



February 08, 2013

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Feature Article - Sermon From A Worm -

(Excerpted from a sermon by Dr. Ken Connolly called "Jonah: Hard Lessons Learned")

"So Jonah went out of the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and there made him a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city. And the LORD God prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd. But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered. And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live." (Jonah 4:5-8) There he goes again "And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death. Then said the LORD, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night: And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?" (4:9-11)



And I feel like I need to keep reading. What a peculiar way to end a story.

The Chapter Jonah Never Wrote

Somewhere in the context there is a secret that tells me what happened in chapter five, the chapter that never got written. I have no question in my mind that Jonah came into conformity to the will of God. But what was it that brought it about? He had the harrowing experience in the storm. He had the frightening experience in the fish. He had the aggravating experience in the city. And none of that moved him to be reconciled to the will of God for his life. What was it that did? (I believe that he did.) I am hazarding a guess, but I believe the secret of the story is told in the first five words of the seventh verse. "But God prepared a worm..."

His God and our God are one and the same, recognizing that his proclivity and ours might be one and the same and hoping that in your experience the counterpart to the ministry of the worm has already taken place.

A little worm smote a gourd and the gourd withered. And that worm taught Jonah something that he had not realized before.

The Sermon From a Worm

God prepared a little worm to preach a sermon to Jonah.

Like what?

Like in the first place something about the greatness of God he had not realized before.

God is Great Enough to Use Little Things to Do His Work

How great is God? Well, look at the beginning of his life. His relationship with God, his call to the mission field, those are moving experiences when they happen in life. Going down deliberately to get away from the presence of the Lord and trying to get to Tarshish to get to the peripheral of the will of God. And the greatness of the story and the greatness of the calm and the greatness of the fish and the greatness of the survival and the greatness of the movement of God in the city of Nineveh. Do you realize that in the contents of this infallible book there is not a single recorded revival from page to page, from cover to cover that equals the largeness of the response of Nineveh that happened, and that in spite of Jonah's disobedience. And then there is the gourd. And then there is the worm. See, Jonah's concern was could he find God in his greatness, in the superlatives, in the majestic and the magnificent, in the mammoth, but then he suddenly discovers that God was great enough to be found in the miniature, in a worm.

And then it dawned on me. It's the worm. It is easy to see God in the fish. It is easy to see God in the sabbath. It is easy to see God in a big evangelistic meeting. But what about the Sunday School class with just two or three children and the weekly responsibility of nourishing their souls in truth?

Can you see God in that classroom? Can you see God at work on Monday morning? Can you see God when you are at the typewriter in the office? Can you see God in the casual conversations that happen between people? Or is God confined for you to the spectacular? Until God invades the non-entities of life you won't be in his will. I have to know that every moment of my day, every brain cell in my body, every drop of blood in my veins belongs to him. I have to somehow capture the consciousness of the presence of God in my daily life. God has to become so great to me that he takes His rightful place in every little, unimportant, mundane part of my experience. Unless God is that great, like Jonah, you can't be in his will.

God Can Use Little People to do His Work

It brings me to a second lesson I believe that Jonah learned from that little worm. And it is a corresponding lesson. It is as mandatory as the lesson of God's greatness. And it boils down, basically, to man's nothingness, to our impotence, our unworthiness.

A worm suggests something to Jonah that it might not suggest to us. A worm was a low contemptible creature. It lived under the surface of the earth. It covered away from the light and from the gaze of mankind.

"Thou worm, Jacob."

"What is man, that thou art mindful of him?"

"I am a worm, and no man."

"Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

You see, here was the proposition that God gave to Jonah. Jonah was saying, "I am the evangelist. I want God to meet me at the bargaining table and I want to discuss with Him some propositions. He sent me here with a message, now God must do what He promised He was going to do in that message or I am on strike until God does it." And God said, in essence, to his servant, "Well, I guess there are some things we do need to get straightened out. But while you are not doing anything, could you move aside for just a moment and let me bring a substitute preacher in?" And he brought in a worm.

And if ever a great prophet and great preacher got a lesson in humility Jonah learned from that little worm, "I am not very important. God could get by easily without me. I amount to the zero, to an insignificant factor in this whole scenario. As great as He is I am nothing." I said it is a corresponding vision. One brings the other. One requires the other. You see, you tell me how important you are and I will tell you how correspondingly big your God is because you can't have a God of the infinite dimensions that can bring you into center of his will until you recognize the fact that you before him are nothing. And if there is anything to your credit in this life, it is attributed wholly, solely and only to his glory and his honor and his grace.

The Problem With Bigness

I travel around the world preaching in different churches nearly every weekend. I go to churches pathetically rent and split and have found without one single exception that churches that have been weakened in their ministry are usually damaged by one man with a proud overestimate of his value and that he is not willing to eat humble pie and say, "I am nothing and God is everything."

Look at the ministry of the apostle Paul. He writes to the Corinthian Church and he says that Paul is the chiefest of apostles. And he writes about his Savior and he said, "We preach Christ crucified." I want you to recognize that is fundamental truth. That is basic.

But Paul, a little later, writes to the Ephesians and he says, in essence, to them, "Would you allow me to deviate for a little bit and change my posture?" It is not Paul the chiefest of apostles. It is Paul who is less than the least of all saints. It is not simply Christ crucified. It is Christ the head of the Church. And then as time passes by he writes his last epistles to the young evangelist Timothy, and he said, "Timothy, let me do one more readjustment." It is not now Paul, the chiefest of apostles. It is not Paul, less than the least of all saints. It is, "a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save

sinner; of whom I am chief." It is not now Christ on the cross and it is not simply Christ the head of the Church. He is now known as King of Kings and Lord of Lords who only hath immortality.

The Greatness of God and the Smallness of Man

He had discovered that there are two truths that balance each other out. They are the greatness of God and the smallness of man. Put your finger on your own pulse and find out what are you apart from him?

When I was a young convert I believed I did God a favor when I came to him. I am ashamed of it today. I look back over my experience and wonder: Was I really saved? Or did my salvation come as he added knowledge and grace to my life? And all I can tell you today is there is nothing I value in my life, but what he has given to me. He has become supremely my Lord as well as my Savior. I humbly acknowledge that apart from him I have nothing worthy of two minutes investment. Like this man Jonah I needed to learn how great God is and I needed to learn how little man is.

The Value of Precious Souls

And there is a third lesson and with this I conclude. Not simply God's greatness, not simply man's nothingness, but that little worm taught him something about the value of souls, of which he was unconscious. When you go back and look at it, God prepared a gourd. He was glad for that. This gourd was very important to him. It was the token of God's favor in his life. But God prepared a worm and the worm smote the gourd.

And God said, "Jonah, do you have a right to be angry for the gourd? For the which thou hast not labored neither madest it grow, which came up in a night and perished in a night and should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand?" I assume that they were children. What the population of the city was, it was vast, beyond my imagination. "Jonah, do you mean to tell me that you will defend a gourd, but you will let 120,000 children of Adam suffer, and perish under the judgment of God? Your priorities are all mixed up!"

There is no way you can be in the will of God until the mind of God captures your heart and that includes value of people that are living and dying without a Savior. There was nothing that Jonah owned that didn't perish in a storm. He had nothing left, but the clothes on his body. And in tenderness God gave him a gourd for shade. And then God smote it. It is my opinion that you shouldn't let a day pass by without evaluating, "What are my gourds?"

"But God prepared a worm..."

Has he done that in your life?

(Dr. Ken Connolly departed for heaven a few years ago. He was the son of Dr. Peter Connolly, the Irish evangelist who was converted under the preaching of Jock Troup in the Fishermen's Revival in the early years of the twentieth century. After sitting under Peter Connolly in Bible college in the early 1960's I met Dr. Ken Connolly at a missions conference in 1998 and a sweet friendship was begun that continued until he died. He had a grasp of history that few men ever attain to. We traveled together in England and Ireland later that year and he made the Old Country come alive for us. He made several documentary films on Revival, George Muller's life, Charles Spurgeon, and on the History of the English Bible, as well as on the history of the Bible, called The Indestructible Book. - Ed)

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Deacon True Sez -

Lots of pastors preach about the virtuous woman in Proverbs 31. I found a verse the other day that describes my sweetheart perfectly. It says, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea..." Psalm 16:6

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Sermon Fodder -

F.W. Boreham tells a story set on the east coast of Scotland where the little towns up and down the coast are all fishing villages. The men go out on Monday morning, come back on Friday night, sell their fish on Saturday, have a day in church on Sunday, and then on Monday it starts it all over again.

But there was one fisherman in the group that had a better catch than any other man. And he got a better price. They tried every way they could to discover what he was doing that they were not doing. They even sent divers down under his vessel and all they could see was that he had a tank filled with the waters of the North Sea so when he caught

the fish out of the sea, he put them back into the same water. But this was not new, they had the same tanks. It wasn't that.

The old fisherman died. The only member of the family left was a middle aged daughter. She couldn't run a fishing fleet so she advertised that her fishing fleet was for sale to the highest bidder. And the secret would go with it. And she got a wonderful price for it. But do you know what they found to be the secret of his success?

He kept a catfish in the tank.

You say, "What would that do?"

Catfish are scavengers. They never sit still. And as long as a catfish is in the tank no other fish will be still. It will just keep moving and if it has got five days to go before it gets back to port, it will have exercised itself in the same sea water through those five days so that it became a choicer piece of meat than any of its comparisons.

"Sometimes," says, F.W. Boreham, "every once in a while God has to drop a catfish in our tank, some circumstance that keeps us moving all the time so we can grow and be worth something."

Excerpted from Ken Connolly's sermon on *The White of an Egg*.

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Manna In The Wilderness -

(In every issue of Heads Up we offer a link to good Bible sermons for those who do not live near a church where God's word is preached. *Bro. Randy Pike* was the first Independent Baptist missionary to work in Australia. He is now in poor health and looking for the Lord to take him home to Heaven any day. You can hear Bro. Randy at this website: [http://archive.org/details/H.R.PikeAudioPreaching- Ed](http://archive.org/details/H.R.PikeAudioPreaching-Ed))

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Therapy For the Funny Bone -

"Vernon, where's your homework?" Miss Martin said sternly to the little boy while holding out her hand.

"My dog ate it," was his solemn response.

"Vernon, I've been a teacher for eighteen years. Do you really expect me to believe that?"

"It's true, Miss Martin, I swear," insisted the boy. "I had to force him, but he ate it!"

Nothing rattles my father-in-law, especially when the St. Louis Cardinals are on TV.

One day we were watching a game when my mother-in-law shrieked from the kitchen, "Jim, there's a horsefly in here!"

Not even taking his eyes off the screen, he barked back, "Give it some cough syrup."

Humorous Headlines -

- Include Your Children when Baking Cookies
- Something Went Wrong in Jet Crash, Expert Says
- Police Begin Campaign to Run Down Jaywalkers
- Safety Experts Say School Bus Passengers Should Be Belted
- Drunk Gets Nine Months in Violin Case
- Survivor of Siamese Twins Joins Parents
- Iraqi Head Seeks Arms
- British Left Waffles on Falkland Islands
- Eye Drops Off Shelf
- Teacher Strikes Idle Kids
- President Wins on Budget, But More Lies Ahead
- Enraged Cow Injures Farmer with Ax
- Plane Too Close to Ground, Crash Probe Told
- Miners Refuse to Work after Death
- Juvenile Court to Try Shooting Defendant

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The Greatest Mistakes of the 20th Century -

It is a terrible mistake for pastors to think that they can play with contemporary worship music and their churches not get hurt. - *David Cloud*

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Notable Quotes and Quotable Notes -

- If you would like to know what it's like to be in a minority group, do more work than is expected of you. - *Dr. Don Boys*
- What does it take for a man to be in the will of God? If you could find the right man and he was at the right place and he was there at the right time and he was doing the right thing, would you conclude he was in the will of God? Because Jonah was the right man, Nineveh was the right place, the eve of judgment was the right time and preaching was the right activity. But nobody can convince me that he was in the will of God. The mercy of God on Nineveh displeased him. There is more to the will of God than identity, location, timing, and activity. There is the question of motive that comes into whether anyone is in the will of God. *Dr. Ken Connolly*
- The clock and Christ are not close friends. Imagine what God thinks of us now that we are so locked into schedules that we have locked ourselves out of the Sermon on the Mount - it is hardly possible to walk a second mile today without offending one's pocket calendar. We jump at the alarm of a Seiko but sleep through the call of the Almighty. *Richard M. Swenson*
- Be on guard against any tampering with the Word, whether disguised as a search for truth, or a scholarly attempt at apparently hidden meanings; and beware of the confusion created by the senseless rash of new versions, translations, editions, and improvements upon the tried and tested Bible of our fathers and grandfathers. *M. R. DeHaan*

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Blinded Minds -

(Jimmy Carter exemplifies the modernist element among Southern Baptists. In the following article he openly declares his love for liberal theology. He rejects the simple, clear teachings of Scripture for the murky, confusing errors of feminism. - Ed.)

LOSING MY RELIGION FOR EQUALITY

Date July 15, 2009

OBSERVER

Opinion By *Jimmy Carter*



I HAVE been a practising Christian all my life and a deacon and Bible teacher for many years. My faith is a source of strength and comfort to me, as religious beliefs are to hundreds of millions of people around the world. So my decision to sever my ties with the Southern Baptist Convention, after six decades, was painful and difficult. It was, however, an unavoidable decision when the convention's leaders, quoting a few carefully selected Bible verses and claiming that Eve was created second to Adam and was responsible for original sin, ordained that women must be "subservient" to their husbands and prohibited from serving as deacons, pastors or chaplains in the military service.

This view that women are somehow inferior to men is not restricted to one religion or belief. Women are prevented from playing a full and equal role in many faiths. Nor, tragically, does its influence stop at the walls of the church, mosque, synagogue or temple. This discrimination, unjustifiably attributed to a Higher Authority, has provided a reason or excuse for the deprivation of women's equal rights across the world for centuries.

At its most repugnant, the belief that women must be subjugated to the wishes of men excuses slavery, violence, forced prostitution, genital mutilation and national laws that omit rape as a crime. But it also costs many millions of girls and women control over their own bodies and lives, and continues to deny them fair access to education, health, employment and influence within their own communities.

The impact of these religious beliefs touches every aspect of our lives. They help explain why in many countries boys are educated before girls; why girls are told when and whom they must marry; and why many face enormous and unacceptable risks in pregnancy and childbirth because their basic health needs are not met.

In some Islamic nations, women are restricted in their movements, punished for permitting the exposure of an arm or ankle, deprived of education, prohibited from driving a car or competing with men for a job. If a woman is raped, she is often most severely punished as the guilty party in the crime.

The same discriminatory thinking lies behind the continuing gender gap in pay and why there are still so few women in office in the West. The root of this prejudice lies deep in our histories, but its impact is felt every day. It is not women and girls alone who suffer. It damages all of us. The evidence shows that investing in women and girls delivers major benefits for society. An educated woman has healthier children. She is more likely to send them to school. She earns more and invests what she earns in her family.

It is simply self-defeating for any community to discriminate against half its population. We need to challenge these self-serving and outdated attitudes and practices - as we are seeing in Iran where women are at the forefront of the battle for democracy and freedom.

I understand, however, why many political leaders can be reluctant about stepping into this minefield. Religion, and tradition, are powerful and sensitive areas to challenge. But my fellow Elders and I, who come from many faiths and backgrounds, no longer need to worry about winning votes or avoiding controversy - and we are deeply committed to challenging injustice wherever we see it.

The Elders are an independent group of eminent global leaders, brought together by former South African president Nelson Mandela, who offer their influence and experience to support peace building, help address major causes of human suffering and promote the shared interests of humanity. We have decided to draw particular attention to the responsibility of religious and traditional leaders in ensuring equality and human rights and have recently published a statement that declares: "The justification of discrimination against women and girls on grounds of religion or tradition, as if it were prescribed by a Higher Authority, is unacceptable." We are calling on all leaders to challenge and change the harmful teachings and practices, no matter how ingrained, which justify discrimination against women. We ask, in particular, that leaders of all religions have the courage to acknowledge and emphasise the positive messages of dignity and equality that all the world's major faiths share.

The carefully selected verses found in the Holy Scriptures to justify the superiority of men owe more to time and place - and the determination of male leaders to hold onto their influence - than eternal truths. Similar biblical excerpts could be found to support the approval of slavery and the timid acquiescence to oppressive rulers. I am also familiar with vivid descriptions in the same Scriptures in which women are revered as pre-eminent leaders. During the years of the early Christian church women served as deacons, priests, bishops, apostles, teachers and prophets. It wasn't until the fourth century that dominant Christian leaders, all men, twisted and distorted Holy Scriptures to perpetuate their ascendant positions within the religious hierarchy.

The truth is that male religious leaders have had - and still have - an option to interpret holy teachings either to exalt or subjugate women. They have, for their own selfish ends, overwhelmingly chosen the latter. Their continuing choice provides the foundation or justification for much of the pervasive persecution and abuse of women throughout the world. This is in clear violation not just of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights but also the teachings of Jesus Christ, the Apostle Paul, Moses and the prophets, Muhammad, and founders of other great religions - all of whom have called for proper and equitable treatment of all the children of God. It is time we had the courage to challenge these views.

Jimmy Carter was president of the United States from 1977 to 1981. Read more:

<http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/losing-my-religion-for-equality-20090714-dk0v.html#ixzz2J8JmBVe>

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1 Corinthians 4:1-2

"Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."



Diaries of the Saints

During the reign of Queen Mary I (February 18, 1516- November 17, 1558) many Christians were martyred for their faith. "Bloody Mary", as she was called, burned at the stake about 300 Christians .

One, who was to be executed, was a man by the name of John Gilpin. He had a favourite Bible verse he was forever quoting. It was [Romans 8:28](#), "*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God...*"

When he was arrested he quoted it to the Queen's officers. When he was jailed he quoted it to the jailer. When he was tried he quoted it to the magistrate. When he was kept in prison for months he quoted it to the guards.

One of them in particular hated John Gilpin and despised his favourite verse. When they came to take him away to die, he quoted his verse and the guard laughed out loud at John Gilpin's simple faith.

On his way to his execution John rested in the truth of his verse and trusted in the Lord. When he and his guards were about half way to the place of execution the guard violently jerked the chain that bound John Gilpin and that so hard that he fell off his horse, breaking his leg. And John's response? You guessed it. Even in pain he yet believed that "*all things work together for good to them that love God...*"

The guards were obligated by law to deliver him to the stake sound in life and limb so they feared for their lives that his crippled condition might cause him to die before he reached his place of execution. If that happened they would be liable, and they didn't want to get on the bad side of "Bloody Mary". So the guard that hated John Gilpin took him up in his arms and carried him to a house where a doctor could set his leg. And John Gilpin, as he was being carried by his enemy leaned his head on the guard's shoulder and softly whispered in his ear, "*all things work together for good to them that love God.*"

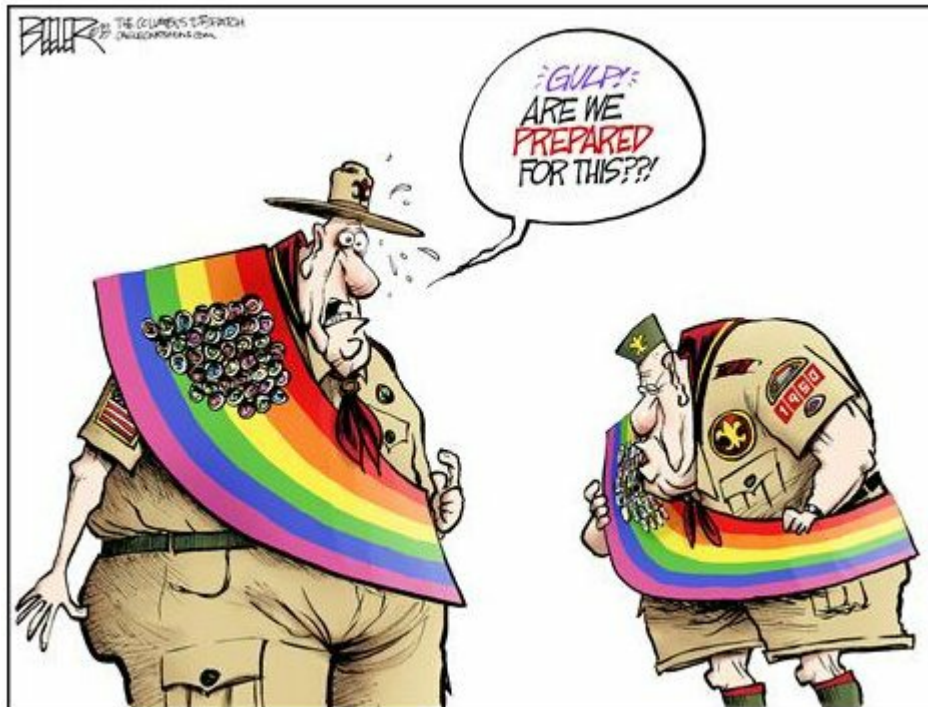
Many of you might be thinking, "Here's a man – a Christian – scheduled to be burned alive. Why would his Loving Creator allow him to fall off his horse and break a leg in addition to all else that he was suffering. How could good come of this?" But it was good. While John Gilpin lay in a rough bed regaining his strength "Bloody Mary" died and Protestant Queen Elizabeth claimed the throne of England. When Queen Elizabeth came to the throne she revoked Mary's death sentences. And when John Gilpin went into Smithfield Market where he would have been martyred the coronation bells were ringing. Elizabeth had come to the throne and the death sentence passed by "Bloody Mary" was banished forever.

So what did John Gilpin have to say about this surprising turn of events? "*All things work together for good to them that love God...*"

Trials do not destroy Christians, but they temper them and make them stronger in their faith.

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Cartoons for the Wise -



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Poems That Won't Preach -

O, F E dear!

O, F E dear, what XTC
I MN8 when UIC!
Since KT 1 me with her I's
2 LN I O countless sighs
T'was MLE while over C's
Now all 3 are non-NTT's
4 UXL them all, UC
U suit me, FE, to a T

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Jesus' Parting Prayer - For Me

by John Ecob

When Jesus contemplated His departure from this world He was concerned for those He would leave behind and made several requests for them. His requests were directed to the Father for the disciples whom the Father had given to Him and to those who would believe on Him through their witness. He prayed: *"I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them"* (John 17:9-10).

This prayer is sometimes called the High Priestly prayer since Jesus continues to intercede for His Own at the Father's right hand in heaven.

Christendom has misinterpreted this prayer and used it to promote the ecumenical movement based on a small part of the prayer taken out of context:

"That they all might be one" (John 17:21).

Please note:

1. Jesus did NOT pray for the world but for those who had been given to Him. He said: *"I pray for them: I pray not for the world"* (John 17:9).

Old Testament believers belonged to the Father and the Father gave them to the Son. The disciples were already believers when Jesus called them to follow Him. A new era was beginning and the Old Covenant was about to pass and be replaced by a New Covenant but those who were saved under the Old Covenant needed to be brought into a new relationship with the Father and the Son.

The Lord's disciples had left the world's side to be with Christ.

"I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me" (John 17:6).

2. Jesus prayed for those who belonged to Him but while the disciples belonged to Christ they also belonged to the Father before they were given to Christ.

These Old Testament believers did not lose their relationship with the Father but had a new relationship with the Son: *"And all mine are thine, and thine are mine"* (John 17:10). The world had waited for the time when *"the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world"* and when Christ came in the fullness of time, the Father gave the true believers to Christ. When Christ died He went to Paradise and when He ascended He *"led captivity captive"* and took all the saved in Paradise to heaven (Eph.4:8). Now all believers belong to Christ: *"For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward"* (Mark 9:41).

3. Jesus' prayer was extended to all those who would be believed through the testimony of the Apostles as recorded in the New Testament Scriptures.

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word" (John 17:20).

Christendom is a part of this world's system. It is religious, political, and commercial: It has worldly objectives. Jesus prayed for believers who were hated by this world's system. *"The world hath hated them, BECAUSE they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17:14).*

When we belong to Christ the world rejects us because we do not love the world system. The Gospel condemns the world and offers salvation from it. There is a difference between loving sinners for Christ's sake and loving the world system with its materialism, religion, sensuality, honour, ambition and praise.

If we search the Scripture we will not find one instance of Jesus seeking the cooperation of the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Herodians or the scribes. Jesus referred to Herod as *"that fox" (Luke 13:32)* and Herod and his men of war mocked Jesus (Luke 23:11). At no time did Paul join with Gnostics, and Epicureans in order to preach the Gospel. He opposed Judaisers and false teachers calling them the *"enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Phil.3:19).*

The true Church is diametrically opposed to Christendom and it would be foolish to expect opposing forces to cooperate with each other in order to help people come to Christ. Jesus said: *"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household" (Matt.10:34-36).*

The New Testament spends much time exposing false teaching and warning us against it. The Lord says to those in Mystery Babylon, *"Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev.18:4).* There is a line drawn and the world system is on one side while the true believer is on the other. We love sinners for Christ's sake but we do not join them. Our desire is that they leave the world's side and join us on Christ's side of that line so that they too belong to Christ.

If we trace the Lord's life we will find He was hated at all times. Herod tried to kill Him as a child; the scribes and Pharisees plotted to kill Him and even at the beginning of His ministry the Jews in His own synagogue at Nazareth would have thrown Him over the brow of a hill if they could; at Jerusalem they tried to stone Him. Finally, Jesus was arrested, abused, mutilated and crucified. *"He was despised and rejected of men" and if we belong to Him then we should expect the same treatment "outside the camp, bearing his reproach" (Heb.13:13).* The ecumenical movement today has no time for believers who refuse to surrender the great doctrines of the Word of God.

John wrote: *"Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you" (1 John 3:13).*

Jesus said: *"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (John 15:18-19).* If we belong to Christ we have crossed over from the world's side to Christ's side. The greatest hatred experienced by Jesus was from the religious people of His day and we can expect the same. It is ironic that the Lord's prayer in John 17 is used by the ecumenical Church to gather all the apostates of Christendom together in an unholy union. They pick a few words out of the Lord's prayer and apply it to Christendom. *"That they all might be one" (John 17:21).*

At the same time Christendom condemns the true believers who stand faithfully for the Word of God. We are branded as "Fundamentalists" and even likened to terrorist organizations in the Muslim fundamentalist camp. Apostate Christendom has no convictions except the conviction that Bible-believing Christians are

trouble makers. The Inter-faith Movement can even tolerate other religions such as Hinduism and Islam, but any Christian who holds to Biblical separation from the world system is anathema! The ecumenical, Inter-Faith movement promotes dialogue with every false religion and endeavours to fuse them into one world company of tolerance and compromise.

Christendom will accept anybody today. Homosexuals are accepted; Idolatrous Roman Catholic priests are accepted along with Seventh Day Adventists pastors on ministers fraternals while tongues-talking charismatics are welcomed. It matters not what they believe for they will accept anyone provided they do not preach the whole counsel of God.

- from the February Herald of Hope

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Eddy-Torial -

Why Are We So Afraid Of Certain Bible Words? - Part 2

The Plenitude of Scripture

It was ascribed to Tertullian, the saying, "I adore the plenitude of Scripture. Every letter is a word, every word a sentence, every sentence a paragraph, every paragraph a book, and every book is a Bible in itself."

Every word a sentence! The content of even one word, inspired by God, breathed out from Him to us, is enough to nourish the soul of the believer. How rich are His words!

God says about His words that every one is pure! Reader, do you know the delight of tasting the words of Holy Scripture? Every word is a delicacy, a beefsteak, a sweetmeat, a draught of cold milk, a barrel of the purest spring water, and better than bread made with the finest wheat.

Amening God! -

Many years ago a dear old brother, a Victorian sheep farmer, mentioned a sermon he'd heard in which the preacher told the congregation that Abraham "amened" God. Well, I liked it and borrowed it and used it for forty years before I discovered that it was precisely true! Read the verse for yourself, "And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness." (Genesis 15:6) For years I assumed that the old preacher was just using poetic or pictorial language, but it is literally true. The word for "believed" in Gen. 15:6 in the Hebrew language is "Amen!" They pronounce it "Aw-man." And the English word "Amen" in the Hebrew Old Testament is from the same root word (pronounced "aw-mane"). "Blessed be the LORD God of Israel for ever and ever. And all the people said, Amen, and praised the LORD." 1 Chronicles 16:36

Close Kin to Amen -

What a cosmos of meditation there is in this word "Amen!" God's word for Faith is close kin to His word for Amen. Now I begin to see why it was that old time Christians, those Pre-Appraise saints, loudly voiced their agreement with God's truth by saying or shouting "Amen!" They were making a personal and public confession of faith. They were saying with Jeremiah, "That I may perform the oath which I have sworn unto your fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as it is this day. Then answered I, and said, So be it, O LORD." (11:5) So be it, O LORD! Here the Hebrew word for "Amen!" is translated "So be it!" Those old timers are swiftly becoming an endangered species and are under threat of extinction because we still believe in saying "Amen!" We are verbalising our hearts by responding to the preacher or singer with "Faith!" We are saying to all and sundry, "Perfectly Believable!" "Entirely Credible" "Completely Trustworthy!" "I Agree!" and "So be it!" Sadly, this practice of saying "Amen" has all but disappeared and is actually frowned upon in many churches.

The Applause Culture -

There is a new generation of church goers that have just about displaced the "Ameners" among us. Someone recently called them the "Y" generation and said it had to do with the questions they ask. (Why should I get out of bed, why should I go to school, why should I get a job, why should I pull my pants up where they belong, why should I go to church, why should I read my Bible, and why should I turn down my music?) For years their parents scratched around in the cracked cisterns of erudite and lifeless denominations until they entirely lost their "amens." The glory of God departed from their churches about the same time the fire in the pulpit went out, so their teens are presently helping their parents' churches out by bringing in the dim and smoking lamps of the night clubs they haunt all week. It just so happens that they bring in with them the music of the nightclubs and the "Applause Culture" that goes with their music.

What Does Applause Really Mean? -

Say, if it doesn't overload the cerebral circuits, what do you think the Applause Culture is really saying when they clap for the entertainer behind the plexiglass pulpit and for the musicians that ate the microphones for a hundred and twenty mind-blowing minutes? What does the congregation clapping in church really say in their applause? They are not saying what we say when we say "Amen!" to God's truth.

I suspect their applause says,

1. "I am entertained!" "I enjoyed that!" "I got high on that!" "That was cool!" "Groovy!" "I like you, you made me feel good, man!" And if we could hear the secrets of their hearts we would hear them whisper, "My flesh, my old nature, was greatly nourished by that! I am now more carnal, and more wilful, and can resist the Spirit of God better than before you entertained me."
2. Do they not also say by their clapping, "We approve the shift from old fashioned Bible preaching that convicts us of sin to these little motivational talks that inspire us to be happier sinners?" And, "We like 'Religion-Lite' so much better than 'Meat and Bread Bible Teaching.' It's sort of 'Easy-Listening' church with a rock band to make church fun."
3. And clapping does at least one other thing. It makes it possible for the individual church attender to be a part of group-think. You see, when a sincere worshipper of Jesus Christ shouts "Amen" from his heart, he doesn't care one whit whether anyone else says "Amen." He is oblivious to what anyone else thinks or says. We have one man in our church that still remembers how to say "Amen," and he doesn't seem to care at all that the rest of the congregation have gone to sleep. He's busy "amening" God. But watch the next time you see church attenders clap the muso's. They won't do it one at a time. There has to be a crowd clapping, or they will soon give it up. It reveals their inability to stand alone. It's a mob mentality.

Amen Is MultiLingual -

Such is the undiluted vitality of God's words that they retain their liveliness in other languages.

Someone made the comment a few years ago that there are two words that must be Heavenly words that God sent down to earth to live and they then found a home in every language on earth. One of those words is "Amen." You can guess what the other one is.

Evict The Squatters! -

Now, before you go, let me ask you a question. Has "Amen" dropped out of your vocabulary? Was it (perhaps) bullied out of your heart by "Cool!" or "Wicked?" Well then, it sounds like it's time to evict the squatters and invite Captain Faith back in to stay.

When we lived in Cairns years ago I knew a chap who was very direct in his dealings with others. A friend of his told him that some squatters had taken over his rent house and wouldn't leave. Mr. Rough and Ready asked him if he had a garden hose he could borrow. Well then, the next morning about daybreak he showed up at the house full of hippies, hooked up the hose, turned it on full blast, climbed the back steps and proceeded to wash all the druggies and hippies out the front door. He told them he was hired to clean up the mess, and when they called the cops on him, he explained to the policeman that he was just cleaning the house of all the squatters that were living there and wouldn't leave when asked to. The policeman told them to get out.

If you or I read the Bible aright, it makes a very good firehose to clean the world's words out of our minds and hearts so God's pure and precious and powerful words can take up residence there again.

Turn on the tap, Lord!

Buddy Smith

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