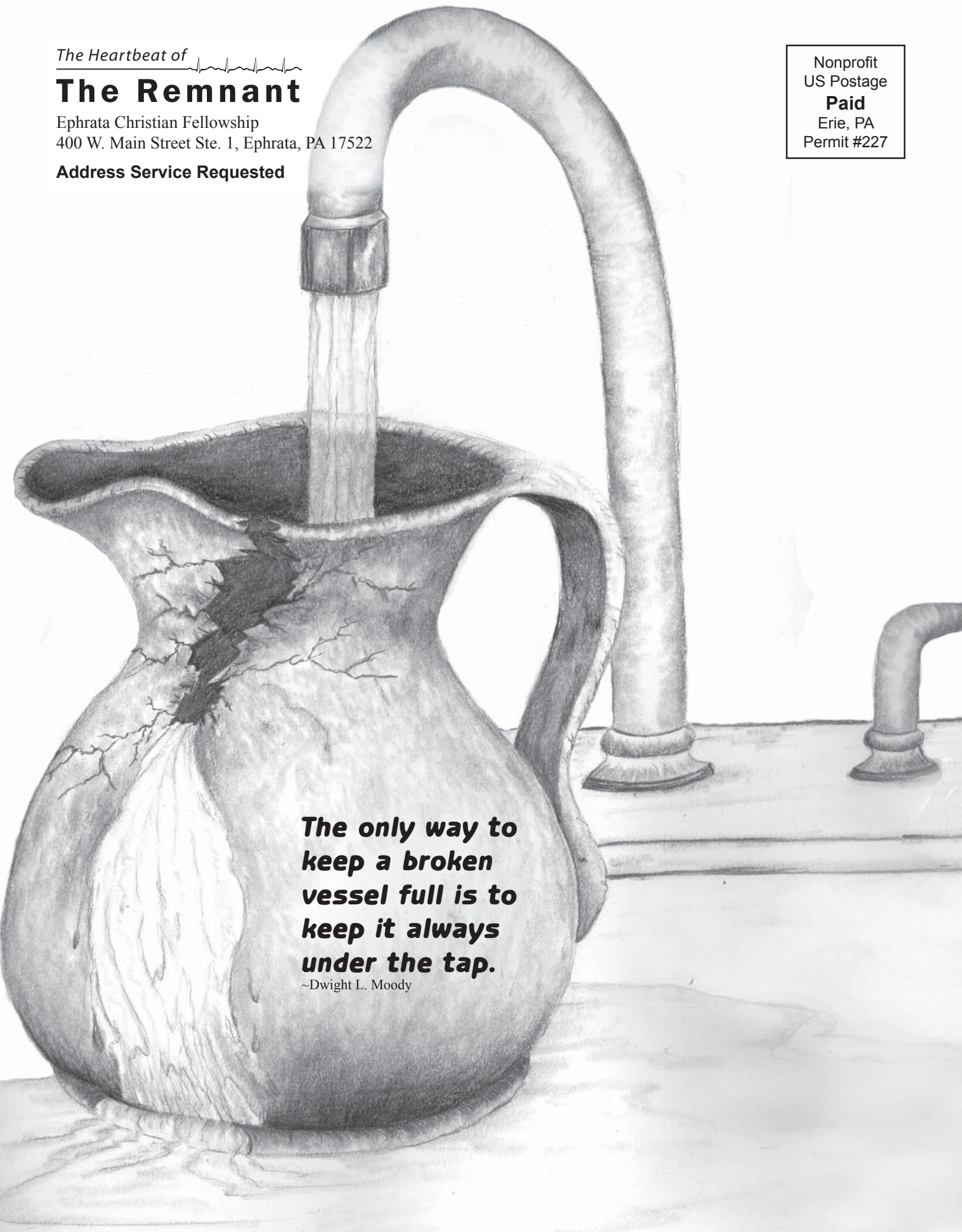
*The Heartbeat of*

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***The only way to  
keep a broken  
vessel full is to  
keep it always  
under the tap.***

~Dwight L. Moody