



"I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I will answer when I am reproved." Hab. 2:1

November 18, 2011

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Feature Article – Rape and evolution

Evolution shows its true colours

(When I read this in Creation magazine several years ago I desired greatly to call it to the attention of everyone I knew. Parents particularly need to read this. IF YOUR CHILDREN ARE OLD ENOUGH TO HANDLE THIS AND THINK IT THROUGH, I ADVISE READING IT THROUGH ALOUD WITH THEM AND EXPLAINING IT TO THEM LINE BY LINE. It contains powerful arguments against evolution that we need to think through. Feedback welcomed. Ed.)

Summary

It's not often that we ask to reproduce an article that has already appeared elsewhere, but this one is exceptional. John Lofton, a Christian, here interviews Craig Palmer, who, along with Randy Thornhill, is one of two evolutionist academic authors of the book, *A Natural History Of Rape: Biological Bases Of Sexual Coercion* (MIT Press). The book argues that rape is to be expected on the basis of our alleged evolutionary heritage. Many other evolutionists have attacked the book's thesis; this interview brilliantly spotlights the inconsistency between evolution and the idea of moral values in a society. We do not know the interviewer, but we commend him for his unashamed willingness to confront an unbeliever with the truth, yet in a way that is full of wisdom and insight.

John Lofton: So, how would you sum up what your book is saying?

Craig Palmer: That there is obviously some evolutionary basis to rape just like there is some evolutionary basis to all aspects of living things. In the book we narrow it down to two plausible specific evolutionary reasons for why we are a species in which rape occurs. One is just a by-product of evolved differences between the sexualities of males and females. Or, two, rape might be an adaptation. There might have been selection favouring males who raped under some circumstances in the past. And therefore there might be some aspects of male brains designed specifically to rape under some conditions.

What do you mean when you say evolutionary reasons?

An evolutionary reason is also known as the ultimate level of explanation. It's really the question of why are we the way we are? And the evolutionary answer is what selective forces favoured those traits in hundreds or thousands of past generations that we eventually end up with today.

So, if men rape for evolutionary reasons then they are not responsible for their rape?

Oh, absolutely not. That's not—

How could they be responsible? To what?

Excuse me?

Evolutionary man would be responsible to what? To whom?

The question of causation is a different question from responsibility. Let me turn it around and say the typical explanation is that culture, your culture, causes you to rape. Why aren't people saying then, 'Oh, then the person can't be responsible because it's their culture, something else that caused them [to rape].'

I assume you think rape is wrong and should be a crime.

Absolutely. Yes.

But, if we just evolved, how can there be any right and wrong?

That's a very good point. But you need to avoid the naturalistic fallacy. What was favoured by natural selection is no more likely to be considered good or bad. You can't just make the assumption that if something is natural, favoured by evolution, that therefore it is good. That is the naturalistic fallacy.

But, you're a naturalistic evolutionist, right?

I've never heard that term.

I mean, you either think that God caused evolution, and that's the way people were created. Or it all just happened naturally.

Oh, oh. Then given those two options, I guess I'd be a naturalist evolutionist.

Then I repeat my question: Where would right and wrong come from in a completely natural world where things just happen?

It doesn't come from what was selected for. I suggest that where it comes from is that you look at the consequences; not the causes of a behaviour, whether it's evolved or not, but what

are the consequences. And then you are free to choose which consequences you find desirable and good and which should be encouraged, and which consequences you find bad and should be prevented.

But let's take this conversation out of the realm of the abstract. I'm talking to you, Dr Palmer. You say rape is wrong and should be illegal, right?

Absolutely.

But, if there was no law against rape, why would you be for making it illegal? Why do you think it is wrong? By what standard is rape wrong?

Because it causes so much human suffering.

But this begs the question. Why is it wrong to cause human suffering? In naturalistic, evolutionary terms, what is a human that it is wrong to make one suffer? I mean, you believe that humans are accidents, they just happened.

I would go with that.

So, why would it be wrong then to make humans suffer if they just happened?

We're free to deem those things we consider wrong. Let me ask you: Are you a creationist?

I'm a Christian who believes the Bible.

Ahhhh, I see.

Are you a Christian?

No. I was raised Christian, a Congregationalist. I'm now an agnostic. I don't have any evidence that God doesn't exist.

The reason men rape is because of Original Sin. This very easily explains rape. But because you're an unbeliever, you have no real answer as to why rape is wrong.

You don't like my human suffering answer?

As I've said, this begs the question because you don't say why causing human suffering is wrong. I say, because I'm a Christian who believes the Bible, that rape is wrong and human beings ought not to be made to suffer, because God says this is wrong. God says rape is a capital crime. And making humans suffer is wrong because we are made in God's image. But, you can't say any of this.

That's true. I do not give that ultimate reason. You're right, absolutely right.

You still say rape is wrong, however. But, where would right and wrong come from in an evolutionary world where things just happen? Isn't there a problem here, from your perspective?

I actually think that what you say is basically true. I kinda like the view that we have free will to decide what's right and wrong and that we don't have to follow some scriptures.

But, if we have this free will that means that each one of us can decide for ourselves if rape is right or wrong. A rapist can decide that rape is OK for him. And a rape victim can decide that rape is not OK for this victim. If all this is true, then there is no right or wrong regarding rape. There are just different opinions.

But you have democracies and laws –

But you say individuals decide about rape being right or wrong according to their free will.

An individual can decide if cannibalism is fine or whatever. But others have the right to disagree and to enact laws and vote so that persons can't act on that.

But your free will, everybody-decide-for-himself-what's-right-or-wrong view, by definition, means that there is no transcendent, absolute argument against rape or anything else.

You also have the rule of the majority in law and that does figure into it.

Not at all. This doesn't, necessarily, bind individuals. In fact, what you just said is just one more opinion that I can accept or reject according to my free will, as you see it. Do you really think rapists respect majority rule?

Well, they might if they know the majority has passed laws that will lock them away for the rest of their life.

But see, the problem you have is that the way you reason—and the only way you can reason as a naturalistic evolutionist—is that everyone decides for himself, according to his own free will—which he does not have but thinks he does—what's right and wrong. And this means there is no right and wrong, that everybody just makes up his own religion, his own right and wrong. And this is exactly the situation we have in our society today, which is why we have moral chaos! In fact, this is what God talks about in the book of Judges in the Old Testament—a time in Israel's history when they, too, were in chaos because 'every man did that which was right in his own eyes' (Judges 21:25).

Very interesting.

It is. But, tell me this, please. For generations now, in our public, government-run schools, your view has been taught. Kids have been taught evolution, that they are animals who evolved from lower forms of animal life. How do you think this is working? I don't think it is working.

I would agree with you on that one. Absolutely.

So, why doesn't this shake your belief then? If you can honestly say that the teaching of your view is not working, why doesn't this shake your viewpoint?

This may surprise you, but I actually think religion has a good effect on people because it has been the way that generation after generation has passed down moral codes.

But, I'm not talking about just 'religion'. I'm not a religionist. I don't believe 'religion' saves anybody. 'Religion' is something people babble about and praise when they don't know what they are talking about. 'Religion' isn't, necessarily, good or bad. It depends on whether you're talking about a true or false religion.

Ahh.

But, again, why do you cling to a view that you admit has not worked when taught to our kids in the public, government-run schools? Do you care if reality refutes what you believe?

Could it be possible that my view of how living things came to be, would it be logically consistent—possible—that what I believe is true and yet the teaching of that truth has social

consequences that we might consider bad? I think that is possible. And that your view—though not accurate—might have better consequences if taught? I think that's possible.

(Laughing) Oh, boy. One of the things I have on my resume is that I thank God I never went to college—which is why I am so smart. But, no, your view is not possible because it contradicts the Word of God. Your view is an interesting evasion to try and get you out of the corner you are in. But, it is not possible. The consequences of teaching your view are bad because what you believe is bad, is false! But, if you really believe that your view when taught has bad consequences, where does this leave you? And what should be taught in the schools?

I think there are aspects of religious teaching that have wonderful social consequences and particularly the encouragement of morality and self-restraint that does come with religion and—

Again, please, forget 'religion'. I'm not a religionist. I'm defending Christianity.

Sure. OK, this all comes certainly with Christianity. I've written a paper but never published it arguing that all types of sexual crimes increase when religion and moral traditions in general deteriorate.

You mean Christianity since there are no 'moral traditions in general'. The reason I'm so touchy on this matter is because God, the Lord Jesus Christ, is to be given the glory for all good things that happen. And He is robbed of this glory when one speaks of 'moral traditions in general'.

OK. I would agree that there is a correlation between powerful Christian traditions and the lowering of all kinds of crimes, maybe particularly sexual crimes. And I would agree that in our society we have seen Christian traditions weakened.

You're a master of the under-statement.

And that (the weakening of Christianity) is a factor responsible for the increase in rape and sexual crimes and violence, murder in our schools, which you've mentioned. So, there is maybe a small point of agreement here.

But, where does this leave you and what you believe? If the secular humanist order is collapsing all over the world—and it is—where does this leave you when you admit this view has bad consequences when taught? And what are these bad consequences of teaching naturalistic evolution?

The question is whether the benefit of teaching this outweighs the cost. My view can increase knowledge, generate predictions which can be tested and you discard the ones that aren't met and keep the ones that can increase knowledge. The downside is that my view tends to—you would say it has to—is that it diminishes the role of religion. And I think that religion does make people more co-operative, more self-restrained, nicer, altruistic ...

But, we're back to 'religion'.

OK, Christianity, sorry. I'm an anthropologist and am used to talking in those terms. I'll try to stick to Christianity. [My view] turns people away from Christianity. Christians are nicer, more altruistic, more willing to sacrifice for someone else, more willing to restrain themselves for someone else than from someone who does not practise—I would say any religion—than in evolution. So, you have to choose and I've had to choose. What are the benefits of increased knowledge versus the cost of this loss of say Christian behaviour? I

t's interesting that I actually started a dissertation in graduate school on religion. And what I found was that it was too close of a call for me to make. Yes, I thought I could increase knowledge about religious behaviour, its causes, etc. But in doing so it tended to have the effect on people I convinced of [this that they] would no longer practice their Christianity. I was not at all sure that was a good thing. In fact, I sensed that it was making them more selfish and less cooperative.

But, when you—as an unbeliever—worry about people falling away from their Christianity, when you are not a Christian, [it] makes you a hypocrite! Seriously, how can you do this when you, too, reject Christianity?

I understand perfectly. I would try to behave in a nice, caring, non-selfish, restrained way ...

A Christ-like way, you mean. The Christ in whom you do not believe!

Yes. Exactly. Perfectly put.

Your problem is that you want Christianity without Christ.

Yes, the behaviour without having to...

But, you're not going to get it! You will not get Christianity without Christ! You will not get the fruit without the tree! See?

Uh-huh.

You remind me of a story that was told about the French atheist Voltaire (1694–1778). It is said that when he had atheist friends over for dinner they spoke openly, while being served, of their atheism. But, Voltaire told them to shut up, that he didn't want such godless talk in front of the hired help because if they believed this they might murder him in his sleep and rob him.

(Laughing) That's very good.

And it's very true, too, and applicable to you! What you need to do is repent of your sin of unbelief and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. You need to admit that your godless philosophy has been a dismal failure. But, you're not there yet.

No, not quite. But, I have enjoyed this.

<http://creation.com/rape-and-evolution>

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1 Timothy 6:20-21

O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: Which some professing have erred concerning the faith.

Notable Quotes and Quotable Notes –

- **Is Evolution a Theory?** – Evolution is often called a theory but it is not. As David Stone, Ph.D. in physics, says: "Scientific theories involve quantitative modeling, experimental data, and repeated validation by prediction and observation. In any aspect of the philosophy / fantasy of evolution, there is no 'theory.' There is no theory for formation of the first protein, first DNA, first cellular sub-structures, first cell, multi-celled creatures, transitions between kinds, etc. Just stories. There is no genetic data, not a single observed case of mutations and natural selection producing new, complex tissues, organs, or creatures. Evolution qualifies merely as a philosophical, even religious idea, void of scientific support, and intended to replace biblical truth with stories." (Friday Church News Notes, November 4, 2011, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org.)
- "History does not long entrust the care of freedom to the weak or the timid." – *Dwight D. Eisenhower*
- Men fail because they do things without thinking, or because they think about them and do not do them, but most of the time they fail because they do not know what God says in His Word. and do not remember that he has all power to accomplish what He has promised." – *anon*
- "What we love usually manages to get into our conversation. What is down in the well of the heart will come up in the bucket of the speech." – *Vance Havner*.

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Pinnacles of Prophecy –

(For years and years I have observed the proclamations of my brethren on prophetic themes and found many of their theories to be an embarrassment to God's people. How many of us remember when the prophecy experts declared that the European Economic Community was the kingdom of the Antichrist and as soon as there were 10 nations in it, the rapture would come? Every once in a while it would do us all a lot of good to go back and read the failed prophetic interpretations of yesteryear. Remember the Jupiter Effect? Remember when Mussolini was the Antichrist? Or that the bar code was the mark of the Beast? Or the mental meanderings of Stan Deyo? Or Don Stanton's comments about Pan Am not allowing two saved pilots on the flight deck for fear of the rapture leaving them with no pilot to fly the plane? For some years prophecy preachers have been telling students of prophecy (with all authority!) that the New World Order is the coming world government of the Antichrist. Maybe it is and maybe it isn't. All we really know for sure is that the events that are clearly predicted in Holy Scripture will come to pass in the Lord's time, but as for any man being able to say "This is that!" with authority, we need to exercise GREAT caution lest we discredit the name of the Lord. Below is an article by Patrick Buchanan questioning whether the present New World Order is doomed to failure like all its predecessors. – Ed.)

Is the New World Order Unraveling?

By Patrick J. Buchanan

Posted: October 13, 2011 – 2:40 pm Eastern

With Greece on the precipice of default and Portugal and Italy approaching the ledge, the European monetary union appears in peril. Should it collapse, the European Union itself could

be in danger, for economic nationalism is rising in Europe. Which raises a larger question. Is the New World Order, the great 20th century project of Western transnational elites, unraveling?

The NWO dates back as far as Woodrow Wilson's League of Nations, which a Republican Senate refused to enter. FDR, seeking to succeed where his mentor had failed, oversaw the creation of a United Nations, an International Monetary Fund and a World Bank. In 1951 came the European Coal and Steel Community, love child of Jean Monnet, which evolved into the European Economic Community, the European Community and the European Union. A European Central Bank and a new currency, the euro, followed.

The hidden ultimate goal of economic union was political union – a United States of Europe as model and core of the 21st-century world government. With the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the EU expanded to the east. And the New World Order, formally proclaimed by George H.W. Bush in 1991, was out in the open and seemingly the wave of the future. Progress was swift. A North American Free Trade Agreement, bringing the United States, Mexico and Canada into a common market that George W. Bush predicted would encompass the hemisphere from Patagonia to Prudhoe Bay, was signed in 1993. A World Trade Organization was born in 1994.

U.S. sovereignty was surrendered to a global body where America had the same single vote as Azerbaijan. The Kyoto Protocol, brought home by Vice President Al Gore, set up a regime to control the worldwide emission of greenhouse gases. An International Criminal Court, a permanent Nuremberg Tribunal to prosecute war crimes and crimes against humanity, was created. A doctrine of limited sovereignty had been asserted. Elites claimed a higher law than national sovereignty; "a responsibility to protect" enabled them to intervene in countries where human rights violations were egregious. Serbia, bombed by Bill Clinton for 78 days for fighting to hold its ancient province of Kosovo, was the first victim. Suddenly, however, the progression has stalled. Indeed, the New World Order seems to be unraveling.

Emerging powers like China, India and Brazil are demanding they be exempt from restrictions developed countries seek to impose. The follow-up summits to Kyoto – Copenhagen in 2009, Cancun in 2010 – ended in failure. The Doha round of world trade negotiations ended in failure. China refuses to let her currency float lest she lose the trade surpluses that have enabled her to amass \$3 trillion in cash reserves. Protectionism is rising. Americans chafe at a new world economic order that has led to deindustrialization of their country. Congress is talking of defunding the U.N. as anti-Western and anti-Israel.

Why is the New World Order suddenly going in reverse?

A primary reason is the resurgence of nationalism. Nations are putting national interests ahead of any perceived global interests. A second reason is the decline of a West whose project this was. We no longer dictate to the world, and the world no longer marches to our tune. The deficits and indebtedness of Western nations preclude more of the big wealth transfers in foreign aid that once bought us influence. A third reason is demography. Not one European nation has a birth rate sufficient to replace its population. Europe's nations are aging, shrinking, dying. A depopulating Germany cannot carry forever the deficit-debtor nations of Club Med. The oldest nation, Japan, is on schedule to lose 25 million people by 2050, as is neighbor Russia. Militarily, America remains the most powerful nation. But Iraq and Afghanistan have bled the country and left us without the certain attainment of our goals. Old allies like Turkey go their separate ways. Ethno-nationalism also explains a disintegrating world order. Aspiring nations like Scotland, Catalonia, Padania, Flanders, Ingushetia, Dagestan, East Turkestan, Kurdistan and Baluchistan seek a place in the sun, free of the cloying embrace of the mother country. The desire of peoples for nations all their own, where their own language, faith and culture predominate and their own kind rule to the exclusion of all others, is everywhere winning out over multiculturalism and transnationalism.

Through history there have been attempts to unite the world.

The Roman Empire. Catholicism. Islam. The West that ruled much of mankind from Columbus to the mid-20th century. Communism, which conquered half of Europe and Asia but arose and fell in a single century. With the death of communism and the decline of the West – in relative population and power – Islam has become the largest religion, China the world's emerging superpower and Asia the continent of the future.

Could this still be the Second American Century?

Not the way we are going.

Read more: Is the New World Order unraveling?

<http://www.wnd.com/index.php?fa=PAGE.view&pageId=355405#ixzz1aiYY2VPM>

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You Might Be A Pastor's Wife If. . .

- You're at every church service, seated on the second row, piano side. You don't sit with your husband. He doesn't sit at all.
- You arrive early and leave late, even if you have a headache or company, or both.
- You bring music for an instant offertory and emergency special – just in case.
- You turn off the church coffee pot, dump the nursery diapers, and water the lobby ferns.
- You starch your husband's white shirts and press his gray suits.
- When he buys a small red car, you fret that he won't look dignified driving in a funeral procession.
- When your weary family needs to sleep late, you get up early, quietly dress and put on makeup before lying down again – just in case a deacon happens to drop by. Then you can answer the door and he won't think the whole family is lazy.
- You're an expert at multiplying recipes to feed 12, 24, 48, or 96.
- You keep a pan of lasagna in the freezer – just in case.
- You are able to look and sound grateful for another sack of zucchini.
- To church fellowships, you bring peanuts and pork rinds (for Atkins dieters) and loaves of zucchini bread.
- You wince when the phone rings early Sunday morning, but you don't panic. You've already prepared a Sunday school lesson – just in case.
- You laugh at your husband's pulpit jokes before he gets to the punch lines and turn to the sermon text before it's announced.
- Prayer requests and announcements prompt additions to a "to-do" list you've scribbled on a bulletin.
- You notice new hairdos, new dresses, and which lady needs a hug.



- You provide compliments and hugs, just in case no one else does.
- You remember the names of grandchildren and puppies.
- You love the unlovable.
- No matter how many folks are at a service, you know who isn't.
- You smile at the eighth family who say they will be out of town next Sunday and wish them a pleasant trip.
- To attendance figures, you add the people who would have been there if they could have been there and come up with a new total, just for yourself.
- You work beside your husband without schedule, salary, or job description. You love your job – usually.

(– A word of appreciation – You may already know how valuable you are. Maybe your congregation praises you openly and often. I hope so. But – just in case – let me remind you: your church is stronger because of you. You are its caregiver, its sparkle, and its heart. The wheels of your church roll smoothly because you sweep the pebbles out of its path. Without you, your husband's task would be much harder. And the lobby ferns would die.)

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Ironsides on Calvinism –

"Turn to your Bible and read for yourself in the only two chapters in which this word predestinate or predestinated is found. The first is Romans 8:29–30, the other chapter is Ephesians 1:5 and 11. You will note that there is no reference in these four verses to either heaven or hell but to Christ-likeness eventually. Nowhere are we told in scripture that God predestinated one man to be saved and another to be lost. Men are to be saved or lost eternally because of their attitude towards the Lord Jesus Christ. Predestination means that someday all the redeemed shall become just like the Lord Jesus"

"D.L. Moody used to put it very simply the elect are the 'whosoever wills' the non-elect 'whosoever won't's'. This is exactly what scripture teaches, the invitation is to all, those who accept it are the elect. Remember, we are never told that Christ died for the elect".

"Whosoever means, whosoever." Only a biased theologian, with an axe to grind, could ever think that it meant only the elect."

H.A. Ironsides.

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Romans 8:29-30

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

A Rabbi Comments on Gossip –

Rabbi Joseph Telushkin comments:

Over the past decade, whenever I have lectured throughout the country on the powerful, and often negative, impact of words, I have asked audiences if they can go for twenty-four hours without saying any unkind words about, or to, anybody. Invariably, a minority of listeners raise their hands signifying yes, some laugh, and quite a large number call out, "NO!"

I respond by saying, "Those who can't answer yes must recognise that you have a serious problem. If you can't go for twenty-four hours without smoking, you are addicted to nicotine. If you cannot go twenty-four hours without a drink, you're most likely an alcoholic. Similarly, if you cannot go for twenty-four hours without saying unkind words about others, then you have lost control over your tongue."

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Sharia and Liberty –

by Pastor David Bennett

The migration of peoples from around the world to the shores of Australia means that the mission field is coming to the Christian rather than the Christian going to the mission field. However, with this often comes not only a clash of cultures but also in the case of Islam a conflict of judicial, political and financial systems. These three systems within Islam fall under what is acknowledged as Sharia. Sharia can vary from country to country. However, simply put "Sharia governs every aspect of a Muslim's life, from food, hygiene, sexuality and family to politics, banking and business."

The Australian Federal Attorney General may have "ruled out any chance of sharia law being introduced to Australia" but the fact remains that "Muslim men who come to Australia with multiple wives have those 'marriages' recognised by Australian law."

It is also apparent that the one feature of Sharia which seems to be THE foot in the door for more Sharia being practiced and accepted in Australia, is the banking aspect, for money speaks. Federal Labor Parliamentarian "Bill Shorten, Assistant Treasurer and Minister for Financial Services and Superannuation, says 'Islamic finance is a rapidly growing part of the global financial system and Australia is in an excellent position to capitalise on that growth.'" At least one bank, the National Australia Bank (NAB), provides a scholarship for Muslims within the banking sector and practices Sharia finance. I have emailed the NAB asking if they provide scholarships for other religions but as yet no answer.

However, to believe that only Sharia Islamic finance will be accepted is to be very gullible to say the least. For "Muslim activists are heartened that, at least in this respect, Australians are becoming more open to the potential benefits of sharia law, and hope this concession won't be the last. 'Muslims aren't going to go anywhere, just because people say 'why don't you go home?', says Siddiq Buckley. 'This is home. And Australian Muslims have the same right to influence the government as anyone else.'" And influence government they do!

If the Federal government continues down this path of so called multiculturalism the liberties we presently enjoy will be slowly eroded until they have disappeared completely. When leaders

of Islamic groups proclaim the Sharia that would be practiced in Australia "would be a more moderate variety of Islamic law that fits with Australian values" the reality in Europe, Great Britain and other countries prove that statement false.

Yes, God is in control but He has given us the opportunity to live with liberties unparalleled in history. These liberties are worth protecting. Speak out and let your state and Federal member know your concerns on this issue.

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Poems That Preach –

(I stumbled across Kipling's poem many years ago and thought what an accurate description he gives of the pioneering work that is done by missionaries all over the world. Especially striking to me were the last four verses (highlighted in blue). It saddens me deeply that the real missionary pioneers, the ones that open up entire nations to the gospel, the ones who actually plant national churches, are soon forgotten. The smooth faced men who come after them are not church planters. They break no new ground. They simply come in and take over the national churches and turn them into carbon copies of the churches "back home." They do not lead churches to be indigenous, but instead train them to be clones of the Krispy Kreme churches (and McDonalds seminaries) that sent them out. In Australia we have groupings of missionaries, not one of which has ever started a church. EVERY one pastors a church started by a church planter, and has diverted its entire ministry to their board's agenda. Thank God, there are still a few church planting pioneers, though they be few and far between! – Ed.)

The Explorer - 1898

*There's no sense in going further -- it's the edge of cultivation,"
So they said, and I believed it -- broke my land and sowed my crop --
Built my barns and strung my fences in the little border station
Tucked away below the foothills where the trails run out and stop:*

*Till a voice, as bad as Conscience, rang interminable changes
On one everlasting Whisper day and night repeated -- so:
"Something hidden. Go and find it. Go and look behind the Ranges --
"Something lost behind the Ranges. Lost and waiting for you. Go!"*

*So I went, worn out of patience; never told my nearest neighbours --
Stole away with pack and ponies -- left 'em drinking in the town;
And the faith that moveth mountains didn't seem to help my labours
As I faced the sheer main-ranges, whipping up and leading down.*

*March by march I puzzled through 'em, turning flanks and dodging shoulders,
Hurried on in hope of water, headed back for lack of grass;
Till I camped above the tree-line -- drifted snow and naked boulders --
Felt free air astir to windward -- knew I'd stumbled on the Pass.*

*'Thought to name it for the finder: but that night the Norther found me --
Froze and killed the plains-bred ponies; so I called the camp Despair
(It's the Railway Gap to-day, though). Then my Whisper waked to hound me: --
"Something lost behind the Ranges. Over yonder! Go you there!"*

*Then I knew, the while I doubted -- knew His Hand was certain o'er me.
Still -- it might be self-delusion -- scores of better men had died --
I could reach the township living, but....e knows what terror tore me...
But I didn't... but I didn't. I went down the other side.*

*Till the snow ran out in flowers, and the flowers turned to aloes,
And the aloes sprung to thickets and a brimming stream ran by;
But the thickets dwined to thorn-scrub, and the water drained to shallows,
And I dropped again on desert -- blasted earth, and blasting sky....*

*I remember lighting fires; I remember sitting by 'em;
I remember seeing faces, hearing voices, through the smoke;
I remember they were fancy -- for I threw a stone to try 'em.
"Something lost behind the Ranges" was the only word they spoke.*

*I remember going crazy. I remember that I knew it
When I heard myself hallooing to the funny folk I saw.
'Very full of dreams that desert, but my two legs took me through it...
And I used to watch 'em moving with the toes all black and raw.*

*But at last the country altered -- White Man's country past disputing --
Rolling grass and open timber, with a hint of hills behind --
There I found me food and water, and I lay a week recruiting.
Got my strength and lost my nightmares. Then I entered on my find.*

*Thence I ran my first rough survey -- chose my trees and blazed and ringed 'em --
Week by week I pried and sampled -- week by week my findings grew.
Saul he went to look for donkeys, and by God he found a kingdom!
But by God, who sent His Whisper, I had struck the worth of two!*

*Up along the hostile mountains, where the hair-poised snowslide shivers --
Down and through the big fat marshes that the virgin ore-bed stains,
Till I heard the mile-wide mutterings of unimagined rivers,
And beyond the nameless timber saw illimitable plains!*

*'Plotted sites of future cities, traced the easy grades between 'em;
Watched unharnessed rapids wasting fifty thousand head an hour;
Counted leagues of water-frontage through the axe-ripe woods that screen 'em --
Saw the plant to feed a people -- up and waiting for the power!*

*Well, I know who'll take the credit -- all the clever chaps that followed --
Came, a dozen men together -- never knew my desert-fears;
Tracked me by the camps I'd quitted, used the water-holes I hollowed.
They'll go back and do the talking. They'll be called the Pioneers!*

*They will find my sites of townships -- not the cities that I set there.
They will rediscover rivers -- not my rivers heard at night.
By my own old marks and bearings they will show me how to get there,
By the lonely cairns I builded they will guide my feet aright.*

*Have I named one single river? Have I claimed one single acre?
Have I kept one single nugget -- (barring samples)? No, not I!
Because my price was paid me ten times over by my Maker.
But you wouldn't understand it. You go up and occupy.*

*Ores you'll find there; wood and cattle; water-transit sure and steady
(That should keep the railway rates down), coal and iron at your doors.
God took care to hide that country till He judged His people ready,
Then He chose me for His Whisper, and I've found it, and it's yours!*

*Yes, your "Never-never country" -- yes, your "edge of cultivation"
And "no sense in going further" -- till I crossed the range to see.
God forgive me! No, I didn't. It's God's present to our nation.
Anybody might have found it, but -- His Whisper came to Me!*

Rudyard Kipling

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Dread Of Controversy -

The following was written by *Robert Haldane* in 1874

Many religious persons have a dread of controversy and wish truth to be stated without any reference to those who hold the opposite errors. Controversy and a bad spirit are, in their estimation, synonymous terms. And strenuously to oppose what is wrong is considered as contrary to Christian meekness. Those who hold this opinion seem to overlook what every page of the New Testament lays before us. In all the history of our Lord Jesus Christ, we never find Him out of controversy. From the moment He entered on the discharge of His office in the synagogue of Nazareth till He expired on the cross, it was an uninterrupted scene of controversy. Nor did He, with all the heavenly meekness which in Him shone so brightly, treat truth and error without reference to those who held them or study to avoid giving its proper appellation to those corruptions in doctrine or practice that endangered the interests of immortal souls. His ensues were not confined to doctrine but included the abettors of false principles themselves.

And as to the Apostles, their epistles are generally controversial. Most of them were directly written for the express purpose of vindicating truth and opposing error--and the authors of heresies do not escape with an abstract condemnation of their false doctrine. Paul again and again most indignantly denounces the conduct of the opposers of the Gospel and, by name, points out those against whom he cautions his brethren. When Hymenaeus and Alexander erred concerning the faith and when he delivered them unto Satan that they might learn not to blaspheme, he did not compliment them as amiable and learned persons. Even that Apostle who treats most of love and who possessed so much of that spirit which was so eminently manifested in his Divine Master, does not avoid controversy--nor in controversy does he study to avoid severity of censure on the opposers of the truth.

In the examples of opposing error (left on record for our imitation) we perceive nothing of that frigid spirit of indifference which smiles on the corrupters of the Word of God and shuns to call heresy by its proper name. With what holy indignation do the Apostles denounce the subtle machinations of the enemies of the gospel! In vain shall we look among those faithful servants of the Lord for anything to justify that trembling reserve which fears to say decidedly that truth is truth--and error is error.

In what style, indeed, should perversions of the truth of God be censured? Ought they to be treated as mere matters of opinion on which we may innocently and safely differ? Or ought they to be met in a tone of solemn, strong and decided approbation? Paul warned Christians against men who arose from among themselves, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them--and instead of complimenting false teachers in his day, denounced an angel from heaven on the supposition of his preaching another gospel. And if an Apostle was withstood to the face, because he was to be blamed, are the writings of those who subvert the Gospel to pass without rebuke?

When the canker of the principles of neology [the use of new meanings for established words], derived from the Continent and from America, is perverting the faith of many and seducing them into the paths of error--which a spirit of lukewarmness and indifference to truth is advancing under the mask of charity and liberality, there is a loud call on all Christians to "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel," to present a firm and united phalanx of opposition to error under every name--from whatever quarter it may approach.

Should believers become unfaithful to their trust and be seduced to abandon their protest against false doctrines, they may gain the approbation of the world--but what will this avail when compared with the favor of God? But if (with prayer to God, in the use of the appointed means) they contend earnestly for the truth, then they may expect the gracious fulfillment of the blessed promise, "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him."

July 14, 2009 (Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, fbns@wayoflife.org)

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Therapy For the Funny Bone -

A man wrote a letter to a small hotel in a Midwest town he planned to visit on his vacation. He wrote: "I would very much like to bring my dog with me. He is well-groomed and very well behaved. Would you be willing to permit me to keep him in my room with me at night?"

An immediate reply came from the hotel owner, who wrote:

"SIR: I've been operating this hotel for many years. In all that time, I've never had a dog steal towels, bedclothes, silverware or pictures off the walls. I've never had to evict a dog in the middle of the night for being drunk and disorderly. And I've never had a dog run out on a hotel bill. Yes, indeed, your dog is welcome at my hotel. And, if your dog will vouch for you, you're welcome to stay here, too."

A customer asked, "In what aisle can I find the Polish sausage?"

The clerk asks, "Are you Polish?"

The guy, clearly offended, says, "Yes I am. But let me ask you something. If I had asked for Italian sausage, would you ask me if I was Italian? Or if I had asked for German Bratwurst, would you ask me if I was German? Or if I asked for a kosher hot dog would you ask me if I was Jewish? Or if I had asked for a Taco, would you ask if I was Mexican? Or if I asked for some Irish whiskey, would you ask if I was Irish?"

The clerk says, "No, I probably wouldn't."

The guy says, "Well then, because I asked for Polish sausage, why did you ask me if I'm Polish?"

The clerk replied, "Because you're in a hardware store."

An employer welcomed a job seeker into his office, and asked him where he got his training.

The applicant replied, "Yale."

"Hmmm, that's good," commented the employer, "So what is your name?"

"Yim Yohnson."

My friend Bill sat down next to a stranger on an airliner last week. As they chatted, Bill mentioned that he was flying to Chicago to talk to the company manager about a transfer to the head office there. He said, "I don't think I'll take it, and if I refuse the promotion I'll have to resign."

"Why would you refuse the promotion?" asked his seatmate.

"Because I can't bear the thought of living in Chicago with all its crime and corruption. It's just too wicked a place for me and the wife to live in."

"It's not too bad. And you sort of get used to it after a while. You should take the job." replied the other man. "I've been working there for over fifteen years."

"And what do you do for a job?" asked Bill.

"Tailgunner on a beer truck!"

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Fresh Quills –

(This column is reserved for young authors God is raising up. – Ed)

The Blight of Bitterness

By Simeon Western

Hebrews 12:15 "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled."



In this verse of Scripture we find valuable instruction on the subject of bitterness. This message is of particular importance to us who find ourselves in ministry homes. I have personally experienced the sour, destructive fruit of a bitter heart. There are several lessons we can learn from this verse.

I. The Cause of Bitterness

The word 'bitterness' comes from the Greek word PIKROS which means to cut, to prick (Vines). The ministry has many privileges and blessings but then there are the bitter experiences that cut and wound our hearts. There are the slanderous tongues, the heartaches, and the tears that come to those in the front line of the battle. Without a deep work of God's Grace our lives will become the victim of this terrible disease. Bitter-ness takes root in a heart that 'fails' to allow God's grace to do its work.

II. The Character of Bitterness

The Word of God likens bitterness to a root that grows beneath the surface and suddenly reveals its bitter nature. This is the nature of bitterness. It grows quietly in the wounded heart un-detected. Like the bitter waters of Marah (Ex. 15:23) its true nature is not known until someone tastes its sour content. Bitterness is a choice, a decision not to respond to a situation through the grace of God. You may smile, go to church and say Amen but deep down you have a root of bitterness draining the spiritual moisture in the soil of your heart.

III. The Consequences of Bitterness

There are 2 clear consequences of bitterness in this verse.

1. It Troubles you.

The word trouble means to crowd in, to annoy (Strong's). Bitterness brings misery, guilt, and sorrow into a person's life. In the case of Esau it drove him into a life of immorality (see Heb. 12:16). Bitter people are unhappy people and their bitterness becomes their main consuming focus, it crowds in on them.

2. It Defiles Others.

Bitterness is highly contagious and spreads like an infectious disease. Often we think we can live our own independent life without it affecting others. This is not the case. Many are effected. Your siblings, your friends, and those who look up to you and follow you. Absalom's bitterness towards his father David spread throughout all Israel to the point where David had to flee for his life. The Bible solemnly reminds us of the fact that Achan "perished not alone in his iniquity" (Josh. 22:20). To this day we suffer the consequences of Adam and Eve's rebellion against God. The sin of bitterness defiles and destroys others.

IV. The Cure for Bitterness

If you are bitter today there is hope for you as I also experienced. There are two parts to this cure.

1. Your Part—"looking diligently"

We cannot control the bitter experiences but we can monitor our hearts condition and humbly recognize bitterness that has taken root. It is also interesting to note that this verse uses the word 'any man' which tells us we need to not only be diligent concerning the condition of our own hearts but also the condition of our brothers and sisters in Christ lest they fall prey to the snare of bitterness. Proverbs 4:23 says, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life".

2. God's Part—"the grace of God"

If failing of God's grace is the cause of bitterness, then partaking of God's grace is the cure for bitterness. We often hear grace defined as "God's unmerited favor" which is a true definition. There is nothing in ourselves to merit God's salvation. God gives us salvation freely in love despite our unworthy condition. But there is another meaning of the word. Strong's Concordance defines grace as "the divine influence upon the heart, and its reflection in the life." What a powerful definition! How desperately we need the inward working of the grace of God, not just to save us from hell but also to influence our lives in such a way that we become a reflection of Him.

To be cured of bitterness you must do your part by recognizing it and taking it to God in prayer as He is the only one who can influence your heart with an infusion of His grace to enable you to overcome it. Consider our Saviour Jesus Christ and the bitterness of the cross. See the bitter strips across His back (remember bitterness means to cut), see the bitter nails pierce His hands and feet, see the bitter thorns spear His head. Hear the bitter words wound His loving heart. In the midst of all this bitterness hear Him say, "...Father forgive them for they know not what they do..." (Luke 23:34) That's Grace. God giving me the power to forgive what would be humanly impossible to for-give. It is no wonder this passage of Scripture begins with that great exhortation to look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Without Him, bitterness will have us out of the race set before us.

A man by the name of George Matheson was engaged to be married but before he reached his wedding day he learned that he had an eye condition that would leave him totally blind. His fiancée said, "I cannot marry a blind man" and left him with shattered hopes and dreams. So deep was the wound he contemplated taking his life but instead cast himself upon the grace of God and penned these words, " O love that will not let me go, I rest my weary soul in Thee; I give Thee back the life I owe, That in Thine ocean depths its flow May richer fuller be" (Encyclopaedia of 7700 Illustrations by Paul Lee Tan Pg. 893). T

Today we are still blessed by this hymn that came out of a humble mans bitter experience that was responded to through the grace of God. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, if you have bitterness in your heart towards your parents, the ministry or some other problem in your life I beg you to take it to Christ today and experience the work of His grace through the power of the Holy Spirit.

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The Book of Proverbs And a Pound of Ratty Butter

At church we recently did surveys of different books of the Bible every Wednesday night for few months. One week we did an overview of Proverbs. "Proverbs", you remember, comes from "pro" ("before", or "for" as in the sense of "instead of", and "verba", for "word".) So, proverbs are "a few words that take the place of many words." Truth condensed. The concept of boiling down truth to its essence and then stating that essence in just a few words agrees perfectly with the theme of Proverbs, which is Wisdom. (We both know there is much more to the book of Proverbs, but does give a vital insight into the book.)

We all grew up with homely, uninspired, and sometimes humorous proverbs. Most of them we learned from our parents or grandparents. We weren't even aware we soaked them up until we heard ourselves quoting them to our kids, "A penny saved is a penny earned."

It is probably a mark of old age, but I have begun to collect them. My favourites are the quaint sayings of the country people I minister to in Far North Queensland. At the moment, at the top of my list is this one, "No sense having a dog and barking yourself."

Every time I ponder the wisdom of Proverbs I remember a story told to me by my grandmother, Lilly Denton. She died a year or two ago at the grand old age of 100 years and one month. She was a little old lady who loved us rugrat grandkids and made great biscuits. Her story was about one of her uncles who owned a tiny grocery store. It had two rooms, one for sales, and one for storage. A customer walked in one day with a pound of homemade butter wrapped in a piece of brown paper and laid it on the counter. She said, "Mr. Morgan, would you swap me a pound of your butter for a pound of my butter?" He looked at her for a moment and then asked, "Now, why would you want me to do that?" "Well," she said, "When I was churning it, a rat fell into the churn. I got it out pretty quick so I reckon the butter be ok to eat, but I sort of didn't want to eat butter that had had a rat swimming around in it. But I didn't want to throw it out either, so I wondered if you would swap with me? I could have a pound of your good butter, and somebody else could have this butter, and I figured that what they didn't know wouldn't hurt them, would it?" Mr. Morgan pondered on this for a minute or so, and then replied, "Alright, I'll swap you," and he took her butter back into the back room. He then unwrapped the lady's "ratty" butter and also unwrapped a pound of his own butter. Using the wrapper off his butter, he wrapped the lady's butter in it, and carried it back to her at the counter. Handing it to her with a smile, he said, "What they don't know won't hurt them, now will it?"

So I asked the folks at church, "How can we condense into a few words the lessons of that little story? What proverbs (or simple Bible truths) would tell that story in just a few words?"

We had a very interesting 10 minutes or so, and some of the proverbs that came out were these:

"As ye would that men should do unto you, do ye also to them."
"For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Agreed, these are not precisely "proverbs", but they certainly ARE verses that sum up the wisdom of my granny's old uncle in a few words.

Any thoughts?

Bro. Buddy Smith

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So What form of Government is Next? An Ineptocracy? –

Ineptocracy (*in-ep-toc'-ra-cy*) – A system of government where the least capable to lead are elected by the least capable of achieving, and where the members of society least likely to succeed or even to sustain themselves, are abundantly rewarded with goods and services paid for by the confiscated wealth of a diminishing number of producers. – *from Daily Reckoning*

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Two Excellent Books On Apologetics –

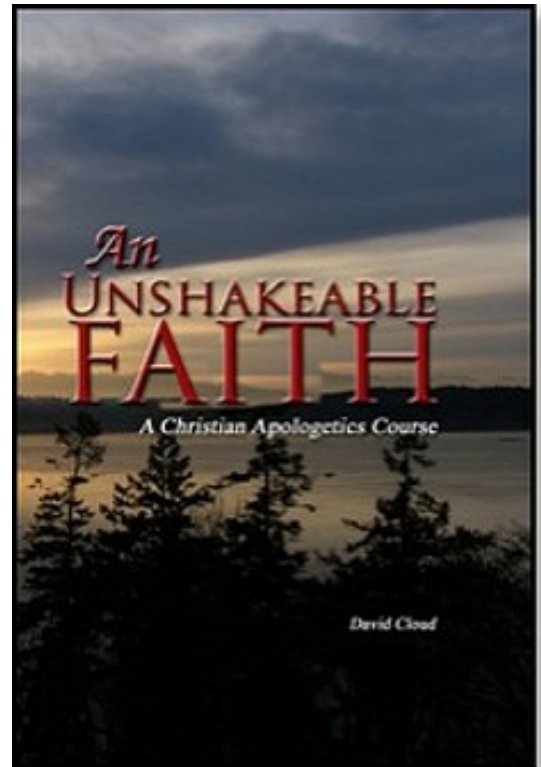
(The past month has brought to my attention two excellent books on the defence of the faith.

Bro. David Cloud has just released **AN UNSHAKEABLE FAITH**

We are pleased to announce the publication of a major apologetics teaching package. It is also a course in evangelism.

The course is built upon nearly 40 years of serious Bible study and apologetics writing. Research was done in the author's 6,000-volume library plus in major museums and other locations in America, England, Europe, Australia, Asia, and the Middle East.

The package consists of a 385-page apologetics course entitled AN UNSHAKEABLE FAITH (available in both print and eBook editions) plus a series of 18 PowerPoint/Keynote presentations. (Keynote is the Apple version of PowerPoint.) The professional PowerPoint presentations consisting of 1,850 slides deal with archaeology, evolution/creation science, and the prophecies pertaining to Israel's history.



The majority of the photos in the PowerPoint slides were taken on location with a Nikon D700 prosumer digital Single Lens Reflect (SLR) camera.

The material is extensive, and the teacher can decide whether to use all of it or to select only some portion of it for his particular class and situation.

After each section there are review questions and summaries as teaching aids and to help the students focus on the most important points. Selections can be made from the review questions for sectional and final tests.

There is also a summary of the entire course, which emphasizes the major points that the students should master so well that they can use them effectively in apologetic and evangelistic situations.

There is a major section "Soul Winning and Apologetics."

The course can be used for private study as well as in a classroom setting.

(This package includes both print and e-Book editions of An Unshakeable Faith: A Course in Christian Apologetics, plus 18 PowerPoint/Keynote presentations on a CD. The book is printed on 8.5x11-inch stock with coated color cover and is spiral bound so it can be laid flat. Available from www.wayoflife.org)

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A Defence of the Bible

By Dr. Gary Baxter

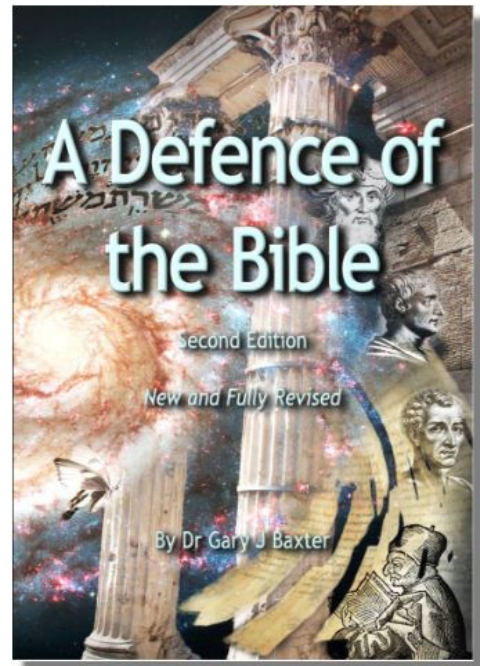
Dr. Gary Baxter has just released a new edition of his book, A Defence of the Bible.

It is well written and illustrated, printed on glossy paper, and is economically priced.

To obtain copies, you may write directly to Dr. Baxter at:

www.adeffenceofthebible.com

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Links In The Media Chain –

Everyone needs to see this discussion between Donohue and Friedman on capitalism –
http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=g-o0kD9f6wo

IAEA says foreign expertise has brought Iran to threshold of nuclear capability
http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/iaea-says-foreign-expertise-has-brought-iran-to-threshold-of-nuclear-capability/2011/11/05/gIQA6hjtM_print.html

Beautiful glass art –
<http://wimp.com/glassmaster/>

LG video projection at its best –
http://www.youtube.com/watch_popup?v=XVTga6GmbGw&vq=medium%23t=74%3Chttp://www.youtube.com/watch_popup?v=XVTga6GmbGw&vq=mediumt=74

Turning a chess piece on a bow lathe –
<http://www.wimp.com/chesspieces/>

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Eddy-Torial -

The first sermon ever mentioned was a red hot sermon of judgment on sin. It was a prophetic message about the second coming of Christ. And the preacher was taken to Heaven without dying.

Much could be written, I think, about that first preacher in the Bible, the prototypical prophet Enoch, the seventh from Adam. Somehow I feel that Enoch would not fit in the ecumenical gatherings of the present generation.



I wonder if Noah, Enoch's great grandson, ever read that fiery sermon. Noah was a preacher himself. He was born almost 70 years after Enoch mysteriously disappeared, so he could not have heard the sermon, but could he have read it? And if he did, what effect did it have on him? Did he borrow from his Great grandfather's sermon when he preached about the great flood to come?

Preachers reading other men's sermons is not new. Godly men have been inspired, convicted, strengthened, and edified by picking up and reading a manuscript that burned their fingers to hold it.

Two and a half millennia ago Daniel read Jeremiah's prophecy of Israel's 70 years in captivity and prayed accordingly. Nehemiah's prayer is filled with quotes from Moses' writings. Ezekiel refers to Noah, Daniel and Job, and it is surely reasonable to think that he read whatever they wrote. Luke wrote down for every pastor to read what Peter and Paul preached in those early days of the church.

I have on my shelves several sets of books and many individual volumes of sermons by faithful preachers. Spurgeon's sermon on Matthew 27:46 (My God, My God, Why hast thou forsaken me?) is an excellent example of good preaching. Campbell Morgan's sermon on the woman with the issue of blood. F.W Boreham's Life Verses sermons. Martyn Lloyd Jones' message on Jairus. D.L. Moody's sermon "Weighed in the Balance", John Wesley on the New Birth, John G. Ridley's message on the man at the pool of Bethesda, William Elbert Munsey on Eternal Retribution, R.A. Torrey on the evidences of the Inspiration of Scripture. R.G. Lee's sermon on Ahab and Jezebel (Payday Someday.) On and on the list could go.

One of the preachers I enjoy reading is Vance Havner. He was not a loud preacher (on his tapes.) His sermons were not long, but they were sharp. And they glorified the Saviour. They convicted sinners. And they rebuked worldly preachers. How I wish every pastor could read his message "The 401st Prophet" on Micaiah and his message to Ahab and Jehoshaphat. All the false prophets predicted victory, 400 of them. But God had a man who didn't belong to the Ministers' Fraternal, and he had another message. It was a message of judgment from God.

And it is a message preachers badly need to preach today.

John Wycliffe was a converted Catholic (before there was an Anglican denomination.) His sermons, carried by the Lollards to Europe, kindled a fire in the heart of John Hus, a Bohemian priest who was converted to Christ but never left Catholicism. Hus' sermons touched the heart of Martin Luther, and he was saved. Luther wrote a commentary on Galatians which God

used to reach John Wesley, and it was in a little Wesleyan chapel that Spurgeon was gloriously saved.

And Spurgeon's sermons are still bringing in fruit to the glory of God.

Can you explain how it is that God uses such halting messengers to preach His Word?

Can you explain how His Spirit works so powerfully through sermons that limp preached by men who lisp?

Neither can I.

But if you will excuse me, I think I will go and read a good sermon.....

Bro. Buddy Smith

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Heads Up! is a weekly publication produced by Pastor Buddy Smith, Grace Baptist Church, Malanda, Qld., 4870, Australia.
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