

The Sword and Trumpet

Founded in 1929 by Geo. R. Brunk I

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SWORD AND TRUMPET GUIDELINES monthly magazine is a faith ministry directed by a Board representing various constituencies of the Mennonite Church. It is committed to defending, proclaiming, and promoting the whole Gospel of our Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures. It emphasizes neglected truth and contends for “the faith which was once delivered to the saints.” This publication exposes and opposes doctrinal error which compromises that faith and leads to apostasy.

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IN THIS ISSUE

1. Person of the Month: Elmer N. Beachy	1
2. Broken Things	2
3. From the Editor’s Desk:	
Simplicity in Christ	3
4. The Sunday School Lessons	5
5. Do You Hate Math, Too?	9
6. Newslines	11
7. Trusting in Deep Distress	14
8. The Light of the World	16
9. Evaluating Religious Reconciliation Efforts	18
10. Satisfied	19
11. Song of the Month:	
“The Risen Lord Is Here”	20
12. Sermon of the Month:	
How to Respond to Tragic Loss	22
13. From <i>Observations</i>	23
14. Counseling From the Word:	
Some Things Are Certain	24
15. Clinics Use Tissue From Babies	25
16. The Cost of Discipleship	26
17. Developing Servant-Leaders	29
18. Beginning Issues:	
The Dating Methods: Are They Reliable?	32
19. A Wife’s Respect for Her Husband	33

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EVALUATING RELIGIOUS RECONCILIATION EFFORTS . . . cont'd.

after their arrival in America, the Mennonites printed the *Dortrecht Confession of Faith* in English so their neighbors would understand what they believed.

The Anabaptists gave testimony to their faith, but they did not compromise that faith. We, too, need to continue sharing our faith with others without compromising Biblical belief and practice.

Present reconciliation efforts sidestep basic Scriptural tenets. These reconciliation conferences have used Communion, feet washing, and even joint baptism as symbols of forgiveness and brotherhood. In contrast, the Anabaptists faced persecution and even died because they refused to commune with those who tolerated known sin in the state church. To hold fellowship together now is to practice what the Anabaptists refused to practice at the cost of their lives.

The Anabaptists understood the Scriptural call to a pure Communion as a Biblical imperative (1 Corinthians 5). We, too, need to maintain the vision of a pure church, separated from the course of society and from those churches that blend with the world.

Forgiveness is not the same as establishing fellowship. The Anabaptists did forgive; they often expressed forgiveness as they faced martyrdom. Had they accepted the reconciliation offered them, they could have saved their lives. But they refused, because to be

reconciled on the basis offered was to go back from obeying the Word of God. The religious groups that opposed the Anabaptists during the Reformation have not moved toward the Word on the issues that separated them from the Anabaptists. The differences that existed during the Reformation period have been resolved only as Anabaptist groups have moved away from a Biblical position.

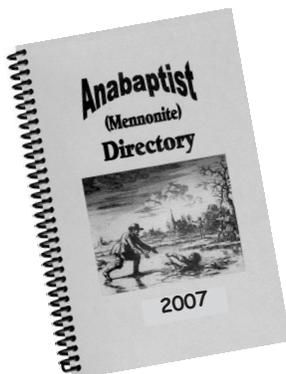
The Anabaptists forgave their persecutors but understood that forgiveness does not mean tolerating unsound doctrine in the church fellowship. We, too, need to be forgiving of any past and present wrongs, yet remain firmly on the Gospel foundation in separation from the world and from those groups not practicing the full Gospel.

In response to religious reconciliation movements, we must continue to emphasize the high calling of the church as the pure bride of Christ. As we maintain this Scriptural vision of the church, we will continue beseeching those of all walks of life to be "reconciled to God" (2 Corinthians 5:20). All who continue on the Gospel foundation, through the grace of God, will be a part of the bride that He will present to Himself, "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:27). ■

—Reprinted with permission from *The Eastern Mennonite Testimony*, Aug., 2007

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Person of the Month: *Elmer N. Beachy* (1931-2007)



Elmer N. Beachy, son of Noah M. and Elizabeth (Tice) Beachy, was born February 20, 1931, near Salisbury, Pennsylvania. He was one of two sons and six daughters born into the Beachy home.

As a young person he recognized his need of Christ and accepted Him as his Lord and Saviour. He then joined Mountain View Mennonite Church. Elmer's grandfather, Mose Beachy, founded Mountain View, the first Amish Mennonite church. It was at Mountain View where Elmer served faithfully as a Sunday school teacher.

Beachy worked as a feed dealer in his father's business: Noah Beachy & Sons. Elmer was noted as being a businessman of great integrity.

In 1952, at the age of 21, Brother Elmer married Lena E. Yoder. Over the years God blessed their family with the births of six daughters and one son.

Elmer's family was a very important part of his life but his love for the Lord was even greater. He was knowledgeable about God and His Word, spending much time reading and studying the Scriptures as well as attending many Bible conferences, which equipped him to intelligently discuss Bible doctrine. Although a kind, quiet-spoken, unpretentious man, Brother Elmer was not afraid to speak "the truth in love" when it came to the Word of God. He was a defender of "the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints." Because of his faithfulness to God and His Word Elmer was invited to become part of the board of the *Fellowship of Concerned Mennonites* in December of 2002. Brother Beachy loved prophecy, especially that which pertained to God's people, the Jews, and His future plans for them. Brother Elmer was also present at the beginning of a new prophecy and Jewish evangelism ministry, *Israel's Shalom Ministry* (ISM) begun in December 2006. He was chosen as a member of the Consulting Board.

A lover of music, Elmer sang for many years in the Mountain Anthems Chorus and served as a chorus board member. One of his favorite songs was the "Hallelujah Chorus."

After retiring from the feed business Brother Beachy enjoyed serving his Amish neighbors by providing taxi service for them. In the early morning hours of June 6, 2007, while on a taxi run, Elmer was involved in a fatal traffic accident and was immediately ushered into the presence of the Lord he loved and served. Elmer N. Beachy was 76 years old.

His funeral and burial took place June 9th at the Mountain View Mennonite Church.

May God give us *more* men of courage like Brother Beachy, who are lovers of the Lord Who is "*the way, the truth, and the life*"!

—Gail L. Emerson

Broken Things

by Dale Byers

***It is when we are broken ourselves that we learn
how much God values broken things.***

I could speak for hours on the subject of broken things. When I was in Bible college, I drove a 1959 Rambler with continental kit, push-button transmission, and divided seats in the front. The problem with this wonder car was that its windshield wipers were broken. The wiper blades would go down but not come back up.

I did not have money, time, or know-how to fix them. So I did the next best thing. I tied a string around the wiper blade and threaded it through the window. When it was snowing, I would pull the wiper blades up with the string and allow the working half of the mechanism to take them back down. As I traveled to my classes, I could be seen driving down the highway, pumping the string to keep my windshield clean.

Another of my cars had wiper blades that decided to come on when I used the turn signal. Sometimes I could not get the wiper blades to quit working once my turn was completed. One day I was giving a ride to one of our missionaries when he noticed the wiper blades suddenly begin to operate. I explained that I could not get them to quit. He asked how I handled the situation. My explanation was simple: "I pray for rain."

Not only have I spent much time with broken things, but I have spent much time with broken people. My former ministry was as chaplain of the Lighthouse, a large

neurological rehabilitation center in Michigan. The lives of its residents have been broken in some way. The staff members at the Lighthouse believe that every individual is important to God, and so we would help these individuals "repair" as much brokenness as possible. Those past neurological repair, we ministered to as God's special people.

One day your life may come to a sudden turn in the road and you may find yourself broken in health. Your business may fail; you may lose everything but your shirt. God may ask you to live the rest of your life broken financially, physically, or emotionally. Many individuals have known success in all those areas, and then one day they find themselves helpless, weak, and in great need.

It is when we are broken ourselves that we learn how much God values broken things.

Our Saviour did not come to help the perfect, the self-sufficient, the self-righteous. Christ came to minister to sinners. He is the Great Physician to spiritually sick and dying people. When you find that you are broken and insufficient in yourself, then you qualify to receive God's abundant mercy and grace by trusting Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord of your life. Then ask Him to bring into your life someone who is broken and in need of *your* care. Remember, He loves you. Rest in His love and share it with those around you. ■

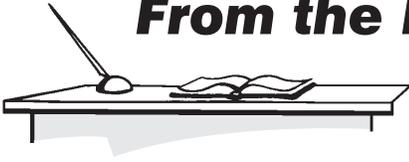
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Dale Byers, a retired pastor, lives with his wife Betty in Holland, Michigan. His books include I Left the Lodge and Suicide: How God Sustained a Family.

PAGE 2

SWORD AND TRUMPET

From the Editor's Desk



Paul M. Emerson

GUEST EDITORIAL

Simplicity in Christ

by Dwayne Martin

*“Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed bear with me. For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, **so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.** For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him” (2 Corinthians 11:1-4).*

What is this simplicity that is in Christ? What is it that can corrupt our minds? Does this deception pose a threat to me, or was it only the Corinthians that had a problem? Let us see what we can learn from God's Word.

This simplicity refers to singleness and sincerity of heart. It is the opposite of divided loyalties. There is a very apt illustration given in the above passage, of the godly young woman about to be married. She has

eyes for only one man, her fiancé. In the same way, the Apostle Paul's desire was for the Corinthians to seek Christ with their whole heart. In their single-minded devotion to Christ, they would avoid the defilements Satan tried to place in their pathway.

We all know the story of Eve, as referenced in this account. Before Satan approached her, she had no intentions of disobedience. Eve was sincerely serving the Lord. But the devil craftily turned her aside from the truth of God's Word to another way that sounded more attractive. The result was death. We too face the same Master Deceiver who is ever trying to convince us that there must be an easier way, a way with less trouble and conflict. If Eve and the Corinthians were confronted with temptations to try another gospel, we are only fooling ourselves if we think we are immune.

Many of these “gospels” are very close to the truth, with what seems like only minor points of difference with the Word of God. However, Satan is happy if he can persuade us to sidestep the truth even in small areas,

because he is starting us on a path away from God. In 1 Timothy 4 Paul warns Timothy of the false teachers who would threaten the church in the last days. Among other things, they would give heed to doctrines of devils. Those doctrines include the practice of forbidding men and women to marry so that they might be more holy unto God. While it is not necessary to marry to be under the blessing of the Lord, God has ordained the institution of marriage for the good of mankind. Another false doctrine is the abstaining from certain kinds of food for religious purposes. Paul points out that God has designed all meats to be received with thanksgiving.

Denying legitimate desires of the body to please the gods is part of many pagan religions. Remember how the prophets of Baal leaped on the altar and cut themselves in an attempt to awaken their god? Sometimes worship of the gods required offering babies as a sacrifice to appease the anger of the gods. Man is still the same today and thinks he needs something tangible to prove he is under the blessing of the Lord. These doctrines have appeal since they give him reason to feel he is accepted by God. However, they undermine the plan of salvation. Salvation is only by grace through faith, and good works can never put us one step closer to the Lord. Self-discipline and self-righteousness earn us praise of man but not of the Lord.

If we become snared by these cheap gospels, we no longer have that single-hearted desire to please Christ. We are now going about to establish our own righteousness just as the majority of the Jews were doing in Paul's day (Romans 10:1-3). There are many good works religions in our day and age. If you do enough good, it will outweigh the bad and God will allow you into heaven, they say. But the Word of God strongly refutes this false teaching. *"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good,*

no, not one" (Romans 3:10-12). *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"* (Romans 3:23). Isaiah 64:6 refers to our own righteousness being as filthy rags. It is as Peter told the Jewish rulers, *"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved"* (Acts 4:12).

Good works will proceed from the life of the one who is born again. They are not done to obtain merit with God; rather, they are a result of the work of God in the heart of the believer. God gives the saints the power to live holy lives. Ephesians 2:10 explains that God designed this salvation plan to result in good works coming from the life of the believer.

Our lives will show forth either the fruit of the Spirit or the works of the flesh. There is no in-between. There is no option given in the Scriptures of being born again and not having the Spirit. Thus if someone claims to be serving the Lord, we can rightly expect that he will be leaving a testimony of a life filled with the Spirit. We should be able to see love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance in his dealings with his fellowman.

One common belief in our day is that many roads lead to God. That sounds so good, but it is totally foreign to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Scripture says in Acts 4:12, speaking of Jesus, *"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."* Our only hope of salvation is in the One who says, (John 14:6) *"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."*

In closing, I would like to emphasize the necessity of a close acquaintance with the Bible. There is no way to detect false doctrine other than to be familiar with the truth. So let us daily read the Word of God, rejoicing in the precious promises and believing that what God has said will come to pass. ■

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THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS



A Devotional Commentary



by David L. Burkholder

OCTOBER 7, 2007

Jacob and Esau

Genesis 25:19-34

The narrative of Abraham's family continues. Abraham was now dead. Ishmael's family lived in the east country (see 25:12-18), separated from the heir and his family. Today's lesson picks up with Isaac and Rebekah and their family, the line through which God had chosen to channel His blessing. We have seen the securing of Rebekah as Isaac's wife in last Sunday's lesson. Here we see in the opening verses of today's text that Rebekah was barren. However, upon Isaac's entreaty, the Lord opened Rebekah's womb and she became pregnant with twins.

The struggle in Rebekah's womb pre-saged the struggle between the two nations her sons would beget. This was confirmed by the Lord's response to her when she inquired: "Why is this happening to me?" The Lord explained that the two peoples emanating from her sons would be two types of people, one stronger than the other, the people of the elder son subservient to the younger. This, in complete contrariety to the established norm that the elder son held a special place in the family and became the patriarch upon his father's death.

However, God had His purposes and as the story unfolds we see how His predictions were borne out. Esau was the firstborn (v. 25) but Jacob was God's chosen (see Malachi 1:2, 3; Romans 9:13). As we note from verses 20 and 26, Isaac also waited a long time for the fulfillment of God's promise and the birth of an heir. The twin boys were named according to their

traits, "Red" and "Supplanter."

Verse 27 gives us further insight into the character and qualities of Jacob and Esau. Esau was an outdoorsman, a hunter, a man of the fields. Jacob, by contrast, was a "quiet" man, a man of the house. We note in verse 28 the seeds of conflict. Parental favoritism soon shows and leads to conflict, rivalry—and worse (see Chapter 27). It seems that the dynamics in Isaac and Rebekah's home were not healthy and the boy's attitudes were exacerbated by the parents' open favoritism.

The last six verses of our lesson text portray vividly the adult character of Esau and Jacob. Esau's focus was on the present, on personal comforts. He seemingly had no concept of the future. He is described in Hebrews 12:16 as "a profane [godless, unholy] man." Jacob was a cunning man, a deceiver with an eye to the future. Whether he knew or not that he was the God-chosen heir in the lineage of Abraham, he nevertheless used shrewd measures to thwart the rule of primogeniture which guaranteed the exclusive right of the firstborn son to inherit his father's estate.

When Esau asked for food, Jacob struck a shrewd bargain with him—a meal for his birthright. Esau, being the thoughtless person he was, agreed. He went away with a full stomach and an empty future. Only later would he regret his bargain, but then it was too late. The blessing was Jacob's. And therein lay the roots of conflict.

For thought and discussion

1. While outside of today's lesson text, we note in 25:6-18 the separation of Abraham's other sons from Isaac, his heir. What principles does that imply for the

- children of God today?
2. Be sure you understand both the meaning and the purpose of God's choice of Jacob and His rejection of Esau.
 3. You've heard the phrase, "What's in a name?" Jacob and Esau give vivid examples of this expression. What does your name mean? Does it give meaning to your life?
 4. God endows and equips people differently, as we note from Esau and Jacob. What should this teach us about acceptance and respect, especially in our families and within the Christian brotherhood?
 5. Parents, pastors, teachers—beware of favoritism. It leads to unwholesome attitudes and relationships. We need to accept each individual, though differing in abilities and character, on their own individual merits and treat each one as a worthy child of God.
 6. What are some parallels today to Esau's despising of his birthright?

OCTOBER 14, 2007

Jacob's Dream at Bethel

Genesis 28:10-22

In today's lesson we find Jacob enroute to Padan-aram in search of a wife from among his mother's relatives. (Read the first part of Chapter 28 for context.) The real reason for his flight, however, is found in Chapter 27, evoked by Jacob's deception and Esau's threatened revenge in the matter of the birthright and blessing. One can only speculate as to how God would have worked things out to achieve His purpose and promise (25:23) without the deceptive actions of Rebekah and Jacob. We do need to remember that God is sovereign over the affairs and actions of men.

Nightfall caught Jacob out in the fields where he bedded down for the night, using a stone for a pillow. He was very likely traveling alone and carrying only sparse provisions (see 32:10). He would have

needed to leave secretly to avoid Esau's wrath and possible pursuit. Deception and intrigue carry a high price, and Jacob fled, leaving behind home and parents. He would never see his mother again, though his father lived till after he returned to his homeland (see 35:27-29).

While Jacob slept he had a dream. A stairway stretched from earth to heaven. Angels were moving up and down and at the top stood the Lord God. He had a message for Jacob. His message was affirmation of His sovereignty and confirmation of His promise to Abraham and Isaac, and now to Jacob, the promise of the land and of posterity. God's blessing also included the Messianic promise of blessing to all peoples of the earth (v. 14) through Jacob's descendants.

Furthermore, and this should certainly have been a very present encouragement to Jacob, the Lord said, "I will be with you, I will keep you, and I will bring you again into this land." The Lord had made a promise. He would carry it through. Jacob certainly lacked integrity, but as one commentator said, "God's choice of Jacob was not based on merit but [on] grace. God . . . saw in Jacob a man who would grow in faithfulness and in character strength." — *Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Commentary*

On waking, Jacob's immediate response was to worship. He recognized that God was in this place. So he set up his pillow-stone as a memorial stone and anointed it with oil (see 31:13). Jacob named the place Beth-El: house of God. Jacob was now about 50 miles into his 400-mile journey from Beersheba to Haran here at Beth-El.

In response to God's promise of keeping and blessing, Jacob makes a vow to God. He promises that in response to God's blessing he will serve God, he will remember his experience at Beth-El, and he will return to God a tenth of the blessings He gives. Jacob was deeply touched by this experience and it no doubt provided ongoing support and encouragement during the difficult years ahead.

Jacob was fleeing Esau, but he was

drawing closer to God. He was no longer alone on his journey. No doubt he moved on with renewed confidence.

For thought and discussion

1. One lesson we learn from the experience of Jacob and Esau is that it is always best to do things God's way. What happens when we don't?
2. Another lesson we learn from this experience is that God can make good come out of our mistakes and failures. However, that does not give license to sin presumptuously.
3. God revealed Himself to Jacob in a dream. How does God reveal Himself and His will to His people today? Discuss.
4. There is also a lesson here in faith. Part of God's promise to Jacob was not fulfilled till more than 400 years later, part not till perhaps another 1,800 or more years. Remember, God is always true to His promises.
5. Bethel held special significance for Jacob. See also 35:17. Do you have a special place or experience that is your spiritual Bethel?

OCTOBER 21, 2007

Jacob and His Wives

Genesis 29:20-35

For context for today's lesson you will want to read all of Chapters 29 and 30. This is the story of Jacob and his wives and the beginning of his family of twelve sons and one daughter. Jacob had finally arrived in Haran and found his mother's family. They readily took him in and it appears he was soon working for his uncle and future father-in-law, Laban (see v. 15). It appeared to be love at first sight between Jacob and Rachel and he soon found himself indentured to Laban for the hand of his daughter.

The intensity of Jacob's love for Rachel is reflected in the rapid passing of the

seven years he had agreed to serve for her. It would also seem that this "plain man," Jacob, had some ability as a herdsman since Laban's cattle increased greatly while Jacob was in charge of them (see 30:29, 30, 43). He seemed to have been serving Laban with integrity and enthusiasm.

When the seven years of servitude were ended, Jacob demanded his pay, Rachel as wife. And here we note that the trickster got his due. Likely Laban either made up the excuse about marrying the older daughter first, or saw this bit of subterfuge as a way of getting additional years of free service from Jacob. At any rate, Jacob ended up with Leah instead of Rachel on his wedding night. One can only imagine Jacob's extreme disappointment and frustration when he discovered what Laban had done. However, he readily agreed to Laban's bargain to serve an additional seven years for Rachel whom he married when the week of celebration was over (verses 27, 28).

Jacob's preferential love for Rachel couldn't be hidden, either from his wives or from God. As a result, or in retaliation, God opened Leah's womb to bear children, but closed Rachel's. Jacob did not actually hate Leah, but rather loved her less, or spurned her in favor of Rachel. It is obvious that he continued an intimate relationship with her due to the fact that she continued to bear him children.

Leah gave names to her sons reflecting her emotions at being the second-class wife. It is also very interesting to note that two of the sons of this lower-ranked wife became very prominent in the subsequent history of Israel. The tribe of Levi became the worship leaders for the nation, and it was through the tribe of Judah that God's promise of "blessing to all people" became a reality in the eventual birth of the Saviour in Bethlehem.

One important lesson for us in these experiences of Old Testament peoples is how God often used less-than-perfect people to accomplish His purposes. We may

wonder at times why He chose whom He did. But then we must also reflect upon our own many failures and our unworthiness to be tools in His hands. Truly God is gracious and merciful—and forgiving.

We note from Jacob's subsequent history that he did have several significant encounters with God which shaped and molded his character. He died, being the patriarch of a nation chosen by God to bless the world.

For thought and discussion

1. We look back with a certain sense of sorrow and bewilderment at the intrigue and deceptiveness of these "saints" of old. But are we totally free of such today? This would be a good time to examine our lives to see if our motives and actions are pure before God and toward our fellow believers.
2. Disappointments will come in life, as they did to Jacob. When they do, how do we respond? What does our response reveal about our character?
3. God places a premium on integrity, but He also overrides our mistakes and failures and turns them into positive experiences. Think of examples from your own life where this was true.
4. Favoritism carries the seeds of strife and unrest. How can it be avoided while at the same time recognizing differing gifts and abilities within the Christian family and brotherhood? Discuss.
5. What was Leah's source of comfort and security in the face of rejection? What lessons does that have for us when we feel rejected or unloved?

OCTOBER 28, 2007

Jacob and Esau Reconciled

Genesis 33:1-11

For context for today's lesson you will want to read Chapters 30-33. In these chapters we see the growth of Jacob's fam-

ily, his additional six years of service to secure flocks and herds, his departure from Padan-aram, making peace with Laban, wrestling with the angel, and making preparations to meet Esau. One can easily imagine the trepidation with which Jacob approached his meeting with Esau. But it is obvious from the unfolding story that both men had changed in the intervening 20 years since they had parted on less-than-amicable terms.

Learning of Esau's approach with 400 men and not at all sure of his motives, Jacob hurriedly arranges his family into obviously preferred groups: Zilpah, Bilhah, Leah, Rachel. He had previously divided his cattle and from them prepared a peace offering for his brother Esau. We also note from 32:3-5 that Jacob sent an advance delegation to soften any potential animosity when the two brothers met.

Jacob advanced toward his estranged brother in an attitude and act of obeisance, bowing himself to the ground seven times. This certainly shows a change of attitude on Jacob's part. He was exhibiting an attitude of subservience, not of lordship or preeminence. Undoubtedly this registered with Esau and any attitude of defiance or revenge he may have harbored melted in light of his perception of change in his brother Jacob.

It is indeed a touching scene where these previously estranged brothers meet, embrace, and weep together. "The strong feelings of brotherhood surged up and swept aside the bitterness and estrangement of twenty long years." —*New Bible Commentary*. Isn't it amazing what God's love and mercy can do in bringing reconciliation, by working in individual hearts and lives? Jacob and Esau provide a beautiful example of a restored relationship.

Note, in response to Esau's question regarding the people with Jacob, how he responded: They are "the children which God hath graciously given thy servant." Jacob readily acknowledged the Lord's blessing upon him and expressed himself in an attitude of humility before Esau. In

PAGE 8

SWORD AND TRUMPET

response to Esau's question regarding the advance drove of cattle, nearly 600 head, Jacob responded: "These are to find grace in the sight of my lord." A peace offering, no less.

Was Jacob seeking with this gift to share some of the blessing he had stolen from Esau, or was this gift simply intended to buy peace? We can only guess. Perhaps it was given from mixed motives (see 32:20b). We then see some mid-eastern bargaining. No doubt Esau did have enough, as indicated by his statement in verse 9. However, to have refused the gift would have left an unhealed breach between the brothers. "Not until the present was accepted could Jacob be sure . . . that all was well between Esau and himself." —*New Bible Commentary*. "He urged him, and he took it."

Reconciliation was complete. Harmony was restored and each went his own way in peace. The burden was lifted. They were true brothers once again.

For thought and discussion

1. Reflect on the long-standing effects of deception upon relationships. Which is more important, getting one's own way, even through intrigue, or giving up personal desires in order to maintain relationship? The answer should be clear as we look at the experience of Jacob and Esau.
2. Is it appropriate to use gifts to restore broken relationships? Why, or why not? Discuss the implications.
3. What is necessary, on the part of both parties, to restore a broken relationship? Discuss.
4. A sincere attitude of humility usually goes a long way in restoring broken relationships. But one's overtures are not always accepted. Then what?
5. Do you have an outstanding broken relationship that needs mending? Let the experience of Jacob and Esau guide you in seeking reconciliation and healing. ■

Do You Hate Math, Too?

by Jason D. VanBilliard

After a decade of teaching mathematics, I think I have developed a gracious response to statements like, "Math? I was never good at that," or "I was good at math in elementary school, but when I got to algebra, that was it for me," or even "I always hated math." While attempting to conceal my inner agony, I usually announce, "Well, everyone has their strengths and weaknesses." However, when I do occasionally probe to determine the cause of their disillusioned or hostile disposition toward a subject I adore, I commonly discover that most people view the discipline quite differently than I do. Consider the mathematician's perspective:

- "Mathematics, rightly viewed, possesses not only truth but supreme beauty—a beauty cold and austere, like that in sculpture." —Bertrand Russell
- "The mathematician's patterns, like the painter's or the poet's, must be beautiful." —G. H. Hardy
- "It is impossible to be a mathematician without being a poet in soul." —Sophia Kovalevskaya
- "To speak freely of mathematics . . . I call it the most beautiful profession in the world . . ." —Blaise Pascal
- "At the age of eleven, I began Euclid, with my brother as my tutor. This was one of the great events of my life, as dazzling as first love. I had not imagined there was anything so delicious in the world." —Bertrand Russell

Most people rarely think of mathematics as "beautiful" or something "as dazzling as first love." However, this is how I see mathematics. It is how I want my students to see mathematics. Contrary to popular opinion, we, as believers, should expect mathematics to be beautiful, intriguing, and awe-inspiring. It is a reflection of the order, complexity, and beauty of the God we serve. Mathematics should be studied for what it is instead of being peddled as a set of rules to be followed and exercises to be completed.

Mary Beth Ruskai, a mathematics professor at Tufts University, says, "We cannot

hope that many children will learn mathematics unless we find a way to share our enjoyment and show them its beauty as well as its utility.” Ruskai recognizes the importance of understanding both the utility and the beauty of mathematics. However, most efforts to convince students they should learn mathematics are based on its utility. Popular slogans include “Do Math and You Can Do Anything” (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics) and “Math Is Power” (The Ad Council). A fashionable poster in many high school math classrooms is titled “When am I ever going to use this?” The poster cross-references jobs with mathematical topics. Understanding and experiencing the uses for mathematics is important. However, the utility argument has been insufficient in elevating students’ interest in and love for mathematics.

The utility argument helps the student to see that math should be studied for the student’s sake. However, students would be much more inclined to study, understand, and even love mathematics if it were studied for math’s sake. Alfred Posamentier, Professor of Mathematics Education at the City College of New York, wrote the following in a 2002 *New York Times* article:

The point is to make math intrinsically interesting to children. We should not have to sell mathematics by pointing to its usefulness in other subject areas, which, of course, is real. Love for math will not come about by trying to convince a child that it happens to be a handy tool for life; it grows when a good teacher can draw out a child’s curiosity about how numbers and mathematical principles work. The very high percentage of adults who are unashamed to say that they are bad with math is a good indication of how maligned the subject is and how very little we were taught in school about the enchantment of numbers (Posamentier 25).

If everyone considered and experienced the “enchantment of numbers” and the beauty intrinsic to mathematics, people would be more inclined to confess their fascination with prime numbers, discuss coding techniques used for internet security, or argue over probabilities involved in daily life. People nobly say they enjoy seeing a Monet, listening to Bach, or reading Shake-

speare. Similarly, the enlightened mathematics student should be enamored by Gauss’ insight into arithmetic series, enjoy playing with Fermat’s theorems in elementary number theory, and appreciate the beauty of the Mandelbrot fractal.

I invite you to investigate the beautiful, captivating, and enchanting world of mathematics. It is not a world of fluff but of substantial and provocative insights. Mathematics is not the drudgery that you may have suffered. See mathematics from my point of view. Investigate the heart of mathematics with a good book such as *Journey Through Genius: The Great Theorems of Mathematics* or *The Mathematical Universe* by William Dunham; *Math Charmers: Tantalizing Tidbits for the Mind* by Alfred Posamentier; *Zero: The Biography of a Dangerous Idea* by Charles Seife; or *The Art of the Infinite: The Pleasures of Mathematics* by Robert Kaplan and Ellen Kaplan.

Furthermore, most of these topics demand integration into other subject areas, into real-life scenarios, and, most importantly into addressing significant worldview questions: Did God create a chaotic universe? Is there true randomness? What does it mean to be infinite? What is acceptable risk? Is mathematical knowledge objective? Did God design a mathematical standard for beauty?

In the foreword of *The Heart of Mathematics*, the authors state, “We hope you discover the beauty and fascination of mathematics” and “We want you to discover what mathematics really is and to become a fan. However, if you are not intrigued by the romance of the subject, that’s fine, too, because at least you will have a firmer understanding of what it is you are judging” (Burger & Starbird xi). Study mathematics for its artistic beauty, powerful intrigue, and elegant “romance.” However, beware. You might succumb to its allure and “become a fan.”

“The mathematician does not study pure mathematics because it is useful; he studies it because he delights in it and he delights in it because it is beautiful.” —Henri Poincare ■

—This article originally appeared in the Spring 2007 edition of *PBU Today*, the quarterly magazine of Philadelphia Biblical University and is reprinted with permission.

Newslines . . .

by Hans Mast

incidents events occurrences facts illustrations episodes committees vignettes proceedings problems
experiences crises adventures transactions meetings tragedies scoops reports conferences happenings
bulletins questions reports affairs dramas encounters personages actions tidings et cetera

Man Shot, Killed Outside York, PA, Mennonite Church

A 25-year-old man was shot and killed right outside Tidings of Peace (ToP) Mennonite Church on a Sunday morning during Sunday school. A stray bullet flew through a window, into a house, and grazed a 4-year-old girl's head, injuring her slightly. Pastor Clayton Shenk and a member of the congregation who is a CNA were some of the first people to reach the man's side, but he had already stopped breathing.

Police closed down part of the block with yellow crime scene tape as neighbors watched. Two ladies hugged each other, crying. Fifty-sixty Tidings of Peace attendees watched somberly.

The York Dispatch wrote, "Shenk said violence is common in the neighborhood, including about a dozen shootings nearby in the last six months. He pointed to an air conditioner across the street that was pierced by a bullet and said a church meeting was interrupted when a man across the street was attacked by someone with a baseball bat.

"Church members have seen people run by with guns, and teachers at the church's Tidings of Peace Christian School once herded children out of the way of a fight as it turned into a shootout," Shenk said.

"The neighborhood's getting worse and worse," he said.

"The violence isn't chasing church members away—they feel that God wants them where they are," Shenk said. But though they've brought Bible studies and Sunday school to the neighborhood, the violence has continued, raising questions about whether the church is doing what it needs to do to be the light of the world and the salt of the earth.

Shenk said that the police found 23 empty shell casings and one of the three suspects is

in custody. The church has used this as an outreach opportunity "providing assistance to the family with meals, funeral meal, and neighbors with emotional support." Shenk says that fear remains high in the neighborhood with one family considering pulling their children from ToP school. Last Sunday ToP held a service on the site of the shooting, with several neighbors in attendance.

—Sources: *The York Dispatch* and *Personal Interview with Clayton Shenk*; excerpt from "Man killed, child injured in York City shooting" by Daina Klimanis in *The York Dispatch* on 7/8/2007 (<http://tinyurl.com/2uy2ov>)

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Book of Jeremiah Corroborated

By confirming the historical accuracy of a tiny detail, a two-inch clay tablet long in the possession of the British Museum, has given ammunition to those who believe that the Bible—specifically, in this case, the book of the Prophet Jeremiah—is history.

The tablet itself is certainly genuine. On July 10 the museum announced that a Viennese expert, working his way through thousands of similar clay documents in its possession, translated one dating from 595 B.C. that described a gift of 1.7 lbs. of gold to a Babylonian temple by a "chief eunuch" named Nabu-sharrussu-ukin.

A museum official called it "a world-class find." What makes the ancient, but seemingly mundane, receipt significant is that the Book of Jeremiah in the Hebrew Bible (or Old Testament) mentions the exact same official, as accompanying the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar when he marched against Jerusalem in 587. According to some experts, that proves that whoever wrote Jeremiah wasn't making it up.

—Excerpt from "A Boost for the Book of Jeremiah" by David van Biema in *TIME Magazine* on 7/21/2007 (<http://tinyurl.com/3cnaax>)

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Dubai Skyscraper Tallest in World

A skyscraper under construction in Dubai—the capital of the eponymous emirate which is one of the seven in the United Arab Emirates—is now the tallest in the world, passing up the Taipei 101 in Taiwan. It currently has no glass and is just an ugly concrete finger jabbing 1680 feet into the sky. However, once it is finished, it will be a 2,275 ft. glistening fusion of glass and metal. A short history of the world's tallest buildings is thus: Egypt's Great Pyramid of Giza, 481 ft., 2500 B.C.-1889 A.D.; Eiffel Tower, 985 ft.; Empire State Building, 1250 ft.; Shanghai's Jin Mao, 1381 ft.; Sears Tower, 1451 ft.; Malaysia's Petronas Towers, 1483 ft.; Taipei 101, 1667 ft. The AP article comments that the tallest building crown has returned to the Middle East where it was for so long. That reminds me of a tall building that was also in the Middle East that predated even the Giza Pyramids. AP says, "The building reflects the city's hunger for global prestige." The stated intent of the Babel architects was, "Let us make a name for ourselves." God isn't against tall buildings, but He is against wrong attitudes.

—Source: *Associated Press*

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A Talk With a Suicide Bomber

Last week, at the Directorate of National Intelligence in Kabul, I met a failed suicide bomber. Arrested two weeks before in Jalalabad, preparing to assassinate the governor of Nangahar Province, Farhad was sitting outside of Pakistan's Waziristan Province for the first time.

Only 17, he was terrified. Not only because of an uncertain fate, but perhaps more so because the world was not as the Taliban had described it. The Taliban indoctrinated him well, convincing him the Americans were stealing the faith of Afghan Muslims. I asked him if he hated the governor. No, it was simply that in working with the Americans he'd fallen away from Islam. He deserved to die.

It was immediately clear this kid was

ignorant of the world; the boundaries of his village were his world. I asked him if he'd heard of Iraq. He had, but when I asked him if he could point it out on a map, he said he couldn't. The same with Palestine. I doubt that he'd ever seen a map.

That raised the question what he knew about Islam. When I asked he said he'd read the Quran. I asked him if he understood it. He shook his head. It was then it became apparent his education went no farther than the madrassa—he was taught to recite the Quran in Arabic but did not understand a word other than what he was told.

And this is where the Taliban came in. Spotting him in the village mosque, they invited him to attend what can only be called an indoctrination course in Waziristan. There he was taught that suicide bombers go directly to heaven, where they're met by virgins and lush gardens. Farhad was also taught that any Muslim working with the Americans in Afghanistan was no longer a Muslim, but a "munafiq," a pretend Muslim. It was written in the Quran, Farhad was assured.

Even I, who have tried to get a grip on Muslim suicide bombing, was stunned by the depth of the brainwashing. I'd never seen anything like it. So I asked the question, What religion is Musharraf, the president of Pakistan? He's a Jew, the Taliban had assured Farhad.

—Excerpt from "A Talk with a Suicide Bomber" by Robert Baer (former CIA field agent) in *TIME Magazine* on 7/20/2007 (<http://tinyurl.com/25wgt6>)

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Musharraf's Grip Slipping in Pakistan?

Pervez Musharraf, Pakistan's president and head of military, sacked Pakistan's chief justice putatively because he abused office. However, many believe it was because he stood in the way of Musharraf having the parliament grant himself another five-year term. The Supreme Court overturned Musharraf's decision and restored the chief justice. This defeat, combined with the great backlash of suicide bombings that are rocking Islamabad as a result of Musharraf's decision to assault a mosque where Islamic

militants were holed up, show an erosion of his once iron grip on the country.

Musharraf is one of America's most vocal allies in the war on terror; however, he has been criticized lately for not doing enough to crack down on militants in the border region next to Iraq. Unfortunately, he faces a conundrum. While Pakistan's officers are more secular and liberal and want to crack down on terrorists, many of the rank and file in the Pakistan military are Islamic fundamentalists and would not be happy to attack other Muslims, however terrorist-minded. So Musharraf faces the danger of mass revolt and desertion in the lower ranks if he orders a crackdown on terrorists in the border regions.

—Source: *TIME Magazine*

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Explosion Rips Through Manhattan

A large explosion rocked Manhattan sending muddy debris flying through the air, causing office workers to stream out of their skyscrapers, shooting smoke and steam above the Chrysler building, and leaving a huge crater in the street. One person was killed and thirty wounded in the blast. Many people nearly got trampled in the ensuing rush. A steam pipe running under the street had ruptured and 200-degree steam exploded out, leaving several with severe burns. Steam and dirt geysered from the gaping hole for hours afterwards. The repairs will entail hundreds of millions of lost revenue..

—Sources: *WNBC* and *TIME Magazine*

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Iran Supplying Arms to Iraqi Terrorists

The U.S. discovered a field of Iranian-made missiles in Iraq pointed at U.S. Military bases. Also, Iraqi terrorists have used high-tech explosively formed penetrators (supplied by Iran) against U.S. troops, killing two American soldiers in Baghdad. Iran denied the charge.

—Source: *Jerusalem Post*

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Palestinian Peace?

Few people will believe in Israeli-Palestinian peace until they see it, but a new attempt has been made. Many members of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade (linked to Fatah, Mahmoud Abbas' faction) have laid down their weapons and committed to peace in exchange for amnesty. Many more members are lined up to do the same. "Everything must come to an end," said Mahdi Maraka, an Aqsa Brigades leader. "There are two tracks, the political and the military. Now is the time for the political stage."

Many of the militants are saying that the seven-year intifada hasn't achieved anything, and all militants interviewed said they want to give Mahmoud Abbas a chance to negotiate an independent Palestinian state.

Khalil Abayat, an Aqsa member said, "Enough. I'm exhausted. I just want to rest."

Jesus said, "Come to me . . . and I will give you rest." May Brother Andrew's vision for Israelis and Palestinians coming together in peace at the foot of the cross come true!

—Source: *International Herald Tribune*

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Answer to Prayer in Thailand

Several students of the Institute for Global Opportunities were sitting beside a Buddhist temple praying. They prayed that Buddhism would crumble and that people would come to Christ. They prayed that Buddhist statues would fall down like Dagon. The very next day an ancient Buddhist temple in Northern Thailand collapsed. *Pattaya Daily News* writes, "The top of the historic Chomkitti chedi, containing the sacred relics of the Lord Buddha, collapsed" in a 5.7 magnitude earthquake.

—Source: *Personal Knowledge* and *Pattaya Daily News*

*Please send any tips, stories, opinions, suggestions, or corrections to: **hansmast@hansmast.com***

Trusting in Deep Distress

by Dr. Roy B. Zuck

Habakkuk's Journey from Worry to Worship

Sometimes we get impatient with God. Frustrated, we wonder why He doesn't do something about evil in the world. Or the problems in our families. Or the illnesses in our bodies. Through Habakkuk, an Old Testament prophet, we can learn to wade through the waters of worry to worship.

When We Wait

Most prophets addressed the people about God, but Habakkuk spoke to God about the people. He couldn't understand why God allowed injustice in His country to continue unpunished. Confused by His seeming silence, Habakkuk asked God why He tolerated such evil (Habakkuk 1:3).

When God responded that He would use the Babylonians to conquer Judah (vv. 5-11), Habakkuk grew even more confused. How could God use a nation more wicked than his own to punish them? That was not the answer Habakkuk wanted. At first he had no answer; then he had what he considered the wrong answer. Having asked, Is God unconcerned? Habakkuk then had to ask, Is God unfair?

When We Worry

How should we react when God gives us an answer we think isn't right? Complain? Argue? Reject Him? Habakkuk set the example for us. He said, "I will look to see what he will say to me" (2:1). What a wise move! He "shut up" and waited to see what God said. He was overwhelmed, but not overcome, and he took his problem to the Lord and left it there. Then he waited like a watchman in a watchtower for God's response.

The Lord, in His remarkable reply, told this minor prophet with a major problem that He would handle the situation—and without delay (v. 3). Sometimes our impatience makes us think God doesn't care. But

like Habakkuk, we need to learn that God does care and that He is always on time.

When God Answers

One of the first things God told Habakkuk is that He would deal with the Babylonians because of their pride. In their arrogance they were "not upright." They trusted in themselves, not God. Their puffed-up hearts stood in stunning contrast to the righteous, who live by faith (v. 4). This verse, easily overlooked in this seldom-read Old Testament book, is so significant that the last sentence is quoted three times in the New Testament—in Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; and Hebrews 10:38.

What a great reminder to Habakkuk—and us—that we must trust the Lord even when we can't understand everything He does. Those who are righteous, that is, redeemed, can enjoy God's rich blessing of security and protection. On the other hand, the ungodly Babylonians faced God's judgment.

Confused by God's seeming silence, Habakkuk was a question-mark prophet.

Their pride led them to drunkenness and greed. Yet the nations they conquered would rise up and pronounce "woe" on them. Five times the word *woe* occurs in Chapter 2 in describing the doom Babylon would face.

- Guilty of extortion, they in turn would be plundered (vv. 6-8).
- Guilty of injustice in seeking to elevate themselves, they would "forfeit" their own lives (vv. 9-11).
- Guilty of bloodshed and crime, they would gain nothing from their efforts (vv. 12-14).
- Guilty of getting others drunk so they could

gaze on naked bodies, they would in turn be exposed and filled with shame (vv. 15-17).

- Guilty of worshipping idols, they would find that idols are lifeless and useless and that only the sovereign God is alive and worthy of worship (vv. 18-20).

God's point in these verses is clear: "You may not like my answer, but I'm in control and I'll take care of the problem. I'm not indifferent to sin. Yes, I'll use the Babylonians to punish Judah, but I'll also take care of the Babylonians. Evil ultimately will not triumph over good." What comfort that truth is today as it was then!

When We Worship

How then should we respond to this reminder of God's sovereignty? By silent worship. "The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him" (v. 20). Since God is in control, we need not worry. Instead of arguing with God, we should stand in awe and worship Him in humble silence.

After God explained to Habakkuk that He would handle the prophet's situation, the tone of the book shifts from perplexity to praise. In Chapter 1 Habakkuk had asked, "God, how long?" In Chapter 3 he responded, "God, how great!" Recalling what God had done in the past ("I stand in awe of your deeds, O Lord"), the prophet asked God to show His great power again and in doing so to be merciful to His people (3:2). God's power and glory had been evident in Israel's wilderness wanderings (vv. 3-7), in the crossing of the Jordan River (vv. 8-10), in the defeat of the Gibeonites by having the sun stand still (v. 11), and in defeating many of Israel's enemies (vv. 12-15).

Not surprisingly, Habakkuk was affected physically, emotionally, and spiritually by this remarkable display of God's invincible deeds. "I heard and my heart pounded, my lips quivered at the sound; decay crept into my bones, and my legs trembled" (v. 16).

We, too, ought to tremble in God's presence. Habakkuk had questioned the Lord; now he quivered before Him. And this led him to respond with confidence that the Lord would carry out His plans in His time.

The prophet affirmed, "I will wait patiently" (v. 16). And as a result he was full of joy, for he said, "I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Saviour" (v. 18). Basic fruits (figs, grapes, olives), might not be available, basic crops (wheat and barley) might fail, and basic flocks (sheep and cattle) might die. Yet Habakkuk would rejoice in God, who was his strength (vv. 17-19).

The prophet's hunger for an answer from God was satisfied because he saw the problem from God's perspective.

What made the difference between Habakkuk's complaint in 1:2, "How long, O Lord?" and his confidence in 3:19, "The sovereign Lord is my strength"? The prophet's hunger for an answer from God was satisfied because he saw the problem from God's perspective. He recognized that God is in control. The circumstances didn't change, but Habakkuk did. What began as a sob ended in a song. What started as a concern shifted to confidence. He moved from worry to worship, from anxiety to adoration, from frustration to fulfillment.

In the eighteenth century William Cowper overcame depression as he reflected on Habakkuk 3:17-19. He wrote these words of consolation:

*Though vine nor fig tree neither
Their wonted fruit should bear,
Though all the field should wither,
Nor flocks nor herds be there;
Yet, God the same abiding,
His praise shall tune my voice;
For while in Him confiding,
I cannot but rejoice.*

Does God seem to delay His answers to your prayers? Or to give an answer you don't want? When impatience overtakes you, turn to Him in faith and straighten your bent-over question mark into an upright exclamation mark. ■

—Reprinted with permission from *Kindred Spirit*, Summer 2007.

The Light of the World

by Henry M. Morris

One of the most amazing statements ever made was the assertion of Jesus Christ in the temple in Jerusalem one early morning long ago, speaking to a group of bigoted religionists who were seeking an excuse to condemn Him. This claim should immediately have branded Him as either a raving lunatic or a conniving charlatan—or—(could it conceivably be true?) as the very Son of God Himself!

The Amazing Claim

Here is what He said: *“I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life”* (John 8:12).

A listener may have thought, “But, Sir, it is the mighty sun that illumines the world, not some wandering preacher from Galilee. The sun moving high in the sky provides light so that men do not have to walk around in the dark, so how can you claim to be the sun? The sun does, indeed, make life possible, with its radiant energy causing plants to grow and rivers to flow; it can certainly be said to be *‘the light of life.’* But how can *you*, of all creatures, claim to give life?”

Oh, His followers might reply, “He was just speaking metaphorically. He is the *spiritual* light, giving *spiritual* life, conquering *spiritual* darkness, not really claiming to produce sunlight.”

But that’s just as bad, isn’t it? This country preacher with no formal education and only a motley group of deluded followers! Yet here He is professing to provide the spiritual, as well as moral and intellectual guidance for the whole wide world, when neither He nor His disciples have ever even

traveled beyond the borders of Israel! How could this Jesus, from Nazareth, possibly expect anyone to believe *that*?

The Astounding Fulfillment

Yet, for the past two thousand years there have indeed been millions of people from all over this whole wide world who have believed just that, and whose lives have been transformed because of it. Further, not only individual men and women have been transformed, but whole societies and cultures. Great educational institutions have been established in His name, as well as hospitals and charities of all kinds, not to mention multiplied thousands of churches and helpful ministries in great variety. Nations have been established to serve Him; even the worldwide evil of slavery has been almost abolished.

Most of the founding fathers of science were sincere followers of Jesus, as well as the greatest medical researchers of the past. The Lord Jesus Christ, even though despised by so many of His contemporaries that He was judicially executed in a uniquely cruel manner by their leaders, has indeed been the Light of the world ever since, not only spiritually, but also intellectually and morally. Those who choose to follow Him have not walked in darkness but gladly testify that they have found the Light of life, just as He promised.

But that is not all, by any means! By overcoming death and rising from His tomb in a glorified physical body (which many would evaluate as the best-proved fact in history), He proved Himself to be (as He also claimed) the omnipotent Son of God, equal with the heavenly Father—the very Word of God made flesh!

As His early disciples soon began to proclaim on His authority, it was also He who

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had actually created all things. He was not the sun (the physical light of the world), but He is greater than the sun, for He created the sun! *“By him were all things created, that are in heaven . . .”* (Colossians 1:16). *“All things were made by him”* (John 1:3). It was obvious that God, in the beginning, created heaven and earth, but He *“created all things by Jesus Christ”* (Ephesians 3:9).

Not only was the physical light of the world—the sun—created by Christ, but it is He who has kept it shining ever since. It is the eternal Son of God—*“whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting”* (Micah 5:2). *“Who being the brightness of [God’s] glory, and the express image of his person”* who is still *“upholding all things by the word of his power”* (Hebrews 1:3). Scientists are still somewhat uncertain as to what keeps the sun shining, though most of them promote the theory of thermonuclear fusion processes in its deep interior. There are unsolved difficulties even with this explanation, however, and no one really *knows*.

The Power of Light

We do know, however, if we believe the Bible, that Jesus Christ the Creator is also the Conserver. He upholds everything by His own power! *“By him all things consist”* (Colossians 1:17). Not only our sun, in fact, but all the suns of the cosmos! Indeed He is the light—not only of our little world, but of the entire physical universe! In the promised future new earth, in fact, with its magnificent holy city, we are told that the city will not even need the sun for its light, *“for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof”* (Revelation 21:23).

Note, incidentally, the anticipatory intimation in such verses of the modern scientific concept of the equivalence of mass and energy. *Things* are held together by *power*. And that power is nothing less than the power of Christ Himself. In Him, all things “consist” (literally “are sustained” or “hold together”). Our gentle, loving Saviour is the mighty Creator of all things who is now

upholding all things and someday will restore all things to their primeval perfection.

As far as physical life is concerned, He also claimed that those who follow Him not only would no longer *“walk in darkness”* but also would possess *“the light of life.”*

Modern physical science (at least classical physics) was centered around the electro-magnetic spectrum, which included all the varieties of force and energy in nature—light, heat, sound, electricity, magnetism, chemical energy, etc.—everything except gravity and nuclear energy. Light, of course, in a sense covers the whole spectrum, from long-wave-length infrared to short-wave ultra-violet radiation, with the visible light spectrum occupying the key center, as it were.

In a significant sense, light energy is thus the most basic energy of all, and it is not surprising that the first words recorded by the living Word of God were: *“Let there be light”* (Genesis 1:3). There were no “lights” as such at that point, however, until He said: *“Let there be lights”* (Genesis 1:14). Then, instantaneously appeared in the sky the two great lights for the earth and *“the stars also”* (Genesis 1:16) scattered throughout the vast cosmos.

And all of these lights—and the light which they generated and sent forth to be *“for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years”* (Genesis 1:14)—would also serve life itself through the many marvelous mechanisms it would energize for Earth’s coming inhabitants (photosynthesis, etc.).

Thus it is that: *“In him [that is, the Word of God] was life; and the life was the light of men”* (John 1:4). It then follows also that Christ is *“the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world”* (John 1:9).

And that is true in both the physical sense and spiritual sense. Physically, *“in him we live, and move, and have our being”* so that He is *“not far from every one of us”* (Acts 17:28, 27). It should be painfully sobering for even those who refuse to believe on Him to realize suddenly (as they

must, someday) that their very existence—even the cellular structure of their bodies—depends on His moment-by-moment maintenance. If He just withdrew His power for an instant we would collapse into nothingness.

Spiritually, we are likewise assured that He enlightens “every man that cometh into the world” (John 1:9). That is, even those born in some heathen home and those who may spend all their lives without ever hearing of Christ, have been given some spiritual light (in nature, in conscience, in history, etc.) so that if they respond positively to the light they have, will then somehow be given more and more light, eventually enough to be saved. The classic Biblical example is the Roman Cornelius, to whom God eventually sent Peter with the full message of salvation through Christ. As Peter said at that time: “God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him” (Acts 10:34, 35).

The warning, however, is that those who do not respond to whatever light they have are “without excuse” and thus will “die in [their] sins” (Romans 1:20; John 8:24), because they do not believe on Christ. And the tragedy is that “light is come into the

world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil” (John 3:19). Nevertheless, “the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him” (2 Chronicles 16:9). After all, God does desire everyone “to be saved” (1 Timothy 2:4), and to “turn them from darkness to light” (Acts 26:18), but they will not come.

Passing Heaven’s Torch

Jesus also said to His disciples (including us!): “Ye are the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14), obviously here referring just to spiritual light. Thus, since He is no longer here in the flesh, His enlightening ministry is to be mediated through us, passing His torch, as it were, to us. “As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you” (John 20:21).

Our mission and challenge, therefore—as those who know the Lord Jesus as both Creator and Saviour, is to “shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life” (Philippians 2:15, 16). “For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). ■

—Reprinted with permission from *Back to Genesis*, September 2002.

Evaluating Religious Reconciliation Efforts

by Glenn E. Auker

The theme of reconciliation among Anabaptists, Protestants, and Catholics has recently gained considerable attention among some Anabaptist groups. This emphasis reflects the broader ecumenical movement of the end times. It is more than a call to forgive the persecution of the past; it includes a call to minimize differences and enter into fellowship relationships, reversing the break that took place more than 475 years ago. In both Europe and North America, reconciliation conferences involving Anabaptist descendants have

resulted in participants exchanging confessions of error and expressions of forgiveness. These conferences have culminated in shared Communion, feet washing, and even symbolic baptism as seals of forgiveness and reconciliation.

How should we view these religious reconciliation efforts? What should be our response?

The call to reunification is not new. During the Reformation, Protestant state churches would have welcomed the Anabaptists

(continued on page 21)

Satisfied

by William Lister Krewson

Jesus, master storyteller, painted two portraits of humanity's relation to God. He described two prayers offered in God's temple. The first was from a Pharisee whose prayer consisted of a rehearsal of his religious deeds: "I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector" (Luke 18:11, NIV). The Pharisee's faith rested on his own worthiness, contrasted with the nearby tax collector, whose reputation sank to that of society's criminals. The tax collector worked for the occupying Roman Empire's revenue department. Most considered him to be the scum of the earth, representing everything that would cause his fellow Jews to despise him. Apparently, he had come to share the same opinion of himself as others did, since he came to the temple and prayed, "God, have mercy on me, a sinner" (Luke 18:13, NIV).

The tax collector's prayer is simple but profound. The verb that he used to implore God for mercy (*hilaskomai*) is related to the word for an important article in the temple. Within the Holy of Holies stood the Ark of the Covenant, a large wooden chest covered in gold. The Ark served as God's throne (2 Samuel 6:2). Inside the Ark were kept the two tablets of the Law (Deuteronomy 10:5). The imagery is plain—the God who sits on His throne rules according to His holy law. There was yet another vital part of the Ark—the cover. It was a solid gold lid called the "atonement cover" or "mercy

seat" (Exodus 25:17; Hebrews 9:5), called the "*hilasterion*" in the Greek Old Testament (the Septuagint) and the New Testament. This was the place where blood was applied on the Day of Atonement causing God to show His mercy in forgiving the people (Leviticus 16:14, 15). The wrath of a holy God whose holy law must not be broken could be satisfied only one way—through blood. The cover became the place of mercy, graphically located between God and His law. In that place, God's wrath found satisfaction.

***"All who desperately
come to God for mercy
find it lavishly
poured out through
Christ Jesus . . ."***

The tax collector pleaded for mercy (*hilaskomai*) which could only come from the mercy seat (*hilasterion*).

When Jesus shed His blood as the supreme sacrifice, His death propitiated (satisfied) God's wrath and allowed His mercy to flow. Jesus is the one "whom God put forward as a propitiation [*hilasterion*] by his blood, to be received by faith" (Romans 3:25, ESV). *Propitiation* refers to the satisfaction of God's anger. In Old Testament days, God was propitiated at the mercy seat of the temple. Since the death of Jesus, our Saviour is God's new mercy seat. He is "a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation [*hilaskomai*] for the sins of the people" (Hebrews 2:17, NAS). All who desperately come to God for mercy find it lavishly poured out through Christ Jesus who is "the propitiation [*hilasmos*] for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world" (1 John 2:2, NAS). Our hearts find satisfaction in Jesus Christ, God's new mercy seat. ■

—Reprinted with permission from *PBU Today*, Summer 2007.

Bill Krewson, S. T. M., M. Phil., is the Director of The Friends of Israel Institute of Jewish Studies, PBU.



Song of the Month

Douglas A. Byler, Music Editor

The primary purpose of this column is to give congregations fresh music to add to their worship, and/or insights into the origin and meaning of old hymns that have been around for centuries. It will (hopefully) focus primarily on original Mennonite hymns, although other hymns will be incorporated from time to time as well. We request your input for this column, particularly in the form of lyrics to be set to music and used for the column; but also if you know of a hymn that you would like to see published here with an explanation of its background. We specifically ask that if you know of composers who are qualified and willing to compose for this column, let us know about them. Please send your submissions to: Douglas A. Byler, Sword and Trumpet, Box 575, Harrisonburg, VA 22803.



The Risen Lord Is Here

by Frank/Irvine

Lyrics:

The lyrics for this hymn were contributed as a response to the request for original compositions. Richard Frank currently lives in Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania, and he has a long history of ministry in that area. For twenty-five years, Mr. Frank served as the pastor of the Elizabethtown Mennonite Church. After his time as a pastor, he served as part-time chaplain at the Mennonite Home in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Since 1992, he has been involved part-time with the Sunday School Meditations Radio Broadcast.

The words of this song were penned in 1976, as Mr. Frank was preparing for an Easter sermon from Luke 24. He soon saw that in addition to being complementary to the sermon, his poem could be sung with the tune "Crimond" (Irvine). Since then, the hymn has been used a few times, but has never been widely circulated.

Although the title refers to the resurrection, the main thrust of the hymn is intended to be invitational and emphasizes the loving and compas-

sionate aspects of our Risen Lord. The first verse speaks of His power to take away our sins, and the second tells of the eternal life that we can expect if we allow Him to cleanse us. The third verse is an invitation to come to Jesus and experience His power to change and lead us in meaningful lives of service. As the last phrase points out, there is no need to fear if we allow our lives to come under the control of our Risen Lord.

Music:

Since this is an original Anabaptist text, I thought it would be ideal to have original Anabaptist music to go along with it. I received Mr. Frank's consent to compose a musical setting specifically for this hymn, but was unable to come up with anything that fitted better than the tune he had chosen, "Crimond." The restful confidence of the tune fits very well with this text, and the fact that the music is familiar and accessible will help to get the hymn circulated more widely. ■

The Risen Lord Is Here

RICHARD H. FRANK

JESSIE S. IRVINE, 1872

1. The ris - en Lord is here to bless, And
2. Christ speaks in ten - der tones of love, He'll
3. O - pen your heart to His a - bode, He'll

6

give our souls sweet rest; Be - lieve, o - bey, He'll
calls us by our name; Pre - pares us for our
make your heart his throne; He'll lead you in His

11

en - ter in And cleanse our hearts from sin.
home a - bove That we with Him might reign.
ser - vice here And you need nev - er fear.

The musical score is written in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are provided below the notes.

EVALUATING RELIGIOUS RECONCILIATION EFFORTS . . . cont'd.

back into their fellowship, even pleading that the Anabaptists join them in their desperate struggle for survival against Catholicism. The Catholics themselves offered compromises regarding Communion to win the Hutterites back to their church. In the 1700s, appeals to unite all German Protestant groups in Pennsylvania in fellowship relations included overtures to the Mennonites. Endeavors were also made to align Mennonites with the Protestant Great Awakening.

Mennonites that remained faithful to the Word over the centuries have shared fellowship only with those groups adhering to the doctrines of believers' baptism, separation, and nonresistance. We, too, must continue

drawing fellowship lines based on these doctrinal issues and their practical applications.

The differences are not mere misunderstandings that need further discussion and clarification. The Anabaptists were faithful to share the truths of the Word with their persecutors. Numerous debates in Zurich and Bern between the Anabaptists and Protestants clarified Bible principles that were at stake. Lengthy discussions between Catholic priests and Anabaptist prisoners clearly delineated the divide between the Anabaptists' commitment to simple obedience to the Bible and a church established largely on ritual and greatly tainted with pagan influence. Soon

(continued on page 37)



Sermon of the Month



Each month we will feature a Biblical sermon in this column. We would like to emphasize expository preaching and ask our readers to submit good expository sermons for consideration. Please send typewritten copies by "snail mail" or email to: Editor, Sword and Trumpet, Box 575, Harrisonburg, VA 22803; swandtrump@verizon.net.

How to Respond to Tragic Loss

by Joshua Hess

"Our hope is in that day when Christ returns and death is vanquished once and for all."

It was the morning of July 10. There was nothing unusual about that morning until the phone rang and my mom told me that a few hours earlier, my dad, Gordon Hess, had passed away. Suddenly, my world was turned upside down.

Tragic losses. They may come suddenly or gradually, but they all hurt. As believers in Christ, how should we respond when we are stung by tragic loss in this fallen world? To answer this question, we will look at the story of Naomi in Ruth 1:19-22.

First, we observe in verse 19 that tragedy creates an awkward environment for expressing grief. You can imagine the awkwardness for Naomi and Ruth as the women came out to see them. People have always been drawn to the "fascination" of a tragedy. And so, too often, when people grieve, others gawk. In times of tragic loss, that is frequently the context in which we will find ourselves, and we will be tempted to suppress our grief.

Second, we see in verses 20, 21 that in times of tragic loss, we grieve because of

our loss. Naomi grieved the loss of what she held so dear. And that's our response too. As well it should be. Losing someone you love is like losing part of yourself. However, the pain is part of the healing process and is evidence that you truly loved the person you lost.

As Christians, we get this strange idea that death is good. While we can draw comfort from the fact that our loved one is with the Lord, we must not forget that death is bad. It is a curse that came from the Fall. Our hope as Christians is not death. Our hope is in that day when Christ returns and death is vanquished once and for all. So don't be ashamed to grieve in times of loss.

Third, in verse 22, the author places qualifications on Naomi's despair. First, Naomi had Ruth with her. Later we read how the Lord used Ruth to bless Naomi. So, too, we must not isolate ourselves in our grief, but rather, we must look for God's agents of grace.

Next, we notice that Naomi returned during the barley harvest. Later we read how the "fortuitous" timing of her return

PAGE 22

SWORD AND TRUMPET

is the beginning of the process in which God created a “new” normal for her. If she will wait on God’s providence, she will find that this “new” normal is indeed good. We are wise to remember the same.

Finally, we can surmise that Naomi’s despair arose from a philosophy that too many of us live by every day. We measure God’s faithfulness by our circumstances. We must not do this, though, because God is always faithful.

Presently, I’m still grieving the loss of

my dad. However, I am also waiting for God as He creates a “new” normal in my life. But more than that, I’m waiting for a time when Christ returns and this fallen world is fallen no more. In times of tragic loss, grieve well, but not without hope, for although we may not understand His ways, the God we serve is good. ■

—Reprinted with permission from *Veritas*, July 2007 publication of Dallas Theological Seminary



From Observations

by David L. Miller

As Anabaptist Christians who subscribe to nonresistance, it is important to remember that nonresistance is not negative, but positive; not passive, but active. To love our enemies and overcome evil with good is not a typical human response.

The following incident is a powerful illustration of this principle. While many older readers have heard this before, I am concerned that the memory is preserved for the rising generation.

The scene is in Ephrata, PA, during the Revolutionary War. The main characters in these events were Peter Miller, a Christian who had just translated the *Martyrs Mirror* from Holland Dutch to German, and Michael Whitman, who operated a tavern.

The Christian group of which Peter was a part (Ephrata Cloisters) brought help to wounded soldiers. In 1777, they opened their cloister to more than 500 soldiers. Some 300 were nursed back to health. Whitman’s sympathies were more with the British than with the “rebels.” One day when Whitman was standing outside his tavern awaiting the arrival of a stagecoach he saw Peter Miller with a wheelbarrow load of paper coming past where he was standing. Whitman felt such antagonism

toward Miller that he spit in his face. Miller continued on his journey thanking the Lord that he had been spared physical injury.

Eventually Whitman became more vocal in his British leanings. Two spies frequented the tavern and heard firsthand his Tory leanings. He was arrested for his disloyalty and sentenced to death by hanging.

When word reached Ephrata, Peter Miller set out on foot some 60-70 miles to Philadelphia to intercede for Whitman’s life. When Miller had presented his plea, General George Washington told Miller, “I will not spare your friend’s life. He is a traitor.” Miller replied that this was not his friend. He then related the spitting incident.

The general was astonished. “You walked more than 60 miles through snow to save the life of a person who did that to you. That puts things in a different light. I will grant Michael Whitman’s pardon.”

Miller was still 15 miles from West Chester where Whitman was to be executed. He arrived just in time with the pardon to save Whitman from death. The two men walked back to Ephrata together. ■

—Reprinted with permission from *Calvary Messenger*, June 2007



Counseling From the Word

Some Things ARE Certain

by James Rudy Gray

The postmodern philosophy embraces it and the emergent church seems to endorse it: Nothing is certain except uncertainty. While that might have a ring of novelty and controversy to it, it does not help people to live good and godly lives. Truth cannot be avoided or compromised if people are to live in health.

The times we live in are confusing and often conflicting. Statistics and studies of various sorts can be quoted to supposedly prove or disprove different theories. It seems that so much of our culture reflects more contradiction than certainty. We have become more influenced than we imagine by postmodern thought.

Gary Foster Consulting has compiled some interesting data. For example, today only 7 percent of adults believe the local church is central to one's faith development. However, adult church attendance in the United States has risen from a low of 37 percent in 1996 to 47 percent in 2006. Involvement in small group Bible study or prayer groups has also reached a new high of 23 percent. I am not sure everything these statistics imply is correct, but I am confident that we are engaging more and more people in our churches who are not grounded in Scripture. Counseling in the average church today must employ a solid exposition of Scripture in therapeutic process. Otherwise, we will leave our counselees with just another option instead of the truth.

MySpace.com has more than 57 million users and is growing at about 160,000 users per day. It seems that constant exposure to media may be harmful to children and yet the great majority of MySpace users are children and teens. New studies link TV and video games to many problems including obesity, sexual activity, consumerism, and antisocial behavior. The average Christian spends more time watching TV each evening than Bible reading in a week. Again, as we encounter more and more people in Christian counseling, we will be dealing with more and more Biblical illiteracy. Christian counseling cannot duck the issue—we must be teaching the Word of God as we counsel.

Ninety-two percent of Christians and 74 percent of non-Christians believe religious beliefs actually change the way you live. Thirty-six percent of Christians and 47 percent of non-Christians are "still trying to figure out the purpose of life." That statistic is particularly interesting to me because I am convinced that God has given Christians just one overarching general purpose. That single purpose can be applied in a multitude of ways. It is simply: Glorify God. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 10:31, "*Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*" Having a base purpose in life can give more direction to struggling souls than we ever achieve through our feeble efforts without the truth of God.

PAGE 24

SWORD AND TRUMPET

There are more than 4 million pornography Web sites, with more than 68 million users daily. The average age of first exposure to porn is 11. Twelve to 17-year-olds are the biggest Internet porn consumers. Eighty percent of 15- to 17-year-olds have had multiple exposures to hard-core porn, while 90 percent of 8- to 16-year-olds have viewed online porn.

How can we help sexual addicts and those addicted to lust because of pornography? We can provide good counseling and empathetic listening, but we must be founded in truth as we minister to those trapped in sinful behavior because of wrong choices and bad thinking. Understanding how persons feel is important. Discovering how their background and experiences possibly contribute to their behavior is significant and helpful. However, the most powerful thing we can do is direct them to the truth in loving and caring ways. It is the truth, Jesus said, that will set us free.

This is the problem: We are living in a time where words, doctrines, and interpretations of Scripture are not simply being refined or explained better. We are living in an age where words, doctrines, and interpretations of Scripture are being redefined. Adultery is not adultery, lying is not lying, etc. The end result of this kind of thinking and behaving is insecurity. Like ancient Israel, people resort to doing what is right in their own eyes. If there is right or wrong, who knows? It is at this point, Christian counselors can have such a positive and godly ministry. There is a certain moral standard given in the Bible. People must be counseled to walk in the truth and turn from behavior and thought that disobeys, rejects, or dishonors God's truth.

Some things are certain. Scripture is certain. We are called to counsel from a base of certainty to a culture in which certainty is an increasingly rare concept. ■

—Reprinted with permission from *Pulpit Helps*, August 2007.

Clinics Use Tissue From Babies Killed in Abortions for Cosmetic Injections

Women from around the world are traveling to clinics in various locations that are now offering face-lifts and cosmetic surgery using tissue from babies who have been killed by abortions. . . .

Women like Susan Barrington, a 52-year-old housewife from England, are heading to places such as Barbados, the Dominican Republic, Moscow, and Rotterdam to obtain the treatments.

She has been given the final go-ahead from a local clinic to travel abroad for the treatment that promises to make her look ten years younger, and doesn't mind that lives have been sacrificed to enhance her beauty.

To produce the treatments, clinics are using tissue from babies killed in abortions from 6 to 12 weeks into pregnancy and stem cells obtained from destroying human embryos to inject into a client's face. The fetal cells then begin a supposed rejuvenation process that makes the skin look younger.

To obtain the cells, women in underdeveloped nations were paid up to \$200 to carry a baby up to the optimum 8- to 12-week period when the fetuses are "harvested" for their stem cells which are then sold to exclusive cosmetic clinics. . . .

UK stem cell researcher Colin Blake-more told the *London Daily Mail* newspaper that the therapies are "highly experimental" and risk damaging the reputation of legitimate stem cell researchers.

He also complained that these clinics were located in tourist destinations and unregulated by any international body.

"And if anything goes wrong afterwards, it is hushed up to prevent damage to the business," he told the newspaper. ■

—*lifeneews.com*; reprinted with permission from *The Sword of the Lord*

The Cost of Discipleship

by Randy Alcorn

Peacemaking always requires a certain amount of self-denial. However, as Christ's disciples, self-denial is ultimately in our best interest.

"And He was saying to them all, 'If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself?'" (Luke 9:23, 24).

This is arguably the single greatest and hardest passage on self-denial in all of Scripture. We are told we should lose our lives for Christ's sake. We are told we must deny ourselves. If losing and denial aren't enough, we're to carry a cross, the most dreaded instrument of execution there is. Carrying a cross is walking the path not only to death, but excruciating death. The cross is suggestive of the very sacrifices of Jesus Himself. In terms of costliness, how much more dreadful a picture could be painted?

And to top it off, we are to do this cross-carrying not just once, at some triumphant point of martyrdom, after which the terrible job will be done. Rather, we are to carry this cross daily—every day of our lives!

This seems impossible. (Yet it would be cruel for God to command us to do what is impossible, so clearly He offers the power and means to do whatever He commands.) It also sounds emphatically undesirable. Who but a masochist would want to do this? Who could get up in the morning looking forward to doing it, or go to bed at night looking back with

pleasure at having done it?

Yet if we think this way, we are letting the words of self-sacrifice and self-denial—which are real, but only part of a larger picture—eclipse the central meaning of the text. Take a closer look.

"If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me." Self-denial and cross-bearing is a means to, or part of, coming after Jesus. But what does Jesus offer those who come to Him, and follow after Him?

Consider Matthew 10:28-30: "Come to me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart. You shall find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

So, once we actually follow Jesus, in this mode of self-denial, what do we find? Rest for our souls, not weariness. An easy yoke, not a hard one. And a light burden, not a heavy one. In other words, all this apparently heavy-duty self-denial is done with the promise of finding rest, ease, and lightness. The very cross we bear daily is to be borne

with rest, ease, and lightness. As we abide in Jesus, as we enjoy His fellowship, as we find our joy in Him, we are empowered and fulfilled. It is not only God's glory that comes out ahead in this—we also come out ahead.

If it seems that I am imposing Matthew 10 on Luke 9 to lighten it, consider just what Luke 9 itself says in the next verse: "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it."

Here the end is in full view: our long-term goal should not be to lose our lives, but to save them. Losing our lives now, momentarily, is the divinely prescribed way to ultimately save them.

At first this sounds contradictory to the passage. But look at it closely. Jesus is appealing to our desire to save our lives, and our desire to not lose them. He points out that the means to save your life permanently (which we want to do) is to lose it temporarily by acting as Christ's disciple rather than doing what we may feel like. The way to lose your life permanently (which we don't want to do) is to save it temporarily by doing what we feel like, while failing to act as Christ's disciple.

In other words, this passage that seems saturated by the abandonment of self-interest is in fact an appeal to our true self-interest. It is saying "abandon what looks to be in your short-term self-interest and embrace what is in fact in your long-term self-interest." Apparent self-interest is not true self-interest. Things are not as they appear.

The word *apparent* is key. When we act in self-preservation rather than obeying Christ's command to love our neighbors, to speak His name before men, to abide in Him and His Word, do we actually bring to ourselves lasting

satisfaction? Yes, there are the "passing pleasures of sin" (Hebrews 11). Yes, there are the passing costs of righteousness (1 Peter 4). But long-term satisfaction eludes us, for it can never be found in acts (or failures to act) of non-discipleship.

God has built us in such a way that He is the greatest pleasure and desire of our heart. Therefore, any other pleasures found apart from Him, can only satisfy us in very brief and shallow ways (followed by guilt and numbness and deeper dissatisfaction). But every command of Scripture to rejoice in following Christ, even in the midst of sacrifice, affirms that obedience is not only in our eternal self-interest, but even our temporal self-interest. (The joy of Chinese believers in prison, in contrast to the angry misery of their jailers, is a case in point.)

What this passage offers us is not loss instead of gain, but gain instead of loss. It is not death instead of life, but life instead of death. We fail to see it because of the weight of cross-carrying and self-denial, which seem antithetical to gain and life. But in verse 25 Jesus asks, "For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself?"

Note that Jesus directly appeals to our human desire for profit. He wants us to want gain, and He wants us not to want loss. In fact He has created us, designed us to want gain, not loss. He appeals here to the very way He has made us.

Jim Elliot's words make this precise point, though they—just like Christ's words—are typically misunderstood: "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."

Elliot—and the four other men who died in the jungle—sacrificed, carried their cross, denied themselves, and lost

This passage that seems saturated by the abandonment of self-interest is in fact an appeal to our true self-interest.

their lives (figuratively and literally). But why?

Read it again: “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.”

This statement is all about gain. Jim Elliot was a profit-seeker. The men who died on that beach did what they chose to do and what they wanted to do. Even in the short run, they would have been miserable and unfulfilled not doing it. And in addition to that, they would have forfeited incalculable gain. The cost of their non-discipleship would have been far greater than the cost of their discipleship. It would have taken a terrible toll on their lives. They would have been fools not to follow Jesus, and they didn’t want to be fools. Neither should we.

We mistakenly associate Elliot’s famous statement, just as we do Christ’s, with self-sacrificial altruism, stripped of any thought of self-interest or gain. But in fact, gain was the whole point of his statement. Jim Elliott was an excellent wrestler at Wheaton. He knew about winning and losing. He didn’t want to lose. He wanted to win. And he was right to want gain rather than loss! The difference between him and so many Christians is not that he didn’t want gain—all of us want gain—it was that he realized what gain would last and what gain wouldn’t last, and he chose the one that would last!

For Jim Elliot, as for all of us, discipleship wasn’t just the right choice. It was the smart choice. It was the choice that one would be a fool not to make.

The alternative to following Christ wholeheartedly and abiding in Him and obeying Him even when it’s uncomfortable is to not follow Him, not abide in Him, and not obey Him. There is no

third alternative. In not doing these things, we will not only forfeit joy and fulfillment, we will heap upon ourselves (and our families) incalculable negative consequences.

Taking up our cross to follow Christ is truly in our best interest. Losing our lives in obedience to Christ will result in finding our lives. This is smart—i.e., always in our ultimate, and often even in our immediate, self-interest.

Trying to find ourselves by disobeying God will mean losing our lives. This is therefore stupid—i.e., always in our ultimate and, often even in our immediate, self-destruction.

So the cost of discipleship is significant. But paying that cost purchases something; it purchases life, gain, profit, reward, rest, and fulfillment. By not paying the cost of discipleship—that is, by paying the cost of non-discipleship—we purchase death, loss, anxiety, and lack of fulfillment.

Which is the better deal? What is to God’s glory is also to our good.

What is right is also smart. What is wrong is also stupid.

So when we are tempted, let’s be motivated not only by our love for God and our desire to see God glorified. (Lofty as those are, sometimes they seem insufficient to motivate us.) Let’s also be motivated by our desire for life rather than death, and gain rather than loss. Let’s be motivated by our desire to live smart rather than to live stupid. Let’s realize that the passing cost of discipleship, real though it be, pales in comparison to the lasting cost of nondiscipleship. ■

—Reprinted with permission from *Peacemaker Magazine*, Summer 2007.



Developing Servant-Leaders

by Robert Burns

“But blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in him. He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit” (Jeremiah 17:7, 8).

A number of years ago a friend shared with me some memories about her freshman year at Wheaton College. She recalled her first day of class when she saw an older man in a suit walking along a campus sidewalk, pausing every now and again to pick up trash. Later in the week, even though she had no idea who he was, that same man stopped her between classes. Calling her by name, he asked specific questions about her family, her courses, and how she was adjusting to college life. After the conversation, a classmate told her the man was Dr. V. Raymond Edman, then-president of the college. Many years later, Edman continued to stand out to my friend as a shining example of a servant-leader.

What is a servant-leader? The description of a leader being a servant is popular today in business literature. It was popularized in 1970 by an article titled “Servant as Leader” by Robert Greenleaf. The theme of Greenleaf’s work was that true leadership emerges from those whose primary motivation is a deep desire to help others. This is a wonderful, altruistic idea that many seek to employ in their corporate and personal lifestyles. However, there is a problem with Greenleaf’s theory—it fails to take into account the brokenness of our human nature. As the Apostle Paul records in Romans 7:21-24, it is difficult to maintain such high and virtuous standards when our sin nature constantly pulls us down.

Enter the Gospel of Jesus Christ. When the Spirit of God transforms our broken souls by the power of His redeeming love,

we suddenly discover a new motivation in our lives. No longer burdened by this exalted standard of becoming a servant-leader, we discover that we can serve others because He first loved us (1 John 4:10, 11).

As we grow in our understanding of God’s love, we discover that Jesus expected His people to be servant-leaders. In Mark 10:42-45, Jesus contrasted the leaders of this world who “lord [their power] over” others with the expectation that His followers “must be slave of all.” Then He concluded, “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” Later, in John 13, Jesus explained, “You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you” (vv. 13-15 ESV).

Because servant-leadership is God’s expectation for us, it is reasonable to ask the question: How does God form us into servant-leaders? What does He do to transform a busy college president into a man who willingly stops to pick up trash and knows specific facts about new students? (Edman and his wife would read the student records and rise together at 5 o’clock every morning to pray for students.)

The Shaping of a Servant-Leader

As we explore the Bible, the ways in which God shapes servant-leaders are surprising. I was recently reminded of one of

these methods while attending a seminar led by Russ Moxley (former senior fellow at the Center for Creative Leadership). Moxley pointed out that, of all the aspects of leadership development researched by the center, the single most important element was that of hardships.

Hardships. These are rarely referenced in books or training curricula. Yet as I heard Moxley talk about the role of hardships in leadership development, my mind raced to verses in the Bible. Take, for example, James 1:2-4, where the brother of Jesus tells us to “count it all joy” when we meet trials because this testing of our faith produces steadfastness and makes us complete.

Or Romans 5:2-5, where Paul explains a process that begins with suffering, produces character, and ends with mature hope. Or even 2 Corinthians 12:7-10, where Paul states that his own thorn in the flesh caused him to learn God’s grace and exhibit God’s power.

Perhaps the passage that impacted me most in this reflection was Hebrews 5:8. Here the author makes this profound statement: “Although he [Jesus] was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered.” The context of this passage makes it clear that Jesus is the unique and only Son of God. This forced me to ask the question: How could the eternal Son of God learn anything?

Puritan John Owen helped me here. In his commentary on Hebrews, Owen explains that Jesus did not learn new knowledge because He already knows all things. Furthermore, He did not need to learn to obey because He was always prepared to obey the Father. Rather, Jesus’ suffering was learning through experience. Just as we learn the sweetness of ice cream by actually tasting it, so Jesus learned the experience of obedience by His suffering. Indeed, the hallmark of Jesus’ life was suffering—He was described as “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” (Isaiah 53:3 ESV).

But what I found most interesting was

how Jesus learned. His learning took place through hardship. And what is true for Jesus is true for us as His disciples. Look, for example, at the aforementioned passages from James and Romans. These verses say that God uses adversity to form the character of His followers. Traits such as steadfastness of faith and maturity of hope are formed in the crucible of hardship. When difficulties pushed him to move beyond his own capabilities to cry out for God’s intervention, Paul learned the availability of God’s grace. His discovery—learned only by facing his own limitations through hardship—was that

God’s power is magnified in weakness.

Sometime after returning from Russ Moxley’s seminar, I read a chapter he wrote on hardships. In it Moxley says: “People seek to minimize the possibility of experiencing hardships . . . [but]

comfort is the enemy of growth. Hardship experiences unfreeze people, by which we mean open them up to new awareness. . . . How people respond drives learning.”

If our response to hardships drives our learning, I wondered what kind of experiences would form a man into a servant-leader who, as president of a college, would mark a freshman’s life by picking up trash and praying for students. In his book titled *They Found the Secret*, Dr. Edman shares that it was his response to specific hardships that shaped his life and service for God: a near-death experience as a missionary in Ecuador and a crisis of faith while returning from missions service. In each instance, God used hardships to form in Dr. Edman a servant spirit.

I have had the privilege of meeting with 30 pastors three times a year over the past two years. As we have shared our lives and ministries together, a consistent theme has been the way in which God has used hardships to shape our lives. Among these pastors are those who have faced personal rejection, physical trauma, accusations against their leadership, and even church

As we grow in our understanding of God’s love, we discover that Jesus expected His people to be servant-leaders.

splits. Yet, in each case, these pastors have not responded in bitterness and anger; each has allowed his experiences to mature him in his calling. How will we respond to hardships? Our answer plays a critical role in our development as servant-leaders.

Three Responses to Hardships

First, we can respond by viewing our hardships through the lens of Scripture. In Romans 15:4 Paul says, “For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope” (ESV). God designs our hardships to shape our character as servant-leaders. This is seen in Paul’s experience of his thorn in the flesh. Examples similar to this are found throughout the pages of the Old and New Testaments.

Second, we can respond by viewing hardships through our theology. When our second son was stillborn, I received great comfort and encouragement by reminding myself that God, for His own glory, has fore-ordained whatever comes to pass. He was governing through His holy, wise, and powerful providence.

A third way to respond to hardships is to do an audit of past and current experiences, seeking to identify what God may be teaching us about ourselves, about others, and about His purposes for our lives. Pondering these lessons can teach us much about the way God is forming our character and shaping us into servant-leaders. Journaling is one way to do such an audit. Many have found that writing their thoughts and reflections provides a means of remembering difficult experiences and recalling how God was faithful to them during the trials. Occasionally revisiting these journal entries becomes a reminder of the lessons He has taught during difficult times.

This kind of reflective introspection can be challenging for many of us. God has not called us to be isolated and without sup-

port—especially in times of hardship. We can find numerous resources within the Church to help us process the lessons learned in hardships. This can occur through talking with friends, sharing with a pastor, or even meeting with a counselor. This type of support aids us in both understanding our experiences and grappling with the implications stemming from them. God does not waste pain, and we must not squander the opportunity to learn from it.

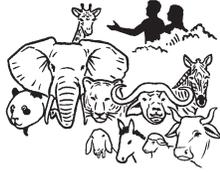
Josiah Henson was born into a slave family in 1789. Having come to faith through the ministry of John McKenny, an itinerant preacher in the early 1800s, Josiah led his family north from Maryland to freedom in Canada. There he learned to read and write and ultimately became a lay preacher. Known as Father Henson, he was an abolitionist leader who spoke across Canada and the Northern United States. In 1851 he traveled to London, and through contacts within the church, he continued his fight against slavery.

After one speaking engagement, Henson was introduced to the Archbishop of Canterbury, who had been in attendance. Impressed by the presentation, the Archbishop asked Henson which university he had attended. With keen insight into God’s leadership development plan over his life, the former slave simply replied, “I graduated, your grace, at the university of adversity.”

God has called us to Himself in Christ, and part of that calling is to be servant-leaders. One important aspect of our leadership development for this vocation is the experience of hardships. Because His loving hand guides us into these learning experiences, we must not allow the lessons to pass. Rather, with confidence placed in His grace, we can respond to these lessons with the knowledge that “he who [has b e g u n] a good work in [us] will bring it to completion at the day of Christ Jesus” (Phil. 1:6 ESV). ■

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Beginning Issues



The Dating Methods: Are They Reliable?

by John Mullett

The generally accepted age of the Earth is about 4.6 billion years, but is it really that old? How do we know it to be that old? Are the various dating methods used reliable? What I want to bring into focus in this article is that there are significant problems with the commonly accepted dating methods used to determine the age of rocks and subsequently the geologic column along with the fossils and other specimens found therein.

The various radiometric dating methods used by scientists, while varying some in what they test for, all follow the same basic principle with the exception of Carbon-14. Each is measured by a relative parent-daughter isotope concentration where the parent isotope (potassium-40) decays into the daughter isotope (Argon-40). The logic is by knowing the rate of decay we can see how much of the parent isotope has decayed into the daughter isotope. The isotope concentrations can be measured very accurately along with decay rates, but there are several key assumptions that must be made in order to calculate the age of the sample being measured based on these concentrations:

1. The starting conditions are known; (i.e., there was no daughter isotope present in the beginning or we know how much was).
2. The decay rates have always been con-

stant.

3. The systems were closed so that no parent or daughter isotopes were either lost or added.¹

That these assumptions must be made is key. If there is no eyewitness account that was there at the sample's formation then there is no way to know for sure what its starting conditions were. If we were not able to be there to monitor the sample's entire history there is no way to know for sure that the decay rate has been constant or its systems closed. So these conditions must be assumed. The problem is, in essence we are not *measuring* the sample's age, but rather we are *guessing* its age.

If these dating methods were accurate then we should be able to test them using samples of known age. This has been done and there are many examples where they have been found to be inaccurate.² This begs the question, If they are not accurate using samples of *known* age why should we trust dates given on samples of *unknown* age?

If they are accurate the different dating techniques should agree, shouldn't they; but they frequently don't. So which one is accurate? What's more—how can we use several of them while results given by each differ and still consider all techniques valid? Researchers frequently reject dates because they are "bad" and all too frequently it's

because they don't fit the *expected* age slot.³ So is it compelling evidence or the world-view of the one interpreting the evidence that decides how old the earth is?

Assumptions and estimates are a reminder of our need for an unchanging standard of truth we can measure all things by and God has given us that in the Bible. It's the historical eyewitness account of how and when this world came to be and our purpose in it. Remember He was there.

The Carbon-14 dating method certainly merits discussion here as well, due to space limitations will have to be left for another

article. For a more detailed article on how the dating methods work and what their limitations are please visit the following page on the world wide web at: <http://www.answersingenesis.org/docs2002/carbon dating.asp>. ■

1. Other Radiometric Dating Methods—<http://www.answersingenesis.org/docs2002/carbon dating.asp>
2. Methods should work reliably on things of known age—<http://www.answersingenesis.org/docs2002/carbon dating.asp>
3. Bad Dates—<http://www.answersingenesis.org/docs2002/carbon dating.asp>



A Wife's Respect for Her Husband

by Richard Steele (1629-1692)

"And the wife see that she reverence her husband" (Ephesians 5:33b).

The great duty of every wife is to reverence her own husband. She stands obliged to many other duties, as you have heard, which lie common between them; but she is still signalized¹ by this. This is her peculiar qualification as she is a wife. Let her have never so much wisdom, learning, grace;² if she does not reverence her husband, she cannot be a good wife.

Look to her creation: She was made *after* man; he has some honor by his seniority. "For Adam was first formed, then Eve" (1 Timothy 2:13). She was made out of man; he was the rock whence she was hewn. "For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man" (1 Corinthians 11:8). She was made *for* man: "Nei-

ther was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man" (1 Corinthians 11:9). So that it is not man that hath set this order, but God Himself. Look again to the Fall, and there you hear what God saith: "Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (Genesis 3:16). See in the New Testament, lest Christ's being "made of a woman" should seem to alter this inviolable law: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord" (Colossians 3:18). "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands" (1 Peter 3:1). "Your chaste conversation" must be "coupled with fear" (v. 2). "The holy women of old adorned

1. **signalized**—characterized; marked conspicuously.

2. **Let . . . grace**—no matter how much wisdom, learning, and grace she may have.

themselves in subjection to their own husbands” (v. 5). And so in my text. Let her be never so great, never so good, and though her husband be never so mean and never so bad, yet this is her indispensable duty to reverence her husband . . . it is neither agreeable to nature nor decency to set the head below or no higher than the rib. And when she is resolved in this, then will she with much delight and ease go through her duty. A wise God hath ordered it thus, and therefore it is best.

I. For the First, the Nature of This Reverence

It is a true, cordial, and conjugal reverence, such as is peculiar to a good woman. And I conceive that it is made up of,

1. The wife ought to honor and esteem her husband: “All the wives shall give to their husbands honor, both to great and small” (Esther 1:20). To this end, she ought to contemplate all the excellencies of his person, whether of body or mind; to set a due value upon them and not to think meanly³ of everything in her husband . . . And if the husband be but meanly accomplished,⁴ yet she ought highly to value the excellency of his place, seeing the Holy Ghost hath in this very respect styled him “the image and glory of God” (1 Corinthians 11:7). Whatever he is in himself or to others, yet to the wife he is a nonesuch.⁵ Such you esteemed him when you chose him, and so you ought still to esteem him . . . The wife ought to consider that her honor and respect among her family and neighbors doth very much rise and fall according to that which she bears to her husband, so that in honoring him she honors herself.

2. This reverence is made up of

3. **meanly**—poorly; as having little worth.

4. **meanly accomplished**—poorly skilled.

5. **nonesuch**—a person who has no equal; a model of excellence.

6. **fear**—a cautious diligence and care, not a slavish, cowering fear.

7. **chaste conversation**—holy, pure conduct.

love: Which though it be most pressed upon the husband, yet is also the duty of the wife: “Teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children” (Titus 2:4). Thus Sarah, Rebekah, and Rachel left parents, friends, and country out of their entire love to their husbands . . . And indeed there is no better means to increase the husband’s love than the wife’s reverence, and that alone will make this sweet and easy.

3. Fear⁶ is the third ingredient into the reverence that the wife owes unto her husband . . . this is required: “A chaste conversation⁷ coupled with fear” (1 Peter 3:2). The one is not sufficient without the other. This . . . is no more than a cautious diligence to please him and care lest she should offend him. . . .

II. Now, Let Us Trace This Reverence of the Wife to Her Husband in Its Pattern, Laid Before Her in the Context of These Words.

Here I affirm these two things:

1. That the wife ought to reverence her husband, as the church doth Jesus Christ: So, verse 22: “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord,” and verse 24, “Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.” Examples are prevalent, especially of wise and good people. Here is the example of all the wise and godly people in the world to persuade the wife to reverence her husband. The Apostle seems to say that it is as much a duty in the wife to be subject to the husband, as it is in the church to be subject to Christ . . . Two things proclaim the reverence that the church bears to Christ:

(1) The matter of her subjection: That is in everything . . . She doth not yield to him only so far as her interest or appetite permits her, but when he requires it . . . So saith the Apostle: "Let the wives be subject to their own husbands in every thing" (v. 24), that is, *in everything that is not forbidden by a higher power, even the Law of God*. Indeed, if a thing be only inconvenient, the wife may mildly reason and show the inexpediency⁸ of it; but if she cannot convince and satisfy her husband, she must, if there be no sin in the case, submit her reason and her will to his.

(2) The manner of her subjection speaks her reverence: and that is free, willing, and cheerful. Thus, the church yields up herself to the will of her Husband, insomuch as it is made a kind of proverbial pattern: "With good will doing service, as to the Lord" (Ephesians 6:7), implying that the subjection and service that we perform to the Lord is with a good will. Such ought to be the subjection of the wife, most free and willing; so, as if there were but one will in two breasts . . . Therefore, a contradicting or grudging spirit is very unsuitable to the religious wife and ever leaves a sting in his heart and guilt in hers. For usually it is a sign of unmortified pride and self-conceit and entails the curse of unquietness upon the family . . . If the husband's government be too heavy, it is better for you to leave him to answer for his severity than for you to answer for your contempt.

2. The wife ought to reverence her husband, as the members do the Head. So, Ephesians 5:23: "For the husband is the head of the wife." He is a head for influence and sympathy: that is her privilege. He is a head for eminence and rule: that is his. And how should she expect *benefit* from her head, if she does not *honor* her head? To dishonor a man's head is always ranked among unnatural

sins (1 Corinthians 11:4). . . . She must not cross the purposes of her head. It is preposterous for the head to go one way and the rib another. She must readily follow the directions and counsels of her head, for the members must not teach the head which way to go. They support it, but they do not direct it . . . it will be the wisdom and duty of the wife to be subject to the husband as unto her head (except cases wherein the head is crazed or notoriously distempered⁹).

III. This Hath Brought Us to the Third Thing, by Which the Reverence of the Wife Is Described and That Is by the Effects Thereof.

And they also are,

1. In word: "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matthew 12:34). If there be that inward fear and respect in the heart, which God requires, it will be legible in the words of their mouths. The same law that binds the heart in this case doth also govern the tongue. "In her tongue is the law of kindness" (Proverbs 31:26). And here certainly "a wholesome tongue is a tree of life," whereas "perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit" (Proverbs 15:4).

Now this reverence in the wife is showed,

(1) In her words of her husband: Which should always be composed of respect and honor. Thus Sarah is brought in by the Apostle: "Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well" (1 Peter 3:6). And this was the language of her heart, as you heard before out of Genesis 18:12. And no wife is too great or good to imitate her example in the main by giving respectful titles and expressions of her husband . . . all the reproach and ignominy¹⁰ that they pour out on their husbands doth infallibly redound¹¹ to

8. **inexpediency**—disadvantages; unprofitableness..

9. **distempered**—mentally disordered.

10. **ignominy**—dishonor.

their own shame, their honor and respect standing and falling together.

(2) ***The words of the wife to her husband ought to be full of reverence.*** She should beware, (i) *Of an excess in the quantity, not preposterously interrupting her husband while he is speaking, nor answering ten words for one.* For silence doth more commend the wisdom of a woman than speech; and she that is wise spareth her words. Though she seem to be religious, yet if she do not bridle her tongue, her religion is vain. And, (ii) *She must beware of a defect in the quality of them, namely, of meekness and respect.* For the great study of the wife should be to get a “meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God,” yea, and of man too, “is of great price” (1 Peter 3:4). When the heart is once meekened¹² by the grace of God, then her words will savor¹³ of it, and not until then . . . Hath not God said, “A soft tongue breaketh the bone” (Proverbs 25:15)? [This] is more than any virulent¹⁴ tongue can do . . . It will be an unspeakable comfort at death and judgment to reflect upon the victories that their patience hath gotten and how oft their quiet silence and mild answers have kept the peace. . . . This is certain: if meekness and respect will not prevail, anger and passion never can . . .

2. The effects of a wife’s reverence to her husband must be in deed also. *And that by obedience to his directions and restraints . . .* The wife is bound in conscience to obey her husband in every thing that is not contrary to the will of God. Indeed, if he command her to do any thing that is sinful by the Law of God—if he should bid her tell a lie, bear false witness, or the like—*she must modestly and resolvedly refuse it.* If he forbid her to do anything, that is by God’s command made an indispensable duty unto

her—if he should absolutely forbid her to pray, to read the Scripture, to sanctify the Lord’s day, or the like—*then she must “obey God rather than men”* (Acts 5:29). But in all other cases, though she may respectfully persuade with him, yet if he insist upon it, her obedience will be her best sacrifice and her compliance will be the means to make her yoke the more easy . . .

The house is her proper place: for she is the *beauty* of the house. There her business lies, there she is safe . . . When sun and moon both disappear, the sky is dark; and when both husband and wife are abroad, many disorders breed at home; and you know whose character it is: “She is loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house” (Proverbs 7:11).

So also where the husband judges most convenient to dwell, there the wife must cheerfully consent to dwell with him, though it may be, either in respect of her friends or of his, more uncomfortable to her. Thus . . . He that appoints them to “love their husbands” (Titus 2:4) doth in the next verse enjoin them to be “discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed” (2:5). For though even good women be put to silence, yet good works never can. . . .

Few husbands [are] so bad, but the discretion and respect of a wife would reform them; and few wives [are] so ill-tempered, but the wisdom and affection of a husband would make them better. ■

—From “What Are the Duties of Husbands and Wives Towards Each Other?” in *Puritan Sermons 1659-1689, Being the Morning Exercises at Cripple Gate*, Vol. 2; taken from *Free Grace Broadcaster*. Reprinted with permission.

11. **redound**—return as a consequence.

12. **meekened**—made submissive; humbled.

13. **savor**—show traces of the presence or influence of.

14. **virulent**—violently bitter; spiteful.