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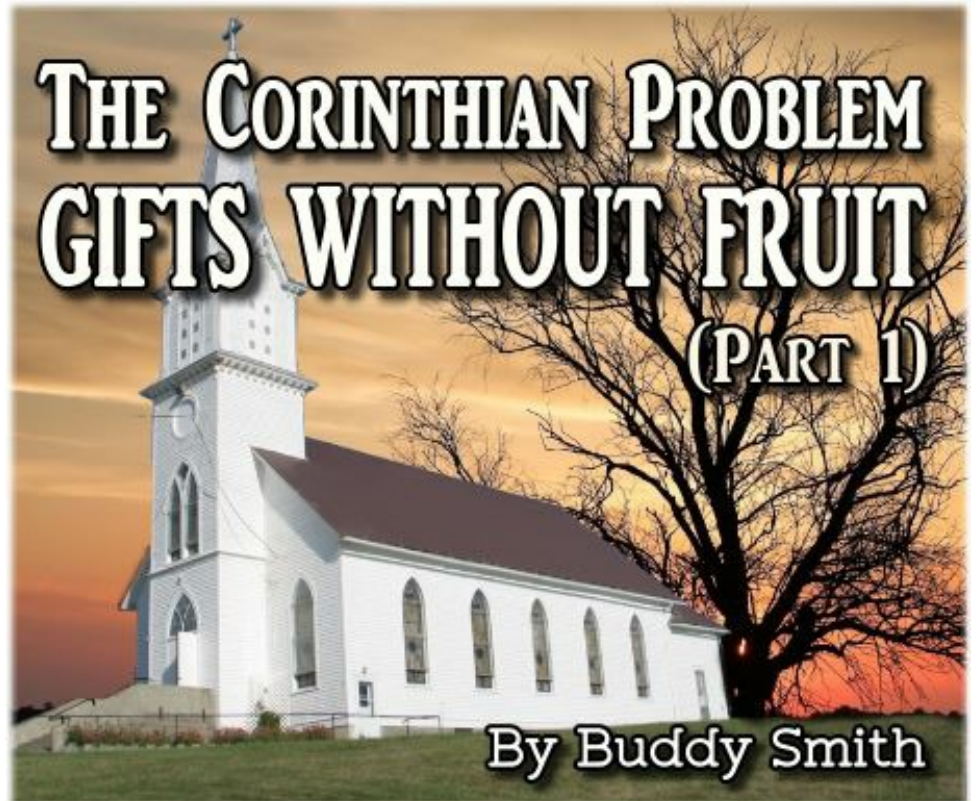
*Disarming the Christian Soldier*



"But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

## **Heads Up!**

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## **IF A PASTOR COULD CHOOSE...**

If a pastor could choose a church in the New Testament which would serve as a pattern for his church to follow, which one would it be?

In Acts, in the Epistles, and in the Revelation there are named fourteen churches, as well as many others which are left unnamed. Out of all those mentioned, which church would serve as the best role model for your church? Certainly I would not choose the churches in Laodicea or Pergamos or Thyatira, but I would love to pastor a church like the ones in Antioch and Smyrna. I admire the church in Philadelphia for its missionary fervour, but wonder if our courage is equal to the door God opened for them.

The surprising fact is that our churches do already resemble those described in the New Testament. We boldly declare that we pastor New Testament Baptist churches, but then we admit that we don't want our churches to be like some of the churches in the New Testament. It

dawned on me recently that God has recorded in His Word an inspired (and accurate) history of churches that existed in the days of the apostles, in order to show pastors what kind of church they may be pastoring already.

### WHAT KIND OF CHURCH AM I PASTORING AT THIS MOMENT?

So which church in the New Testament does my church resemble? I pastor an independent Baptist Church in Australia. Which church in the New Testament is it like?

### DO NOT MANY OF OUR CHURCHES BEAR A STRONG LIKENESS TO THE CHURCH AT CORINTH? –

What if someone made a list of the strengths and weaknesses in the Corinthian church, and then formatted the list into a Spiritual Health Evaluation Form? Would it look something like this?

#### CHURCH HEALTH EVALUATION FORM -

How Much Is \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church Like the Corinthian Church?

On a scale of 1 to 10, indicating your church's likeness to the church at Corinth, please number the blanks beside each statement -

1. Our church comes behind in no spiritual gift. I Cor. 1:7
2. Our church is divided as to who is the best preacher we have heard speak. I Cor. 1:10-12
3. Our church prefers preaching that is intellectual and philosophical in nature, and not so much Bible. 1:17 - 2:16, 18-20
4. Our church displays carnality in the envying, strife and divisions that exist in the church, often the result of glorying in the preachers we have heard. 3:1-10, 21-23; 11:17-19
5. Our church is content to build with wood, hay, and stubble. 3:11-15
6. Our church criticizes its ministers and compares them with our own standards. 4:1-21; 9:1-27
7. Our church is very broadminded when it comes to sexual conduct and views Christians' sexual relationships to be their own business, not the church's. I Cor. 5:1-13
8. Our church winks at brethren taking brethren to court, and believes that demanding one's rights is acceptable to God. 6:1-8
9. Our church believes that Christians should be culturally relevant and not push biblical values on those who are saved out of other religions. 6:9-20
10. Our church accepts a high level of physical contact between men and women, and that marriage is not a permanent institution 7:1-40
11. Our church holds that Christians are to be tolerant toward those who worship idols, and that it is acceptable to identify with their worship by eating the meat offered to idols. 8:1-13
12. Our church does not practice separation from the world, or from others' religious practices as we feel that we have complete liberty to do as we like. 10:1-33
13. Our church is not concerned over the matter of a person's hair length showing the submission of the wife to her husband. 11:1-16
14. Our church feels that personal liberty at the Lord's Supper is more important than concern whether others have food to eat, or than remembering why we partake of the bread and the cup. 11:20-34
15. Our church believes that spiritual gifts are for the benefit of those who have them, that we can pick and choose which gift we want, that some gifts deserve more exposure than others, that the loudest and showiest gifts are the best, and that experience is better than truth. 12:1-14:40
16. Our church believes that those who doubt that Christ arose from the dead should be tolerated in the church, that the resurrection is not all that important. 15:1-58.
17. Our church is not convinced that it is our responsibility to care for others and provide for their needs. 16:1-4

#### SO HOW DID YOUR CHURCH SCORE?

Much better than the church in Corinth? If so, your church is above average. If not, then God's evaluation of the church in Corinth might fit your church to a "T". He said about them, "*And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there*

*is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?" 1 Corinthians 3:1-4*

The Corinthian church was a carnal church. That's what God says about it.

Every time I read the book of I Corinthians I am reminded of G. Campbell Morgan's comment on the Corinthian church. He said, "The church at Corinth was the church most under the influence of its culture." That is a great insight. It is also a description of churches today, IB churches included.

### **THE ONE FACT THAT COMMENDS THE CHURCH AT CORINTH - THEY HAD ALL THE GIFTS**

*1 Corinthians 1:7 "So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:"*

This church was possibly the most gifted church of them all. They had all the gifts that are listed in I Cor. 12, 13, and 14. We count over a dozen spiritual gifts in these three chapters. They had them all. It was a very gifted church!

### **WHY WAS THE CHURCH AT CORINTH SO GIFTED AND YET SO CARNAL?**

It is important to study the structure as well as the teachings of every book of the Bible. One important insight into the book of I Corinthians is that three vitally important chapters are given over to the "spirituals" of the local church. That's what chapters 12 to 14 address. The word, pneumatikos, in [I Cor. 12:1](#) "*Now concerning spiritual gifts...*" refers to the workings of the Holy Spirit in both the distributing, the administering of spiritual gifts AND the growth of the fruit of the Spirit in the members of the church at Corinth.

### **SPIRITUAL GIFTS, A SUMMARY –**

When we review what the New Testament teaches about spiritual gifts, we find that the gifts are divinely imparted abilities that God gives to us at conversion.

They are designed and provided to us for the service to the other members of the body. They are not intended to be used for self gratification, or for

bringing glory to the user. A study of Romans 12:5-8, I Cor. 12-14, Ephesians 4:8-16, and I Peter 4:10,11 will cover the subject of spiritual gifts.

### **THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT, A SUMMARY –**

There are many references in Scripture to fruit, over 70 in the New Testament. The key text is found in Galatians 5:22,23, where there are nine aspects of the fruit of the Spirit listed. Where spiritual gifts are seen to be God given spiritual abilities, the fruit of the Spirit pertains to spiritual attitudes.

Godly aptitudes, perspectives, and approaches to people are described as the fruit of the Spirit, "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance." I never read these verses without thinking of the quote (source unknown), "These verses are the shortest biography of Christ ever written!"

### **THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER OF I CORINTHIANS - HAVE WE MISUNDERSTOOD IT? -**

I Cor. 13 is used for everything but what God intended. Ecumaniacs, greeting card companies, and marriage counsellors all lay claim to parts of this passage, but God inspired it to teach one great lesson.

### **\*SPIRITUAL GIFTS ARE USELESS UNLESS THEY ARE EXERCISED IN THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT.**

1. Chapter 12 describes the gifts and the Spirit's distribution of them in the time of the apostles. It is important to note the carnality of the church as seen in the members' envy and proud disdain of others' gifts. The misuse of the gifts caused carnal divisions in the church.
2. At the end of chapter 12, God introduces the corrective remedy for this carnal use of the gifts when He says, "...and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way." And it is revealed in chapter 13.
3. We tend to skip over verses 1 to 3 in chapter 13 and rush into the (functional) definition of charity/love. But verses 1 to 3 actually describe a great truth which explains the carnality of the Corinthian church.

Note this analysis of God's diagnosis/indictment of their misuse of spiritual gifts,



1 Corinthians 13:1 *"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal."*

Here the biblical gift of speaking real languages never learned by the speaker is said to be simply noise, without meaning nor communication of revealed truth.

To state it simply, the exercise of one's speaking gift without charity, the fruit of the Spirit, is useless! No matter how eloquent and learned their words, no matter what vocabulary, no matter what powers of persuasive speech, if the love of God is not shed abroad in the heart of the speaker, if he does not communicate that as well, he might just as well sit down and remain mute.

1 Corinthians 13:2a *"And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; ( I am nothing.)"*

The next gifts mentioned refer to gifts of knowledge of biblical truth. And again, if they are not exercised in charity, the fruit of the Spirit, then the gifted person is nothing. That is, he has no personal worth to the body of believers. He himself is useless!

Knowledgeable, but of no profit to the local church! He may be a walking Bible encyclopedia, a storehouse of religious information, a one man Bible college, but..... no good to anybody!

1 Corinthians 13:2b *"and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing."*

Even the gift of faith, mountain shifting faith, makes the gifted brother a waste of space if it is exercised without the fruit of the Spirit. In the body of Christ, the muscle of faith is powerless unless it is moved by love, grown in us by the Spirit of God.

1 Corinthians 13:3 *"And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."*

This rarest of all the gifts, the gift of giving, may bankrupt itself to feed others, and even step up to the stake for martyrdom, but if it is not exercised in

the fruit of the Spirit, it brings NO reward. It profits neither the giver nor the recipient. God looks on the motive of the gifted brother's heart, and if love is absent, then he loses his crown. No fruit, no crown!

The rest of chapter 13 bears this out. And the first verse of chapter 14 brings the command, *"Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts...."* We are not exhorted here to pursue spiritual gifts, but to pursue, to focus on the fruit of the Spirit.

***If my spiritual gift is not exercised in the fruit of the Spirit, it is useless!***



### **SO HOW DOES THIS APPLY TO THE CHURCH I PASTOR OR THE CHURCH YOU PASTOR?**

Without a doubt, our churches are filled with gifted people. Some churches may even have all the gifts (we hold that the sign gifts no longer continue with us, but that the body gifts, as seen in Romans 12:5-8 are bestowed at salvation as God chooses, upon all believers). It ought to be mentioned that some of our churches have substituted natural gifts for spiritual gifts. Business management experts, vocal gymnasts, computer technicians, and audio visual doctors of philosophy are the leaders of these churches.

It grieves the Spirit of God that CEOpastors are the role models in so many churches, not godly men with dusty knees who know and love their Bibles almost as much as they love its Author. But all the gifts combined are useless if the fruit of the Spirit is missing!

No degree of gifting, and no hours spent polishing our gift will ever make up for the absence of love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. Gifts without fruit makes for a carnal, barren church.

That was the problem at Corinth. It is the problem in most of our churches today.

(God willing, in part 2 of The Corinthian Problem, we will deal with Growing The Fruit of The Spirit - Ed.)

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## DEACON TRUE SEZ -

I usually say no when our preacher invites me to go with him to a Pastors Fellowship meeting, but he talked me into it last week. He said the speaker, morning and evening, was a ninety five year old evangelist whose preaching had brought our Pastor to Christ forty years before. Well, that made it pretty hard to say no, so I went with him.

Glad I did.

He spoke twice on the subject, "The Death of the Great Commission." In the morning session he preached to us about the absence of simple gospel preaching in our churches' pulpits. He reproved the pastors for the shift of emphasis from "winning the lost to filling the pews" (and the offering plates). He exposed by name a number of well known Baptist leaders who use and promote church growth methods, and he showed from Scripture how their messages and methods are unbiblical, and how the pragmatism being practiced by most of our pastors is idolatrous.

By the end of the sermon most of the preachers there were very uncomfortable, and a few were weeping. The host pastor made an appeal, a most unusual one. He asked if those who were moved to respond would pray aloud. Several stood and poured out their hearts in confession to God. A few, maybe half a dozen, went to the altar and one of them just sobbed as he confessed to God how he had failed his people. Well, that response was contagious. Oh, one or two pastors walked out pretty angry, but those that stayed did business with God.

We never got to have lunch that day. So many preachers were pouring out their hearts to God that none of us even thought about fried chicken. About 3 o'clock the meeting broke up and we wandered off to find a place to think and a bite to eat. We were back early for the night meeting, but almost didn't get a seat. Word had got around and folks came from far and near. Some preachers heard about it and drove a hundred miles to be there for the night meeting.

The host pastor had spent hours that afternoon seeking God's blessing for the night meeting. I have to tell you, I've never been to a meeting like that

night's! No announcements, no rousing song service, no introduction of the speaker. The host pastor asked one of his men in the back of the auditorium to sing a couple of verses of a hymn. He then helped the old evangelist up the steps to the pulpit.



The old preacher read to us from Mark 5 the account of the Gadarene maniac and showed how, when the Lord refused the man's request to go with him, He sent him back home to his friends, "Go home to thy friends and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." (Mark 5:19) Then he gave us the title of the message,

"Have you been home yet?"

His voice was weak and quavering to begin with. The first line of the sermon was, "When any man is truly converted to Christ, he becomes a gospel preacher to his family and friends."

For the next half hour or so he described the decline of our churches from preaching a saving gospel to preaching a socialized gospel. We were shocked to hear him say that! And then he proceeded to prove his point. He demanded to know how many preachers still preach a simple, clear gospel? And if they do, how often do they preach it? How many churches still have a visitation program?

There was a deathly silence, no Amens at all. He demanded of us how many of our folks even know any lost people and are consistently speaking to them about the Lord Jesus Christ and their need to be saved? More silence. He queried if we are actively trying to win lost men to Christ, instead of to our churches? And do we still have Evangelistic Meetings in our churches, not just mini-revival meetings? Do we still print and distribute gospel literature? Is the gospel plainly stated on our churches' websites? Are our youth programs geared more toward entertainment and socializing than evangelizing and discipling the youth in

our churches? He demanded of us whether our pastors are still training our people to be fishers of men or are we making them crew members on cruise ships? It got awfully quiet there for a while. He reminded us that our churches are supposed to be "fishing boats, not theological submarines, not love boats, not pleasure barges, nor cruise ships!"

The main point of the sermon dealt with the converted demoniac going home to tell his friends "how great things Jesus had done for him." He showed us, initially, the people's superstitious rejection of Christ when they "prayed Him to depart out of their coasts."

He spoke of their fear of the changes they saw in the Gadarene. When they found him sitting, clothed, and in his right mind it terrified them and they drove Jesus from them. Then the old preacher hammered home to us the verses (Mark 7:31 - 8:1) that describe the return of Jesus to Decapolis.

After the converted demoniac "went home to his friends and told them of Christ", Jesus returned and was thronged by the multitudes. No longer were they afraid, no longer did they resist the message and ministry of Christ! Now the people came in droves! And many were converted!

What a difference it made for the converted demoniac to become an evangelist to the ten cities of Decapolis!

He closed the meeting with a call to pastors and evangelists and missionaries to renew their vows to simply preach the gospel. There wasn't room at the altar that night for all the preachers that responded so my preacher and I just knelt down by the pew and did serious business with God.

There's no way of knowing the results of that meeting in other churches, but I can tell you it set our preacher on fire. You ought to drop in sometime and meet the new believers at our little country church. Just look for the folks with the biggest smiles and brightest faces.

Strange, but we never hear our preacher preach about getting more folks in the door, or drawing a crowd. Since our preacher preached on "Going Home To Your Friends" we've hardly got room for all the baby Christians. He says to us over and over again, "Have you been home yet?"

Have you been home yet?"

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# Gold From Ophir

## "Principles of Faith"



Faith! Previous articles have noted the perception of faith, people of faith, and promises for faith, but herein let us park our thoughts on some principles of faith. We might even refer to this study as the progression of faith, because faith develops over time.

We often speak of someone being faithful, that is, being strict or thorough in the performance of a duty. Recently while waiting in an airport a younger gentleman took a seat next to me who had served in the U.S. Marine Corp. That served to remind me of a

visit I made on an older man a few days before who is often unable to get out to church services partly due to problems stemming from his stint in Vietnam over four decades ago. Both of these men knew well the slogan "Semper Fi," the Latin phrase translated "Forever Faithful." Believe me, once a U.S. Marine, always a U.S. Marine.

An elderly preacher was rebuked by one of his deacons one Sunday morning before the service. "Pastor," said the man, "something must be wrong with your preaching and your work. There's been

only one person added to the church in a whole year, and he's just a boy." The minister listened, his eyes moistening and his thin hand trembling. "I feel it all," he replied, "but God knows I've tried to do my duty." On that day the minister's heart was heavy as he stood before his flock. As he finished the message, he felt a strong inclination to resign. After everyone else had left, that one boy came to him and asked, "Do you think if I worked hard for an education, I could become a preacher—perhaps a missionary?" Again tears welled up in the minister's eyes. "Ah, this heals the ache I feel," he said. "Robert, I see the divine hand now. May God bless you, my boy. Yes I think you will become a preacher." Many years later an aged missionary returned to London from Africa. His name was spoken with reverence. Nobles invited him to their homes. He had added many souls to the kingdom of Christ, reaching even some of Africa's most savage chiefs. His name was Robert Moffat, the same Robert who years before had spoken to the pastor that Sunday morning in the old Scottish church. Of course, later on Moffat influenced David Livingstone whose work enabled thousands of missionaries to go to Africa (copied).

Men who are found faithful are committed to a cause. If they are to hear "Well done!" at the Judgment Seat of Christ pastors, missionaries, and church folks will have to be found faithful. But faithfulness that stands the test of time is a faithfulness that has developed over time. It is a faith that has been exercised. Unfortunately some excise faith, but thankfully some exercise their faith. A faith that develops into faithfulness is...

**1. Grounded downward (Heb 11:3,4,5,7).** Faith must be rooted in the Word. Just as creation came into being by the Word of God (v3), so faith to believe and behave develops due to the Scriptures. Faith is further grounded by our worship (v4). Abel's worship was right so his faith was right. Or was his faith right so his worship was right? Or is there a mix of the two such that both affect each other? People who are not faithful to the worship services of their church probably won't be found faithful at the grand worship service in heaven, do you think? Furthermore, Enoch was faithful in the midst of the faithless due to his walk (v5). A walk is a succession of steps. When I went for a walk this morning I journeyed farther than normal. It was a little after five o'clock, the air was a bit crisp, the stars were in

their glory with little light pollution to affect them, and I was in the rural area of southern Iowa on my mother's farm. Initially, my goal was to walk to the top of the hill and back. Then we stretched it to the little bridge farther on, and finally managed to walk all the way to the high way. Uh oh! Now I've got to walk back! Friend, each step just got a bit more difficult as the muscles were taxed beyond their normal use. Christianity is a walk, and the nearer we get to our goal, the more difficult the walk is for our spiritual muscles, BUT the whole process not only involves faith; it increases our faith. Work for God further grounds our faith (v7). What a task Noah must have had! Sun up to sun down, day in day out, good weather or bad for 120 years. Tell me his work did not cultivate his faith!

**2. Growing upward (Heb 11:7).** Faith that is grounded downward is a faith that grows upward. Small faith can increase to sizeable faith. Large faith is preceded by little faith. The faith to move a mountain once moved a molehill. Noah walked with his God prior to working for his God. Building an enormous structure such as the ark, beckoning the plethora of animals, and bringing a year's supply for everyone and everything on board was no small task. One wonders, though if during the 480 years prior to the ark assignment if the Lord didn't have other lesser lessons of faith for Noah to learn. It is an argument from silence, but we suspect if he walked with God in the midst of a wicked world there were plenty of steps of faith Noah had to take and thus did. Remember Luke 16:10,11? He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? To the stewards who had faithfully used their resources, the master said to each, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things (Mt 25:21,23). Is the principle of "little before lots" relegated to the days of Jesus only? Is it not a truth for us today? And was it not a truth for Noah in his day? How in the world did he keep on keeping on in the pre-flood era without a sizeable faith in what God had said? One hundred twenty years?!? How many of us would have quit within the first one hundred twenty days? Friend, don't expect to be given an ark-sized assignment if you are not being faithful in the ant-sized ones.



**3. Moving forward (Heb 11:8).** Faith steps; it is not stationary. Like love, it is lived. The familiar verse tells us God so loved that He gave. Love gives; faith does. If it is static, it becomes stagnant. Abraham's journey to Canaan from Ur was approximately 1600 km (1000 mi), about 2,640,000 steps at a good stride. Perhaps he rode an animal or on a cart most or all of the way, but the point is this--he could plod; he could go forward. It was just one step after another...in the same direction we might add. Faith takes us somewhere spiritually and even geographically at times. Every believer who has moved to a different place in the will of God to do the work of God has encountered the need for faith. Likewise, mature believers did not become mature overnight, but it took many "overnights" to become mature.

Day by day and with each passing moment faith pushed, pulled, and prodded an immature believer into a mature believer. Don't you just love to meet seasoned saints in their senior years who have lived a life for the Lord and will leave a legacy from which to learn? What step does God want you to take? Yes, it will require faith as it always does if it is from God.

**4. Glowing outward.** A stepping faith is a seen faith. Abraham's faith radiated. It affected others. First, it affected his family (vs9,11,20-22). Sarah, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph all lived and died believing the promises of God. Second, Abraham's faith affect future Israelites (vs23ff). Moses' parents, Moses, the Israelites fleeing Egypt, those entering Canaan, Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthae, David, Samuel, and the other prophets—all believed the same promises God has given Abraham. He believed them; they believed them. Abraham died without receiving them; they could certainly do the same, and many of them did. Abraham's faith affects folks today. Let me ask, who is your favorite Bible character? Is it Joseph, David, Elijah, Nehemiah or Esther? Why? Is it due to some act of faith on their part? How about you?

Are you someone's faith hero? You may already know this, but I'm not a fan of Facebook. And why? Because too much of it centers on self. I wish someone would start a Faithbook where the focus is on God. Oh wait, maybe God did when he wrote the first chapter of the book (Hebrews 11). If God continued to write this Faithbook, would you be included in the ensuing chapters? Does your faith glow?

**5. Gazing heavenward (vs10-16).** Perhaps the key to living a faith-filled and faith-directed life is found here. Note that Abraham looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Was this city Jerusalem? No, that was promised to his descendants. We think Abraham aspired to go as a citizen to heaven (v10). He had a hope that helped. Some church signs read, "We believe in the Bible, the Blood, and the Blessed Hope." This blessed hope refers to the coming of Christ for his own, and it is this heavenward gaze that can keep us going when we feel like stopping. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable (1Co 15:19). Near the end of his life, Paul wrote, In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began (Tit 1:2). If anyone was so heavenly minded he was so earthly good it was Paul.

But we also see from our text that Abraham and his followers also admitted they were strangers on earth (vs13-16). A heavenward gaze reminded them and reminds us we are just pilgrims passing through. When Sarah died, her husband testified to the sons of Heth, I am a stranger and sojourner with you (Gen 23:4). Likewise Jacob stated to Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years (Gen 47:9).

Brethren, if we are tied to this earth, we will never live a life of faith. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal (2Co 4:18). Abraham's view of heaven and that of his people DID this earth good. He wasn't so heavenly minded that he was no earthly good.

Of over 660 Nobel Prize winners, some 160 have been Jews. Men like Louis Pasteur (killing of germs in dairy products), Albert Einstein (theory of relativity, et.al.), Joseph Salk (father of the polio vaccine), Haym Solomon (father of modern banking), and Jacobi (father of pediatric medicine) all physically stemmed from Abraham.

Cannot those of us who are sons of Abraham spiritually do our bad world a world of good? We can do plenty of earthly good with a heavenly gaze.

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# A Few Insights Into the ESV Coming to a Bible College Near You?

(One of my earliest memories is that of my pastor boldly exposing the corrupt nature of the Revised Standard Version (RSV). It was in the mid 1950's. Over the years, as I began building my library, I collected a number of pamphlets and books that identified the modernists who translated, published, and promoted the RSV. Among those exposing and opposing the RSV were Lester Roloff, Carl McIntyre, and Bob Jones, Sr. It came as a surprise to me recently that Bob Jones University's book shop sells the ESV, the grandson of the RSV. (Not to mention the other play bibles you can buy there! - Ed.)

## 1. THE NRSV VS THE ESV - LAURENCE M. VANCE, PH.D. (FROM VANCE PUBLICATIONS)

The Revised Standard Version (RSV) was perhaps the most controversial version of the Bible ever translated. Its publication (the New Testament in 1946; the Old Testament in 1952) brought forth a multitude of books and pamphlets against it that attracted the attention of both the secular and religious press. Copies of the RSV were even burned.

The RSV relegated Mark 16:9-20 and John 7:53-8:11 to footnotes, attacked the deity of Christ by changing the punctuation of Romans 9:5, dropped the word begotten from John 3:16, replaced the word propitiation throughout the New Testament, and, in what became the most controversial passage of all, changed the word virgin to "young woman" in Isaiah 7:14. This is all in addition to the scores of omitted phrases and verses in the New Testament because of the corrupt Greek text that the RSV was translated from.

The RSV claimed to be an authorized revision of the 1901 American Standard Version (ASV). Many conservative evangelicals, however, disagreed, and controversy over the RSV led to the translating of two other well-known versions. The New American Standard Bible (NASB), first appearing as just the

Gospel of John in 1960, followed by the New Testament in 1963 and the Old Testament in 1971, also claimed to be an authorized revision of the ASV, hence its name. The translators of the other version took a different approach. Because the designation New American Standard was not needed, since this was an entirely new version and not a revision, the name chosen was the New International Version (NIV). It was released as a New Testament in 1973 and a complete Bible in 1978.

Soon after its publication, and repeated on other occasions, the RSV text was changed in many places. When the complete Bible was published in 1952, it incorporated about eighty changes in its New Testament text. So, in a sense, the 1952 edition was the first New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). In 1962, the whole of the RSV was slightly revised, but again, the designation NRSV was not used. In 1971, the official second edition of the RSV New Testament appeared, but it was still not termed the NRSV. It was not until 1990 that a Bible with the name NRSV was published.

The NRSV is the official revision of the RSV. In 1974, the National Council of Churches, which held the copyright on the RSV, authorized another revision of the RSV. The head of the Standard Bible Committee, the ecumenical committee formed in 1929 that was responsible for the text of the ASV and its revisions, was (since 1977) Bruce Metzger of Princeton—also one of the editors of the Nestle-Aland Greek text. The composition of this committee during the time that work on the NRSV was done included liberal Protestants, Roman Catholics, a Greek Orthodox, and several women. Like its predecessor, the NRSV also had a Jew on its translation committee.

According to Metzger, there were four major types of changes to be made to the text of the RSV: the elimination of archaisms, changes in paragraph structure and punctuation, attaining greater

accuracy, clarity, and euphony, and the elimination of masculine-oriented language.

Regarding archaisms, the NRSV attempted to finish what was started in the RSV. It completely eliminates the archaic second person plural personal pronouns (thee, thou, thy, thine) that the RSV retained only in reference to God. But the translators of the NRSV were very inconsistent, for not only does the NRSV retain many of the supposedly archaic words found in the Authorized Version (AV)—words like eventide, flagon, gird, haunt, milch, suppliants, and villainy—it often replaces a simple word or phrase in the AV with a more difficult word: the word knop is changed to "calyx" (Exo. 25:25), the word wanderers is changed to "decanters" (Jer. 48:12), and the word nations is changed to "goiim" (Jos. 12:23).

Regarding punctuation, there is one notable change for the better. In the notorious passage in the RSV that attacked the deity of Christ (Rom. 9:5), the original period was changed to a comma. The original RSV reading, however, is retained in a footnote.

Regarding greater accuracy, clarity, and euphony, the NRSV falls short. Instead of the wise men coming to worship Christ, they come "to pay him homage" (Mat. 2:2) Yet, the word worship is retained when Satan tells Jesus to "fall down and worship me" (Mat. 2:9). Even though cetology is the branch of zoology dealing with whales, the Greek word ketos, from which we get "cetology," is translated "sea monster" in the Lord's account of Jonah (Mat. 12:40). The NRSV fails to correct the RSV's "grow up to salvation" (1 Pet. 2:2). Instead, it merely changes it to: "grow into salvation." It is debatable if the introduction of the word "intercourse" (Num. 5:13, 20; Jud. 19:22; Hos. 3:3; Rom. 1:26, 27) contributes to euphony.

The main change found in the NRSV, and that which has been the most controversial, is its elimination of masculine-oriented language. The NRSV was the first major "inclusive-language" translation.

The preface to the NRSV laments the "inherent bias of the English language towards the masculine gender, a bias that in the case of the Bible has often restricted or obscured the meaning of the original text."

There are a number of ways in which the NRSV "desexed" the Bible. The chief technique was to use

the plural instead of the singular, but other conventions included using generic terms, using indefinite pronouns, altering third person constructions to first or second person, and replacing active verbs with passive ones.

So instead of God creating man, he creates "humankind" (Gen. 5:1). Carried to its logical consistency, this gives us: "For there is one God; there is also one mediator between God and humankind, Christ Jesus, himself human" (1 Tim. 2:5). In an effort to get rid of the word brethren, the NRSV many times adds the phrase "and sisters" without any support from the Greek text it professes to follow (e.g., Rom. 12:1; 1 Cor. 4:6; Gal. 5:13; 1 Thes. 2:1; 1 Tim. 4:6; Heb. 2:11).

But getting rid of the word brethren also introduced a strange irony. The RSV was criticized as Communist Bible because it was produced by the National Council of Churches. Yet, it was not until the publication of the NRSV that the word "comrades" was introduced (Rev. 12:10, 19:10, 22:9)—a word with definite communistic overtones.

Because of the controversy surrounding the use of gender-inclusive language in Bible translations, another revision of the RSV was published in 2001—one that would correct its inaccuracies, update some of its archaic language, and make it more literal. There was a problem, however, since the designation NRSV was already taken, another name had to be chosen. The name decided on was The English Standard Version (ESV).

So now we have in the marketplace two rival revisions of the RSV—the NRSV and the ESV—both claiming to be legitimate successors.

The ESV has its roots in the discussions that took place back in 1997 at the Focus on the Family headquarters in Colorado regarding the controversy over the proposed inclusive-language revisions to the NIV. An agreement was reached in 1998 with the National Council of Churches to use the text of the RSV as the basis for a new translation.

The preface to the ESV claims that "each word and phrase in the ESV has been carefully weighed against the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, to ensure the fullest accuracy and clarity and to avoid under-

translating or overlooking any nuance of the original text." The ESV seeks to "capture the echoes and overtones of meaning that are so abundantly present in the original texts" and to "carry over every possible nuance of meaning in the original words of Scripture into our own language."

There are three areas addressed in the preface to the ESV that are the direct result of criticisms leveled at many recent modern versions.

First, the ESV claims to be "an 'essentially literal' translation that seeks as far as possible to capture the precise wording of the original text and the personal style of each Bible writer." The preface openly criticizes the "thought-for-thought" instead of "word-for-word" translation philosophy of the NIV and other translations.

Second, the ESV "carries forward classic translation principles in its literary style." This refers to the retaining of theological terminology—words like grace, faith, justification, sanctification, redemption, regeneration, reconciliation, and propitiation. As was pointed out earlier, the RSV had removed words like propitiation from the Bible.

And third, the ESV has as its goal, in regards to gender language, to "render literally what is in the original." This means that although "anyone" might replace "any man" and "people" might replace "men" where there are no words corresponding to "man" and "men" in the original languages, the words man and men are "retained where a male meaning component is part of the original Greek or Hebrew." The use of the generic "he" is usually retained "because this is consistent with similar usage in the original languages."

The publisher, Crossway Books, has assembled an impressive translation team. The advisory council includes well-known personalities like Max Lucado, Paige Patterson, Carl Henry, Timothy George, R. C. Sproul, Joseph Stowell, Joni Eareckson Tada, and John Walvoord (now deceased).

The Translation Review Scholars were chosen to review selected books of the Old or New Testament based on their special expertise. This group includes Daniel Block and Thomas Schreiner of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Craig Blomberg of

Denver Seminary, Darrell Bock and Daniel Wallace of Dallas Theological Seminary, Moises Silva of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Daniel Gard of Concordia Theological Seminary, Robert Gordon of Cambridge University, and Scott Hafemann of Wheaton College.

The Translation Oversight Committee, which was responsible for the final review and approval of the ESV, includes J. I. Packer (the general editor of the entire project), Robert and William Mounce, Vern Poythress, R. Kent Hughes, Wayne Grudem, and Paul House.

A variety of special features and ancillary materials are already available to complement the ESV. A comprehensive concordance to the ESV, compiled by one of the translators, was published last year. The text of the entire Bible is available for search on the publisher's website. A CD-ROM with the complete text of the ESV is included with many editions.

The ESV is also available for various software applications. An anglicized edition with British spellings for some words is available from HarperCollins UK. Future plans for the ESV include large and giant print editions, a study Bible, and an audio version of the New Testament.

The ESV does correct some of the more egregious errors found in the RSV. "Virgin" is restored to Isaiah 7:14. The deity of Christ is restored in Romans 9:5. "Son" is restored to Psalm 2:12. However, because the ESV follows corrupt Greek texts (the United Bible Societies Greek New Testament, 4th ed. and the Nestle-Aland Novum Testamentum Graece, 27th ed.), it is filled with corrupt readings and omissions of phrases and entire verses.

Some corrupt readings include: Joseph is Christ's "father" in Luke 2:33, the words of Malachi are ascribed to "Isaiah" in Mark 1:2, Christians will give account at the "judgment seat of God" in Romans 14:10, the day of Christ is changed to the "Day of the Lord" in 2 Thessalonians 2:2, an "eagle" speaks in Revelation 8:13 instead of an angel, God is not manifest in the flesh in 1 Timothy 3:16, just an unnamed "He," those after the church age who "wash their robes" can partake of the tree of life instead of those who "do his commandments" (Rev. 22:14), and in the genealogy of Christ, the kings Asa

and Amon are replaced by "Asaph" (Mat. 1:7) and "Amos" (Mat. 1:10).

The ESV completely omits the following verses from the New Testament: Matthew 17:21, 18:11, 23:14; Mark 7:16, 9:44, 9:46, 11:26, 15:28; Luke 17:36, 23:17; John 5:4; Acts 8:37, 15:34, 28:29; Romans 16:24. In no instances, however, are the verses renumbered to account for the missing verses—the number of the omitted verses is simply skipped.

Omissions from verses include: "without a cause" (Mat. 5:22), "and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery" (Mat. 19:9), "and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt" (Mark 9:49), "but by every word of God" (Luke 4:4), "struck him on the face" (Luke 22:64), "even the Son of man which is in heaven" (John 3:13), "going through the midst of them, and so passed by" (John 8:59), "I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem" (Acts 18:21), "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:1), "Thou shalt not bear false witness" (Rom. 13:9), "for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof" (1 Cor. 10:28), "Lord" (2 Cor. 4:10), "that ye should not obey the truth" (Gal. 3:1), "of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 3:14), "through his blood" (Col. 1:14), "Lord" (1 Tim. 1:1), "our Saviour" (Tit. 1:4), "by himself" (Heb. 1:3), and didst set him over the works of thy hands" (Heb 2:7), "for us" (1 Pet. 4:1), and "before the throne of God" (Rev. 14:5). Half of Luke 9:55-56 is also omitted, as is half of Acts 9:5-6 and 1 John 5:7-8.

Like their predecessor, the NRSV and the ESV claim to be in the "Tyndale-King James legacy." The Revised Version of 1885 even made the same claim. It had to—if it wanted to sell. The claim, however, is just as false now as it was then.

How can a Bible be in the "Tyndale-King James legacy" that removes the command to study the Bible (2 Tim. 2:15), claims that all who left Egypt rebelled (Heb. 3:16), removes the warning against science (1 Tim. 6:20), changes corrupters of the Bible to peddlers (2 Cor. 2:17), removes the warning against being effeminate (1 Cor. 6:9), changes the reference to giants being on the earth before the flood (Gen. 6:4), changes the command to abstain from all appearance of evil (1 Thes. 5:22), and says that the love of money is not the root of all evil (1 Tim. 6:10)?

So even though the ESV is a substantial improvement over both the RSV and the NRSV, it still has a major obstacle that it will never overcome—the "inestimable treasure that excelleth all the riches of the earth": the King James 1611 Authorized Version.

## **2. ESV BIBLE TRANSLATION REVISIONS 'POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS,' BIBLICAL SCHOLAR WARNS**

By Brandon Showalter , CP Reporter September 17, 2016|9:42 am

A debate is stirring over revisions made to the final translation of the English Standard Version Bible regarding gender, with one biblical scholars saying the changes are "potentially dangerous."

The Crossway Board of Directors and the ESV Translation Oversight Committee said in a statement that the 52 words revised in 29 verses were "the culmination of more than 17 years of comprehensive work by the committee, as authorized and initiated by the Crossway Board in 1998."

Crossway added that the 2016 edition is a "Permanent text of the ESV Bible [and will remain] unchanged throughout the life of the copyright."

One of the controversial changes can be found in Genesis 3:16. Editors changed the previous translation of Genesis 3:16 which said, "Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you." The verse has now been changed to read, "Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you."

Northern Seminary New Testament professor Scot McKnight believes the word changes in the newly revised ESV Bible, such as those found in Genesis 3:16, have profoundly negative implications.

"This new translation of Genesis 3:16 suggests the curse against the woman is an act of God (a curse) that seals estrangement, alienation and tension between females and males," McKnight said in an interview with The Christian Post on Thursday. "By so rendering this verse, the ESV creates the impression that females and males are contrarians with one another."



"Some think they make women rebellious and men authoritarian in response. That is a sad and potentially dangerous interpretation for it gives the wrong kind of males a ready-made excuse for domination," he added.

Other translations of the Bible, such as the The New International Version and the New Revised Standard Version, change terms like "man" and "brethren" to "human beings" and "brothers and sisters" to show that the writer is referring to both sexes instead of only men.

On Tuesday, Carolyn Custis James, a professor at Biblical Theological Seminary in Hatfield, Pennsylvania, noted in a post on Missio Alliance that "because of the awkwardness of the ESV translation, I've heard pastors in churches with ESV Bibles in the pews abruptly interrupt their public Bible reading to explain that the actual meaning of the text is "brothers and sisters."

"That modern linguistic clarification doesn't make the text gender-neutral, but rather gender-accurate — reflecting the actual meaning of the biblical text," she said.

Renowned systematic theologian and Phoenix Seminary professor Wayne Grudem, a complementarian who was the general editor of the latest ESV translation, argues in his book, Systematic Theology, that "man" should be retained.

"The theological issue is whether there is a suggestion of male leadership or headship in the family from the beginning of Creation. The fact that God did not choose to call the human race "woman,"

but "man," probably has some significance for understanding God's original plan for men and women," Grudem writes in the book.

The Christian Post reached out to Grudem to further unpack this comment but he was not available for comment by press time.

Other changes made to the ESV Bible include verses 1 Kings 8:48, Ephesians 1:5, and James 2:10.

1 Kings 8:48 has been changed from "If they repent with all their mind and with all their heart in the land of their enemies," to now, "If they repent with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies."

Ephesians 1:5 earlier read, "He predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will." It now reads, "He predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will."

James 2:10 has been changed from, "For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it," to "For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it."

(To read the entire article see <http://www.christianpost.com/news/esv-bible-translation-revisions-potentially-dangerous-biblical-scholar-warns-169695/>)

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# HOPE BIBLICAL COUNSELING CENTER

A Ministry of Hope Baptist Church

Everybody Needs Hope • 1 Thessalonians 4:13 • Helping people change their lives Biblically

DR. TERRY L. COOMER  
Founder & Director

## Notable Quotes and Quotable Notes -

- The child of God must be willing to be a channel through which God's abundant blessings flow. This channel is narrow and shallow at first, yet some of the waters of God's bounty can pass through. If we cheerfully yield ourselves to this purpose, the channel becomes wider and deeper, allowing more of the bounty of God to pass through. We cannot limit the extent to which God may use us as instruments in communicating blessing if we are willing to yield ourselves to Him and careful to give Him all the glory. ~ George Müller.

- "And yet some people actually imagine that the revelation in God's Word is not enough to meet our needs. They think that God from time to time carries on an actual conversation with them, chatting with them, satisfying their doubts, testifying to His love for them, promising them support and blessings. As a result, their emotions soar; they are full of bubbling joy that is mixed with self-confidence and a high opinion of themselves. The foundation for these feelings, however, does not lie within the Bible itself, but instead rests on the sudden creations of their imaginations. These people are clearly deluded. God's Word is for all of us and each of us; He does not need to give particular messages to particular people." ~ Jonathan Edwards.

- Every age of lawlessness is characterized by "lawless lawmen". Those who despise dominion and yet crave the exercise of it become the heroes of the masses. They refuse to be under authority to anyone, but expect to be in authority over everyone. "Who have said, With our tongue will we prevail; our lips are our own: who is lord over us?" Psalm 12:4 Albert Barnes displayed excellent insights into this when he wrote on 2 Peter 2:10 "But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. And despise government." Marg., *dominion*. That is, they regard all government in the state, the church, and the family, as an evil. Advocates for unbridled freedom of all sorts; declaimers on liberty and on the evils of oppression; defenders of what they regard as the rights of injured man, and yet secretly themselves lusting for the exercise of the very power which they would deny to others--they make no just distinctions about what constitutes true freedom, and in their zeal

array themselves against government in all forms. No topic of declamation would be more popular than this, and from none would they hope to secure more followers; for if they could succeed in removing all respect for the just restraints of law, the way would be open for the accomplishment of their own purposes, in setting up a dominion over the minds of others. It is a common result of such views, that men of this description become impatient of the government of God himself, and seek to throw off all authority, and to live in the unrestrained indulgence of their vicious propensities. ~ B. Ferraro.

- The antithesis of the objective Word of God, mysticism is defined by The Merriam-Webster Dictionary as "the belief that direct knowledge of God, spiritual truth, or ultimate reality can be attained through subjective experience such as intuition or insight," and adds that it is "vague speculation, a belief without sound basis." Google gives this definition: "belief characterized by self-delusion or dreamy confusion of thought, especially when based on the assumption of occult qualities or mysterious agencies." A mystical worldview, which is intensifying in both the world and its religions, will be foundational to the coming one-world religion. ~ The Berean Call (Tom McMahon).

- Adjectives in English absolutely have to be in this order: opinion/size/age/shape/colour/origin/material/purpose and then the Noun they describe. So you can have a lovely little old rectangular green French silver whittling knife. But if you mess with that word order in the slightest you will sound like a maniac. It's an odd thing that every English speaker uses that list, but almost none of us could write it out. And since size comes before colour, green, great dragons can't exist. ~ quoted by Matthew Anderson.

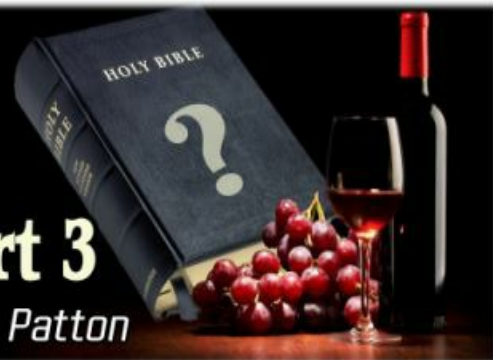
- 7 habits of optimistic people

1. Expressing gratitude
2. Donating time and energy to others
3. Being interested in other people
4. Surrounding yourself with cheerful people
5. Refusing to be friends with complainers
6. Be quick to forgive, slow to be offended
7. Smile at every opportunity

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# Bible Wines and the Laws of Fermentation - Part 3

By William S. Patton



(The issue of alcohol consumption is more relevant today than ever before, not only for Christians, but for society in general. It is assumed almost universally in evangelical circles that social drinking is acceptable. Total abstinence is thought to be legalistic, or uncultured. William Patton researched the subject thoroughly, beginning in 1820, eventually publishing his findings in 1873. His conclusion was that it was possible for the ancients to preserve new (unfermented) wine, or grape juice, without it becoming alcoholic, and that the processes for preventing fermentation were well known to men long before the time of Christ. His book "Bible Wines and the Laws of Fermentation" is now in the public domain. It should be read by every Christian, especially by every pastor, missionary, and evangelist. We have made the entire book available in segments in Heads Up. It can be read from the June and August issues (2016) to the present issue and following issues yet to come. - Ed.)

The ancients had several motives for boiling the unfermented juice. They knew from experience that the juice, by reason of the heat of the Mediterranean climate and the sweetness of the grapes it would speedily turn sour. To preserve it sweet, they naturally resorted to the simple and easy method of boiling. The art of distillation was then unknown; it was not discovered until the ninth century.

## ONE METHOD WAS FILTRATION

By filtration, the gluten or yeast is separated from the juice of the grape. Whilst the juice will pass through the filtering implements, the gluten will not, and, being thus separated, the necessary conditions of fermentation are destroyed.

**Donovan**, already quoted, states that, "if the juice be filtered and deprived of its gluten or ferment, the production of alcohol is impossible.

**Dr. Ure** says, as previously stated, that fermentation may be prevented "by the separation of the yeast either by the filter or by subsidence."

The ancient writers, when speaking of the removal of the vim, vi, vires, that is, the potency or fermentable power of the wine, use the following strong words eunuchrum, castratum, effoeminatum — thus expressing the thoroughness of the process by which all fermentation was destroyed. — A.-B. 224.

**Plutarch**, born A.D. 60, in his Symposium, says: "Wine is rendered old or feeble in strength when it is frequently filtered. The strength or spirit being thus excluded, the wine neither inflames the brain nor infests the mind and the passions, and is much more pleasant to drink." —Bible Commentary p. 278. In this passage, we are instructed that the filter was not a mere strainer, such as the milkmaid uses, but was such an instrument as forced the elements of the grape-juice asunder, separating the gluten, and thus taking away the strength, the spirit, which inflames the head and infests the passions.

**Pliny**, liber xxiii. cap. 24, says: "Utilissimum (vinum) omnibus sacco viribus fractis. The most useful wine has all its force or strength broken by the filter." — Bible Commentary, pp. 168 and 211.

Others hold that the true rendering is: "For all the sick, the wine is most useful when its forces have been broken by the strainer." This does not relieve the difficulty; for, when the forces of the wine, which is the alcohol, have been broken (fractis, from frango, to break in pieces, to dash to pieces), what then is left but the pure juice? The next sentence of Pliny clearly states that the vires or forces of the wine are produced by fermentation: "Meminerimus succum esse qui fervendo vires e musto sibi fecerit." "We must bear in mind that there is a succus, which,

by fermenting, would make to itself a wires out of the must." The succus represents the gluten or yeast, the detention of which in the filter would effectually prevent all fermentation. — Nott, Edition by F. R. Lees, p. 211. The strainer (saccus) separates the gluten; for in no other way can it break the forces, the fermenting power.

**Smith**, in his Greek and Roman Antiquities, says: "The use of the saccus (filter), it was believed, diminished the strength of the liquor. For this reason it was employed by the dissipated in order that they might be able to swallow a greater quantity without becoming intoxicated." Again: "A great quantity of sweet wines was manufactured by checking the fermentation." **Prof. C. Anthon** makes a similar statement in his Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities.

Again, **Pliny**: "Inveterari vina saccisque castrari." "Wines were rendered old and castrated or deprived of all their vigor by filtering." — Nott, London Edition.

"Ut plus capiamus vini sacco frangimur vires;" that we may drink the more wine, we break in pieces, vires, the strength or spirit, Sacco, by the filter. He adds that they practised various incentives to increase their thirst. — Bible Commentary, p. 168.

On the words of **Horace**, "vina liques," Car. lib. i. ode ii., the Delphin Notes says: "Be careful to prepare for yourself wine percolated and defecated by the filter, and thus rendered sweet and more in accordance with nature and female taste." Again: "The ancients filtered and defecated their must repeatedly before it could have fermented; and thus the faeces which nourish the strength of the wine being taken away, they rendered the wine itself more liquid, weaker, lighter and sweeter, and more pleasant to drink." — Bible Commentary, p. 168, and Nott, London Edition, p. 79.

**Captain Treat**, in 1845, wrote: "When on the south coast of Italy, last Christmas, I enquired particularly about the wines in common use, and found that those esteemed the best were sweet and unintoxicating. The boiled juice of the grape is in common use in Sicily. The Calabrians keep their intoxicating and unintoxicating wines in separate apartments. The bottles were generally marked.

From enquiries, I found that unfermented wines were esteemed the most. It was drunk mixed with water. Great pains were taken in the vintage season to have a good stock of it laid by. The grape-juice was filtered two or three times, and then bottled, and some put in casks and buried in the earth — some kept in water (to prevent fermentation).— Dr. Lees' Works, vol 2. p. 144.

Gluten is as indispensable to fermentation, whether vinous or acetous, as is sugar. It is a most insoluble body until it comes in contact with the oxygen of the atmosphere; but by frequent filtering of the newly-pressed juice, the gluten is separated from the juice, and thus fermentation prevented.

#### ANOTHER METHOD IS SUBSIDENCE

Chemical science teaches that the gluten may be so effectually separated from the juice by subsidence as to prevent fermentation. The gluten, being heavier than the juice, will settle to the bottom by its own weight if the mass can be kept from fermentation for a limited period. Chemistry tells us that, if the juice is kept at a temperature below 45°, it will not ferment.

**Dr. Ure** says: "By lowering the temperature to 45°, if the fermenting mass becomes clear at this temperature and be drawn off from the subsided yeast, it will not ferment again, though it should be heated to the proper pitch." — Bible Commentary, p. 168.

**Pliny**, liber xiv. c. 9, when speaking of a wine called Eggslices, that is, always sweet, says: "Id event cara. "That wine is produced by care." He then gives the method: "Mergunt eam protinus in aqua cados donee bruma transeat et consuetudo fiat algendi." "They plunge the casks, immediately after they are filled from the vat, into water, until winter has passed away and the wine has acquired the habit of being cold." — Kitto, ii. 955; A.-B. 217; Smith's Antiquities.

Being kept below 45°, the gluten settled to the bottom, and thus fermentation was prevented.

**Columella** gives the receipt: "Vinum dulce sic facere oportet." "Gather the grapes and expose them for three days to the sun; on the fourth, at mid-day,



tread them; take the mustum lixivium; that is, the juice which flows into the lake before you use the press, and, when it has settled, add one ounce of powdered iris; strain the wine from its faeces, and pour it into a vessel. This wine will be sweet, firm or durable, and healthy to the body.” — Nott, London Edition 213; A.-B. 216.

We notice in this receipt:

- 1, the lixivium, which the lexicon (Leverett) defines “must, which flows spontaneously from grapes before they are pressed;”
- 2, this is allowed to settle, the gluten thus subsiding;
- 3, pounded iris is put into the juice, and then it is strained or filtered.

Here are three combined operations to prevent fermentation.

The same author, liber xii, cap. 29 (see Nott and A.-B. 216), mentions a receipt: “That your fruit, take the newest must from the lake, put into a new amphora, bung it up, and cover it very carefully with pitch, lest any water should enter; then immerse it in a cistern or pond of pure cold water, and allow no part of the amphora to remain above the surface. After forty days, take it out, and it will remain sweet for a year.”

**Prof. C. Anthon** gives the same receipt in his Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities. We here notice: 1, that the newest — the unfermented juice — is taken; 2, it is put in a new amphora or jar free from all ferment from former use; 3, the air is perfectly excluded; 4, it is immersed in cold water for forty days. Being below 45°, fermentation could not commence. Thus there was ample time for the gluten to settle at the bottom, thus leaving the juice pure and sweet.

**Columella**, liber xii. cap. 51, gives a receipt for making oleum gleucinum: “To about ninety pints of the best must in a barrel, eighty pounds of oil are to be added, and a small bag of spices sunk to the place where the oil and wine meet; the oil to be poured off on the ninth day. The spices in the bag are to be pounded and replaced, filling up the cast with another eighty pounds of oil; this oil to be drawn off after seven days.” — Bible Commentary, p. 297.

Here notice:

- 1, The best must — the unfermented juice — is taken;
- 2, This, when in the cask, is covered with oil, which excludes the air from the juice;
- 3, A bag of spices is placed in contact with the juice;
- 4, After nine days, in which the gluten would settle, the oil is poured off;
- 5, The spices are pounded and replaced, oil again is poured in, to remain seven days, and then drawn off, leaving the juice pure and unfermented.

#### ANOTHER METHOD WAS DEPURATION

The ancients preserved some of their wines by depurating them.

“The must, or new wine,” says **Mr. T. S. Carr**, “was refined with the yolks of pigeon eggs (Roman Antiquities), which occasioned the subsidence of the albumen or ferment. But on the new wine being allowed to stand, this principle would subside by natural gravity; hence the ancients poured off the upper and luscious portion of the wine into another vessel, repeating the process as often as necessary, until they procured a clear, sweet wine which would keep.” — Kitto, ii. 955.

**Harmer**, on the authority of Charden, observes that “in the East they frequently pour wine from vessel to vessel; for when they begin one, they are obliged immediately to empty it into smaller vessels or into bottles, or it would grow sour.” Chemistry teaches that sweet juices in hot climates, if left to themselves, immediately pass into the acetous fermentation and become sour.

To avoid this, the above process was adopted.

#### THEY SOMETIMES USED FUMIGATION

**Dr. Ure** states that fermentation may be stopped by the application or admixture of substances containing sulphur; that the operation consists partly in absorbing oxygen, whereby the elimination of the yeasty particles is prevented. Adams in his Roman Antiquities, on the authority of Pliny and others, says “that the Roman fumigated their wines with the fumes of sulphur; that they also mixed with the mustum, newly pressed juice, yolks of eggs, and other articles containing sulphur. When thus defaecabantur (from defaeco, ‘to cleanse from the

dregs, to strain through a strainer, refine, purify, defecate') it was poured (diffusum) into smaller vessels or casks covered over with pitch, and bunged or stopped up."

Miller's Gardener's Dictionary, article Wine, says "The way to preserve new wine, in the state of must, is to put it up in very strong but small casks, firmly closed on all sides, by which means it will be kept from fermenting. But if it should happen to fall into fermentation, the only way to stop it is by the fumes of sulphur." — Dr. Lee's Works, vol. 2.

Here we notice two important facts. The first is, that the exclusion of the air from the fresh juice will prevent fermentation. The second is, that, when fermentation has commenced, the fumes of sulphur will arrest it. How more certainly it will prevent fermentation if applied to the new wine.

**Cyrus Reading** says of sulphur, "Its object is to impart to wine clearness and the principle of preservation, and to prevent fermentation." — Nott, London Edition p. 82.

**Mr. T. S. Carr** says that the application of the fumarium to the mellowing of wines was borrowed from the Asiatics, and that the exhalation would go on until the wine was reduced to the state of a syrup." — Kitto, ii. 956.

"Such preparations," says Sir Edward Barry, "are made by the modern Turks, which they frequently carry with them on long journeys, and occasionally take as a strengthening and reviving cordial." — Kitto, ii. 956.

"In the London Encyclopaedia 'stum' is termed an unfermented wine; to prevent it from fermenting, the casks are matched, or have brimstone burnt in them. — Nott, London Edition p. 82.

**Count Dandolo**, on the Art of Preserving the Wines of Italy, first published at Milan, 1812, says, "The last process in wine-making is sulphurization: its object is to secure the most oncontinued preservation of all wines, even of the very commonest sort." — Nott.

A familiar illustration and confirmation may be had from the expressed juice of the apple. If the fresh unfermented apple-juice is not cider, what is it?

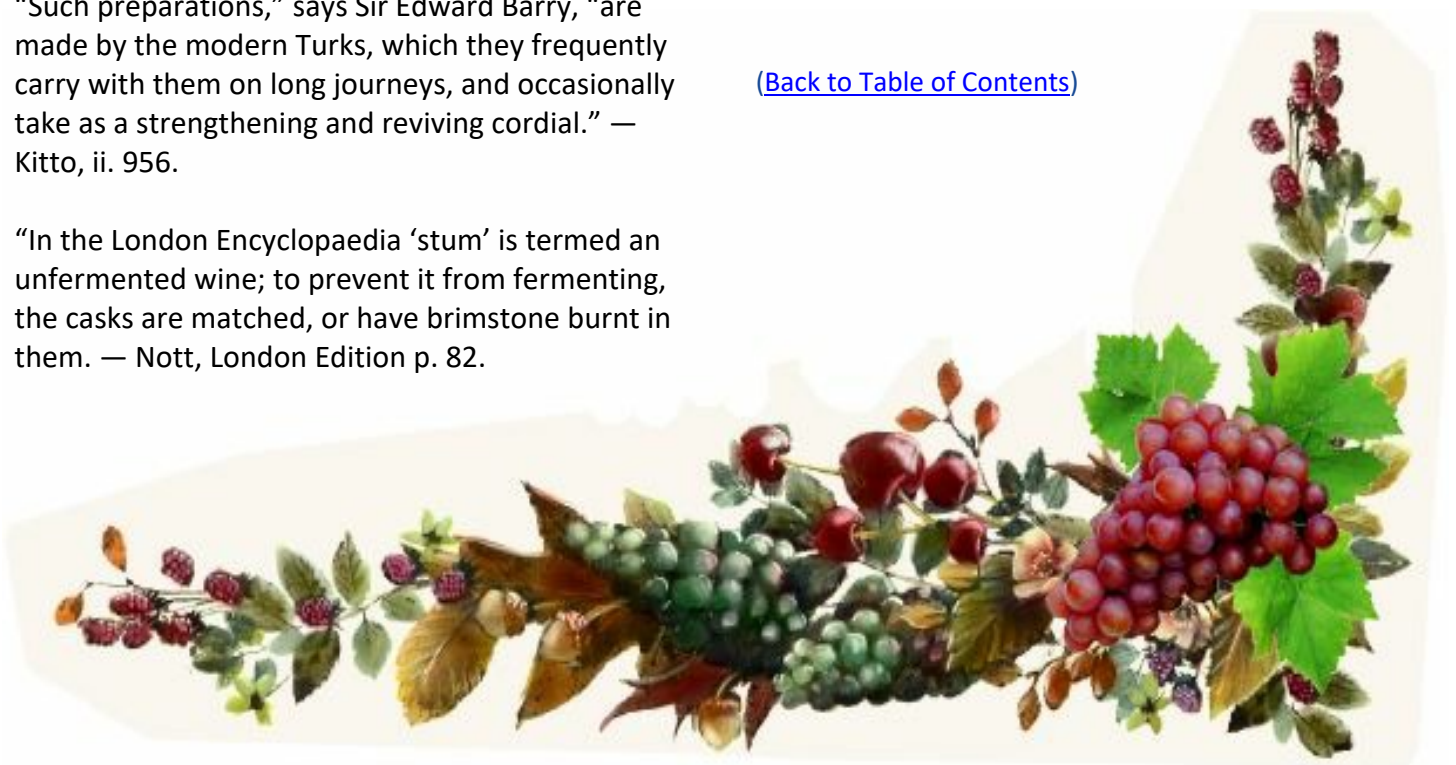
Every boy, straw in hand, knows that it is cider — so does every farmer and housewife. After it has fermented, it is also called cider. It is a generic word, applicable to the juice of the apple in all its stages, just as yayin in the Hebrew, oinos in the Greek, vinum in the Latin, and wine in the English are generic words, and denote the juice of the grape in all conditions.

When the barrel is filled with the fresh unfermented juice of the apple, add sulphur, or mustard-seed, make the barrel air-tight, and keep it where it is cold, and fermentation will not take place. When the gluten has subsided and, by its specific gravity, has settled in the bottom, the pure unfermented juice may be bottled and kept sweet.

This, men call cider; they have no other name for it.

In all these four methods, but one object is sought — it is to preserve the juice sweet.

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# Are We SURPRISED?



- PENTECOSTAL CHURCH IN NORTH CAROLINA IS TURNED INTO ISLAMIC CENTER -

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/pentecostal-church-north-carolina-turned-into-islamic-center-183902/>

- CHRISTIAN PASTOR IN BIBLE BELT ADMITS PERSONALLY WORSHIPPING ALLAH -

<http://www.wnd.com/2017/05/allah-takes-over-church-in-heart-of-u-s-bible-belt/>

- POPE FRANCIS' LOVE FOR COMMUNIST MENTOR -

(Very interesting article. - Ed)

<https://spectator.org/pope-franciss-communist-mentor/>



## ROMAN CATHOLIC CLERGY WELCOMES ISLAM INTO THE "CHURCH", THEN BOWS TO IT

Last July, for the first time during a Mass in Italy, a verse of the Koran was recited from the altar. A priest in the south of Italy enraged parishioners by dressing the Virgin Mary in a Muslim burqa [also known as hijab, chadri or paranja in Central Asia] for his church's Christmas Nativity scene...

The Roman Catholic clergy is probably disoriented by Pope Francis himself; he was the first to allow the reading of Islamic prayers and Koran readings from the Vatican.

The Pope embraced religious relativism when it comes with Islam. He repeated that Islamist violence is the work of "a small group of fundamentalists" who, according to him, have nothing to do with Islam. Church of England Bishop Harries suggested that Prince Charles's coronation service should be opened with a Koran reading. In the US, more than 50 churches, including the Washington National Cathedral, hold Koran readings.



- SURVEY: 61 PERCENT OF PRACTICING CHRISTIANS AGREE WITH SOME 'NEW SPIRITUALITY' BELIEFS -

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/survey-61-percent-of-practicing-christians-agree-with-some-new-spirituality-beliefs-183173/>

- HILLSONG'S RUSH TO ROME ACCELERATES....01 MAY 2017 -

<http://blogspot.us15.list-manage2.com/track/click?u=b76cb8219f474264221a93c7f&id=1d4ee6f394&e=7b07e57129>

- ROMAN CATHOLICISM PUTS MARY ON THE CROSS -

<https://www.wayoflife.org/reports/roman-catholic-church-puts-mary-on-cross.php>

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## Lifting Up The STANDARD

*"WHEN THE ENEMY SHALL COME IN LIKE A FLOOD, THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD SHALL LIFT UP A STANDARD AGAINST HIM" (ISAIAH 59:19).*

An Outreach Ministry of FairHavens Baptist Church  
[www.fairhavensbaptist.net](http://www.fairhavensbaptist.net)

CHALLENGING AND ENCOURAGING GOD'S REMNANT TO REMAIN FAITHFUL





# Needing a Starving

## From John Phillips' Commentary on Philippians 4



*"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).*

I must add one other thing, however, for it is sometimes true that in God's sight we have a need for that which is not so pleasant. We need to be disciplined, taught, or tested. If that is the case, then it is also true that Philippians 4:19 is a promise of God to supply the unpleasant discipline and testing.

Early in his ministry Harry Ironside had an experience that illustrates this provision. On one occasion he had acted on faith, as he often did, to preach for two weeks in Fresno, California. But the time came, surprisingly to him, when he was entirely out of money and had no funds with which to eat. He was even forced to check out of his hotel room and leave his suitcase at a drugstore to be picked up later.

There was some complaining and bitterness. When the thought of Philippians 4:19 crossed his mind—*And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus*—his spirit rebelled.

"Why then doesn't he do it?" he questioned. It seemed that God had promised, but he was no longer keeping his word. That night, as he settled down under a tree on the lawn of the courthouse in

Fresno, God spoke to Ironside concerning things about which he had grown careless. In his prayer and meditation he experienced a spiritual awakening.

From that time on the work went better. Old friends appeared, first to invite him to lunch and later to provide accommodation. The church to which he was ministering took a collection to help him out on his return journey.

At the end he went to the post office and found a letter from his father, much to his surprise. He opened it, and there staring him in the face was a postscript that said, "God spoke to me through Philippians 4:19 today. He has promised to supply all our need. Some day he may see that I need a starving! If he does, he will supply that."

Ironside says, "Oh, how real it all seemed then! I saw that God had been putting me through that test in order to bring me closer to himself, and to bring me face to face with things that I had been neglecting."

He wrote later that he wished to share the experience with others who may be going through similar times of testing.

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### The Mobile Phone and the Christian Home and Church

#### A Youth Discipleship Course

*by David W. Cloud*

This practical and far-reaching youth discipleship course deals with the parent's part, the church's part, and the youth's part in winning and discipling young people. It covers salvation, child discipline, the Christian home environment that produces disciples, reaching the child's heart, Bible study techniques, how to protect young people from dangers associated with the Internet and smartphones, how to use apologetics, and many other things.

[Available From Way of Life Website](#)



# Spurgeon & Places of Entertainment

PALACE  
THE SCREENS MOST POLISHED LOVERS ARE HERE  
CLIVE BROOK EVELYN BRENT & SLIGHTLY SCARLET  
VITAPHONE



WE HAVE GREAT reason to bless God for the rich mercies we have enjoyed as a church and people for many years, in the unity of the brotherhood, the zeal of the workers, the number of conversions, the success of all our enterprises, and the growth of the whole body.

It is on my heart to say a word upon another subject—a subject which presses heavily upon my heart. I beseech you, by the mercies of God, and by the love of Christ Jesus your Lord, that as members of this church you do nothing which would grieve the Spirit of God, and cause Him to depart from among us.

Remember how Israel suffered defeat because of Achan. One man only, and one family only, had broken the Divine rule, but that sufficed to trouble the whole camp. Achan had taken of the accursed thing and hidden it in his tent, and so all Israel had to suffer defeat. Churches, too, will suffer if sin becomes general among them and is allowed to go unrebuked. At this time many a church is suffering grievously from the sin of its own members—sin in its ranks.

As I look abroad, I am grieved and have great heaviness of spirit at what I see among professing Christians. A very serious matter concerns the amusements engaged in by professing Christians. I see it publicly stated, by some who call themselves Christians, that it is good for Christians to attend the theatre, so that the tone and character of the productions may be improved. The suggestion is about as sensible as if we were bidden to pour a bottle of lavender water into the main sewer to improve its aroma.

## "TOUCH NOT...!"

If the church is now supposed to raise the tone of the world by imitating it, things have strangely

altered since the day when our Lord said, "Come out from among them...and touch not the unclean thing." Is Heaven to descend to the infernal lake to raise its tone? Such has been the moral condition of the theatre for many a year that it has become too bad for mending. And even if it were mended it would soon become corrupt again.

Pass by it with averted gaze, for the house of the strange woman is there. It has not been my lot ever to enter a theatre during the performance of a play, but I have seen enough when I have come home from journeys at night, while riding past the theatres, to make me pray that our sons and daughters may never go within their doors.

It must be a strange school for virtue which attracts the harlot and the debauchee. It is no place for a Christian if it is best appreciated by the irreligious and worldly.

## A STEP TO DEGENERATION

If our church members fall into the habit of frequenting the theatre, we shall soon have them going much further in the direction of vice, and they will lose all relish for the ways of God. If theatre-going became general among professing Christians, it would be the death of piety. Yet one finds the taste for such things increasing on every hand.

We cannot even enter places once dedicated to science and art without finding ourselves in the presence of something like a theatrical performance. Such gimmickry, though in itself harmless enough, has helped foster the taste which leads ultimately to the theatre and its surroundings.

Who can suppose amusements surrounded with the seductions of vice to be fit recreation for a pure mind? Who could draw near to God after sitting to admire the performances of the debauched (and I

am told that some who have dazzled London society are such)?

When behaviour is growing every day more lax and licentious, shall believers lower the standard of their lives? If they do so their spiritual power will depart, and their reason for existence will be over. If there ever could be a time when Christians might relax their rigidity, it surely is not now when the very air is tainted with pollution, and when our streets ring with the newsboys' cries vending filthy papers.

It is profoundly saddening to hear how people talk about acts of sin nowadays; how young men and women without blushing talk of deeds which deprave and destroy, as though they were trifles, or themes for joking. It is a great pity that the ends of justice should require the publishing of unsavoury details. As for those who not only commit lewdness, but who take pleasure in those who do it—"O my soul, come not thou into their secret." My heart often cries, "Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest."

It will certainly be disastrous for the church of God if her members should become impure. In these days we must be doubly strict, lest any looseness of conduct should come in among us. Actual sin must be repressed with a strong hand, but even the appearance of evil must be avoided.

My dear brethren and sisters, whatever your deficiencies, be pure in heart and lip and life. Never indulge an evil imagination, or speak about things which are unclean. Let them not once be named among you, as becometh saints. A lascivious glance, a doubtful word, a questionable act must be strenuously avoided. Anything and everything that verges upon the unchaste must be rejected.

Only the pure in heart shall see God. We are all subject to human passions, and this wretched flesh of ours is too easily fascinated by those who would pander to its indulgences. In seconds the soul may be led into captivity. Watch unto prayer, especially in these evil days. Cry, "Lead us not into temptation," and if the prayer is sincere, you will also keep far from doubtful places.

Make a covenant with your eyes that you will not look upon that which pollutes, and stop your ears

from hearing about it. Watch your lips lest they spread corruption when speaking of sin. I am not afraid that you will step directly into gross sin, but that you may take a very small step on the road that leads to it. Then it will only be a matter of time.

### SEDUCED

An ancient writer tells a story of a young friend of his who had the greatest horror of everything connected with the Roman amphitheatre. A heathen friend tried to persuade him to enter the Colosseum, and as he was very hard pressed and was under some obligation to that friend, he agreed to go just once, but determined to keep his eyes and ears closed all the time. It would seem to be a very small risk to sit there as one who was blind and deaf, but in the middle of the sports the people so loudly applauded a certain gladiator who had pleased them that he opened his eyes and ears to discover what it was all about. From that moment he was spellbound; he looked on, and enjoyed the sight, and though before he could not bear the very mention of it, he came at last to be a regular frequenter of the cruel sports, and a defender of them, and after a short time he abandoned his profession of Christianity.

Beware of the leaven of worldly pleasure, for its working is silent but sure, and a little of it will leaven the whole lump. Keep up the distinction between a Christian and an unbeliever and make it clearer every day.

Have you heard of the minister who complained to the devil for running off with one of his church members? The fiend replied, "I found him on my premises, and therefore I claimed him." I, also, may say, "Stop!" to the arch-deceiver, but it will be of no use if he finds you on his territory. Every fowler claims the bird which he finds in his own net. This is the argument: "I caught him in my net, and therefore he is mine." We shall in vain try to dispute this right of property with the arch-enemy, for possession is nine points of the law.

### TOO RIGID?

Avoid the appearance of evil. "But we must not be too rigid," says one. There is no fear of that in these days. You will never go too far in holiness, nor become too like your Lord Jesus. If anybody accuses

you of being too strict and precise, do not grieve but try to deserve the harge.

I cannot suppose that at the last great day our Lord Jesus Christ will say to anyone, "You were not worldly enough. You were too jealous over your conduct, and did not sufficiently conform to the world." No, my brethren, such a wrong is impossible. He Who said, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," has set before you a standard beyond which you can never go.

"Well, but," says one, "are we to have no enjoyments?" My dear friend, the enjoyments which are prepared for Christians are many and great, but they never include sin and folly. Do you call vice and folly amusements?

When I go down into the country, I see farmers carrying out great pails of hogwash for the swine, and I never grudge them their dainty meal. I do not protest against their having a full trough twice over. But do I partake with them? Certainly not! I have no taste for that. Do I therefore deny myself? Certainly not! It never struck me that there was anything desirable in their rich mixture. I have no doubt that it has a fine flavour to the creatures for whom it is prepared. It certainly seems to be appreciated.

If worldlings enjoy the pleasures of the world and sin, let them have them, poor souls. They have nothing else to enjoy. They have no paradise for the everlasting future. They have no Christ and Saviour to lean their heads upon. Let them have that which makes them happy while they can be happy. But when I am talking to the children of God I adopt another tone, since for you these things have no charms if you have truly tasted the high delights of fellowship with God.

"But," you say, "I would greatly enjoy a little of the pleasures of sin." Judge yourselves, then, to be falsely called children of God. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin," by which is not meant that he does not fall into sin through weakness, but that it is not his desire or plan or delight to commit sin. It is not his way, because he is a new creature, and he finds his joy and pleasure in living as near to God as possible.

"How far may we go in conformity to the world?" is a question that is frequently asked. Have you never

heard the story of a lady who wanted a coachman? Two or three called to see her about the post, and, in answer to her enquiries, the first applicant said, "Yes, madam, you could not have a better coachman than myself." She replied, "How near do you think you could drive to danger without an accident?" "Madam, I could go within a yard of it, and yet you would be perfectly safe."

"Very well," she said, "you will not suit me."

### CARE OR CONFIDENCE?

The second applicant had heard the question upon which the other had been rejected, and therefore he was ready with his answer, "Danger! Madam, why I could drive within a hair's breadth, and yet be perfectly safe." "Then you will not suit me at all." When number three came in, he was asked, "Are you a good driver?" "Well," he replied, "I am careful and have never met with an accident."

"But how near do you think you could drive to danger?" "Madam," he said, "that is a thing I never tried; I always drive as far away from danger as ever I can." The lady at once replied, "You are the kind of coachman I want, and I will engage you at once."

Get such a coachman as that yourself to guide your own heart and lead your own character. Do not see how near you can go to sin, but see how far you can keep away from it. If you do not take that advice and if the Spirit of God does not produce in you purity of life, by and by the church will have to hold up its hands and say, "Who would have thought it? These were the nice young people of whom so much was expected; these were the good people who used to say, 'You must not be too strict,' and where are they now?" To avoid the worst keep clear of the bad.

As for your Lord's work, be bound to the altar of Christ and be united for ever to Him, and I am sure you will not find that you are losers by giving up worldly pleasures. The Lord's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all His paths are peace. There is a safe and sweet pleasantness in holy living, and the pleasantness lies very much in the fact that an abounding peace springs from it. God grant us grace to keep in these peaceful paths, even though others should call us Puritans and ridicule our holy fear of sin.

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## Therapy for the Funny Bone -

### It happened in an Aged Care Centre.

The people who live there have small apartments and they all eat at a central Cafeteria. One morning, one of the residents didn't show up for breakfast so his friend went upstairs and knocked on his door to see if he was OK. He could hear him through the door. He said that he was running late, but would be down shortly, so he went back to the Dining area. An hour later, he still hadn't arrived; so he went back up to his room and found him on the stairs. He was coming down the stairs very slowly. He had a death grip on the hand rail and was having trouble getting his legs to work right. He told him he was going to call an ambulance but he said no, he wasn't in any pain, and just wanted to have his breakfast. So he helped him the rest of the way down the stairs and he had his breakfast.

When he tried to return to his room he was completely unable to get up even the first step and they finally called the ambulance for him. A couple hours later his friend called the hospital to see how he was doing. The receptionist there said that he was fine, and that they discovered when he got up that morning he'd put both feet in one leg of his boxer shorts.

(oh, yehhhhh, I relate to that condition. I think it is called "toomanybirthdays-monoleg-itis"! - Ed.)



**Seniors Banking.** (supposedly written by an 86 year old woman.)

Dear Sir:

I am writing to thank you for bouncing my cheque with which I endeavoured to pay my plumber last month.

By my calculations, three nanoseconds must have elapsed between his presenting the cheque and the arrival in my account of the funds needed to honour it.

I refer, of course, to the automatic monthly deposit of my entire pension, an arrangement which, I admit, has been in place for only eight years. You are to be commended for seizing that brief window of opportunity, and also for debiting my account \$30 by way of penalty for the inconvenience caused to your bank. My thankfulness springs from the manner in which this incident has caused me to rethink my errant financial ways. I noticed that whereas I personally answer your telephone calls and letters, when I try to contact you, I am confronted by the impersonal, overcharging, pre-recorded, faceless entity which your bank has become.

From now on, I, like you, choose only to deal with a flesh-and-blood person. My mortgage and loan repayments will therefore and hereafter no longer be automatic, but will arrive at your bank, by cheque, addressed personally and confidentially to an employee at your bank whom you must nominate. Be aware that it is an OFFENCE under the Postal Act for any other person to open such an envelope.

Please find attached an Application Contact which I require your chosen employee to complete. I am sorry it runs to eight pages, but in order that I know as much about him or her as your bank knows about me, there is no alternative.

Please note that all copies of his or her medical history must be countersigned by a Notary Public figure, and the mandatory details of his/her financial situation (income, debts, assets and liabilities) must be accompanied by documented proof. In due course, at MY convenience, I will issue your employee with a PIN number which he/she must quote in dealings with me.

I regret that it cannot be shorter than 28 digits but, again, I have modelled it on the number of button presses required of me to access my account balance on your phone bank service.

As they say, imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

Let me level the playing field even further. When you call me, press buttons as follows:

IMMEDIATELY AFTER DIALLING, PRESS THE STAR (\*) BUTTON FOR ENGLISH..... THEN

- #1. To make an appointment to see me
- #2. To query a missing payment.
- #3. To transfer the call to my living room in case I am there.
- #4 To transfer the call to my bedroom in case I am sleeping.
- #5. To transfer the call to my toilet in case I am attending to nature.
- #6. To transfer the call to my mobile phone if I am not at home.
- #7. To leave a message on my computer, a password to access my computer is required. Password will be communicated to you at a later date to that Authorized Contact mentioned earlier.
- #8. To return to the main menu and to listen to options 1 to 9
- #9. To make a general complaint or inquiry.

The contact will then be put on hold, pending the attention of my automated answering service.

While this may, on occasion, involve a lengthy wait, uplifting music will play for the duration of the call. Please note all calls will be charged at premium rate as I have decided to restrict my standard geographical number to friends & family only.

Regrettably, but again following your example, I must also levy an establishment fee to cover the setting up of this new arrangement.

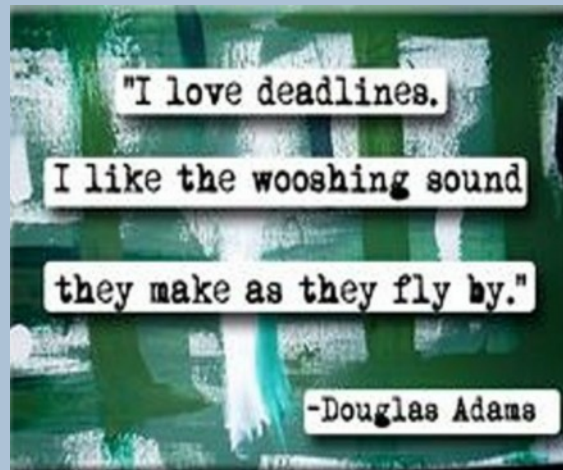
May I wish you a happy, if ever so slightly less prosperous and convenient New Year?

Your Humble Client...

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## A WEAKNESS FOR POSTERS -



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## A MOST UNUSUAL APPROACH FOR A MUSLIM SEARCHING FOR SALVATION THROUGH CHRIST

M\_\_\_\_\_ had a desire in his heart while he was back in Syria to go into Christian churches but was rejected because he was Muslim and the Christian churches were afraid to have him in their church as it is against the law.

After M. came to Lebanon, and then to Zahle, he believed he was now free to go into Christian churches and learn about Christ but he didn't know any Christians and needed a reason to enter the churches. He had the idea to start attending funerals as a way to enter the Christian churches and started attending about 10 funerals a week!

One day a man approached him and said, "Tell me your story, I know you can't possibly know all of these people whose funerals you have been attending". M. shared with him that he was a Muslim searching for the Truth. The man recommended that he visit the Evangelical churches. M. came to True Vine Church and ended up giving his life to Christ.

Meanwhile, back home, his parents found out he had become a follower of Christ and they stopped sending him the money that was his from a factory and shops he owned in Syria. They sent the imams to find him and they gave him a checkbook and said, "Fill in the amount that you need to live for 5 years and we will take care of you, you don't have to be here and turn your back on your roots".

He refused and they threatened to take his daughters as they told him he is no longer fit to raise them because he turned away from his Muslim beliefs. He told the imams, "Whatever you do, I will not leave Christ".

Two weeks ago he started bringing his wife with him to (church) and his two daughters are still with him. -

(Contributed by a brother who ministers to Arabic speaking pastors.)

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# THE WORDS GOD CHOSE TO USE

# APOSTASIA

## FALLING AWAY ~ By Pastor Tom Hill



(I have several dear friends who interpret II Thess. 2:3 to refer to the rapture. It is thought by them to be a text that supports the pre-tribulational rapture of the saints. After long deliberation, I have decided to publicly disagree. I do so for several reasons. First, the word "APOSTASIA" does not mean simply, a departure, as Bro. Hill explains below. It means a falling away, as it is translated in the KJV. Second, with all respect, there are sufficient proofs in Scripture for the rapture of the saints happening BEFORE the tribulation without our dear brethren's well-meaning attempts to turn "apostasia" into the Rapture. Here is what Pastor Tom Hill wrote when I asked him to shed some light on the word "apostasia". - Ed)



Before the return of our Lord Jesus Christ for His own, we are told of two events that positively have to take place.

2 Thessalonians 2:3, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come **1)** a falling away first, and **2)** that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition."

The words FALLING AWAY are from the word APOSTASIA. It has come to light that there are those who believe that APOSTASIA refers to the rapture of the saints. This is not a new position by any means. Many articles define the word APOSTASIA as being a "departure". My purpose is to define the word, and then show how it is used in the rest of the Scriptures.

The word APOSTASIA can mean "departure." But I caution my brethren to remember that words are defined, not by a pretext of what one wishes a word to mean, but rather by the context in which the word is found. That is how we discern the meanings of particular words when they can be defined more

than one way. For example, the word AND is used extensively, and have a variety of meanings. The context helps show how the writer intended us to understand "AND". Sometimes the Greek word is DE, which means MOREOVER or BUT. Other times the word for "AND" is KAI, which can mean AND, THEN, FURTHER, ALSO, BUT, and the like.

Context matters, beloved.

Some writers say the word APOSTASIA is related to the word AOSPAO. AOSPAO is made up of the word APO – "away from, to separate," and the word SPAO, meaning "to draw" such as a sword or dagger, or to draw away to be alone. A careful study of AOSPAO reveals that it does not come from the same family of words, other than sharing the same prefix preposition (APO).

The word APOSTASIA is used only twice in the New Testament.

The other usage besides II Thess. 2:3 is found in Acts 21:21 "And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs."

The word FORSAKE is the same word, APOSTASIA. The root word of APOSTASIA is APOSTASIS. The way that it appears in 2 Thessalonians 2:3, is that it has a definite article – the word THE (Gk. HE) which might give it the thought of THE REBELLION.

Does the definition of DEPARTURE fit the verse? Indeed, it gives the same sense to what Paul is saying. This is the departure from what? Falling away from what? The word means "a literal defiance of an established system or authority, it is a rebellion, an abandonment, a breach of faith."



The Septuagint uses the word in Joshua 22:22, 2 Chronicles 29:19. In the LXX (Septuagint), it is only used of a "rebellion" or means "too forsake, or remove far away". The related Greek word is APHISTEMI such is found in Acts 15:38 and is used of John Mark's departure (Acts 13:13).

Another use of the word APHISTEMI is found in 1 Timothy 4:1 in speaking of the departure from the faith. A related word in the Greek vocabulary is the word DICHOSTASIA. The difference between APOSTASIA and APHISTEMI is that APOSTASIA refers to the STATE of apostasy and APHISTEMI refers to the act itself. There is an added nuance to APOSTASIA that means the "deliberate abandonment of a former position or authority".

When we come to II Thess. 2:3, when Paul uses the word APOSTASIA, he is giving the Thessalonians a way to know that the day of the Lord had not come and would not come until there was a falling away from the truth and the man of sin be revealed.

Many of us believe that the falling away, the departure, the abandonment of the truth is going on in our churches today. One need only to open his eyes to see how little the Word of God means and how small a place it has in the churches.

How many churches are really concerned about the faith in this day? Budgets and numbers have a much higher priority in a lot of places, and truth gets set aside in order to get more people into the congregation and get the offerings up so that the

budgets can be met. Others have fallen for Calvinism. Still others are welcoming the world and the flesh without reservation.

If a person reads church history he will find that there has never been such a departure from the truth as there is today. The APOSTASIA, the departure, comes in many forms and through many vehicles, from youth programs, to music, that many churches have chosen to use to draw the crowds.

Contrary to those who say there is a revival in the land, the fact is that there is apostasy from truth. But the Lord said it would be this way. The falling away in the Lord's churches is no doubt part of the "perilous times" of which Paul wrote (2 Timothy 3:1).

May we who love the truth, preach the truth and live the truth, never remove nor allow another to remove the ancient landmark of truth that the Lord established in His churches.

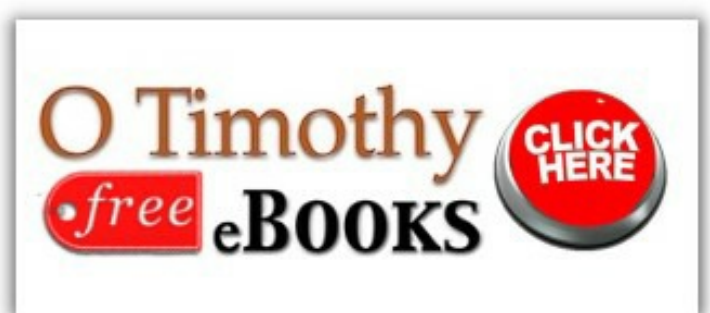
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# Disarming the CHRISTIAN SOLDIER

By Buddy Smith



"In order to disarm those who enlist as soldiers of Jesus Christ, the Enemy must first take our Sword from us. As long as we cling to our Sword the Devil cannot win. It is the Sword of the Spirit which defends our right to wear all the other pieces of armour."



In every case in Scripture where we see God's children defeated, they lost their Sword first. Samson carelessly laid aside his Sword when he chose to marry the Philistine woman. The unnamed prophet of I Kings 13 lost his Sword when the old prophet talked him out of it. He persuaded him to cast it aside and return with him to Bethel. Lot sold his Sword in order to buy a farm near Sodom. Peter left his Sword outside the gate when he went in to warm his hands at the Devil's fire and then denied his Lord.

When you find any one of God's valiant men fallen upon the battlefield, with his armour battered and scattered, see if you can locate his Sword. You will discover that it is missing. It is always missing. You see, the Enemy knows he has to strip us of the Sword of the Spirit before he can smite the helmet of salvation from our heads. If our grasp of the Sword is weak, then it won't be long before the shield of faith is riven in twain, and the girdle of truth is torn and trampled in our own gore. Somewhere in the battle, one shoe is lost and then the other.

The loss of shoe-evangelism is often the first piece of armour to go AFTER WE LOSE OUR SWORD. If the breastplate of righteousness is still in place it will be pierced and dented and hanging by a strap. But the disarming of the Christian soldier begins with the Devil taking the Sword of the Spirit from him.

Somehow, the preachers of this generation have missed this great truth, IT IS THE SWORD OF THE

SPIRIT THAT MAKES IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO WEAR ALL THE REST OF THE ARMOUR! LOSE THE SWORD AND THE BATTLE IS OVER!

In half a century of hearing and observing preachers, I have never seen one fall without him losing his Sword first!

Oh, he may not cast it aside in our sight. He may just begin by holding God's word lightly. He may cease to read it daily, or become casual about memorizing it and meditating upon it. He may become slothful in the use of his Sword in the pulpit. He may use it to increasingly promote his own agenda. He may lay it aside to do a bit of "cross training" by introducing film clips into his sermons to "visually spice up his preaching". He may begin to quote witty worldly wise men instead of Scripture. He may embrace Hillsong's music, message, and morality incrementally. Or he may bring in a new electronic gimmick as a replacement for his Sword, or spring a celebrity like a football star, or a trendy (did someone say, "cool"?) false prophet on the congregation.

Oh, he still carries his Bible to the pulpit for a month or two without opening it as much. And the first thing his people know, his Sword is missing. And the soldier of Christ is disarmed. (Why should the troops in the pews wear their armour if their pastor no longer wears his?) So the battle is lost without them knowing why.

On the other hand, we never see a preacher become a valiant soldier for Christ without first learning to grip the Sword of the Spirit with both hands, and clinging to it with all his might. Samuel is described in I Sam. 15 as "hewing Agag in pieces". That was not his job. It was Saul's task, given him by God. But Saul had lost his Sword a few chapters earlier. So Samuel, who had wielded his Sword since childhood, letting none of God's words fall to the ground, Samuel slew



Agag! Samuel knew how to grip his Sword with both hands!

Most commentators say that I Samuel 3:1 describes the rarity, the scarcity of God's word in Eli's day, "And the child Samuel ministered unto the LORD before Eli. And the word of the LORD was precious in those days; there was no open vision."

Is it not a grievous indictment against our churches that many who attend do not bring their Bibles with them, or if they do, they do not read the Scriptures the preacher calls them to study with him? More and more we see people reading from their phones. I can't help wondering what they are reading? And I wonder how much reverence they have for their "smartBible" they treat it all week as an expensive toy?

We must be vitally interested in how the preacher handles his Sword. If he is careless with his Bible, if he leaves it laying around, if he neglects it and lets it rust, if he never sharpens it. If it no longer cuts the preacher himself. If it is no longer used in battle, but hangs as a trophy on the wall, if he smirks when he is reminded what the Sword is for, THEN IT WILL BE THE BETTER PART OF WISDOM TO DISTANCE OURSELVES FROM HIM LEST WE LEARN HIS WAYS!

- The Sword of the Spirit is a weapon of war supplied to us by God.

- It is perfectly crafted by the Spirit of God for fighting the battles of the Lord.
- It is sharp, penetrating and divisive. It is for parrying as well as thrusting.
- It cuts far, far deeper than all the reasonings of men.
- It has the LIFE of God that no other book has. It has God's POWER and has never been broken in battle.

It is the Spirit's Sword that defeats all the lies of the Devil. With it we hew all his arguments in pieces! Without the Sword the battle is lost.

*Ephesians 6:17 "And take ... the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:"*

*Hebrews 4:12 "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart."*

*Jeremiah 48:10 "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the LORD deceitfully, and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood."*

A soldier with no Sword? A preacher without the Bible?

Surely you jest.

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## Heads Up!

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