



July 20, 2012

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Feature Article - Serving God Creatively - Part 1

At present on Wednesday nights we are having a series of sermons on the subject of Serving God Creatively. Our text is Proverbs 8:12, "*I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.*" God's Wisdom is here, in Proverbs 8 and 9, spoken of as a person who does wonderful things wisely. One of these is mentioned in verse 12, "find(ing) out knowledge of witty inventions."

Wisdom is creative in all its witty inventions -

God created man to be creative. It is a part of that amazing likeness to God He put in man at his creation. As God is a trinity, so we are a trichotomy, body, soul, and spirit. As God has dominion over all

His created works, so he has delegated to man a limited dominion. As God is the large "C" Creator of all things, so he has made man to be a small "c" creator" and permitted him to arrange and combine and adapt some of the pieces and energies found in His cosmos.

He intended for us to plan, and think, and come up with ideas and designs and tools and techniques to make and do things. God never intended for His children to be idle. He made us to be creative!

When king Uzziah would defend Jerusalem from her enemies he *"made in Jerusalem engines, invented by cunning men, to be on the towers and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal..."* (II Chron. 26:15)

We believe the king was wisely creative for the good of his people and to the glory of God, but it is not always so

Sadly, this creativity is more often used for evil purposes than for good -

After Uzziah's death it was only a few years until his grandson Ahaz sat on the throne. To defeat the attacking Syrian armies, Ahaz hired the Assyrians as mercenaries. He then travelled all the way to Damascus to pay the Assyrian king Tiglathpileser. Ahaz there saw an altar (in a pagan land full of idolatry) that he desired for Jewish worship in the temple. We read,

"And king Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglathpileser king of Assyria, and saw an altar that was at Damascus: and king Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest the fashion of the altar, and the pattern of it, according to all the workmanship thereof. And Urijah the priest built an altar according to all that king Ahaz had sent from Damascus: so Urijah the priest made it against king Ahaz came from Damascus. And when the king was come from Damascus, the king saw the altar: and the king approached to the altar, and offered thereon. And he burnt his burnt offering and his meat offering, and poured his drink offering, and sprinkled the blood of his peace offerings, upon the altar. And he brought also the brasen altar, which was before the LORD, from the forefront of the house, from between the altar and the house of the LORD, and put it on the north side of the altar. And king Ahaz commanded Urijah the priest, saying, Upon the great altar burn the morning burnt offering, and the evening meat offering, and the king's burnt sacrifice, and his meat offering, with the burnt offering of all the people of the land, and their meat offering, and their drink offerings; and sprinkle upon it all the blood of the burnt offering, and all the blood of the sacrifice: and the brasen altar shall be for me to inquire by. Thus did Urijah the priest, according to all that king Ahaz commanded." 2 Kings 16:10-16.

In this case the innovative, creative acts of Ahaz were simply the adaptating of the Syrians' devilish creativity. *"Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions."* (Psalms 106:39)

A survey of the Hebrew words used for cunning inventions and creativity in the Old Testament indicate that MOST examples of creativity in the Bible have to do with devising new ways to disobey God. Cain's bloodless sacrifice, Korah's new priesthood, Balaam's scheme for the downfall of Israel, and a thousand more are described by the Preacher in Ecclesiastes 7:29. *"Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."*

God overturns the creativity of the wicked -

It is a glorious promise we seldom hear preached these days, *"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD."* (Isaiah 54:17)

Many are the weapons that are formed against God's servants. Atheism and all its devilish spawn are doing their best to invent tools that will destroy our simple faith in God. But God has promised us that their weapons will not prosper. The batteries run flat or their swords lose their edge at the first blow or their commanding generals suffer sudden meltdowns through Alzheimers, HIV, or caffeine overload. We have God's word that their inventions will all fail, *"There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand."* (Proverbs 19:21)

Good and godly men have done great creative service for God -

One of the men I admire greatly in Scripture is Bezaleel. The story of his creative service for God is recorded in Exodus 31 and 36 to 39. With the help of Aholiab and other wise hearted men they made all that was needed for the tabernacle and the priesthood.

"And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah: And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, To devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, And in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship. And I, behold, I have given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan: and in the hearts of all that are wise hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee; The tabernacle of the congregation, and the ark of the testimony, and the mercy seat that is thereupon, and all the furniture of the tabernacle, And the table and his furniture, and the pure candlestick with all his furniture, and the altar of incense, And the altar of burnt offering with all his furniture, and the laver and his foot, And the cloths of service, and the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons, to minister in the priest's office, And the anointing oil, and sweet incense for the holy place: according to all that I have commanded thee shall they do." (Exodus 31:1-11)

We tend to hurry past these verses, but if we were to stop and read them over carefully, we find many truths about creatively serving God. Bezaleel and his helpers were gifted by God with much wisdom and with great skill. It was the work of the Spirit of God. They were skilled in sculpting, in casting, in carving, in lapidary work, in sewing, in apothecary skills, in furniture building. I marvel at the number of skills that God gave them. Remember that these were slaves, fresh out of Egypt. These were not artisans from Switzerland or Italy. These were ordinary people like you and me, but God gave them the skills they needed to serve Him creatively.

Many of our brethren in the Lord use their God-given skills in service to their King. Sewing, cooking, welding, woodworking, writing, composing music and lyrics, speaking eloquently and with articulation, organising, decorating, working with teens and little children, devising object lessons, inventing computer programs, works of art, and means of earning and managing money so that large amounts can be given for the gospel to be carried all over the world. I sat on the front row at church one night recently and looked around the auditorium at all the creative service our people had done for the service of God. Our men designed the building and then built it, devising means to construct and finish what they had drawn. Our ladies creatively devised our colour scheme for painting the building. One of our men built our pulpit and has a new one in hand to replace the old one. One of our families worked for and paid for and selected our church piano and donated it to the church. Several of our men built the bulletin boards for our missionary letters, and the bookshelves for the missionaries' prayer cards and for the bookstore and church library. Another of our men built all our kitchen cupboards and office filing cabinets and youth group games storage cupboards. Two of our ladies painted a lovely mural on the wall of our Primary Sunday school class. One of our men devised an attractive pattern for the carpet tiles when he laid them. Another of the men who attends built our in-ground baptistry outside the building. Even the layout of the building, the way the seats are arranged, was done creatively and helps with the acoustics so that we really do not need a microphone and amplifiers. The offering boxes on the wall near the door were made by one of our men and have the words "Love" and "Grace" cut through the lids for slots. One of our ladies writes music and plays the piano, and our young people willingly sing special music just about every Sunday, as well as at the nursing home on Wednesdays.

Many years ago we passed through South Africa and attended a missions conference in Johannesburg. One of the missionaries working in Africa told of a creative method of witness there. He said that one nation (Muslim or communist, I can't remember) would not allow missionaries or evangelists to preach there. So he and his helpers bought small pillow balloons and had the gospel printed on them in the language of the

closed nation, and then waited until the wind blew the right direction. They then filled the balloons with helium and turned them loose near the border so that they would drift across the border and soon lose the helium and fall where they would be found by the locals. Bro. Randy Pike told many years ago of putting gospel tracts in bottles with lids and tossing them into the rivers that flowed into the countries that try to keep the gospel out.

The simple fact is that we who know Christ CAN serve Him creatively! And we ought to do so! Let us be about His work with zeal and joy and creativity!

In the next issue of Heads Up I want to deal with the subject of Guidelines for Creative Service.

Bro. Buddy Smith.

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Kindle to Replace Gideon Bibles? -

Hotel in Britain Replaces Gideon's Bible With Kindle Carrying Scriptures

Tue, Jul. 03, 2012 Posted: 11:00 AM EDT

A hotel in Newcastle, England, has replaced copies of the traditional Gideon Bible placed in each of its 148 rooms with a Kindle pre-loaded with the book. Hotel Indigo made the change in its policy beginning Monday, claiming to be the first in Britain to offer such a service, Telegraph reported.

Adam Munday, the hotel's general manager, says it is in line with Newcastle's literary heritage. "In the 18th Century, Newcastle was one of the largest print centres in Britain and we're in Grainger Town, close to the Literary and Philosophical Society," Munday was quoted as saying. "We wanted to reflect this literary history in a very contemporary way, so are offering guests the use of cutting-edge Kindles pre-loaded with The Bible, instead of the more traditional hardcopy Gideon's Bible that they would expect to find in a hotel."

The hotel is also allowing guests to download a copy of any other religious text costing up to £5 (approximately \$11) or less.

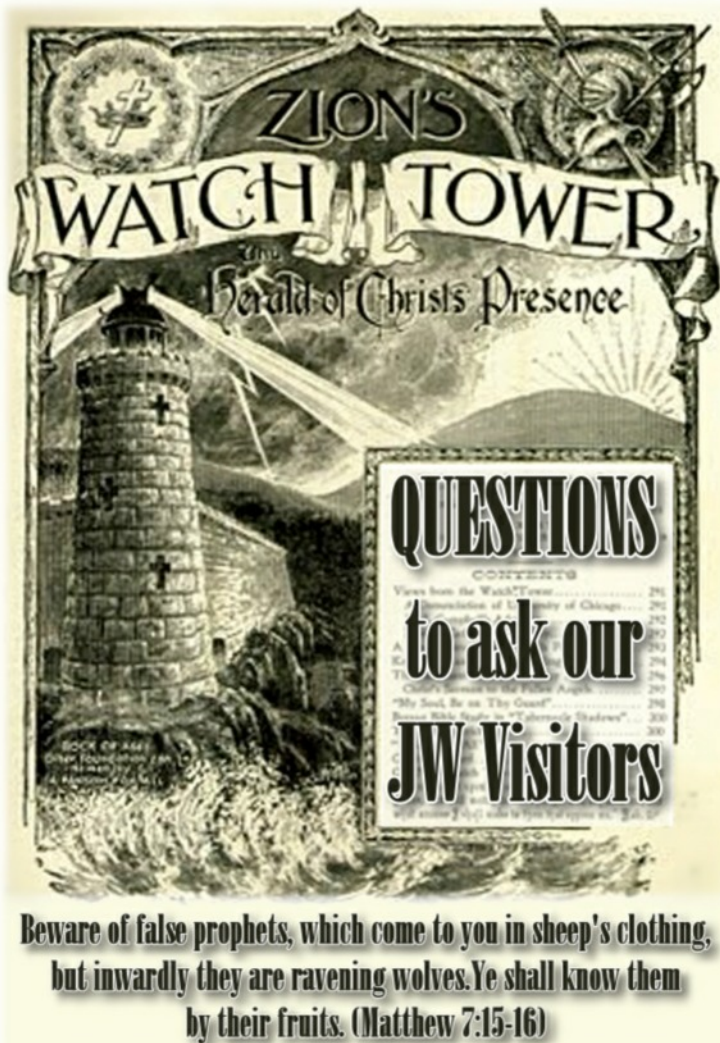
The hotel, situated near the Literary and Philosophical Society library outside London which contains more than 150,000 books, has adopted the policy on a trial basis. After July 16, it will make a decision on whether to retain it in Newcastle, or introduce it also to more of the chain's 44 hotels around the world.

Gideons International, an American evangelical organization dedicated to distributing copies of the Bible around the world, is best known for placing the Scriptures in hotel and motel rooms. The Nashville, Tenn.-based ministry placed the first Bibles in the rooms of the Superior Hotel in Superior, Mont., in 1908. Since then, it has distributed 1.7 billion copies of the Bible worldwide.

Anugrah Kumar

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/hotel-in-britain-replaces-gideons-bible-with-kindle-carrying-scriptures-77579/>

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verse shows that Jesus was speaking about the temple. Ask them to now read verse 21, which states, "...he was talking about the temple of his body."

Watch the JW's faces as they realise that here is the Trinity proven from their own "bible." They have snared themselves and will attempt to change the topic, *but don't let them*. Ask them to explain what they have just read. They said themselves, at the outset, that God raised Jesus from the dead. If their "bible" says that Jesus raised Himself from the dead, then He must be God! And so must the Holy Spirit be God!

Question 3

Do the JWs know that their "new testament" is in agreement with a corrupt Greek manuscript published in 1881 by two apostate Anglican Bishops, named Bishop Westcott and Bishop Hort, whose stated goal was to discredit the original Greek manuscripts and the KJV?

They will deny this is true. But point out that their "bible" is identical in key verses to what *they* claims are a multitude of corrupt modern versions. They will claim that their 'bible' is identical to the KJV, which *was* the Bible used by the JW Movement prior their NWT being released.

Ask the JWs to read 1 Timothy 3:16 from their "bible." The NWT reads [speaking of Jesus], "He was made manifest in flesh, was declared righteous in spirit, appeared to angels, was preached about among nations, was believed upon in [the] world, was received up in glory."

Show the JWs the same verse from the KJV, which reads, "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit..." True to the *historically accepted* Greek manuscripts the KJV declares that Jesus is truly God. Their NWT, however, agrees with the heretical Westcott and Hort Greek manuscript that was changed specifically to deny the deity of Christ.

Question 4

Has God given the commission to guard and feed His sheep to ordained Pastors of Bible based local churches, or has He given it to the leadership of a para-church organization in America, who then delegate that responsibility to their members, who must go house to house, on their behalf, throughout the nations of the world?

Unlike our Independent Baptist church, and in contradiction to Scripture, JWs do not believe in the autonomy of the local church. In Acts 20:28-29, the Pastor has been commissioned to shepherd and

Unless you are well grounded in the Scriptures, it is pointless attempting to debate Jehovah's Witnesses (JWs) on the *selected* subjects they will *lead you into*. The JWs are well versed in the doctrines of their "*pet*" topics. **You need to be well versed in yours!**

JWs are taught to control any discussion between you and them by asking the questions. Your task is to take the initiative. Be assertive (not rude) and *you* ask the JWs to answer *your* questions.

Below are some thought provoking questions you can ask JWs. They have no answer to these questions and will attempt to lead you back to their "*pet*" topics. Be determined to stay on *your* subject!

Question 1

JWs have been taught that their "church" is the one and only true church. Therefore, ask the JWs, "Did Jesus say in Matthew 16:18 that He would build His Church, and that the gates of hell would not prevail against it?" Their "bible, the New World Translation [NWT] reads, "I will build my congregation, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it." Consequently, their response to your question will be "Yes!"

Next, ask the JWs, "When was the JW 'church/congregation' first formed?"

The answer is that the JW Movement was begun in the 1870s by Charles Taze Russell. Prior to 1870 it never existed. Ask the JW to explain, "Where was the Church for 1870 years before the JWs started theirs?"

Question 2

Ask the JWs, "Who raised Christ from the dead?" They will answer that God did. Ask them to read Acts 3:15 from their "bible." In agreement with our KJV, the NWT confirms that "God raised him up from the dead."

Now ask the JWs to read Romans 8:11 from their "bible." Again, in agreement with the KJV, the NWT declares that, not God, but the *Holy Spirit* raised Christ from the dead.

Ask them to now read John 2:19 from their "bible." Once again, in agreement with our KJV, the NWT declares that "Jesus said to them [the Jews]: 'Break down this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.'"

Point out to the JWs that here, Jesus was saying that He was going to raise Himself from the dead. They will deny it, saying that the next

protect God's flock, and he has been clearly instructed what he is to feed them.

Although they will not agree with you, you can demonstrate, even from their own "bible," that the JW members have no God-given authority to go house to house attempting to feed Christians who indicate to them that they already belong to a local, Bible believing church.

Questions For You

1. Should you invite the JWs into your home to allow them to discuss (debate and argue) their interpretation of the Scriptures with you? Apart from what we've just read from Acts 20 above, showing that the pastor of your church, and those authorised by him, should teach and nurture you, what else saith the Scripture?

"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ [as with the JWs], hath not God...If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, *receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.*" (2 John 1:9-11).

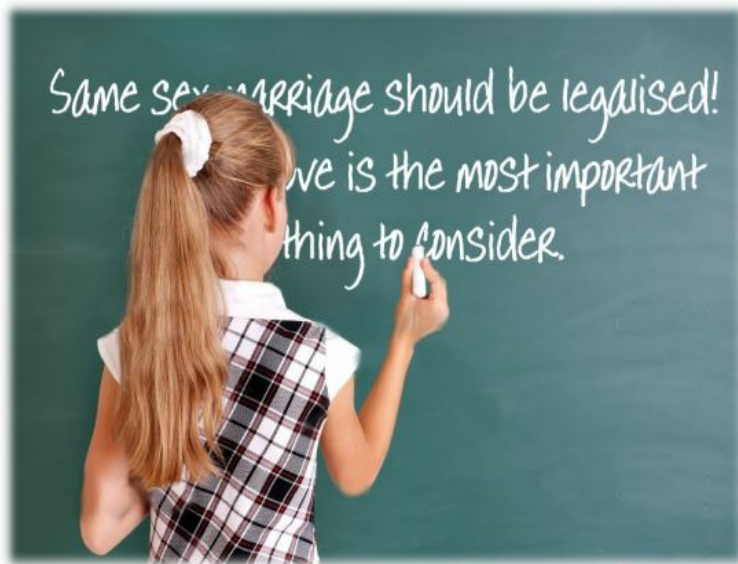
2. Should I accept the literature the JWs offers me to read?

The JW's literature has hidden within it the leaven of their false teaching. The Bible fearfully warns the Christian to beware of false teachers and their doctrines. (Galatians 5:9. Matthew 16:11-12).

A second, perhaps just as important, reason not to receive their literature is because the JW's "salvation" is based upon works. Part of the works they must perform, to secure their place in Paradise, is to convince you to accept their literature. Don't be accountable before God for assisting the JWs in their belief that they must work their way to salvation.

This brochure will be posted to the Grace Baptist Church website "[Resources](#)" page with accompanying instructions for easy printing.

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Blinded Minds -

Schools (In Britain) could be forced to teach gay marriage

Secret Government emails reveal that schools could be forced to teach children about gay marriage if it becomes law. The emails between officials at the Home Office and Department for Education came to light following a Freedom of Information request. One official said the issue was a potential "minefield" and wanted "defensive lines to take" in case the press started asking questions.

Failed

The Government failed to tell the public about the impact on schools when asking people to respond to its consultation on the plans. Schools are currently under a legal obligation to teach children about the importance of marriage in sex education classes. If marriage is redefined, schools may be forced to teach gay marriage to children – sparking conflict with the beliefs of many parents and teachers.

Unnamed

Emails sent between unnamed officials at the Home Office and Department of Education discuss the matter. The emails conclude with a document signed off by schools minister Nick Gibb confirming that teaching about marriage may have to change if marriage is redefined. David Burrowes MP, who openly opposes plans to redefine marriage, said: "Teachers should be able to exercise their consciences according to their own views on marriage, but that could well be constrained by these proposals.

Challenges

"As much as I am skeptical about the Government being able to exempt churches from conducting same-sex marriages, I also doubt whether it will be possible to construct exemptions for teachers. "They would be open to legal challenges. Is the Government really going to order primary school teachers to go against the views of the churches that run them?" The Coalition for Marriage opposes Government plans to redefine marriage and has gathered a petition of nearly 600,000 names.

Secret

Campaign Director Colin Hart said: "We have consistently warned about the unintended consequences of these ill thought out and profoundly undemocratic proposals. "When we raised these concerns in February they were dismissed repeatedly by the Equalities Minister, who said that her plans would only affect civil marriage, but now these secret internal emails reveal that the Government was completely wrong. "The discussion between the unnamed officials in the Home Office and DfE shows an astonishing lack of understanding of the legal position of marriage. "Marriage appears more than 3,000 times in law, affecting every aspect of our lives. It is simply impossible to redefine it without many serious unintended consequences, not least forcing schools to teach children about gay marriage, even if this goes against the wishes of the parents, children and teachers."

<http://www.christian.org.uk/news/schools-could-be-forced-to-teach-gay-marriage/>

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Deacon True Sez -

"I learned some years ago that the best way to discourage anybody is to tell them the truth about something and leave God out of it."

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Pastor, Are You Ready For the Next Long Weekend?

I have often said, "When I take over the world, I am going to cancel all long weekends." Why? Because they are often a source of discouragement for pastors and people in small churches. In a large church it is not noticeable if a few families miss; however, in a small church it can have a very negative influence.

A Few Suggestion Concerning How To Prepare For The Next Long Weekend.

1. **Do Not Let Numbers Be The Source of Your Joy.** Numerical expectations can be a real source of discouragement, especially in a small church. The Word of God says, "...it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." (First Corinthians 4:2) Christ commended a faithful man calling him a "...good servant" because he was "...faithful in a very little." (Luke 19:17) Jesus said, "...where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:20) If only you and one other show up, Jesus will be there. If another one comes you will have three. Either way, Christ said "I am in the midst." That is better than the crowded church in Revelation 3:20 where Jesus said, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock."
2. **Do Not Focus On Who Is Not There, Be A Blessing To Those Who Are.** It is very disappointing when Christians put their family or friends ahead of Christ on a long week-end. Yes, they are setting a very bad example and they seem to have no concern about who they influence; however, consider this; If everyone in the church was doing everything the way God wanted them to do things God would not need any pastors.
3. **Don't Play Church.** We need to have order in our services; however we don't need to have an order of service so pre-planned that the Holy Spirit can't get involved, because He is not found on the "Order of Service" form. Playing church with a handful of people on the next long weekend will help no one, and will discourage the faithful who come.
4. **Ask The Lord To Take Charge.** Recently, I was looking forward to preaching a message that I had worked on all week. I had studied for many hours and I knew this message was going to be a real blessing to everyone. I even had a few people in mind who really needed it. Then, I made the mistake of asking the

Lord what He wanted to do that day. As it turned out, we started singing favourites and having testimonies during the Sunday School hour and we were still singing and having testimonies at 12:30 P.M. It was one of the best services we ever had.

5. **Remember You Are Dealing With People Not Programs.** A program is "...a planned event or a performance." There is nothing that will kill the spirit in a small group of twenty people more than trying to act like a congregation of 400. God commended the pastor at Sardis because he had "...a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments." (Revelation 3:4)

*"Does the place you're called to labor...
seem too small and little known?
It is great if God is in it,
And He'll not forget His own.
Little Is Much When God Is In It."*

Pastor Bob Kirkland

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Critter Sermons - The Wedgetailed Eagle

"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." (Isaiah 40:31.)

Australia's Wedge Tailed Eagle is one of the largest birds of prey, and can soar to heights beyond our sight range and yet can see a very small animal on ground level, such as a bandicoot, rabbit or rat.



The largest wingspan recorded is over 2.8 meters. Other than at takeoff this majestic bird seldom flaps those large wings but catches the thermal updraughts and soars to its destination. On seeing its prospective prey it will dive vertically till its speed gets too high and then will pull out of the dive to slow down only to dive again. The last dive is carefully aimed and will land quietly on top of its prey with those massive talons taking hold.

As a teenager this practice fascinated me, especially as the dive was aimed at my rabbit which was caught in a trap. The trapping of rabbits for their skins was a way of getting money to help support our family. It has been observed that this massive bird, although not heavy in body weight could dive onto a kangaroo or sheep twice or three times its size, and at the last moment fold back its wings and crash into its unsuspecting prey with the hard bone of its breast. This would momentarily knock the prey off its feet and in seconds the Eagle was on top for the kill.

The nest of an Eagle is of great weight, as each year the same pair return to the same nest and add to it new materials for the breeding season ahead. Whilst our photo shows only a smaller nest, I have seen them many times the size of this one and probably thirty metres up in a large tree.

To get the young eaglets out of the nest the parent bird will literally push them over the edge. As they endeavor to fly and begin falling to the ground the parent will fly in under the falling young, catch them on their back and take them high in the air only to throw them off to repeat the same process till the young can fly.



What a majestic bird! Wish I could share more with you. Is it any wonder that God uses this bird in His word to try and get us to realize His greatness.

Look at the promises for those who wait. Isaiah 40-31

1. "Shall renew their strength." (waits hours soaring above for the moment to strike and eat)
2. "Shall mount up with wings as Eagles." (the Eagle flies above all that would be his enemy)
3. "They shall run." (great endurance)
4. "Shall not be weary." (the eagle soars above on the thermal and does not grow weary)
5. "Shall walk and not faint." (the eagle does not know weakness as he does not engage in that which taxes his strength.)

If above is not enough we need to look at Deuteronomy 32-11 "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings:"

How often does God stir us from our comfortable nest. I can visualize Him stirring up our comfortable nests, fluttering over His wayward, children and pushing us out of that nest. Oh yes this is true but the verse has not finished yet, for He spreads His wings under His falling children and bears them up to great heights.

Just because the eaglet is out of the nest and falling does not mean it is doomed, for the mighty Eagle is waiting in the wind to catch it and teach it many useful lessons.

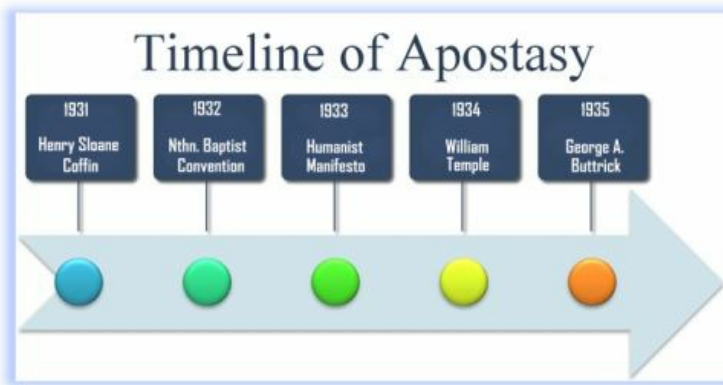
Yes our Critters have some lessons to teach us as God shows us His might and power through them.

Kevin & Pat Milson

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Romans 1:20

"...the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:"



Decades of Decadence - A Timeline of Apostasy

(A description of the course of apostasy over the past century)

1931--Henry Sloane Coffin, President-Emeritus of Union Seminary and former moderator of the Presbyterian Church, wrote: "Certain ... hymns still perpetuate the theory that God pardons sinners

because Christ purchased that pardon by His obedience and suffering. ... There is no cleansing blood which can wipe out the record of what has been. ... The Cross of Christ is not a means of procuring forgiveness" (Coffin, *The Meaning of the Cross*, pp. 118-121).

1932--The Northern Baptist Convention was so infiltrated with theological modernism that a small group of men departed and formed the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches (GARBC).

1933--A Humanist Manifesto was published to promote an atheistic, evolutionary philosophy and to call for a new world order. It stated that "the universe is self-existing and not created" and "the time has passed for theism." It called for the rejection of worship and prayer. It called for the reconstitution and control of all religious organizations and the establishment of "a socialized and cooperative economic order." Signatories included John Dewey, who had a massive influence on American education.

1934--William Temple, who would become Archbishop of Canterbury, said, "... an atheist who lives by love is saved by his faith in the God whose existence (under that name) he denies" (*Nature, Man and God*, p. 416).

1935--George A. Buttrick, Presbyterian pastor who would become president of the Federal Council in 1940, wrote: "Literal infallibility of Scripture is a fortress impossible to defend. ... Probably few people who claim to 'believe every word of the Bible' really mean it. That avowal held to its last logic would risk a trip to the insane asylum" (*Christian Fact and Modern Doubt*, p. 162).-

----- Emil Brunner published *Unser Glaube (Our Faith)*, in which he likened the voice of God in the Bible to the voice of a speaker in a wax recording. As the speaker's voice can be recognized even though the recording is scratchy and otherwise imperfect, God's voice can be recognized though the Bible is (allegedly) filled with error and myth.

1936--The Presbyterian Church in America was so permeated with theological modernism that a small group of conservatives departed and founded the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

1937--The New York Times for March 19 featured Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955) as the Jesuit priest who believed that man descended from monkeys. Teilhard did that and more. He attempted to integrate religion with science and applied evolution to human history, envisioning humanity heading toward an "Omega point" of peace and unity. He believed that humanity would evolve the "noosphere" or planetary communication network.

from wayoflife.org

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Notable Quotes and Quotable Notes -

- People so often ask, "Sumner, what about follow-up?" I believe in it and try to follow-up people who are saved at our church. I have a question, who followed up the woman at the well in John 4? As far as we are told, no one except the Holy Spirit and He does a superb job. That is reality. When I was a pastor, it was sheer joy to visit new converts. Our Sunday School teachers were trained to follow up new converts who would be in their class. We worked at getting new converts to come to Wednesday night "prayer meeting," By the way, the pastor of the largest Baptist church in our city, called me and asked how many people did we have last Wednesday night? Our ushers always counted how many we had in every service and put it on card and then the pulpit when they came to take up the offering. I told him, 394. He let out a holler and said, "You had the most of any church in the city." We never tried to outdo anyone, we just wanted everyone in our church to honor God, lay up treasures in heaven and grow spiritually. I hated sitting around the office and shuffle papers around. I visited people. I found it paid off wonderfully. - *C. Sumner Wemp*
- Wednesday night the guys were preaching at a 4th of July deal when a man approached them. He said to one of our (men from) The Deland School of THE BIBLE, "How old are you?" "I'm 23," he replied, "This is my son. He's sixteen. He thinks Jesus is just for old people like me and for wimps. Would you witness to him?" Thirty minutes later the kid was on his knees trusting Jesus. - *James W. Knox*
- "When you kill time, remember that it has no resurrection." — *A.W. Tozer*
- "The yearning to know what cannot be known, to comprehend the incomprehensible, to touch and taste the unapproachable, arises from the image of God in the nature of man. Deep calleth unto deep, and though polluted and landlocked by the mighty disaster theologians call the Fall, the soul senses its origin and longs to return to its source." — *A.W. Tozer*
- "There is within the human heart a tough fibrous root of fallen life whose nature is to possess, always to possess. It covets 'things' with a deep and fierce passion. The pronouns 'my' and 'mine' look innocent enough in print, but their constant and universal use is significant. They express the real nature of the old Adamic man better than a thousand volumes of theology could do. They are verbal symptoms of our deep disease. The roots of our hearts have grown down into things, and we dare not pull up one rootlet lest we die. Things have become necessary to us, a development never originally intended. God's gifts now take the place of God, and the whole course of nature is upset by the monstrous substitution." — *A.W. Tozer, The Pursuit of God*
- "...the cross of popular evangelicalism is not the cross of the New Testament. It is, rather, a new bright ornament upon the bosom of a self-assured and carnal Christianity whose hands are indeed the hands of Abel, but whose voice is the voice of Cain. The old cross slew men; the new cross entertains them. The old cross condemned; the new cross amuses. The old cross destroyed confidence in the flesh; the new cross encourages it. The old cross brought tears and blood; the new cross brings laughter. The flesh, smiling and confident, preaches and sings about the cross; before the cross it bows and toward the cross it points with carefully staged histrionics--but upon that cross it will not die, and the reproach of that cross it stubbornly refuses to bear." — *A.W. Tozer, The Divine Conquest*

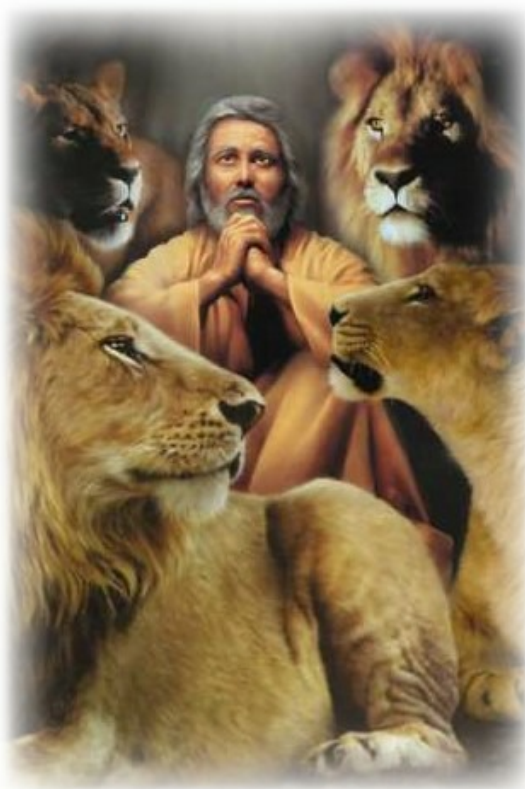
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Fresh Quills - The Character of Daniel

By Benjamin Evans

Daniel has been my favourite Bible character for some time now. I originally liked Daniel because like me, Daniel was taken to a foreign land when he was young, went through a secular schooling system there and seems to have had few friends who shared in his faith with him. However, my interest in Daniel has grown recently as I have read and learned from the Scriptures the strong spiritual characteristics of this godly man. Daniel, despite the strong pagan influence around him, stood strong in his beliefs and actually left great impacts on the people he lived and worked with. Daniel's quiet and private spiritual walk with God eventually became national news, drawing the attention of kings and princes. Yet this humble man never claims the fame for himself. Until the very end, Daniel is recorded as a humble, faithful and righteous man of God.



It was exciting the other day to find a passage in Ezekiel, a contemporary of Daniel, which records the reputation Daniel had even in his own time. Ezekiel 14:14 reads,

"Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD." God is warning Israel, through the prophet Ezekiel, that He is going to send judgment on the nation for the sins they have countlessly committed before Him. God is saying there is no way for Israel to escape any-more. To illustrate how serious He was, God told them, "Even if Noah, Daniel and Job were here, the righteousness of these three men even isn't enough to deliver you from the judgment coming your way." Now, Noah and Job are both famous saints of the past known for their righteousness. Noah and his family were the only ones to be saved from the flood God sent to an utterly evil world, and Job stood firm on his faith of the sovereignty of God despite EVERY thing going wrong in his life. Even in the days of Ezekiel, these two men were heroes in the eyes of the Israelites. It seems a bit odd, then, that Daniel is listed in between these two men, especially when you consider Daniel is still only a young adult and the whole lion's den incident he is most famous for is not going to happen yet for decades! What was it about Daniel that had made it all the way back from Babylon to Israel, listing him as righteous a man as these great men of old? I had to find out. I read and meditated on the first chapters of Daniel, asking God to show me what in the life of Daniel brought him to have so much favour in His eyes. Three times in the book of Daniel is he referred to as "a man greatly beloved." (9:23, 10:11, 19) Let me share with you a few of the things God showed me while studying the early life of Daniel. I pray this will encourage you to go and study your favourite character in depth and learn from their faith also.

1. Daniel was a man of character from his youth. The king was in search of children (or possibly teenagers), who already had strong character. Amongst other physical qualities, these children were to also be "skillful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's place, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans." (1:4) Sounds like a lot to be asking of some teenagers! I guess God didn't think so. Daniel is the first to be listed as one who was chosen. He was skillful in all wisdom, cunning in knowledge, understood science, had ability to serve, and had a teachable attitude.

For Daniel to be the way he was, he would have to have had training in all these areas at home, before he was taken captive into Babylon. He would have been submissive to the teachings of his parents and

would not have rebelled against what he was taught even after he left (or was taken from) home. Daniel had character, yes, but having strong character from when he was young was the strong basis for his lifelong walk with the Lord. Daniel's example teaches us we do not have to be adults in order to become what we might think as "great Christians". God is greatly pleased with His children cultivating strong character from when they are young.

2. Daniel had his guards up in his social life. The king had decided three years was enough to retrain these young men everything they knew and believed and turn them into Babylonians fit to serve him. Daniel would have had to guard what he was taught to believe in class and compare it against Scriptural truths his parents had taught him back at home. But even more than the false things he was taught at school, Daniel had to watch the influences all around him before and after school in his social life. The first real test came at the meal table on the very first day. Eating with possibly dozens of other youth his own age, there would have been enormous peer pressure to just "go with the flow" and eat what everyone else was eating. Knowing how the king punished those who went against his word, Daniel would risk his life to do anything against the norm. Yet "Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself ...: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself." (1:8) Daniel didn't face a problem one day and then start thinking about how to avoid it. He had predetermined some Scriptural standards in his life while he did not yet face the trials so that when they did come, (and they most surely will) he had a strategy he could "automatically" go with. Some of the formal teaching he received at school was definitely not godly truth, but it was the social life Daniel knew would affect him most, and he was prepared, no matter what may come, well in advance. It is easy for us to let our guard down when we are with people, even Christians, especially when we have known them for a while. It is important we form some sound Biblical standards in our lives so that we never give into compromise when there is pressure to do so.
3. Daniel had no uncertainty of his faith in God. When we are faced with a trial, the first thing we usually do is pray and seek the Lord's will. When you're not sure how to deal with a problem, that is certainly one of the best things you can do. However, there are some issues in life that God has already clearly and completely instructed us about in His Word. Daniel knew, no matter what the circumstances, God would not allow him to defile himself. He knew the desire God had of him to live a holy life, and refraining from some foods was a concrete step God had laid for him to follow. When faced with the dilemma of his guard worrying for his life, Daniel did not have to go pray and seek God's counsel and see what He would say to do. Daniel already knew the will of God, and he also knew God would also provide a way for him to fulfill that will. Daniel boldly tells his carer, "Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; ...and as thou seest, deal with thy servants." (1:12-13) Praying itself is never a bad thing, but God desires we cultivate a strong faith that will take action immediately on what we already know to be His will, even without having to go and ask Him every single time.
4. Daniel, by the power of God, was superior in many ways to his colleagues of no faith. Daniel excelled in every area of training he was assigned by the king for those three years. To us, studying secular culture, secular sciences and secular religions may not seem like the best education, but then why would "God [give him] knowledge and skill in ALL learning and wisdom" (1:17)? The answer is because Daniel was already firmly rooted in true education and he was not persuaded in the least by the teachings of this world. The rest of the book of Daniel is a testimony to how Daniel (and his friends) stood firm in their faith whilst using their secular education in best understanding and witnessing to the people God had placed them amongst. Daniel did not discredit his teachers for their pagan teachings, but rather used that opportunity to better understand the mission field God was preparing him for. I understand God places us all in different societies, even in Australia, and academics were not the only thing Daniel excelled in either. The point here is the importance of realising the unique opportunities God places each one of us in, and to excel in it by His power. Some non-believers are "very good people" in different particular areas. Why must we Christians, who have the almighty power of God available to us, be found to be any less than them? Daniel's superiority to every single wise man of the pagan

nation later availed to him many special opportunities to practice his faith in public, which resulted in the glory of God being testified before the whole nation. Let not any of us believers be seen as just "run of the mill", let alone "tardy", in any area of our life. By the power of God, we must excel in everything, based on strong Biblical foundations laid early in our lives. May there be none found in all the land as us, children of the living God!

Studying the character of Daniel, I was amazed at just how great an example he had laid for a godly and faithful walk with the Lord. To me, he is no longer just "a guy who was saved from lions." I recommend you go too, and really study your favourite Bible character. God has left a record of these great men and women of the faith in His Word for us to learn from them. Take some time to research them, and see what you can glean from the examples they have left for us in the Word of God.

(from *Sharpened Arrows* magazine for youth)

Benjamin Evans is the son of Pastor Tony and Mrs. Evans who are missionaries to Japan.

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The Music Wars - The Battle Over Singing in Baptist Churches 17th Century

The following is from Paxton Hood, *Isaac Watts His Life and Hymns*, p. 100-102

"It was about the time that Isaac Watts came to London that some of the assemblies of the saints were shaken by the innovation of singing. The Baptists appear to have been most indisposed to the doubtful practice; and in the church of the well-known Benjamin Keach, of Southwark, the pastoral ancestor of Charles Spurgeon, when the pastor, after long argument and effort, established singing, a minority withdrew and 'took refuge in a songless sanctuary,' in which the melody within the heart might be in no danger of disturbance from the perturbations of song. The Society of Friends was not alone in regarding with distaste all the exercises of song in the house of the Lord. Those who are interested in the curious literature of that time may easily discover pamphlets and lectures which show 'great searchings of heart' upon the question 'whether Christ, as Mediator of the New Covenant, hath commanded His churches under the Gospel in all their assemblies to sing the Psalms of David, as translated into metre and musical rhyme, with tunable and conjoined voices of all the people together, as a Church ordinance, or any other song or hymn that are so composed to be sung in rhyme by a prelimited and set form of words?' The dispute was mainly confined to the Baptist churches. But in 1708 one of the Eastcheap lectures, in a discourse by Thomas Reynolds, replied to the 'objections of singing.' A few years before the controversy had run strong and high. Isaac Marlow very angrily maintained the ordinary songless usage, in the year 1696, in his 'Truth Soberly Defined' and in the 'Controversies of Singing Brought to an End.' Benjamin Keach seems to have been the first to lead on in this suspicious diversion by the publication of his 'Breach Repaired in God's Worship; or, Singing of Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, proved to be an Holy Ordinance of Jesus Christ.' This appeared in 1691. ... It was into this state of things that Isaac Watts was introduced. 'I almost think,' says Alexander Knox, 'that he was providentially appointed to furnish the revived movement of associated piety, which Divine Wisdom foresaw would take place in England in the 18th century, with an unexampled stock of materials for that department, which alone needed to be provided for, of their joint worship.'"

http://www.wayoflife.org/index_files/4d00ab63747a192bf1f15f59b52ca10e-1054.html

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Links In The Media Chain -

- It changes the car, but not the driver? -
<http://smh.drive.com.au/motor-news/hoons-crushed-car-displayed-20120713-21zmx.html>
- Excerpts from a video on Israel -
http://www.youtube.com/watch_popup?v=iPQl6Yupt48
- How Obama Intends to Win -
<http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0612/77213.html>
- New Petrol Powered Cars Greener Than Electric Cars? -
<http://smh.drive.com.au/motor-news/petrol-cars-greener-than-electric-20120705-21ifc.html>

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"The Dark Side of Facebook"

That's the title of a report in the Telegraph a couple of weeks ago. I came across it today, and it confirms many of my previously expressed fears about the security risks of using Facebook. Here's an excerpt

Some four billion pieces of content are shared [on Facebook] every day by 845 million users. And while most are harmless, it has recently come to light that the site is brimming with paedophilia, pornography, racism and violence – all moderated by

outsourced, poorly vetted workers in third world countries paid just \$1 an hour. Although this invisible army of moderators receive basic training, they work from home, do not appear to undergo criminal checks, and have worrying access to users' personal details. In a week in which there has been an outcry over Google's privacy policies, can we expect a wider backlash over the extent to which we trust companies with our intimate information?

Last month, 21-year-old Amine Derkaoui gave an interview to Gawker, an American media outlet. Derkaoui had spent three weeks working in Morocco for oDesk, one of the outsourcing companies used by Facebook. His job, for which he claimed he was paid around \$1 an hour, involved moderating photos and posts flagged as unsuitable by other users. "It must be the worst salary paid by Facebook," he told The Daily Telegraph this week. "And the job itself was very upsetting – no one likes to see a human cut into pieces every day."

Derkaoui is not exaggerating. An articulate man, he described images of animal abuse, butchered bodies and videos of fights. Other moderators, mainly young, well-educated people working in Asia, Africa and Central America, have similar stories. "Paedophilia, necrophilia, beheadings, suicides, etc," said one. "I left [because] I value my sanity." Another compared it to working in a sewer. "All the ---- of the world flows towards you and you have to clean it up," he said.

Neither is Facebook alone in outsourcing unpleasant work. Adam Levin, the US-based chief executive of Criterion Capital Partners and the owner of British social network Bebo, says that the process is “rampant” across Silicon Valley. “We do it at Bebo,” he says. “Facebook has so much content flowing into its system every day that it needs hundreds of people moderating all the images and posts which are flagged. That type of workforce is best outsourced for speed, scale and cost.”

A spokesman for Twitter said that they have an internal moderation team, but refused to answer a question about outsourcing. Similarly, a Google spokesperson would not say how Google+, the search giant’s new social network, will be moderated. Neither Facebook nor oDesk were willing to comment on anything to do with outsourcing or moderation.



The biggest worry for the rest of us, however, is that the moderation process isn’t nearly secretive enough. According to Derkaoui, there are no security measures on a moderator’s computer to stop them uploading obscene material themselves. Despite coming into daily contact with such material, he was never subjected to a criminal record check. Where, then, is the oversight body for these underpaid global police?

Maybe disgruntled commuters, old school friends and new mothers will think twice before sharing intimate information with their “friends” – only to find that two minutes later it’s being viewed by an under-vetted, unfulfilled person on a dollar an hour in an Internet café in Marrakech.

There will doubtless be many who argue that this alleged 'security risk' is really of trifling concern; that Facebook's moderators will be so overwhelmed with the sheer volume of posts requiring attention that they won't be able to focus on any particular post, or picture, or user. However, I think such confidence is misplaced. For example, the moderator who gave the above interview later admitted that he'd gone back to research further information about particular users. No prizes for guessing what sort of posts 'aroused' his interest! It's creepy, to put it mildly.

I suppose the ultimate answer to this sort of security threat is not to post anything overly personal, too revealing, or that can potentially be used to blackmail, threaten or coerce you in any way. However, I'm willing to bet that most Facebook users don't take those considerations into account at all. They - like most of us - develop a blind, unthinking faith in technology, and use it without worrying about the potential consequences. The bad guys rely on that reaction, and exploit it ruthlessly.

I remain adamant that I won't use Facebook or other 'social media' at all unless I absolutely have to; and if that should become necessary, for commercial or other reasons, I'll strictly limit the information I put up there. I can only advise my readers to do likewise.

blogger Peter (from bayourenaissanceman blog)

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1 John 2:15

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”



Polygamy Among Australian Muslims

Preston Mosque in strife over telling wives to share their husbands with other women.

Padraic Murphy - Herald Sun
July 12, 2012 12:00AM

(Preston Mosque - Picture Herald Sun)

VICTORIA'S largest mosque has been forced into an embarrassing back-down after women were told they must "fulfil the rights" of their husbands and share him with other women.

In a move that has outraged local Muslim women, at least one Preston Mosque committee member authorised a post on its official Facebook page instructing women that polygamy was a better alternative to divorce and husbands were "someone you share".

"It is very important for a wife to fulfil the rights of her husband. Why? Because Allah commanded her to, after marriage Jannah is through her husband, and also the husband is your partner. A partner is someone you share with not someone who does things for you," said the post.

"If a man is saying to his wife I will marry another woman, this is far better than saying you are divorced every time he is upset.

We are deeply concerned by the advice provided by Preston Mosque; it reflects a poor understanding of marital discord in Muslim families.

"Now where is the problem. If a man divorces his wife three times he has destroyed his family. They can no longer return to each other. Islam only allows two divorces and returns.

"So if your husband is telling you that he wants to take another wife and you are not doing the right thing by him, then know that he is thinking straight and using a weapon that doesn't have severe consequences."

The advice was pulled down after complaints and the Facebook post has been condemned by community leaders .

"We are deeply concerned by the advice provided by Preston Mosque; it reflects a poor understanding of marital discord in Muslim families," said Joumanah El Matrah, executive director of the Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights.

"Research from the Islamic world unequivocally demonstrates that polygamy contributes to marital discord, it does not resolve it.

"We are further concerned that the mosque is encouraging of polygamous marriages when they have no legal standing in this country - as this is a key requirement of Islam. Muslim marriage is a partnership, it is not a woman serving a man."

A spokesman for Preston Mosque refused to comment, but the secretary of the Islamic Council of Victoria, Sherene Hassan, also condemned the post.

"The comments on the Facebook post are inappropriate and unacceptable," Ms Hassan said. "The fact that the post was removed . . . very shortly after it was posted is encouraging.

"However, this incident further substantiates the community's calls for greater conversations about these issues."

<http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/victoria/preston-mosque-in-strife-over-telling-wives-to-share-their-husbands-with-other-women/story-e6frf7kx-1226422997012>

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Photos to Ponder -



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Isaiah 59:14-15

"...judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the LORD saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment."

A Poem For A Faithful Husband -

My Husband

*"This man you married, who is he?" you well of me might ask.
Am I able to answer your question, put my mind to this simple task?
O yes, I know my husband, he's a man of God and strong.
He's a man who knows the right, and seeks to change the wrong.*

*He loves with all his heart God's pure and holy Word,
And jealously would guard it from becoming tainted food.
A contender for the faith, a lover of the truth
Once delivered to the saints – the old, the youngest, the youth.*

*So often wrongly accused is he of anger and lack of love,
But as with the prophets of old, whose hearts were known above,
His passion is for serving God, and steering men from error,
Urging them to look long and hard into the Word, His mirror.*

*Look beyond the surface, try to see what he can see.
He sees things pretty clearly, just between you and me –
Many times I've reacted strongly to his somewhat pointed advice,
Only to have to confess he was absolutely right.*

*As maddening as this can be, God uses him you know.
If only we will let God, we could all be helped to grow.
Nor does he think he's perfect or beyond correction when needed.
I've never known a time with him when admonishment has gone unheeded.*

*He'll take it to his God and examine his own heart.
He'll test it by the Word, so the Sword can do its part.
He really is submitted, I know him, I can tell.
His heart is to do God's will, and to always serve Him well.*

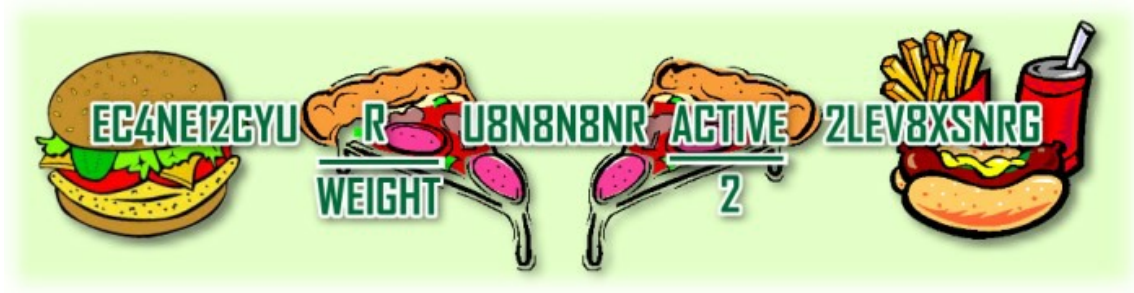
*To me this man I married is all the things I've said,
But he's lots of fun as well, not just serious or in joy half dead!
He's generous and giving and thoughtful in so many ways and things,
And I thank my God daily for the joy to my life he brings.*

*So what if he's a bit gruff, a bit sharp round the edges at times?
Is there anyone here who can truthfully say he toes all those "perfect" lines?
Yes this man of mine is human, and apt sometimes to be hard,
But of this I'm sure, when he meets God he'll hear "Well done, receive thy reward."*

by Colleen Seaborn

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A Word Puzzle For Those Whose Circumference Is Increasing -



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Therapy For the Funny Bone -

- ☺ I planted some bird seed. A bird came up. Now I don't know what to feed it
- ☺ I had amnesia once---or twice
- ☺ Protons have mass? I didn't even know they were Catholic.
- ☺ What is a "free" gift? Aren't all gifts free?
- ☺ They told me I was gullible and I believed them.
- ☺ Teach a child to be polite and courteous in the home and, when he grows up, he'll never be able to merge his car onto the freeway.
- ☺ Experience is the thing you have left when everything else is gone.
- ☺ One nice thing about egotists: they don't talk about other people.
- ☺ My weight is perfect for my height--which varies.
- ☺ I used to be indecisive. Now I'm not so sure.
- ☺ How can there be self-help "groups"?
- ☺ If swimming is so good for your figure, how do you explain the size of whales?
- ☺ Is it just me --or do buffalo wings actually taste like chicken?

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How to Call the Police When You're Old, and Don't Move Fast Anymore

George Phillips, an elderly man, from Walled Lake, Michigan, was going up to bed, when his wife told him that he'd left the light on in the garden shed, which she could see from the bedroom window. George opened the back door to go turn off the light, but saw that there were people in the shed stealing things.

He phoned the police, who asked "Is someone in your house?"

He said "No, but some people are breaking into my garden shed and stealing from me."

Then the police dispatcher said "All patrols are busy. You should lock your doors and an officer will be along when one is available"

George said, "Okay."

He hung up the phone and counted to 30. Then he phoned the police again.

"Hello, I just called you a few seconds ago because there were people stealing things from my shed. Well, you don't have to worry about them now because I just shot and killed them both, the dogs are eating them right now." and he hung up.

Within five minutes, six Police Cars, a SWAT Team, a Helicopter, two Fire Trucks, a Paramedic, and an Ambulance showed up at the Phillips' residence, and caught the burglars red-handed.

One of the Policemen said to George, "I thought you said that you'd shot them!"

George said, "I thought you said there was nobody available!"

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A firefighter is washing the fire engine outside the fire station when he notices a little girl next door in a little red wagon with little ladders hung off the side and a garden hose tightly coiled in the middle. The girl is wearing a firefighter's helmet and has the wagon tied to a dog and a cat.

The firefighter walks over to take a closer look. "That sure is a nice fire truck," the firefighter says with admiration.

"Thanks," the little girl says.

The firefighter looks a little closer and notices the girl has tied the wagon to the dog's collar and to the cat's tail.

"Little partner," the firefighter says, "I don't want to tell you how to run your fire truck, but if you were to tie that rope around the cat's collar, I think you could go faster."

The little girl replied, "You're probably right, but then I wouldn't have a siren."

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A friend of mine was sitting on his lawn sunning and reading, when he was startled by a fairly late model car crashing through a hedge and coming to rest on his lawn. He helped the elderly driver out and sat him on a lawn chair.

"My goodness" he exclaimed, "you are quite old to be driving!"

"Yes" he replied, "I am old enough that I don't need a license anymore."

"No, why is that?"

"The last time I went to my doctor he examined me, and asked if I had a driving license. I told him yes and handed it to him. He took scissors out of a drawer, cut the license into pieces and threw them in the wastebasket."

"You won't be needing this anymore", he said.

"So I thanked him and left."

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And You Don't Think Australian Education is Being Dumbed Down?

A School inspector is sent to assess a Year 4 class in a local Brisbane State school. He is introduced to the class by the teacher.

She says to the class, "Let's show the inspector just how clever you are by allowing him to ask you a question."

The inspector reasons that normally class starts with religious instruction, so he will ask a biblical question.

He asks: "Class, who broke down the walls of Jericho?"

For a full minute there is absolute silence. Eventually, little Billy raises his hand.

Billy stands up and replies: "Sir, I do not know who broke down the walls of Jericho, But I can assure you it wasn't me."

Of course the inspector is shocked by the answer and the lack of knowledge of the famous Bible story and he looks at the teacher for an explanation. Realizing that he is perturbed, the teacher says: "Well, I've known Billy since the start of the year, and I believe that if he says that he didn't do it then he didn't do it."

The inspector is even more shocked at this and storms down to the principal's office and tells him what happened, to which the principal replies: "I don't know the boy, but I believe his teacher. If she feels that the boy is innocent, then he must be innocent."

The inspector can't believe what he is hearing. He grabs the phone on the principal's desk and in a rage, dials Prime Minister Julia Gillard's office and rattles off the entire occurrence to her and asks her what she thinks of the educational standard in the State.

The PM sighs heavily and replies:

"I don't know the boy, the teacher or the principal, but just get three quotes and have the wall fixed!!"

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Results of True Repentance -

(Over the past fifty years or so there has been a strong reaction among many Independent Baptists against preaching repentance. When this first began to be voiced, I was amazed. All the old preachers of generations past preached repentance without apology, and now suddenly, it is declared to be unbiblical? How could this be? There are two answers. 1) Modern day preachers have not read the sermons of older men and simply do not know that they preached repentance. Or 2), there is another agenda at work in their hearts. The desire to build large churches has displaced the desire to be faithful to the Bible in every particular. Pragmatism has reshaped fundamentalism so that "bigness in everything" is more important than "faithfulness in everything." What they do not consider is that jettisoning any Bible truth will change the quality of converts they win. What you sow is what you reap. If we sow a watered down gospel that does not require a man to come to grips with his sin, with his rebellious views of God, with his proud and self indulgent views of self, if we teach that he need never be convicted of sin before he can be converted from sin.... then we reap a weak kneed, uncommitted, slack jawed, dull hearted, feeble minded, world loving, prayerless crowd of "converts" that is more at home in an emergent church than in a fundamental church. Some of our kids are on their way around Australia and told us the other day that they are disgusted at what they see and hear in the churches. I strongly suspect that it has to do, at least in part, with the absence of preaching on repentance. - Ed)

By D.L Moody

I want to call your attention to what true repentance leads to.

I am not addressing the unconverted only, because I am one of those who believe that there is a good deal of repentance to be done by the Church before much good will be accomplished in the world.

I firmly believe that the low standard of Christian living is keeping a good many in the world and in their sins.

When the ungodly see that Christian people do not repent, you cannot expect them to repent and turn away from their sins. I have repented ten thousand times more since I knew Christ than ever before; and I think most Christians have some things to repent of.

So now I want to preach to Christians as well as to the unconverted; to myself as well as to one who has never accepted Christ as his Savior.

There are five things that flow out of true repentance:

- Conviction.
- Contrition.
- Confession of sin.
- Conversion.
- Confession of Jesus Christ before the world.



1. Conviction

When a man is not deeply convicted of sin, it is a pretty sure sign that he has not truly repented. Experience has taught me that men who have very slight conviction of sin, sooner or later lapse back into their old life.

For the last few years I have been a good deal more anxious for a deep and true work in professing converts than I have for great numbers.

If a man professes to be converted without realizing the heinousness of his sins, he is likely to be one of those stony ground hearers who don't amount to anything. The first breath of opposition, the first wave of persecution or ridicule, will suck them back into the world again.

I believe we are making a woeful mistake in taking so many people into the Church who have never been truly convicted of sin.

Sin is just as black in a man's heart to-day as it ever was. I sometimes think it is blacker. For the more light a man has, the greater his responsibility, and therefore the greater need of deep conviction. William Dawson once told this story to illustrate how humble the soul must be before it can find peace. He said that at a revival meeting, a little lad who was used to Methodist ways, went home to his mother and said, "Mother, John So-and-so is under conviction and seeking for peace, but he will not find it to-night, mother."

"Why, William?" said she.

"Because he is only down on one knee, mother, and he will never get peace until he is down on both knees." Until conviction of sin brings us down on both knees, until we are completely humbled, until we have no hope in ourselves left, we cannot find the Savior.

There are three things that lead to conviction:

(1) Conscience; (2) the Word of God; (3) the Holy Spirit. All three are used by God.

Long before we had any Word, God dealt with men through the conscience.

That is what made Adam and Eve hide themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the Garden of Eden. That is what convicted Joseph's brethren when they said: "We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us." (Genesis 42:21) Therefore..." said they, (and remember, over twenty years had passed away since they had sold him into captivity). That is what we must use with our children before they are old enough to understand about the Word and the Spirit of God. This is what accuses or excuses the heathen.

Conscience is "a divinely implanted faculty in man, telling him that he ought to do right."

Someone has said that it was born when Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit, when their eyes were opened and they "...knew good and evil." It passes judgment, without being invited, upon our thoughts, words, and actions, approving or condemning according as it judges them to be right or wrong. A man cannot violate his conscience without being self - condemned.

But conscience is not a safe guide, because very often it will not tell you a thing is wrong until you have done it. It needs illuminating by God because it partakes of our fallen nature. Many a person does things that are wrong without being condemned by conscience. Paul said: "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." (Acts 26:9) Conscience itself needs to

be educated. Again, conscience is too often like an alarm clock, which awakens and arouses at first, but after a time the man becomes used to it, and it loses its effect. Conscience can be smothered. I think we make a mistake in not preaching more to the conscience. Hence, in due time, conscience was superseded by the law of God, which in time was fulfilled in Christ.

In this Christian land, where men have Bibles, these are the agency by which God produces conviction.

The old Book tells you what is right and wrong before you commit sin, and what you need is to learn and appropriate its teachings, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Conscience compared with the Bible is as a rushlight compared with the sun in the heavens.

See how the truth convicted those Jews on the day of Pentecost.

Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, preached that "God hath made this same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

Then, thirdly, the Holy Ghost convicts.

"And when He (the Comforter) is come, He will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; of sin because they believe not on Me,"

2. Contrition

The next thing is contrition, deep Godly sorrow and humiliation of heart because of sin.

If there is not true contrition, a man will turn right back into the old sin. That is the trouble with many Christians. A man may get angry, and if there is not much contrition, the next day he will get angry again. A daughter may say mean, cutting things to her mother, and then her conscience troubles her, and she says: "Mother, I am sorry: forgive me." But soon there is another outburst of temper, because the contrition is not deep and real. A husband speaks sharp words to his wife, and then to ease his conscience, he goes and buys her a bouquet of flowers. He will not go like a man and say he has done wrong.

What God wants is contrition, and if there is not contrition, there is not full repentance.

"The Lord is nigh to the broken of heart, and saveth such as be contrite of spirit." "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." Many sinners are sorry for their sins, sorry that they cannot continue in sin; but they repent only with hearts that are not broken. I don't think we know how to repent now-a-days. We need some John the Baptist, wandering through the land, crying: "Repent! repent!"

3. Confession of Sin

If we have true contrition, that will lead us to confess our sins.

I believe that nine-tenths of the trouble in our Christian life comes from failing to do this. We try to hide and cover up our sins; there is very little confession of them. Someone has said: "Unconfessed sin in the soul is like a bullet in the body." If you have no power, it may be there is some sin that needs to be confessed, something in your life that needs straightening out. There is no amount of psalm-singing, no amount of attending religious meetings, no amount of praying or reading your Bible that is going to cover up anything of that kind. It must be confessed, and if I am too proud to confess, I need expect no mercy from God and no answers to my prayers. The Bible says: "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper." He may be a man in the pulpit, a priest behind the altar, a king on the throne; I don't care who he is. Man has been trying it for six thousand years. Adam tried it, and failed. Moses tried it when he buried the Egyptian whom he killed, but he failed. "Be sure your sin will find you out." You cannot bury your sin so deep but it

will have a resurrection by and by, if it has not been blotted out by the Son of God. What man has failed to do for six thousand years, you and I had better give up trying to do.

There are three ways of confessing sin.

All sin is against God, and must be confessed to Him. There are some sins I need never confess to anyone on earth. If the sin has been between myself and God, I may confess it alone in my closet: I need not whisper it in the ear of any mortal. "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before Thee." "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight."

But if I have done some man a wrong, and he knows that I have wronged him, I must confess that sin not only to God but also to that man.

If I have too much pride to confess it to him, I need not come to God. I may pray, and I may weep, but it will do no good. First confess to that man, and then go to God and see how quickly He will hear you, and send peace. "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy ways. First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." That is the Scripture way.

Then there is another class of sins that must be confessed publicly.

Suppose I have been known as a blasphemer, a drunkard, or a reprobate. If I repent of my sins, I owe the public a confession. The confession should be as public as the transgression. Many a person will say some mean thing about another in the presence of others, and then try to patch it up by going to that person alone. The confession should be made so that all who heard the transgression can hear it.

We are good at confessing other people's sins, but if it is true repentance, we shall have as much as we can do to look after our own.

When a man or woman gets a good look into God's looking glass, he is not finding fault with other people: he has as much as he can do at home. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Thank God for the Gospel! Church member, if there is any sin in your life, make up your mind that you will confess it, and be forgiven. Do not have any cloud between you and God. Be able to read your title clear to the mansion Christ has gone to prepare for you.

4. Conversion

Confession leads to true conversion, and there is no conversion at all until these three steps have been taken.

Now the word "conversion" means two things. We say a man is "converted" when he is born again. But it also has a different meaning in the Bible. Peter said: "Repent, and be converted." Paul said that he was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision, but began to preach to Jews and Gentiles that they should repent and turn to God. Some old divine has said: "Every man is born with his back to God. Repentance is a change of one's course. It is right about face."

Sin is a turning away from God.

As someone has said, it is aversion from God and conversion to the world: and true repentance means conversion to God and aversion from the world. When there is true contrition, the heart is broken for sin; when there is true conversion, the heart is broken from sin. We leave the old life, we are translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light. Wonderful, isn't it? Unless our repentance includes this conversion, it is not worth much.

If a man continues in sin, it is proof of an idle profession. It is like pumping away continually at the ship's pumps, without stopping the leaks. Solomon said:--"If they pray, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin . . ."

Prayer and confession would be of no avail while they continued in sin.

Let us heed God's call; let us forsake the old wicked way; let us return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon us; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. If you have never turned to God, turn now. I have no sympathy with the idea that it takes six months, or six weeks, or six hours to be converted. It doesn't take you very long to turn around, does it? If you know you are wrong, then turn right about.

5. Confession of Christ

If you are converted, the next step is confess it openly.

Listen: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus Christ, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

Confession of Christ is the culmination of the work of true repentance.

We owe it to the world, to our fellow-Christians, to ourselves. He died to redeem us, and shall we be ashamed or afraid to confess Him? Religion as an abstraction, as a doctrine, has little interest for the world, but what people can say from personal experience always has weight. I remember some meetings being held in a locality where the tide did not rise very quickly, and bitter and reproachful things were being said about the work. But one day, one of the most prominent men in the place rose and said: "I want it to be known that I am a disciple of Jesus Christ; and if there is any odium to be cast on His cause, I am prepared to take my share of it." It went through the meeting like an electric current, and a blessing came at once to his own soul and to the souls of others. Men come to me and say: "Do you mean to affirm, Mr. Moody, that I've got to make a public confession when I accept Christ; do you mean to say I've got to confess Him in my place of business, and in my family? Am I to let the whole world know that I am on His side?"

That is precisely what I mean.

A great many are willing to accept Christ, but they are not willing to publish it, to confess it. A great many are looking at the lions and the bears in the way. Now, my friends, the devil's mountains are only made of smoke. He can throw a straw into your path and make a mountain of it. He says to you: "You cannot confess and pray to your family; why, you'll break down! You cannot tell it to your shop mate; he will laugh at you." But when you accept Christ, you will have power to confess Him. There was a young man in the West--it was the West in those days--who had been more or less interested about his soul's salvation. One afternoon, in his office, he said: "I will accept Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior." He went home and told his wife (who was a nominal professor of religion) that he had made up his mind to serve Christ; and he added: "After supper to-night I am going to take the company into the drawing-room, and erect the family altar."

"Well," said his wife, "you know some of the gentlemen who are coming to tea are skeptics, and they are older than you are, and don't you think you had better wait until after they have gone, or else go out in the kitchen and have your first prayer with the servants?" The young man thought for a few moments, and then he said: "I have asked Jesus Christ into my house for the first time, and I shall take Him into the best room, not into the kitchen." So he called his friends into the drawing room. There was a little sneering, but he read and prayed. That man afterwards became Chief Justice of the United States Court. Never be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: it is the power of God unto salvation. A young man enlisted, and was sent to his regiment. The first night he was in the barracks with about fifteen other young men who passed the

time playing cards and gambling. Before retiring, he fell on his knees and prayed, and they began to curse him and jeer at him and throw boots at him. So it went on the next night and the next, and finally the young man went and told the chaplain what had taken place, and asked what he should do. "Well," said the chaplain, "you are not at home now, and the other men have just as much right in the barracks as you have. It makes them mad to hear you pray, and the Lord will hear you just as well if you say your prayers in bed and don't provoke them." For weeks after the chaplain did not see the young man again, but one day he met him, and asked-- "By the way, did you take my advice?"

"I did, for two or three nights."

"How did it work?"

"Well," said the young man, "I felt like a whipped hound, and the third night I got out of bed, knelt down and prayed."

"Well," asked the chaplain, "how did that work?"

The young soldier answered: "We have a prayer-meeting there now every night, and three have been converted, and we are praying for the rest."

Oh, friends, I am so tired of weak Christianity.

Let us be out and out for Christ; let us give no uncertain sound. If the world wants to call us fools, let them do it. It is only a little while; the crowning day is coming. Thank God for the privilege we have of confessing Christ.

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Eddy-Torial - The Glory of Intersecting Lines of Providence

It was only a week or two after we had a mass exodus from that little church in the Ozarks that Leon and his family visited our services. We were as green as grass (not in the modern understanding of "green", but as in "inexperienced.") We had never in our meager spiritual experience seen people angrily reject the simple teachings of Scripture, openly, loudly, publicly. That was our first experience of rebellion in a church. Sadly, it wasn't the last. So the little church's attendance was halved in just a week.

My sweetheart and I grew up in churches where the people loved their pastors and followed their lead. When we left our home church in West Texas and went to Missouri to pastor, we were also surprised to find that the pastors fellowship meetings were very political. There was a lot of bootlicking, and dog eat

dog biting and growling for position. Never having been in business, we didn't know much about climbing the corporate ladder and had never observed the dangers of egos in pulpits. But then our eyes were opened! So we just quietly withdrew. I don't think we were missed.

Newlywed, new in the ministry, new in the district, new to conflict in a church, new to denominational politics, you talk about a leaky boat in a tsunami!!!! We almost sank out of sight, casualties of the ministry. Almost.

But God knew about all this ahead of time and providentially sent Leon and Arlene Huse and their children to befriend us and encourage us and open a whole new world of Christian fellowship for us.

Leon was born and bred a hillbilly. His roots were in the rocky soil of southwest Missouri, down in the hills and valleys of the Ozark mountains. And then he was converted to Christ and called to preach. He served many churches you and I will never hear of, little churches of 15 or 20, sometimes up to 40 or 50 in number. He knew everybody in the district and had told most of them about his wonderful Saviour.

Leon trained under a seasoned veteran of the ministry, and knew things I'd never heard of. Looking back, I think he took me under his wing. He preached for us and invited me to meet his old pastor. His pastor invited me to a fellowship meeting in his church, and then to speak. I found something I didn't think existed. I found pastors of churches that didn't "belong" to anything or anybody but Christ. And then I remembered my college professors mocking churches and pastors like these "independent" Independent Baptists who didn't belong to "the fellowship." One amazing thing I discovered among those hillbilly pastors was the absence of the politicking we'd previously found in the larger fellowships of churches.

Leon stopped by our house one Monday and invited us to hear a missionary speak in his old home church the next night. Knowing how short we were of money, he offered to drive over and take us, so we went. The missionary was a crippled man. He had suffered a childhood injury/disease that left his legs totally without strength so that he had braces on his legs and walked with crutches. He was home on furlough after their first term on the field and was reporting to his churches. We watched and listened as this dear brother made his way into the pulpit, locked his braces, laid aside his crutches, and leaned on the pulpit to preach. I still remember, after 45 years, the titles of the two sermons we heard him preach, "Saved Souls and Lost Lives" and "The Christian Home."

On the second evening he showed slides of their work, and I will never forget the last photo we saw. It was of an elderly aboriginal man pointing his finger at the photographer. The missionary used that photo to ask the congregation the question, "What are you doing to reach lost souls all over the world for Christ?" I see him yet, pointing a black crooked finger at me.

Susan and I looked at each other and read each other's thoughts. We went to the missionary afterward and told him that we thought God might be calling us to Australia. He looked at us and smiled and said, "Brother, if God wants you in Australia, he will make it very clear to you." Very wise counsel. That missionary's name is Randy Pike. Bro. Randy preached in Australia, South Africa, back in Australia, and in the USA for years and years. He is still serving His dear Saviour, though his health is now so precarious that he sits in his wheelchair on the bank of the River, with one foot in the water, and longs for the crossing.

We stayed on in that little church for some time and saw much blessing. And we began learning about what I call "the intersecting lines of divine providence." We learned that Romans 8:28, 29 are true in daily life. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 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." These are two of the many verses in Scripture that teach the wonderful doctrine of Intersecting Lines of Providence.

I have in my workshop a little device that helps me find the centre of a circular block of wood. If I need to turn a disc on the lathe I have to find its centre so it can be centered on the faceplate. It is made of clear plastic and has two ridges that I push against the edge of the block of wood. Then taking a pencil, I draw a line that crosses the centre of the circle. Then, if I rotate the device around the circle 90 degrees or so, I can draw another line and it will intersect the first line, right at the centre of the circle. Just so, God's lines of providence mark the centre of His will for our lives. Through the years we have redrawn the lines of God's providential care of His children. These lines and truths are writ large upon our hearts, in bolder and bolder script, refined and clarified time and time again!



The truths of this blessed doctrine that I am most aware of at this moment are these:

- Love for God simplifies life.
- All things! The very best things, the very worst things, the least expected things! All things are used by God.
- The unending beneficence of God is ever for our good! Never to our harm!
- Providence perfectly meshes together all the gears in the machinery of life! Some of them seem to turn the wrong way. Much of God's machinery appears to the unpracticed eye to be retrograde, but it all works to His purposes.
- Providence has a Grand Purpose! God is conforming us to the likeness of His Son.

People leaving the church? How could that work for good? Well, we soon discovered that the puppetmaster (puppetmistress?) of the split had concealed for many years her immorality, and never made it right with God. We found that she had hindered many of the lost from coming, and when she left they came. Within a month the little church quadrupled in attendance. One family who began attending brought their loved ones, a car load at a time, from sixty miles away and saw them come to Christ until there were almost thirty souls saved, from one family! And we grew, and endured hardship, and stretched our faith, and.....but that's for another day. It's enough to say we learned to look for those glorious lines of divine providence.

Our inexperience, the daily traumas of pastoral work, the evil schemes of men, dear brethren in the Lord, a missionary who yielded up to God a broken body to use as he saw fit, and a thousand thousand trials and blessings all mingled together.... All these are the Lines of Divine Providence.

It's glorious!

Excuse me, I must go. Providence is knocking.

Bro. Buddy Smith

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Welcome to the Website of Grace Baptist Church - Malanda, North Queensland, Australia



On the Atherton Tablelands in Tropical North Queensland - Australia

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