

Heads Up!

May 6th, 2011

Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD. Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens. Lamentations 3:40-41

Jeremiah preached to a dying nation. The prophet with the strongest message had the tenderest heart. Whenever I think of Jeremiah preaching I see him crying aloud with tears streaming down his face. His tears were his meat.

Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people! (Jer. 9:1) And let them make haste, and take up a wailing for us, that our eyes may run down with tears and our eyelids gush out with waters. (Jer. 9:18) But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears because the LORD'S flock is carried away captive. (Jer. 13:17) Therefore thou shalt say this word unto them; Let mine eyes run down with tears night and day, and let them not cease: for the virgin daughter of my people is broken with a great breach, with a very grievous blow. (Jer. 14:17) Thus saith the LORD; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the LORD; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. (Jer. 31:16) Mine eyes do fail with tears, my bowels are troubled, my liver is poured upon the earth, for the destruction of the daughter of my people; because the children and the sucklings swoon in the streets of the city. (Lam.2:11)

It is not Baptistically correct in these anaemic times for preachers to expound the words of Jeremiah. He is not the flavour of the month. He is so out of step with our generation that he never even heard of pragmatism. The bottom line of the ledger was never his focus. Nevertheless, his call to the nation, "Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD. Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens." is the note we need to hear. The wolf stands at the doors of our churches(if he is not already in residence in the pulpit.) and we need a Jeremiah to call us to repentance. It is time to search and try our ways. It is time to give up on help from denominational hindquarters and the pastors fellowship meetings. For too long we have been prophesying by consensus. For too many years we have neglected the Holy Words of the Holy One and learned our doctrines and church polity from the Laodicean elite. It is time to lift up our hearts...

"Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens."

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Notable Quotes and Quotable Notes -

* "The problem with quotes on the internet is you can never be certain they're authentic." - Abraham Lincoln - (I thought you'd like that one!)

* "Just because you are offended doesn't mean you are right". Source unknown

* "One of these days some simple soul will pick up the book of God, read it, and believe it. Then the rest of us will be embarrassed." - Leonard Ravenhill

* "The opportunity of a lifetime must be seized within the lifetime of the opportunity." — Leonard Ravenhill

* You say, "Mr. Sunday, I can be a Christian and go to heaven without joining a church."
Yes, and you can go to Europe without getting on board a steamer. The swimming's good--but the sharks are laying for fellows who take that route.
I don't believe you. If a man is truly saved he will hunt for a church right away." - Billy Sunday

* When wolves in sheep's clothing are tolerated in our churches, it soon becomes fashionable for the sheep to wear wolves' clothing. - selected

* I like a man who grins when he fights. Winston Churchill

* "Men occasionally stumble over the truth, but most of them pick themselves up and hurry off as if nothing had happened." Winston Churchill.

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A Response To Thoughts on Conspiracies -

Your article on conspiracies is almost identical to my study and conclusions over the past several years. I grew up in a conspiracy-orientated church and was not only suspicious and without joy, but down-right mean spirited and critical. I AM SO GLAD THE LORD DELIVERED ME FROM THAT.

We had a man in the last church I pastored who refused to give up on conspiracy theories. Every time I turned around he was distributing the material. I asked him to stop, so, instead, he would invite people around to "get informed" since I, the "weak, anaemic, pathetic pastor," would not

believe the Bible and the "demonstrable evidence." Along with these conspiracies came murderous words and meditations of the heart, pride, arrogance, and an overall wicked attitude toward anyone who disagreed or questioned. In the end, he and his wife left the church. But it wasn't over conspiracy theories; it was over a message I preached on repentance. But the spirit behind them leaving was identical. That spirit was one which, in summary, equated to, "we know the truth and believe the Bible and you do not." A friend of theirs had written a tract on why repentance before salvation was a work and a teaching of the catholic church. I read the tract. It was not based on Bible even though there was a lot of Bible in the tract. It was based on a hatred for the catholic church. Now, I hate that system. It is an enemy of Biblical Christianity. But not everything they teach is wrong. Furthermore, a hatred for something is not and cannot be the foundation of a doctrine. We know that BECAUSE we believe the Bible. So, my message on Repentance as NEEDED prior to placing faith in Christ for salvation was the last straw. I had officially succumbed to the conspiracies against "true" Bible-believing Christians.

THANK THE GOOD LORD I HAVE BEEN DELIVERED FROM THINKING EXACTLY THE SAME WAY! (name withheld by Editor)

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Therapy For The Funny Bone -

FROM THE MOUTHS OF BABES

I was eating lunch on the 20th of February with my 10-year-old grandson and I asked him, "What day is tomorrow?"

He said "It's President's Day!"

He is a smart kid.

I asked "What does President's Day mean?"

I was waiting for something about Washington or Lincoln ... etc.

He replied, "President's Day is when President Obama steps out of the White House, and if he sees his shadow we have one more year of unemployment."

You know, it hurts when coffee spurts out your nose...

- The shortest sentence known to man is often also the longest: "I do."

- I only use deodorant under one arm, that way I know what I would have smelled like if I hadn't used it. And besides that, times are hard and everybody has to save money.

- Do you ever notice that when you're driving, anyone going slower than you is an idiot and everyone driving faster than you is a maniac?

- I've used up all my sick days, so I'm calling in dead.

- Never forget that you're unique, just like everybody else.

- I heard you took an IQ test and your results came back negative. Welcome to the club.
- I don't have an attitude problem. You have a perception problem.

Bank Robbery

A hooded robber burst into a Texas bank and forced the tellers to load a sack full of cash.

On his way out the door, a brave Texas customer grabbed the hood and pulled it off, revealing the robbers face. The robber shot the customer without a moment's hesitation.

He then looked around the bank and noticed one of the tellers looking straight at him. The robber instantly shot him also. Everyone in the bank, by now very scared, looked intently down at the floor in silence.

The robber yelled, " Well, did anyone else see my face?"

There are a few moments of utter silence in which everyone was plainly to afraid to speak. Then, one gentleman tentatively raised his hand and said,

"My mother in law got a pretty good look at you."

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So How Are Our Days Like Noah's? -

I suffer from the malady called "superficial exposition", I think. It is like reading the label on a can of soup, but never tasting the soup. There's not much nourishment in the label.

Last Sunday I preached on Matthew 24:37-40, *"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark...."*

For years I read these verses (or at least the label on the can) and thought they meant that, before the rapture, men would gluttonously eat and drink and make multiple marriages. And then as I read them over and over I began to see that the chapter does not speak of the rapture, but of the revelation of Christ at the end of the tribulation. And the verse does not say that they ate to excess or married more than one wife. Rather, it speaks of people keeping on doing what people do everyday. It hit me that people at the end of the tribulation will maintain their focus on the mundane. Their interests will be in the everyday affairs of eating and drinking, etc, when the world has fallen apart all around them. For seven long years the judgment of God has been poured out on an

atheistic world, and they take no notice. They will not afflict their souls with fasting or postpone their weddings. Their focus is not on the things of God. They are the worldlings, the "earth dwellers" of the Revelation.

We 21st century Christians are presently observing a dress rehearsal for the fulfillment of these verses. The past six months have brought one disaster after another, droughts, floods, cyclones, bushfires, tornados, earthquakes, a tsunami, political follies, and impending financial collapse. Compared with the judgments of Revelation, these are but test cases, God's laboratory experiments to reveal how men respond to the hand of God. And what do we see? How do men respond? Men of the world eat and drink, they marry and give in marriage until "the flood comes and takes them all away."

The saddest commentary of all on this passage is found in verses 48 - 51, *"But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming: and shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."*

Whoever this servant is, it is apparent that he knew of the impending return of his lord, but did not live in the light of that truth. He abused his peers and ate and drank with the worldlings. Meditating on this causes me to tremble for fear that we who know of the Lord's return may be living as though we didn't. Oh that I may live with eternity's values in view!

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Tell Me Again Where New Evangelicalism Leads

Many Born-Again Christians Hold Universalist Views, Barna Finds

<http://www.christianpost.com/>

One in four born-again Christians hold universalist thoughts when it comes to salvation, according to a new Barna analysis of trend data. Twenty-five percent of born-again Christians said all people are eventually saved or accepted by God. A similar proportion, 26 percent, said a person's religion does not matter because all faiths teach the same lessons. And an even higher proportion, 40 percent, of born-again Christians said they believe Christians and Muslims worship the same God. Barna defined universalism as the belief that all human beings will eventually be saved after death. The California-based research and polling firm defines born-again Christians as people who have made "a personal commitment to Jesus Christ that is still important in their life today, and who believe they will go to heaven after death because they confessed their sins and accepted Jesus Christ as their savior. According to the Barna analysis, 43 percent of Americans in general agreed with the statement "It doesn't matter what religious faith you follow because they all teach the same lessons," while 54 percent disagreed.

The report on what Americans believe about universalism and pluralism comes at a time when not only evangelicals, but even prominent secular media, are debating the Christian teachings on salvation and the idea of universalism due to Pastor Rob Bell's book, *Love Wins: A Book About*

Heaven, Hell, and the Fate of Every Person Who Ever Lived. Last week, Time magazine released its Easter Week feature with a cover story on Bell's controversial views contained in his new book. For many evangelicals, the idea of Christians holding universalist ideas is particularly disturbing because it nullifies the need for Christ to die on the cross and the message of Jesus that he is the only way, truth and life.

Various research firms have reported different data on the prevalence of universalist beliefs among born-again believers and more specifically, evangelicals. A 2008 Pew Forum survey revealed that 57 percent of evangelicals agreed with the idea that other religions than their own can lead to eternal life. After tweaking the definition of "evangelical," however, LifeWay Research, found that only two out of 10 evangelicals agreed with the statement that eternal life can be obtained through religions other than Christianity.

While universalism is nothing new, some believe cultural trends are placing pressure on Christians and their beliefs. Don Carson, research professor of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, said at The Gospel Coalition's national conference last week that many are feeling pressure from the culture "to find universalism attractive." "There are pressures in our culture to reduce the truth content of Scripture and then simply dismiss people by saying that they're intolerant or narrow-minded ... or bigoted without actually engaging the truth question at all. And that is really sad and in the long haul, horribly dangerous."

Barna's analysis on beliefs regarding universalism and pluralism is based on data from telephone interviews conducted in the OmniPollSM and from Barna Group's theologicraphic TM database from 2005 through 2011.

(Ed. - New Evangelicalism is now bearing its fruit abundantly. It has taken a bit over sixty years for the crop to grow, but here it is. Emerging Church guru Rob Bell's new book "Love Wins" is more evidence, that like Robert Schuller, Bill Hybels, and Rick Warren, most leading New Evangelicals are quite adept at surfing the cultural waves they see rolling into American culture. The problem is that culture is never elevated by "Christians" conforming to it (but rather by real Christians confronting it.) One alarmed evangelical was quoted this past week as saying that Rob Bell "threw a grenade at evangelicals." What they don't want to talk about is who taught him where to buy the hand grenades, how to throw them and who to throw them at. Evangelical seminaries have become the nurseries for nutcases like Rob Bell. Should they be surprised at being attacked by the radicals they trained to laugh at the "faith once delivered to the saints"? What is even sadder is that the largest Bible colleges and seminaries among Independent Baptists are training our preacher boys how to smirk, if not laugh out loud, at what our spiritual ancestors died for. Right here in Australia we have young pastors who ridicule the very truths that led their parents and grandparents out of apostate denominations. Don't think so? How long is it since you looked around for a real old fashioned fundamental Baptist preacher who was less than fifty years old?)

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Why Do We Not Use Or Recommend The NIV? -

It puzzles me no end why born again Christians lack the discernment to see that the modern Bible versions no longer teach what these Christians claim to believe.

Bro. David Cloud sent out this article recently, titled "What About the New International Version?" Here is an excerpt from the article:

Consider the example of Bruce Metzger, one of the foremost textual critics of the twentieth century. He has been upheld by Christianity Today as an evangelical scholar and his books are used by practically every evangelical Bible translator. Yet Metzger's modernism is evident in the notes to the New Oxford Annotated Bible RSV (1973), which he co-edited with Herbert May. It first appeared in 1962 as the Oxford Annotated Bible and was the first Protestant annotated edition of the Bible to be approved by a Roman Catholic authority. It was given an imprimatur in 1966 by Cardinal Cushing, Archbishop of Boston. **Metzger wrote many of the rationalistic notes in this volume and put his editorial stamp of approval on the rest. Consider some excerpts:**

(1) Introductory Notes to the Pentateuch: "The Old Testament may be described as the literary expression of the religious life of ancient Israel. ... The Israelites were more history-conscious than any other people in the ancient world. Probably as early as the time of David and Solomon, out of a matrix of myth, legend, and history, there had appeared the earliest written form of the story of the saving acts of God from Creation to the conquest of the Promised Land, an account which later in modified form became a part of Scripture." (*Bruce Metzger and Herbert May, New Oxford Annotated Bible, Introduction to the Old Testament*).

(2) Note on the Flood: "Archaeological evidence suggests that traditions of a prehistoric flood covering the whole earth are heightened versions of local inundations, e.g. in the Tigris-Euphrates basin." (*Metzger and May, New Oxford Annotated Bible*).

(3) Note on Job: "The ancient folktale of a patient Job circulated orally among oriental sages in the second millennium B.C. and was probably written down in Hebrew at the time of David and Solomon or a century later (about 1000-800 B.C.)." (*Metzger and May, New Oxford Annotated Bible*).

(4) Note on Psalm 22:12-13: "the meaning of the third line [they have pierced my hands and feet] is obscure." (In fact, it is not obscure; it is a prophecy of Christ's crucifixion!)

(5) Note on Isaiah: "Only chs. 1-39 can be assigned to Isaiah's time; it is generally accepted that chs. 40-66 come from the time of Cyrus of Persia (539 B.C.) and later, as shown by the differences in historical background, literary style, and theological emphases. ... The contents of this section [chs. 56-66] (sometimes called Third Isaiah) suggest a date between 530 and 510 B.C., perhaps contemporary with Haggai and Zechariah (520-518); chapters 60-62 may be later."

(6) Note on Jonah: "The book of Jonah is didactic narrative which has taken older material from the realm of popular legend and put it to a new, more consequential use" (*Metzger and May, New Oxford Annotated Bible*).

(7) Notes on 2 Peter: "The tradition that this letter is the work of the apostle Peter was questioned in early times, and internal indications are almost decisive against it. ... Most scholars therefore regard the letter as the work of one who was deeply indebted to Peter and who published it under

his master's name early in the second century." [Note: Those who believe this nonsense must think the early Christians were liars and fools and the Holy Spirit was on vacation.]

(8) Notes from "How To Read The Bible With Understanding": "The opening chapters of the Old Testament deal with human origins. They are not to be read as history ... These chapters are followed by the stories of the patriarchs, which preserve ancient traditions now known to reflect the conditions of the times of which they tell, though they cannot be treated as strictly historical. ... it is not for history but for religion that they are preserved ... When we come to the books of Samuel and Kings ... Not all in these books is of the same historical value, and especially in the stories of Elijah and Elisha there are legendary elements. ... We should always remember the variety of literary forms found in the Bible, and should read a passage in the light of its own particular literary character. Legend should be read as legend, and poetry as poetry, and not with a dull prosaic and literalistic mind."

Thus, the fact that the New International Version was produced by "evangelical scholars" does not mean that it is sound.

(Ed. - Bro. Cloud also wrote an excellent book titled "Faith Versus the Modern Bible Versions." In the chapter called, Biblical Presuppositions of the Bible Version Issue, he wrote, "Apart from the Holy Spirit, nothing about the Bible can be properly understood. Unregenerate men who lack the Spirit are not qualified in this field. The book *From the Mind of God to the Mind of Man* claims that it doesn't matter if textual critics are skeptics. "... a textual critic may be an unbeliever when it comes to the Bible's doctrinal truths. But when it comes to the Bible's text--to this question of the Bible's words--a textual critic is initially little more than a reporter" (*From the Mind of God to the Mind of Man*, p. 71). In his mistitled book "The Truth of the King James Only Controversy," BJU professor Stewart Custer uncritically cites the following men in his "Select Bibliography" -- Bruce Metzger, Kurt Aland, Eberhard Nestle, Alexander Souter, B.F. Westcott, and F.J.A. Hort. He does not think it is important that his readers know that to a man these critics blatantly denied the infallible inspiration of Scripture. This approach is wrongheaded in the extreme! A wise position was that of Joseph Philpot, Fellow of Worcester College, Oxford, and editor of *The Gospel Standard*. In 1857 he gave six reasons against a revision of the KJV, the first being that the biblical scholars of that day were "notoriously either tainted with popery or infidelity" (Joseph Charles Philpot, "The Authorized Version of 1611," *The Gospel Standard*, April 1857). That was true then and it is even truer today. Philpot then asked an important rhetorical question, "And can erroneous men, dead in trespasses and sins, carnal, worldly, ungodly persons, spiritually translate a book written by the blessed Spirit?" The biblical answer is NO! ")

Read more at: <http://www.wayoflife.org/files/1d9d3a6095c4f5d87a33efb521b4a585-785.html>

and: <http://www.wayoflife.org/database/presuppositions.html>

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Links

A fun clip for the kids: <http://www.wimp.com/cubedropped/>

If you like barbershop quartet music at all: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QmDGntpZC3I>

Enough electricity from windmills to run an electric toothbrush -
<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2011/04/30/why-windmills-won%e2%80%99t-wash/#more-39048>

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Poems That Don't Preach But Are Worth Reading Anyway -

Photosynthesis (just in case the climate alarmists worry you about CO₂)

CO₂ and H₂O and sunlight
Are the reason we can eat our daily bread
CO₂ and H₂O and sunlight
Without the CO₂ we'd all be dead

For plants store energy by making sugars
And other foods that bring us great delight.
It's the basis of all life upon the planet
CO₂ and H₂O and light

Photosynthesis is what they call it,
Photo puts the emphasis on light
Synthesis means putting it together
CO₂ and H₂O and light.

The lion has an antelope for breakfast,
and the antelope, before his final fright,
Ate grass, which like all other vegetation,
Fixed CO₂ and H₂O and light.

The mighty whale eats krill to keep its weight up,
And the krill eat tiny plants, near out of sight,
And the tiny plants create the basic food store
From CO₂ and H₂O and light.

The food chain can be very complicated
With formulae to give a student fright,
But the basis of the chain is very simple –
It's CO₂ and H₂O and light.

Now some say CO₂ is a pollutant,
A poison we must always try to fight
But remember if you want to go on living –
You need CO₂ and H₂O and light!

CO₂ and H₂O and sunlight
Are the reason we can eat our daily bread
CO₂ and H₂O and sunlight
Without the CO₂ we'd all be dead.

Poetic Tax

by **Cliff Ollier**
April 23, 2011

The Carbon Tax

Hurrah, Hurrah the Carbon Tax
Just pay up and then relax.

We'll stop warming, have no fears,
(Maybe take a thousand years).
Like Canute we'll stop the waves.
Make sure that the sea behaves.

Hurrah, Hurrah the Carbon Tax
Just pay up and then relax.

Drought and floods will all be gone
(Miss Mackellar please move on).
Cyclones, bushfires, locusts, pests,
Carbon Tax will put to rest.

Hurrah, Hurrah the Carbon Tax
Just pay up and then relax.

Carbon's nasty, so they say
(scientists, within our pay)
So we tax it through the nose
Don't ask where the money goes.

Ministers for this and that,
Lots and lots of bureaucrats
Wish to use the Carbon Tax,

So pay up, and just relax.

Hurrah, Hurrah the Carbon Tax
Just pay up and then relax.

All the horrors we endure
Carbon Tax is sure to cure.
We will fix them, bye and bye,
Were we ever known to lie?

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Computerized Churches - St. Pixels

(Ed. - Somehow I don't think this is what the Lord Jesus Christ had in mind when he said, "I will build my church...")

St Pixels Launches First-Ever Church Service on Facebook

From temple to church to cathedral to chapel...Facebook! St. Pixels is bringing real time, interactive, multimedia worship within a couple of clicks for any Facebook user.

Friday, April 29, 2011

By Dan Wooding

ESHER, UK (ANS) -- Internet Church St Pixels will be at the International Christian Resources Exhibition (Sandown Park, Esher, UK) to host the first-ever interactive service on Facebook (Tuesday, May 10, 2011), at 1 and 3pm UK time.

Worshippers at computer screens and iPhones across the world will be able listen to Bible readings and a sermon, sing along with hymns and key in prayer requests. A real-time feedback meter will allow them to click "Amen" or "Zzzz" buttons regularly during services - so everyone will see if the preacher's joke was as funny as he thought.

St. Pixels pioneer Mark Howe said: "If the gospel is for today's connected culture, it has to find a distinctive but culturally-appropriate place within social networking. Love it or hate it, Facebook is where people are in 2011. This project is not about trying to look cool and postmodern. It's about applying basic principles of cross-cultural mission to our own culture."

St Pixels (www.stpixels.com) was formed in 2006 after a pilot project by webzine Ship of Fools (www.shipoffools.com). Its first live Facebook service will be hosted in the Web and Media Zone at CRE, Europe's biggest annual exhibition of Christian resources.

"It's easy to build irrelevant ghettos in cyberspace or to abandon distinctives in the rush to embrace the latest online fad," said Mark. "Our Facebook application is an attempt to engage with a cultural

phenomenon on its own terms while holding onto the gospel that has transformed so many cultures across the centuries.”

Speaking at the first Facebook service will be Andrew Graystone, director of the Church and Media Network.

“We have 600 million ‘neighbors’ on Facebook,” said Andrew. “St Pixels on Facebook means 600 million Facebook users now have a church in their pocket. I congratulate St Pixels on reaching an amazing milestone. So much love, work and care has gone into this unique community and I have been a beneficiary of it.”

Stephen Goddard, who issued a news release on behalf of the CRE event, stated, “Some 400 exhibitors will be at CRE (May 10-13, 2011), often dubbed ‘the ideal church show’. The biggest exhibition of any kind at Sandown Park each year, all three floors of the venue will once again be packed with colorful and vibrant stands - from architects to organ suppliers, heating specialists to sound system engineers.

“Steady growth over the past decade has seen attendances rise to an impressive 13,000 over the event’s period – at a time when many secular shows are struggling to survive.”

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Eddy-Torial –

Moving the Barn-

I think the barn was located in Iowa or Nebraska. It was built with steel framing and clad in weatherproof zinc/aluminium panels. Quite a nice looking barn but it tended to flood when the snow melted and the spring rains came too much, too soon. The farmer told his son he wished they had built it on the higher ground nearby, but there was nothing to do about it now. His son, an engineer, disagreed. He told his dad he thought they could relocate the barn and set it up higher. Dad shook his head and told him it would be way too expensive to take the barn all to pieces and move it. And besides where would he store all the stuff while he rebuilt it? His son said they could empty it and move it in one piece, the whole thing, just pick it up and move it. And dad said it would be impossible. And the son set to figuring out the weight of the whole structure and what bracing would be needed to weld inside to keep it in one piece. And dad said it would be too heavy and where would they ever get a crane big enough to pick the whole thing up? And his son said that they could bolt handles on the outside all the way around the barn and that he reckoned 350 strong men could lift it and carry it up the rise and set it on a new foundation. And dad said they would never find enough strong, able bodied men in the little town nearby. And the son reminded dad that the next year was the little town's sesquicentennial (150 year anniversary) and that they would have thousands to choose from, especially if they advertised for help. And so they did it. They got busy bracing the barn and pouring the new slab, and making up the handles for lifting it, and spreading the word, and they did it. The big day arrived and so did all the beefy farm boys, and they did it. The farmer and his son picked out (from the 4500 people that showed up!) 350 hefty farm boys, and they found their places around the barn. Each one bent his knees and grabbed his handle and when

the whistle blew, they straightened their knees and they did it. They lifted the whole barn! Up it came and up the hill it went to its new foundation, and down it sat in its place. Three hundred and fifty men, each lifting his part of the whole. Three hundred and fifty men, each carrying his share. Three hundred and fifty men, each one a vital part of one living organism, walking the same direction toward the same goal. Three hundred and fifty happy men, with not one man slacking off till the job was done. And when they finished there were three hundred and fifty cheering, smiling, backslapping men, delighted to have had a small part in a big job. And one farmer and his son with tears in their eyes and a song in their hearts. They did it 20 years ago and it was printed up in the Country magazine with pictures and all. I don't ever want to forget. They did it.

Every once in a while I see something similar done among the Lord's people. Oh, I know, most times we squabble and grumble and lay out of church. Naysayers prevail and doubters ring their party line friends. The church miser withholds his offerings, and the pastor and his family lift and pray for help and the church sits where it has sat for the past hundred years. But sometimes we do it. Sometimes God's Spirit gets hold of us and we catch the vision and we bend our knees and we lift and the first things you know, we all straighten our aching backs and look around and say, "We did it!"

Once in a while a Nehemiah catches a vision from God and takes long service leave from his government job and sets out to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. And once in a while his people catch the vision from Nehemiah and set out to recover the stones from the rubble. Once in a while the walls get built post-haste, fifty two days from start to finish. Oh yes, there were some who were "too noble" to dirty their hands with building the wall. But the common men did it. They built the wall. Just like the farm boys that moved the barn.

It really is surprising what simple, uncultured, unsophisticated men can do when they catch the vision and hear the call, and bend their knees and lift. Gideon and his men did it! and David did it. Ezra did it, and John the Baptizer did it, and Paul said he did it.

How much more could the Lord's people accomplish for the Lord if we quit worrying about who's going to get the credit, and just caught the vision and bent our knees and lifted.

I suspect we could lift the church to new heights.

Any applicants for the task of moving your church nearer to God?

Bro. Buddy Smith

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