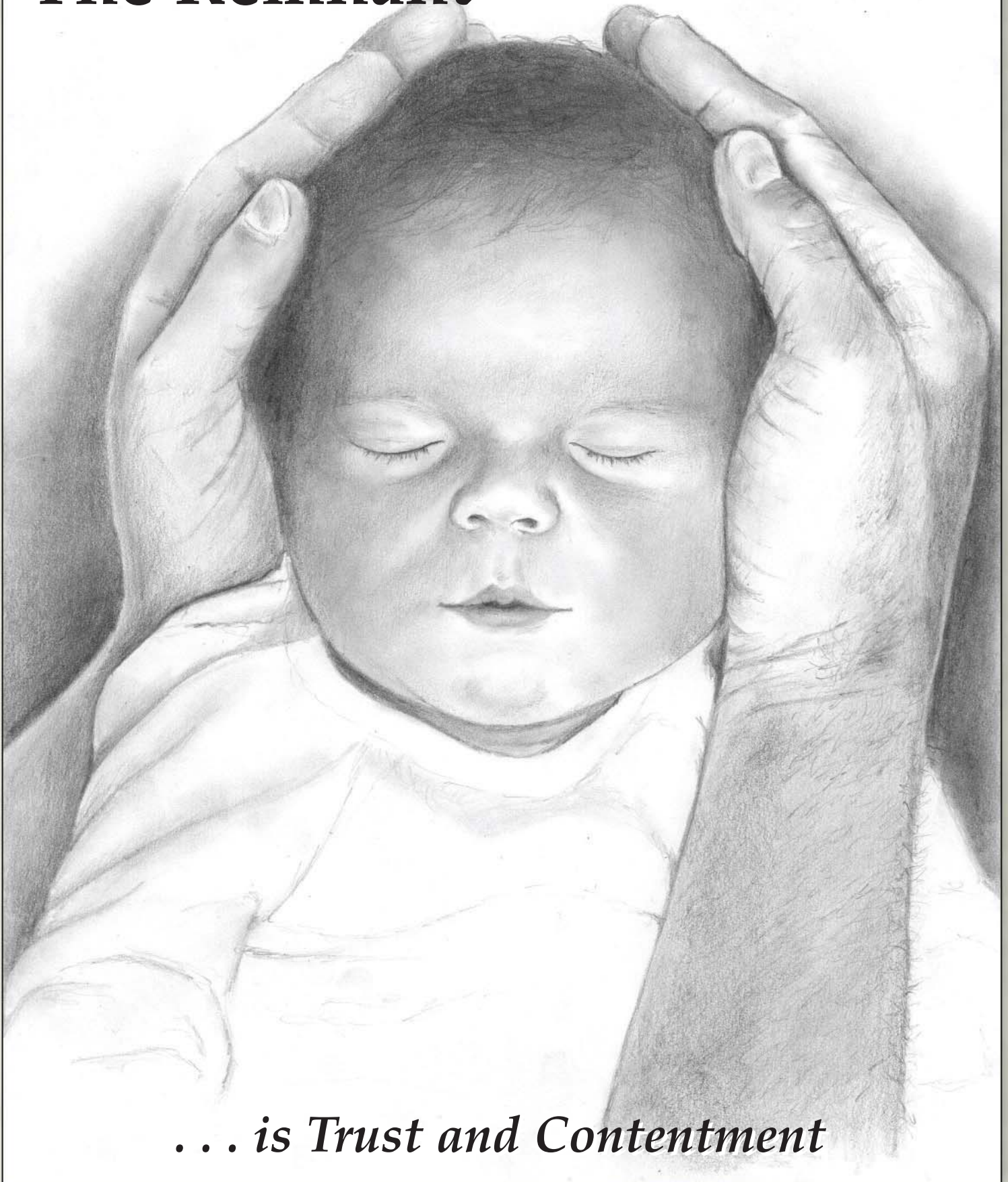


The Heartbeat of

The Remnant

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... is Trust and Contentment

The Heartbeat of
The Remnant

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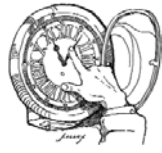
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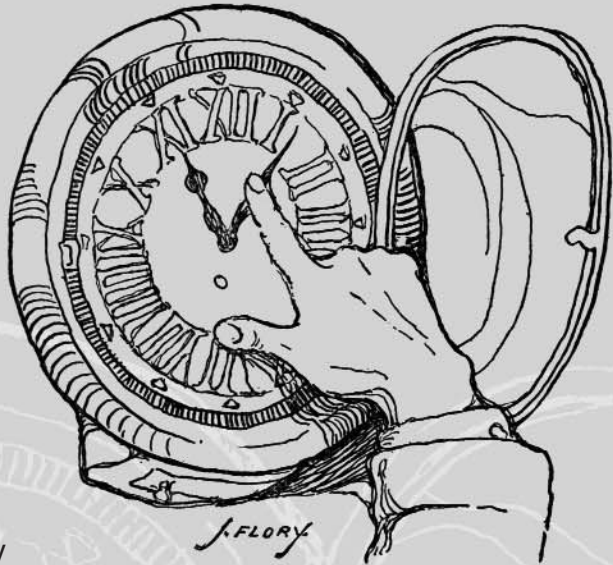


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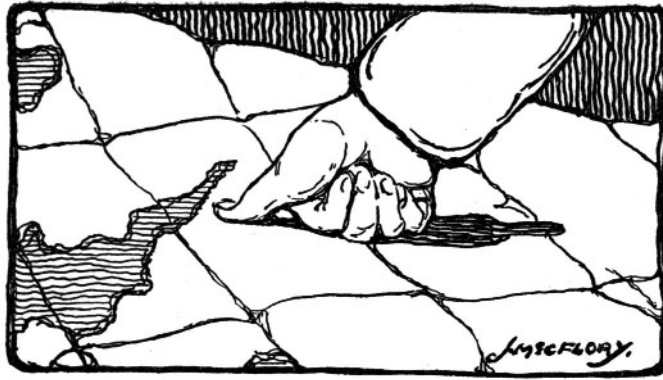


The greatest joy of an active mind is to be doing, to be achieving. O! It is a balm for all the woes of life, to be able to look upon the beneficial results of ones own labor. I have heard a man say he would almost be willing to bear the gigantic trials of the Apostle Paul's life, if he might but do his work and achieve his success. On such a nature it is at this point that sickness presses most painfully. To "be still" is no way consistent with the natural will; except, when weary with weakness there comes a desire for rest.

And when flush with the joy of work, even the natural craving for rest is sometimes met with a feeling of impatience. There rise the feelings of a young horse tightly reined in and fretted with restraint. The soul pants for another body, one with vigor to execute the will of the inner man. There is such a liability to forget that in this world the outer and inner man are inseparably connected; and that the outer very significantly affects the inner.

Paul's "thorn in the flesh" was essential, because it helped to complete his character. And blessed is he who in sickness is conscious of its beneficial effects upon himself. But O! We are foolish, thoughtless, and sensuous. The eye and the ear, the taste and the touch, are all keenly awake to the objects of the material world. But the objects of the spirit world, the truths which are recognized not by sense, but are only obvious to hope, faith and love in their highest applications, these are not realized.

But who that by tribulation has learned the path to wisdom, shall not be thankful for the discipline, is not he one of those "that mourn" and "shall be comforted"?



How to Trust God Without Being a Calvinist

by Dean Taylor

Sovereignty—providence—election—predestination. If you are like me, you have at times felt reluctant to use such terms. Maybe you have even grimaced a time or two to hear others use them. Yet, these are beautiful Biblical concepts that have too often become the objects of doctrinal controversies and denominational differences. This is such a tragedy. Nothing could be more comforting, more sustaining, or more empowering than the settled understanding and heart conviction that God cares and supplies for our every need, and is divinely involved with the smallest of our circumstances. God has willed that every hair on our head be numbered, every step ordered, every sin-stain forgiven, and every bondage broken. What a bountiful storehouse of provisions the Christian possesses!

Unfortunately, many Christians are unaware of these truths. The result has been countless testimonies of miserable defeat by conquered pilgrims

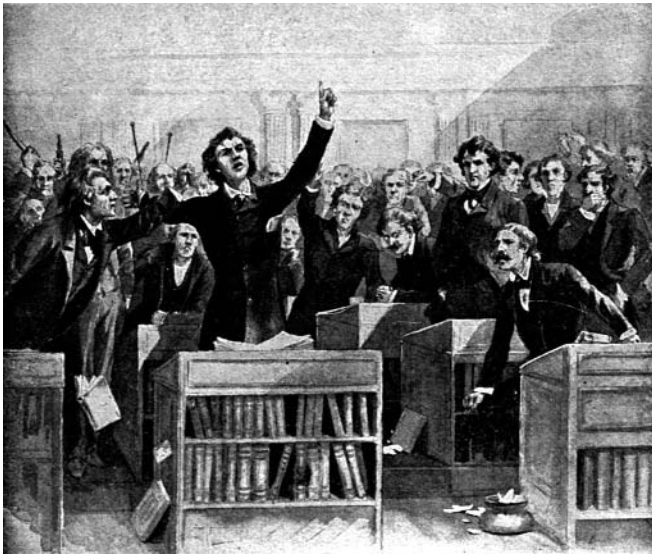
who lost the battle and retreated. I believe one of the most common reasons for this tragedy is ignorance. It is, perhaps, one of the saddest things, to see a child of God, heir to the riches of Christ, spending his life spiritually impoverished simply because he never knew what spiritual riches were his in Christ Jesus.

Sovereignty
Providence
Election
Predestination

How Did We Loose It?

I believe that to a large extent, many of these truths have been avoided because of an overreaction to a few so-called “Calvinist” doctrines. The churches that have followed the teachings of John Calvin have frequently used

many of these themes and terms to defend some of their most controversial doctrines. As a result, many have rebounded and in the process, lost precious truths along the way.



Where Did These Controversies Come From?

Coming out of the Reformation, many Bible believing Christians felt that the reformers did not go far enough in their “reform” of the church. Later, Christian groups such as the Anabaptists and some Armenian holiness groups, led the church into even greater reforms. Today, church historians now refer to this period of greater reformation as the “Radical Reformation.” These “radical reformers” rejected some of the theological teachings of their time, specifically those of the Calvinist and Lutheran churches. They would have differed in particular with some of the teachings these churches held in regard to the nature of God and salvation. Some of the doctrines that these radical reformers had the greatest difficulty with were the Calvinist doctrines of “unconditional election” and “limited atonement.”

A Brief Summary Of Differences:

Although I admit this description to be a gross oversimplification, basically these Calvinist doctrines teach that God has arbitrarily chosen some people to be saved and some to be lost. Those chosen by God to be the “lost” are hopelessly damned and have no hope of salvation. Further, they teach that Christ did not die for the chosen “lost” as He did the chosen “saved;” and that the lost will, therefore, be eternally punished in Hell. Likewise, the ones “chosen” or rather *predestined* to be saved are, *irresistibly* compelled to be saved, and can never lose this compulsory salvation.

Some of the radical reformers felt that these doctrines, by definition, made God the author of sin. Others simply felt that these doctrines were making definitions and dogmas about things that were beyond Biblical revelation. To be fair, not all the churches or preachers which have called themselves *Calvinist* have pushed these doctrines to such extremes. Some “reformed” preachers, such as Charles Spurgeon, called teachers that pushed these points to the extreme, “hyper-Calvinists.” I have even heard some writers claim that John Calvin, himself, was not as “Calvinist” as many of the people who have reacted in debates after him.

Be that as it may, in seeking to defend these positions many of these Calvinist churches have lifted up words like predestination, election, and sovereignty, as justification for their mistaken doctrines. Tragically, however, throughout the centuries of debate, the Calvinist’s persistent and sometimes erroneous references to words like sovereignty and predestination have led many professing Christians to view these words as detestable. This has cost the church so dearly. The Calvinists have since reacted into hyper-Calvinism, which has finally evolved into modern evangelical easy-believism. On the other hand, holiness and Anabaptist groups have also



Realizing the truth of sovereignty and predestination in its proper perspective can empower a feeble Christian, bound by condemnation and doubt, to arise to a new storehouse of spiritual strength.

reacted, emphasizing self-effort which has often resulted in hypocrisy and self-righteousness.

These truths are too pertinent to the Christian walk to remain locked up forever in the tangles of debate and controversy. Just because some groups have taken these truths to erroneous extremes does not lessen the strength or power of the Word of God one bit. "Let God be true and every man a liar" (Rom 3:4). Realizing the truth of sovereignty and predestination in its proper perspective can empower a feeble Christian, bound by condemnation and doubt, to arise to a new storehouse of spiritual strength. Likewise, it can awaken the nominal, sleepy Christian to the phenomenal realization of a Holy God who sees and cares about their every thought and deed.

D.L. Moody told a stirring account of a slave girl who, after the Civil War, struggled to apprehend her freedom. President Lincoln had published the Emancipation Proclamation granting freedom to the slaves. A lady was traveling in the southern states and came one night to a little inn. She was cared for there by a slave girl. Looking up to the girl the lady said,

"Is this your place?"

"No, it is my master's."

"Does he pay you for what you do?"

"No, of course not, I'm a slave!"

"Oh...but there are no slaves anymore," the lady said bewilderedly.

"Indeed there are slaves—I'm one of them!"

"Have you not heard of President's Lincoln's proclamation to free the slaves?"

"Well, we did hear about it, Ma'am, but Master said it was all a pack of lies. Therefore, I am bound to stay here as long as my master says I am a slave."

"Please, listen Dear, everyone knows that all the slaves have been set free. You are as free as I am!"

That very moment something changed in her eyes. She instantly finished serving her guest, packed her bags, and left to appropriate what was hers—freedom.

It was her master's prejudice that prevented the slave girl from appropriating her freedom. Likewise, in the Christian walk, theological reactions and extremes often swing the doctrinal pendulum to bigoted excesses. Prejudices like these have prevented many beautiful gospel truths. Sadly, something as fundamental as trusting God has become one of these prejudices. Sovereignty, predestination, election, and providence are not teachings that Bible-believing Christians should be afraid of. Understood properly, these truths are emancipating.

God is Eternal

In the book of Revelation Jesus said, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last" (Rev. 22:13). This is a truth that is bigger than our finite minds can comprehend. In this verse God did not say that He *was* the beginning and *will be* the end, but rather, He said that He exists—all at the same time—as the beginning and the end. In other words, God exists as much in the beginning of time, and at the end of time, as he does at this very moment—that's eternal! All of us will live forever, but none of us will ever be eternal. "From everlasting to everlasting thou art God" (Psalm 49:2).



God did not say that He was the beginning and will be the end, but rather, He said that He exists—all at the same time—as the beginning and the end.

Foreknowledge

Because of God's eternal omnipresence, God exists at the beginning of our Christian walk and at the end. He not only *knows* if we will accept him by faith but he actually *experiences* our future perseverance or future rejection, by existing in the future already. God's foreknowledge is not mere premonition—it is experiential. As John Wesley put it, "Strictly speaking, there is no foreknowledge, no more than after-knowledge, with God: but all things are known to him as present from eternity to eternity. This is therefore no other than an instance of the divine condescension to our low capacities."

What a glorious thought, that before the beginning of time and throughout all our life, God is there, knocking, leading, and calling out—"whomsoever will may come" (Rev 22: 17). To those who answer this call and surrender their lives to Him, God pours grace into their lives to be saved. John 1:12 says, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." Keep in mind, however, that John is not saying that these people, through the act of believing, *earned* their own

salvation. The act of believing is no more a *work* than that of a child, who, reaching out to receive a present from his father, does anything to merit the gift by the simple act of receiving it.

Speaking of God's work of salvation, 2 Tim. 1:9 says, "*Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.*" What an astonishing truth! Here, God is telling us that all the ability and power and requirement of our salvation was met in the person of Jesus Christ even before God created the world!

The Thought of God caring for *my* salvation throughout time is overwhelming. Consider this for a moment...*your life* planed before the mountains were framed, *your soul* numbered in Abraham's starry sky, *your salvation* sung about from David's harp, and *your holiness* groaned for in Zachariah's burden! This contemplation causes my heart to marvel like the Psalmist when he said, "*When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him*" (Psalms 8:3-4).

Predestination

Defining the landmarks of our salvation and sanctification, Paul spells out the steps clearly in the Book of Romans... "*For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified*" (Romans 8:29-30).

Like divine rungs of a celestial ladder leading to Glory, this scripture points out God's way of salvation, all the way to Heaven. But perhaps the most astonishing thing about this whole path is this idea of *predestination*. Predestination is not presented here as a random choosing of people to salvation or damnation. In the scripture above, I chose to highlight what the entire purpose of predestination is—*to be conformed to the image of His son*. Two very important points can be drawn from this verse. First, the salvation spoken about here brings real changes in a Christian's life. A Christian like *this* will be different than the world around him. Moreover, a Christian transformed like this will actually begin to look like Jesus. Secondly, God Has promised to effect these changes in our lives completely by *His* ability. It is *He* who justifies, it is *He* who sanctifies and finally, it is *He* who glorifies.

We simply can't afford to lose this truth to overreaction and debate. An early Anabaptist leader,

Michael Stattler, summarized his faith in a list of articles in which he was not ashamed to declare both of these truths. He stated, "They are true Christians who practice in deed the teachings of Christ," but he also said, "The foreknown and called believers shall be conformed to the image of Christ."

Ponder it, when I am accepted into His covenant, His oath and promises—when I am surrendered of my own efforts and ambitions—in essence, when I am literally "*in Him*," then I am *predestined* to become just like Him. In such a case, God has promised that I can't help but live a holy life and become like Jesus. Here we see that predestination is no mere legal transaction



God's predestined purpose in our salvation is to make us a holy people.

in Heaven where we are legally considered cleansed and holy with no actual change in our life. God is telling us in these verses that He does the work of changing us, and conforming us to *actually make us like Jesus*. God's predestined purpose in our salvation is to make us a holy people. The apostle John said, "*Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not*" (1 John 3:6).

In the first letter of the apostle Peter, he wrote concerning this empowering gospel, calling the Christians, "*Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ*" (1 Peter 1:2). Here again, we see that the fruit of our sal-

vation brings obedience, actually making us holy by the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus. Once I get my attention off my own problems and desires, I can understand that my salvation is made to give glory to God—*not me*.

To the Ephesians Paul wrote, *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we*



How do you ever know when to stop?” asked the boy. “That’s easy,” said the silversmith with a smile, “It’s finished when I can see a clear reflection of my face.”

should walk in them” (Eph 2:8-10). His workmanship? What a gift! In the storehouse of Christ’s boundless ability and power He changes me, conforms me, quickens me, and makes me into a vessel that gives glory to Him. All I have to do is to die to myself, believe His promises, and keep focused on Jesus—He will do all the rest.

This truth is as emancipating as the truth the slave girl received when she finally realized she was free. It puts the whole mystery of faith and works into its proper place. In total surrender/total trusting, I can rest in Christ and allow Him to change me and make me holy. In this truth, I find that New Testament salvation is not just a new set of laws to follow, accomplished by human strength. That would be worse than the old covenant! New Testament Christianity calls for physically impossible holiness and obedience, but it is God who accomplishes this holiness in us, completely by the power of His grace. Contrasting this new covenant with the old one, the Book of Hebrews records these beautiful prophetic words, *“Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people”* (Hebrews 8:9-10).

I am reminded of a great story of the purifying process, once used by a silversmith. One day, a little boy walked into a silversmith shop while an old silversmith was purifying a lump of silver. Bewildered at the relentless determination and commitment the silversmith had as he sat there heating and reheating the silver lump, he finally got up the courage to ask the silversmith, *“What’s taking so long?”* The silversmith explained, *“As I heat this over and over again, eventually all the impurities float to the top and when they are exposed I can remove them.”* *“How do you ever know when to stop?”* asked the boy. *“That’s easy,”* said the silversmith with a smile, *“It’s finished when I can see a clear reflection of my face.”*

Brethren, such truth needs no apology! We serve a sovereign God who cares for us and loves us before the beginning of time! He is with us always! He foreknew us from the beginning of our faith in Him, and has made us elect and chosen in His Son! Throughout our lives, and forever in Glory—He is there! What’s more, when we give up our own ways and surrender to Him and truly place ourselves *“in Him,”* he promises and predestines us to a life of holiness before God. The end result He tells us, is to make us just like the one who did all this for us—the one I love with all my heart—Jesus!

Without debate and without apology, you can truly trust God without being a Calvinist.

Trust God, believe His Word, surrender from your own way, then just watch what God will do in your life! □



From the Editor's Desk:



God bless each of you as you receive this issue of The Heartbeat of the Remnant. First, I would like to apologize for the delay in the last few issues. We have recently decided to start putting these issues out quarterly, simply because of the lack of time to put them together. As a pastor of a new fellowship and a homeschool father of six, it is sometimes hard to fit everything in. Hopefully, we can begin to offer more issues in the future.

As the title states, the theme of this issue is "Trust and Contentment." I have tried to focus most of the articles on some aspect of the Christian walk, dealing with areas such as sovereignty, contentment, or trusting God through difficulty. There are also a few articles dealing with the home and child training.

The front cover is a drawing from Lisa Weaver. I felt it was simply perfect for the theme of this issue. I will be trying to include more real pictures and original artwork in upcoming issues. If anyone has original artwork that they would like to scan and e-mail our way it would be well received. Pictures focusing on the home or children are always needed.

Our prayer is that this issue will minister to you and bless your walk with the Lord. May God's grace fill you with a full revelation of His sovereign, protecting hands as you walk with Him in "trust and contentment."

Sincerely, Bro. Dean Taylor

07/01/06 Beginning Balance **\$43,933.30**

Receipts

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Total Receipts	\$39,819.35

Disbursements

UPS & Postage	\$6,735.78
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Equipment Maint & Repairs	\$5,328.88
Mailing & Office Supplies	\$2,293.52
Rent	\$2,250.00
Telephone	\$951.82
Website Development & Maintenance	\$558.77
Building Improvements	\$0.00
Miscellaneous	\$356.37
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Books & Catalogs	\$1,912.23
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09/30/06 Ending Balance **\$5,062.86**

Difference **-\$38,870.44**

A Mother's Heart Cry

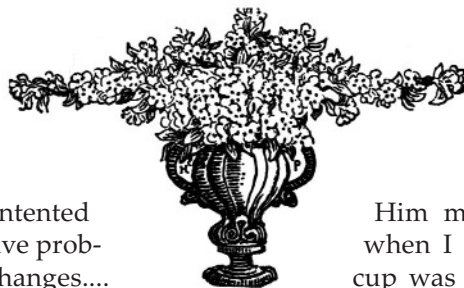
by Rachel Weaver

When the babies are out of diapers...
When I can get a full night of sleep...
When the children are old enough to help...
When homeschooling is finished...
When the teenagers are grown up...
When the children are married...
If I had been taught to keep house...
If I only had a baby...
If I had a husband who...
If my children would...
If our finances weren't so tight...



Have you ever heard these cries, or thought them yourself? So many, many times through the years I have found myself saying many of these things. In the middle of the baby years, with a baby in my arms, toddlers hanging on my skirts and a preschooler, I wished for someone to help with the chores. Later, there were plenty of helpers, but more work and home-schooling to accomplish and I was sure that this was the most difficult time of my life. Still later, when my last babies were tiny, and we were sitting up to chat with young people facing life changing decisions, I was saying other "ifs." So soon, the babies stopped coming and I wasn't nursing any more but my nights were interrupted because of changing hormones. The temptation to be discontented was still there. Some ladies never have problems sleeping even with hormone changes....

**Contentment is a choice,
and joy follows it.**



As I was thinking about the last thirty years, I realized that one of the things that had sapped too much of my vitality was discontentment and murmuring. I remembered the joyful, singing girl that became a mother and somewhere, some of the song was lost. Where did it go when I did not have it? Why was it too often gone? I see so many, many tired, frustrated mothers who do not have the joy of

Jesus on their faces. What is the answer? What have I learned over the years?

When we were married, I was joyful, and full of song. In fact, singing characterized my life. I had learned through some very, very difficult experiences of being alone, that Jesus was all I needed. When I met with Him and walked with

Him my heart overflowed with song. So when I met and married my husband, my cup was really full and overflowing. Now I

had a person to walk with me and to share with. I was very happy.

The babies began to come and I loved them and loved mothering. Children had always been my special interest. I had worked with them all of my life. But the babies were fussy, very fussy. They cried constantly and were sick so much of the time. Finally we uncovered allergies and began to learn how to deal with the problem. But my nights were always interrupted with little ones who did not feel well. I began to drown in the sea of self-pity and discontent. I dragged through my days. I was not serving. I was just tending house and caring for the little ones. I felt like I was failing God. Hadn't He called me to serve others, too? My songs lost their joyfulness. My smile flashed less often. Of course, I was weary! But, remember friends, "the Joy of the LORD is my strength" (Nehemiah 8:10). Without joy there is less strength. For a few years I struggled through my difficulties, keeping on, but really lacking joy and vitality.

Then the Lord met me in a new way and presented to me very clearly the ministry that I had in my own home, the calling that was mine, the challenge to contentment. And the sparkle came back. Oh, the babies still cried at night and I was still weary, but I was thrilled with the understanding that my children were indeed my mission field and that as I served my husband and nurtured our children I was serving the Lord. I was content to serve however I could in my little way, with my children. How sweet it was to be there, and how many, many opportunities came my way to fill others with a bit of happiness and song. This was another joyful time.

The years passed. Then some major disappointments touched our lives. Once again, I had to come to grips with the fact that my happiness is in Jesus Christ alone. No matter what I may do, unless I serve the Lord Jesus with all my heart, soul, mind and strength I will never be contented. Circumstances do affect us, and trials come, but they do not need to steal our joy. What an impor-

tant lesson to learn. Why does it take us so long to really grasp this?

Here I am today, a mother of nine, ages twenty-nine to seven, and a grandmother of six. The temptation is still the same today, but the struggle is not usually as difficult. It's like learning to walk. The more you do it the easier it is to keep your balance. The longer you look at God as a good God, easier it is to accept all things from His hand, sweetly and with contentment. Jesus is my personal friend and He answers my prayers. I do fail, but I can always go back and find sweet forgiveness and go on!

The other morning in my devotions I read this verse, *I Corinthians 10:10* "Neither murmur ye as some of them also murmured and were destroyed . . ." I thought, "Isn't that why our happiness is so often destroyed? It is not having many babies close together, being short in finances, suffering from poor health or having a husband who doesn't help us with the housework that steals our happiness. But discontentment surely will. A discontented, murmuring spirit will destroy us just like the children of Israel were destroyed. Our bodies will not die of a plague, but our joyful spirit will die.

Contentment is a jewel of great price. With it, a small, simple house can seem like a mansion. A frugal meal can become a feast and everything we do can be a blessing. Without it, we are irritable, the children whine and the day does not go well.

What is contentment? Webster's 1828 says contentment is "a resting or satisfaction of mind without disquiet; acquiescence."

I like that. No disquiet, only a restful, satisfied mind. And since everyone in our household reflects us, there will be a resulting restfulness in our homes. There will be a peaceful acceptance of what God brings into our lives each day.

Peaceful acceptance brings joy, and a joyous heart overflows with praise.

Psalm 118:24 "This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." When you and I

This is
the day which
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learn this lesson, it changes our whole life. This is a lesson that I wish the grandmas had passed on to me. If you can see each day as a gift to you, from God, you will be able to better accept what is in the package. You will begin to rejoice. When you see your husband and your little ones in this light you are far more able to joyfully face each new day.

Can you wake up with a sigh and a moan if you understand: *"This is the day that the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it?"* Of course not! I have taken the challenge of waking up with my alarm, and thanking the Lord for the new day and the things He will bring to me. This starts my day on the right foot and is quite helpful. After all, it is harder to grumble about something that you have already thanked God for! Then, as each spill, each challenge, and each interruption comes, stop and say, "Thank you Lord, another chance to bring glory to you." It will change your life.

If you have never read the story, "Pollyanna" by Eleanor Porter, you have missed an opportunity to be challenged by a child who had a contented attitude and a happy outlook about things, even difficult things. Read it aloud to your children and you'll all benefit from the message that there is something in everything to be glad about. That message is the whole of the book. It is shouted in every chapter and we have often been inspired by it.

God's Word is full of the same message. In fact, the author of "Pollyanna", got her message from the Word. That is where her story took root. Take a look at a few of the commands in the Word to contentment. *1 Timothy 6:6 "But godliness with contentment is great gain. . ."* and *Philippians 4:11 "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."* Then comes the injunction to rejoice, and that one is everywhere in the Bible. It is bursting from every seam in the Psalms and sprinkled liberally many other places. Look at a few of them. *Psalm 118:24 This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.*

Psalm 40:16 "Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified." *Psalm 90:14 "O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days."* *Isaiah 12:3 "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation."*

Contentment and joy go hand in hand. Contentment is a choice, and joy follows it. If you do not have joy, you need to get in touch with Jesus and find Him to be your satisfaction for each day. Accept Him as your Lord! Then when He gives you some-

**Contentment is a
jewel of great price.
With it, a small,
simple house can
seem like a mansion.
A frugal meal can
become a feast and
everything we do
can be a blessing.**



thing you would not choose, you can recognize it as a gift from Him. This really changes how you look at everything. *"Be thankful unto Him and bless His name for the Lord is good". Psalm 100:4-5*

Study contentment and joy. Learn your lesson well and you will find peace and contentment filling your heart and life daily. You may fail and find yourself bogging down in the middle of difficult circumstances. The song may go out of your heart and the light go out of your eyes. Then fall on your face and meet your Father who knows everything and has arranged each new day especially for you. Repent and rejoice. This is the day that the Lord hath made!

The following poem sums it up pretty well.

A heavy sigh, "Oh what a day!"
I have to "be content," you say.
You go about, mouth drooping low
Leaving depression where you go.
Your shoulders stoop, your head hangs down,
Contentment is your "only crown".
Contentment? That is what you say?
But friend, you aren't content today.
Come now. Lift up your head, admit it.
You'd like your way if you could git' it.
But since you can't, well, "you feel good,
You've borne your lot, just like you should."
That weary look, the martyred air
You have assumed, so unaware
Is not contentment, it won't stand,
CONTENTMENT AND JOY GO HAND IN HAND.

-Joyce Weaver





An Open Heaven!

Testimony by Mary Yoder

My desire in sharing this is not to write my life story or to evoke pity, but rather to exalt God and to testify of what He can do when we lay aside all the fears and doubts and shame and choose to do what it takes to get right with him. I want it to be a message of hope to hurting souls, it doesn't matter how low you have fallen, God can change you into a completely different person with a new identity!

Also, I desire this to be a grave warning to parents of the devastating things that can happen to children when they are left to themselves. Parents, do not think that cousins or children from your church are safe playmates for your children. Most children, if left unsupervised will get into trouble, it only takes a moment to lose innocency.

Please pray for me, that I can continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus. ~Mary Yoder

It is with great joy and praise to the Lord Jesus that I share this testimony. My desire is to lift up God's mighty protection, His merciful forgiveness, His saving grace, transforming power, and unfailing faithfulness throughout my life. He is my best Friend.

I was born and raised in an Amish home, we later joined a conservative Mennonite church, I was the tenth child in a family of twelve. We were a very average family, our parents taught us many good things and we always had family devotions. I have many good memories of normal childhood activities such as climbing trees, playing dolls, fishing, etc. However somehow in my earliest, most tender years

the devil got a hold of my heart and mind, twisting them and robbing me of my carefree innocence, creating burdens that were too heavy for little shoulders to carry. I cannot even remember a time when insecurities, depression and perversion did not shadow my life. I was a very shy, sensitive little girl. I would cry for hours for no particular reason, I just felt sad and miserable.

As I got older my shyness turned to boldness and I learned how to charm people with a sweet smile and friendly attitude so that they wouldn't know how wretched I was inside. I was extremely self-centered and usually got what I want-

ed either by being “cute” or begging until everyone was sick of me and gave me what I wanted to quiet my whining. When I started school a whole new world of friends and information opened up to me several times a week I would spend the afternoon/evening with a friend or cousin playing unsupervised for hours at a time. We spent many days running through the woods engaging in harmless, wholesome play. However we fell into some very wicked, impure things. Being the “wild child” that I was, I probably instigated most of the inappropriate and perverted things we did.

No one ever paid enough attention to us little girls to notice anything; I was a talented liar and very secretive. So I’m sure I could have figured out a way to get us out of any trouble and probably made us look like the good guys as well, which did in fact happen many times. When I got into a tight spot my motto basically was, hide what you can, lie about the rest. I had a lot of anger and frustration in my heart that just kept growing and growing. This manifested itself in fighting. My sister and I constantly fought until we bled. I fought at school as well, especially with the boys if they crossed my path. Hot anger would just boil over and spew onto the unfortunate offender, which I greatly enjoyed. Sometimes I fought for the sheer joy of tearing into some one and venting some of the anger inside. Another problem I had at school was stubbornness. I had the ability to be a straight A student but I hated being told what to do. So many times I just spaced out and daydreamed instead of doing my work, leaving lots of it only partly done.

Around the age of seven I started feeling strong desired to kill myself. I often wrote out suicide notes to my family telling them that I just ended it all because I was so unhappy. After a while I would take the note I had written and flush it down the toilet so no one would find it. I turned to food for comfort, eating and eating till my little tummy was stuffed. I ate whatever I wanted, whenever I wanted, exercising no self-control.

One Sunday morning as I was walking to church with some of my older siblings I was lagging behind by myself when suddenly, in the ditch I saw this tiny little booklet. I thought it was cute so I snatched it up and slipped it into my pocket. It was full of evil and the devil used it to twist and defile my mind into homosexuality. I cannot describe the devastation that this caused in my heart. I disposed of the little book soon because of the guilt and fear of being found out but the effects lingered on for many years.

All the time these things were going on I was a sweet compliant little girl on the outside and no one had a clue about the things that I was involved in. The story of my life was hiding, hiding, hiding. I had

so many secrets, but no one thought anything of it because after all don’t all little girls love to giggle and to have secrets?

At the age of eleven my family moved two hours away to start a new church, so I was removed from all my friends and secret hideouts. After we moved there were several years that kind of just passed. I remember very little about those years except that I was getting more numb to my feelings until I finally reached a point where I thought that I didn’t have emotions any more. I covered all this up with foolishness and laughter. When I was fifteen I wanted to be born again so one night I prayed and asked Jesus to come into my heart. This made me feel better for a little while and I got baptized into the church. We had the plan of salvation clearly preached at church but I didn’t really understand repentance plus I had bondages that couldn’t be broken simply by a little prayer prayed by myself. The good feelings wore off quickly and with it came a deep dark depression. All the things I had experienced in my childhood returned with such intensity I felt like I was being overpowered and suffocated. It was like a dark heavy cloud was pressing down on me physically and mentally.

My heart was so full of anger and hatred it felt like I was going to burst. I began to abuse myself, just pouring out the rage on my own body, I yearned for death. All my thoughts were basically centered upon the driving desire to just end it all. I started experiencing severe chest pains so sharp and strong they took my breath away. It was diagnosed as panic attacks and I was put on medication. Over the next year I was on so many different medications I don’t even remember what they all were. All these medications just fried my brain and my body. The majority of my time was spent locked in my bedroom sleeping or contemplating suicide but once again my God so mercifully intervened and I never did it.

My doctor had done everything she could and I wasn’t getting better. She finally referred me to a psychiatrist so that I could be monitored more closely. I panicked because I was afraid they would put me in a hospital or something so I got my mom to tell them that we would find another place to go for counseling. My brother-in-law so kindly arranged for me to go to Deeper Life Ministries in OH. I was there for four weeks but I refused to cooperate and to be totally honest with my counselor so they really couldn’t help me very much. After I left DLM I was so psyched I just went crazy. My life was miserable I had no purpose or goals except to feed my flesh. That summer I spent four months in Milbank, SD, with my married sister who had six children. I was very needed, there were only a couple young families and it was in the middle of gardening and canning season.

Those months were spent in the heat, baby-sitting, cleaning, weeding corn and canning peaches etc. It was extremely good for me and I was actually able to get off of my antidepressants.

In September I went back to NC and my sister Amy and I decided to attend Charity youth Bible School. We had no idea what we were getting into, Praise God! I was in shock the whole week I had never in my life been in a crowd like this. There were so many godly youth with clear faces, they were open and honest, sharing their hearts and loving each other. I just observed in quiet amazement and in my heart I knew this was it, this was the truth and freedom that I wanted, I knew that someday I would have it. As we were leaving Bible School I looked at Amy and said, "Amy some day I'm going to live here." After we got home I tried so hard to live a victorious Christian life. I read my Bible more and prayed more but I had not had a heart change and I felt no real connection to God, so as the excitement of Bible School wore off so did my Christianity.

Through out the next year I tried several times to get right with God. I had some contact with Mel and Barbie Esh, which was a tremendous blessing, but I never could bring myself to confess everything that I had been involved in. So I would feel better for awhile and then crash again. There were so many things I didn't understand and I believe that God was using these things to prepare my heart and to bring me to a point of desperation.

In August of 2002, God in His great wisdom and mercy opened the doors for me to move to PA and to live with David and Cherie Cooper. I lived with them for seven life-changing months. Here I was, a Mennonite girl, depressed, proud, willful and fiercely independent dropped into the middle of a family I had never met and who can be best described as the Godly Home tape series in action. I want to take this opportunity to bless the entire Cooper family for the love and patience that they extended to me through those turbulent months of adjustments and homesickness. Thank-you!

As the first several weeks in PA rolled by I began doubting my conversion more and more. I seemed that the harder I tried the more miserable I became. Then Bible School came around and I was encouraged to spend time in prayer and fasting to prepare my heart. Well, pray and fast I did. I cried out to God as I had never done before, pleading and begging Him to save me and set me free. Somehow I had a feeling that something would happen at Bible School, then God told me that when the time was right, Bro. Mose would be the one He was going to use. So I began to pray specifically for Bro. Mose that God would give him wisdom and show him what questions to ask me.

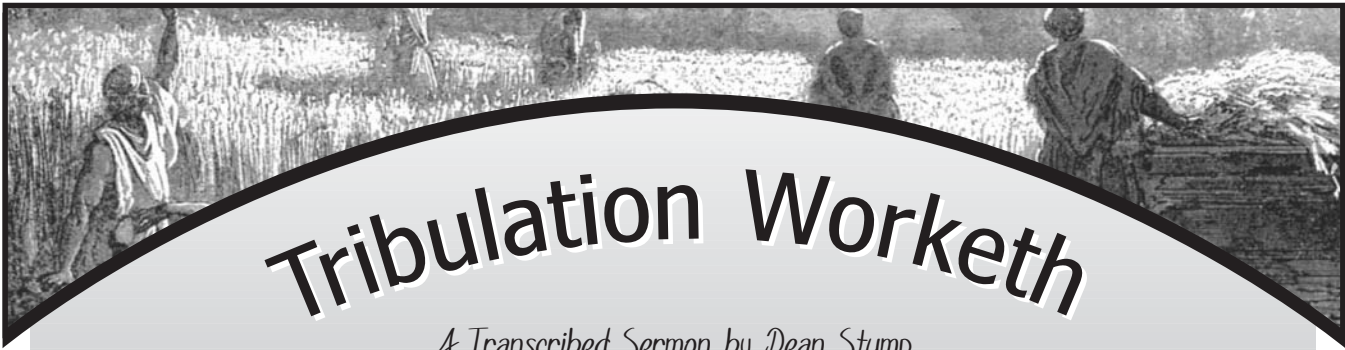
I was so afraid I wouldn't have the courage to confess everything but I wanted to, desperately.

The first day of Bible School finally came and as I opened the schedule Bro. Denny's title 'Freedom from Bondage' jumped out. I immediately knew this was going to be the key. I sat through Monday and Tuesday's messages with my heart wide open. After Tuesday's message I said "OK God, I'm ready to do whatever it takes. Please just send Bro. Mose to me." Only minutes after I had breathed that little prayer, I met up with Bro. Mose and after talking for several minutes we arranged to meet during the evening service.

We met that evening along with another godly couple. As we talked and Bro. Mose started asking questions everything just came spilling out. I told and told until I couldn't think of one more thing. We then got on our knees and the two brothers laid their hands on me and prayed in the name of Jesus, rebuking the devil who had harassed and oppressed me for so many years. After that I prayed, confessing my sins and trusting God to forgive and wash me clean. In the name of Jesus I renounced all the bondages of depression, suicide, homosexuality, and other demonic activity. I meant every word that I prayed and I believed with my whole heart. As I left the room that evening the realization of what had happened slowly dawned on me and my heart just overflowed with joy. Truly old things had become new.

I had a believer's baptism several weeks later as a public testimony to the death of my old man and the resurrection of a new creature in Christ. Three years have passed since the Lord Jesus saved my soul and He has been so faithful to me since then. He has completely delivered me from the bondages of my past life. I can say what Paul said in Philippians 3:13-14, "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth into those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." By the grace of God I can walk with a clear conscience and an open heaven. I have discovered the liberation that comes from living open and honestly before God and man. Because of Jesus I can face the future with joy and anticipation knowing that God in His infinite wisdom has a plan for my life and I can rest in Him. In the past couple months God has been dealing with some things in my life, gently teaching and guiding me to set my heart on higher things. My desire is to live my whole life in complete abandonment to the Lord Jesus, poured out like wine. □

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory and blessing. Revelation 5:12



Tribulation Worketh

A Transcribed Sermon by Dean Stump

I want to show you clearly, from the word of God, that “tribulation worketh.” Tribulation has its place in your life today. As long as you are clothed in your body of flesh, it will be a part of your life. It is not something that you should try to run from. I don’t believe that you should try to run into it, but neither should you try to run from it, because God says that “tribulation worketh.”

For our Scripture passage, let’s turn to Romans chapter five. I’d like to read the first eight verses:

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”



In a third-world country, they still clearly understand what it is to thrash, or to beat something. They beat the crop with threshing instruments to get the meat of the crop separated from the chaff, which was at one point a very necessary part of that grain.

According to Strong’s, tribulation is defined as “pressure or affliction or anguish, being burdened, or persecution, or trouble.” The 1828 Webster’s dictionary defines it as “severe affliction, or distresses of life, sometimes coming from persecution.” Also in Webster’s tribulation means “to thrash, or to beat.”

Do we know what it means to thrash something? Unfortunately, in this industrialized nation, we go through our corn fields and wheat fields with a

machine, and the grain comes rolling out—we don’t think much about the threshing that the grain went through. However, in a third-world country, they still clearly understand what it is to thrash, or to beat something. I’ve watched them do it in Ghana, and it’s a very painstaking job. They beat the crop with threshing instruments to get the meat of the crop separated from the chaff, which was at one point a very necessary part of that grain.

My personal testimony, is like that of the psalmist David when he said “before I was afflicted and tribulation came upon me, I went astray” (Psalm 119:67). When I was seventeen years old, I can remember clearly sitting in my father’s living room with visitors present. I remember the feelings I had of superiority over my father, and feeling the need to bring correction to him. I felt this way because I thought that I had greater

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knowledge than my father, who was some years my senior. What a shame. What a proud heart I had! My loving heavenly Father (who I didn't know at that time was my father) understood what I needed. He knew that I needed tribulation in my life, so I would be at a place of nothingness and humility. Very soon after (still seventeen years old with a proud heart), I remember ice-skating out on the pond, knowing that I was unconquerable, knowing that no one was going to make this young, proud heart surrender.

God knew what I needed. All God had to do was allow an accident to happen which caused my shoulder to be dislocated, and bring me to a place of suffering—of suffering that I had never experienced before. Now I can look back and say, "Tribulation worketh." Also, when I was still seventeen years old, months after injuring my shoulder, and with a brand new truck with only 3,000 miles and that same proud heart, knowing that the world spun under my feet, I had an accident and rolled my truck. It was only the mercy of God that my life was preserved. Still not getting it, I fixed the truck, went another 3,000 miles, and wrecked it again. Soon after that I surrendered my heart and life to Jesus Christ. At that time that those things happened, I was slow to receive the correction that the Lord brought to me, but now I look back and say "tribulation worketh." Praise God!

Tribulation Comes in Many Ways

- It can be a pressure from within—the anguish of sin on our souls.
- It can come from well-meaning relatives that are opposed to us.
- It can be, as I've already mentioned, afflictions in our flesh—troubles that come to our physical bodies, or to our financial situation.
- It can come from our own selfishness, or from those who we love, or our enemies, or from the evil one seeking to destroy us.
- It can even come from God, who knows just when we need a spanking.
- It can come in a thousand different ways. Whatever its source, know that "tribulation worketh."

When we encounter tribulation, our natural response is not to glory in it, as the apostle Paul mentions here. We read the first two verses of Romans 5, and we're excited that we can be justified and free

from our sins, and that we can have our name written in the Lamb's book of life, and we say Praise God, I'm a child of the King! But Paul says in the very next verse that those things are not the only things to be excited about. We are also to rejoice in our tribulations, knowing that "tribulation worketh." It does a good work in our hearts.

Jesus explains the benefit of suffering in the parable of the sower in Matthew 13:20-21:

"But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; [He says Praise God, I'm a child of the King!] Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended."

This is the burden of my message. Where are you in regards to the suffering, to the tribulation, to the persecution, to the anguish, or the trouble that you have in your life today? Jesus says there are those that hear the word, and with joy receive it, but when tribulation comes their way, they're offended! Many of them, sadly, turn their back on God. When trouble comes our way, the natural man doesn't rejoice in it. There is the temptation to be discouraged.

When God gives you a spanking, you don't always have it fresh in your mind that "I'm getting this because my heavenly Papa loves me." We don't always take it with our head bowed, and with our knees bent, do we? Sometimes we stiffen up. When my children become about three years of age, I'll sometimes give them a thorough explanation of how they need to receive a spanking—they need to surrender their will. It's a good sermon to preach to ourselves, isn't it?

Here's an important quote from G. D. Watson: "There's nothing more dangerous to your Christian life than uninterrupted prosperity." There's nothing that will snuff out your spiritual life more effectively than uninterrupted prosperity, whether that be with health, or with finances, or with your mind, or the acceptance of your family. So when you're experiencing difficulty, remember that "tribulation worketh."

Do you want God to work in your life? Do you want God to refine your character? Do you want God to take you beyond the place of "Praise God, I'm a child of His!?" The first year I was a Christian, I thought I experienced it all. It was wonderful! There was seemingly a grace over my life that shielded me from nearly everything—it seemed like I was undaunted by any-

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thing! Because of this, I thought I was a very victorious Christian for a while. Soon afterwards, tribulation started coming my way, and I started seeing ugly things come out of my life. Without that tribulation, I would have never seen those ugly parts of my character I had previously been unaware of.

Here's How NOT To Respond When Trouble Comes Your Way

When in trouble, do not blame others. Don't blame God, and don't even blame Satan! To blame your troubles, pressures, and trials on others works many evils. It humiliates us, and it also sours the heart. It embitters the mind, and clouds the natural faculties, and thus poisons the very fountains of our spirits, which God designed to be sweetened and mellowed by the very trouble that we are disposed to complain of. To lay blame for our trouble on others protects our self-life. If you can find someone or something to blame your troubles on, it protects you from being crucified, and that's what Jesus wants! He said you can't even be His disciple if you can't take up your cross, and the cross means none other than suffering! The cross is not a physical emblem you carry around your neck. It's going to mean some form of suffering in your life! It's going to bring some persecution to you—it's designed to bring death. If you can push your tribulations upon someone else, you're going to miss that wonderful work God is trying to do in your life.

Here Are Four Things That Tribulation Should Lead Us To

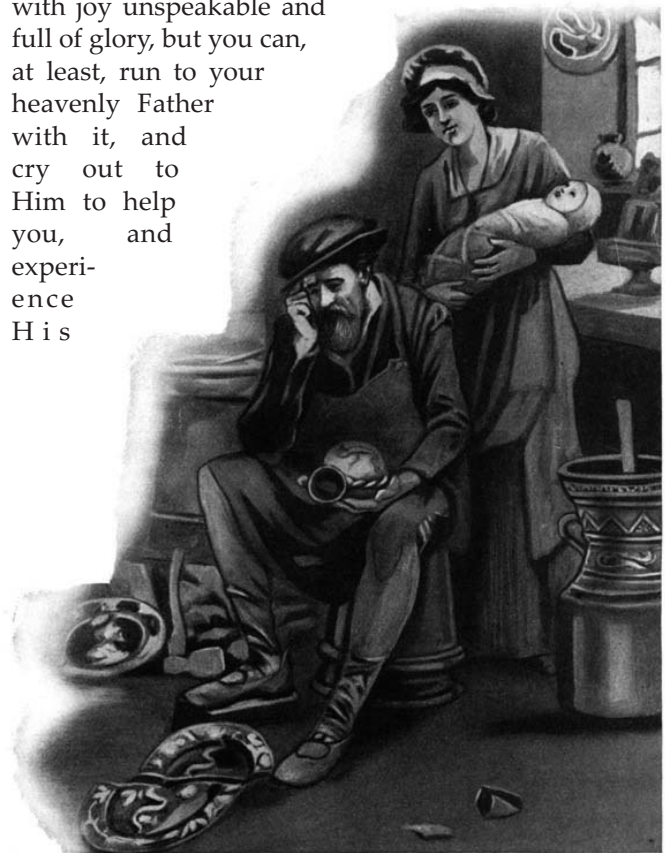
1. To detach us from "creature comforts" to a relationship with the Father

Remember what I said about uninterrupted prosperity? Somehow, in the everyday routine of life, there can creep into our hearts a smugness and a complacency. We can become satisfied with the job that we have, and the abundant money, and other things. There's nothing to cause us to fall on our knees in desperation and humility and poverty of spirit before God, so that we would say, "Lord, without you, I'm not going to make it through the day!"

Without the pressures that can come from every side, we can be easily distracted from the living God

who wants a relationship with us. He wants our dependence to be upon Him. If you are one of those stony-heart hearers, those pressures and tribulations can cause you to become bitter, and to blame others. You need to start thanking God that you're in the difficult situation your in, and start crying out to God to help you and give you grace in your time of need! Paul, with his thorn in the flesh, besought God to remove it from him, but no! God wanted to work something in Paul's character!

Maybe you can't jump up and dance with the sickness that plagues you, or that person that rubs you the wrong way, or that tribulation that you're going through. Maybe you don't have the grace today to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, but you can, at least, run to your heavenly Father with it, and cry out to Him to help you, and experience His



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everlasting arms around you and His grace poured into you. You will look back at the end of the day and realize, "I made it! The Lord helped me today! Thank you, heavenly Father!" You will start to learn that "tribulation worketh."

2. To take Jesus as a partner of our pains

In all our afflictions, He was afflicted. Note here in our text that *"in due time Christ died for the ungodly,"* and *"God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."* We were the problem—Christ was not the problem. But Christ took the responsibility upon Himself. He became a man, and became subjected to the temptations and the tribulations that you and I are subject to today, and did so all the way to the death on the cross, and all the way to the shedding of the last drop of blood in His body. He is a partner with us in our pain. He can sympathize with us. In all points that you are afflicted, that you are suffering, that you have anguish or pressures in your life, He was tempted, and understands what you're going through. Brothers and sisters, when the pressures come in on your life, here's what you need to do: Make Jesus your partner. Come unto Jesus, as he says in Matthew 11:28-30 *"Come unto me, all ye that labour 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 in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."*

Hear His cry in your time of anguish, in your time of pain and suffering, and rather than becoming embittered and trying to blame it on others, and God, and the devil (even while others, the devil, and even God may have a real part in it), instead thank God for the opportunity you have to relate with Jesus, and to fill up that which is lacking in the sufferings of Christ, and to be made conformable into His



image! Philippians 3:8-10 says, *"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered [here's that word—suffering!] the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death"*

Paul knew what it was to suffer loss, and he didn't blame anyone. He was glorying in his suffering, and doing it gladly for Jesus' sake. He got a glimpse of the importance of sufferings, and how they would in this life, bring him closer to Jesus. So, run to the Lord Jesus Christ in the time of your suffering.

3. It causes us to recognize the presence of God in every step

Jesus said, *"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."* The pure in heart; those who have had their hearts redeemed, and have had their hearts cleansed, and made righteous through the blood of Jesus. Their hearts are free, and when trouble comes their way, they can respond to it in a godly way. They can see God in it, and learn to recognize God in each step on the anguish, and understand that God's purposes are being worked out in this situation. In society, you meet many people who are greatly embittered about something that has happened in their lives. My wife had a cousin who had a couple of fingers cut off in a saw, and it was somebody else's carelessness that caused it. It seems to this day he's bitter about it—and because of his bitterness, the fruit is not right in his life.

If you can bow your heart to the sovereignty of God, and recognize that this all-wise, all-knowing God is looking down on the universe, and that He's cares about what I'm going through, and that He sees what I'm experiencing, and He is allowing this tribulation to happen, then you are a blessed person!! Do you know any people that see God in their trials? They're the

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sweetest people on earth, aren't they? They drip with honey! If you want to be an attraction to the world, and to those who don't know Christ, then begin to face your suffering this way. Start crying out to God, that you would recognize Him in all of your trials and tribulations that come your way. You'll be the envy of those around you. No one is attracted to the bitter, shriveled-up soul that is complaining about his problems, or bitter that the whole world's against him. But if you start recognizing God in the trials that come your way, be they training your children, forming a new church, or whatever they may be, your heart will change, and those around you will know it. God will truly be glorified in your life.

4. Suffering should soften our hearts so that we would have a tender heart towards others who suffer

When we see others in their hour of trial, in their hour of anguish, our suffering should lead us to have compassion towards them. There are so many going through poverty, physical pain, spiritual pain, or problems with loved ones. The apostle Paul said in II Corinthians 4:7-11 *"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."*

God wants to be constantly in a place of undoneness. I marvel many times at the first words out of Jesus' mouth when he was about to preach the greatest sermon ever preached: *"Blessed [happy, or to be envied] are the poor in spirit."* Those who are humble, who have a sense of undoneness about them, *"have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the power may be of God, and not of us."* Understand, that in our tribulations, that God is keeping us at a place of undoneness. Being in this state will better enable us to be others-centered, instead of self-centered.

"We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed...."

Why not distressed? Because Paul saw God in the picture! He saw God brooding over him in the midst of difficulty. He made it a habit to run to his heavenly Father. He saw an opportunity to share in Jesus' sufferings.

"We are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always

delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."

Here again, Paul is simply finding another way to say that "tribulation worketh." It does a good thing in your heart, in making you dependent upon God.

Brothers and sisters, if your life is moving along in unhindered prosperity, you should tremble. You should cry out to God, that the life of Jesus may be manifested in your body, instead of depending upon your ability and your own goodness to get by in the



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Christian life. You need daily to have in your life the attitude that says, "I cannot do this on my own. God, I must have you. I will utterly fail in my own strength."

Paul says, *"We preach Christ."* Is that where he stopped? I've heard it many times today, "Preach Christ! Don't preach anything but Jesus Christ!" Is that where it stops? Paul says, *"We preach Christ crucified."* We preach a suffering gospel. We preach that *"tribulation worketh."* We preach that it's okay to have a financial setback. That doesn't mean that God is against you! There's a lot to ponder when we think of preaching *"Christ crucified."* It reminds us that we need to have a life dead to self, and that we need to welcome suffering, and have our lives daily placed on the altar, and never being satisfied with where you are. We would

Tribulation Worketh

never have found pardon, or have known redemption, if it wouldn't be for the suffering of Christ, and His clothing Himself in human flesh. We would have no hope, if it weren't for "Christ crucified."

Sorrow, tribulation and anguish are among many of the ways that we suffer, and thereby are weaned from ourselves. In redemption, God does a wonderful work in our hearts. He gives a new heart, and new desires, and somehow, despite it all, there can come a complacency, a satisfaction that's not right.

I'm concerned about the way our country approaches persecution and suffering—the Charismatic seems to say that God doesn't want us to suffer, or to be sick; many seek to cause the church to be angry and up in arms about the rampant persecution in other parts of the world, and to get involved politically to help stop such persecution, and to make sure that no one has to go through persecution. After all, don't we have a right to believe what we wish without persecution? But the apostle Paul seemed to think differently. There seems to be a resignation and an acceptance of persecution, with the underlying thought of "You need tribulation in your life." Don't run from tribulation. Don't believe God's main goal is to free us from difficulty here on earth.

In closing, here's what the Bible says tribulation worketh in us. Romans 5:3-5 *...tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*

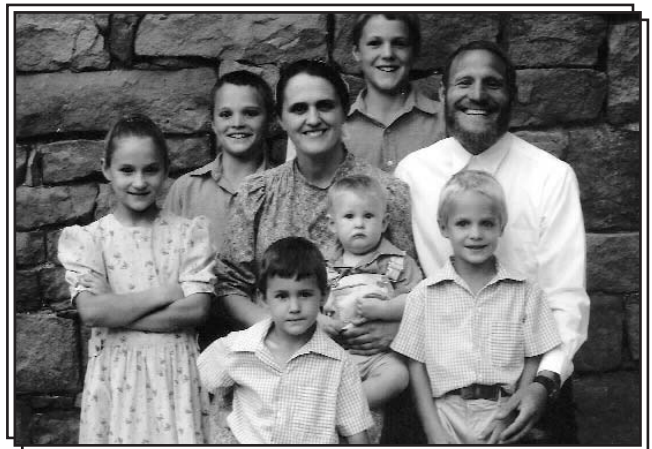
And when that hope is shed abroad in our hearts, we can have boldness. However this boldness, when coming through the avenue of tribulation, is not an arrogant boldness, brothers and sisters. Rather, it's a quiet and a joyful boldness that remains undaunted in the face of whatever comes its way. It's a boldness and a confidence that comes only because "I know in whom I have believed." Our confidence rests fully and wholly in Christ. The confidence in our flesh is stripped from us. The temptation to glory in a spiritual conquest, if the conquest comes through tribulation, is replaced by a knowing in our heart that all glory belongs to God, and none to ourselves.

In the passage, patience is followed by experience. It's not something that's mere empty theology in our minds, but rather something that gets worked out in the everyday workings of our lives. We're talking about the workplace, the home—places where difficulties and trials can be such that we have to often run to our heavenly Father. It's here where patience is devel-

oped, when an immediate crisis forces us to choose between reacting in a godly way and "flying off the handle". There's the excuse that is given so many times: "It happened so fast that I didn't even have time to think!" But at a time like that, you can have righteous responses, and later look back at the incident and say, "Praise God! Tribulation is working in my life."

I want to share a past experience that taught me an important truth regarding tribulation. Years ago I was nominated as a deacon. Earlier that same day (the selection service was in the evening), I once again separated my shoulder badly—the same one I had injured when I was seventeen. The shoulder wouldn't pop back into place by itself, so I had to spend time at the chiropractor to put it back into place. By the time the evening had arrived, I was a pretty broken man—the possibility of me being ordained hadn't even crossed my mind. I was simply bowing my heart to the physical pain, choosing to see God in it and allowing Him to work. When they said my name, I was shocked, but understood at the same time that God uses broken vessels, and that He wants to use those who don't have confidence in themselves. Even with the numerous physical ailments I've endured over the years, I can rejoice and look back at the last ten years with a real understanding of God's mercy in my life. Those physical trials have kept me from going back to my proud, arrogant ways.

In closing I say to you again that "tribulation worketh" a good work in your heart. Don't despise it. □



Dean Stump is a deacon at Ephrata Christian Fellowship, Ephrata, PA. This message was preached at Living Hope Christian Fellowship, Terre Hill, PA

Counsel Upon PARENTAL DUTY *and* RESPONSIBILITY

SEVERITY AND OVER-INDULGENCE



First, I remark that many err in too great severity or too great leniency of family government. Between parental tyranny and ruinous laxness of discipline there is a medium. Sometimes the father errs on one side and the mother on the other side. Good family government is all important. Anarchy and misrule in the domestic circle is the forerunner of anarchy and misrule in the State. What a repulsive spectacle is a home without order or discipline; disobedience and impudence, anger and falsehood lifting their horrid front in the place which should be consecrated to all that is holy and peaceful and beautiful. In the attempt to avoid all this, and bring the children under proper laws and regula-

tions, parents have sometimes carried themselves with great rigor.

The heart sickens at what you sometimes see, even in families that pretend to be Christian- perpetual scolding, and hair pulling, and ear boxing, and thumping, and stamping, and fault-finding, and teasing, until the children are vexed beyond bounds and growl in the sleeve, and pout, and rebel, and vow within themselves that in after-days they will retaliate for the cruelties practiced.

A child's nature is too delicate to be worked on by sledgehammer and gouge and pile-driver. Such fierce lashing, instead of breaking the high mettle to bit and trace, will make it dash off the more uncontrollable.



“I was only playing, and he is my little boy, and I am scolding him, as you did me this morning.” Children are apt to be echoes of their parents.

Many seem to think that children are flax- not fit to use until they have been hackled (combed to straighten) and swungled (beat with a knifelike instrument). Some one talking to a child said: “I wonder what makes that tree out there so crooked.” The child replied: “I suppose it was trod on while it was young.”

THE FAMILY SCAPEGOAT

In some families all the discipline is concentrated upon one child’s head. If anything is done wrong the supposition is that “George” did it. He broke the latch. He left open the gate. He hacked the banisters. He whittled sticks on the carpets. And George shall

be the scapegoat for all domestic misunderstandings and suspicions. If things get wrong in the culinary department, in comes the mother and says, angrily: “Where is George?” If business matters are perplexing at the store, in comes the father at night and says, angrily: “Where is George?” In many a household there is such a one singled out for suspicion and criticism. All the sweet flowers of his soul blasted under this perpetual northeast storm. He curses the day in which he was born. Safer is the child in an ark of bulrushes on the Nile, among crocodiles, than in an elegant mansion, amid such domestic Gorgons (terrifying Greek gods).

A mother was passing along the street one day and came up to her little child, who did not see her approach, and her child was saying to her playmate: “You good for nothing little scamp, you come right into the house this minute, or I will beat you till the skin comes off.” The mother broke in, saying: “Why, Lizzie, I am surprised to hear you talk like that to anyone!” “Oh,” said the child, “I was only playing, and he is my little boy, and I am scolding him, as you did me this morning.” Children are apt to be echoes of their parents.

Safer in a Bethlehem manger among cattle and camels, with gentle Mary to watch the little innocent, than in the most extravagant nursery over which God’s star of peace never stood. The trapper extinguishes the flames on the prairie by fighting fire with fire, but you cannot, with the fire of your own disposition, put out the fire of a child’s disposition.

DANGERS OF OVER-INDULGENCE

Yet we may rush to the other extreme and ruin children by too great leniency. The surgeon is not unkind because, notwithstanding the resistance of his patient, he goes straight on with firm hand and unflinching heart to take off the gangrene. Nor is the parent less affectionate and faithful because, notwithstanding all remonstrance on the part of the child, he, with the firmest discipline, advances to the cutting off of the evil inclinations. The Bible says: “Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.”

Childish rage will unchecked, after awhile, become a hurricane. Childish petulance (bad temper) will grow up into misanthropy (hatred of mankind). Childish rebellion will develop into the lawlessness of riot and sedition. If you would ruin the child, dance to his every caprice and stuff him with confec-

tionary. Before you are aware of it that boy of six years will go down the street, a cigar in his mouth, and ready on any corner with his comrades to compare pugilistic (fist-fighting) attainments. The parent who allows the child to grow up without ever having learned the great duty of obedience and submission has prepared a cup of burning gall for his own lips and appalling destruction for his descendants. Remember Eli and his two sons, Hophni and Phinehas.

A second error prevalent in the training of children is the laying out of a theory and following it without arranging it to varieties of disposition. In every family you will find striking differences of temperament. This child is too timid, and that too bold; and this too miserly, and that too wasteful; this too inactive, and that too boisterous. Now, the farmer, who should plant corn and wheat and turnips in just the same way, then put them through one hopper and grind them in the same mill, would not be so much of a fool as the parents who would attempt to discipline and educate all their children in the same manner. It needs a skillful hand to adjust these checks and balances. The rigidity of government which is necessary to hold in this impetuous nature would utterly crush that flexible disposition, while the gentle reproof that would suffice the latter would, when used on the former, be like attempting to hold a champing Bucephalus (the horse of Alexander the Great who would submit to no other rider) with the reins of a thread.

LET THE CHILDREN EXPLORE A LITTLE

An error often committed in the training of children is the suppression of childish activity and inquisitiveness. Don't put religion on your child as a strait-jacket. Parents, after having for a good many years been jostled about in the rough world, often lose their vivacity, and are astonished to see how their



**Lecture the frisking lambs
on the hillside until they
walk like old sheep, rather
than put exhilarant
childhood in the stocks.**

children can act so thoughtlessly of the earnest world all about them. That is a cruel parent who quenches any of the light in a child's soul. Instead of arresting its playfulness, go forth and help him trundle the hoop, and fly the kite, and build the snow castle. Those shoulders are too little to carry a burden, that brow is too young to be wrinkled, those feet are too sprightly to go along at a funeral pace. God bless their young hearts!

Now is the time for them to be lively. Let them romp and sing and laugh, and go with a rush

and a hurrah. In this way they gather up a surplus of energy for future life. For the child that walks around with a scowl, dragging his feet as though they were weights and sitting down by the hour in moping and grumbling, I prophesy a life of utter inanition (emptiness) and discontent. Hush the robins in the air till they become silent as a bat, and lecture the frisking lambs on the hillside until they walk like old sheep, rather than put exhilarant childhood in the stocks.

THE BEAUTY OF EARLY PIETY

The present generations of men will pass off very much as they are now. Although the gospel is offered to them, the general rule is that drunkards die drunkards, thieves die thieves, and libertines die libertines. Therefore, to the youth we turn. Before they sow wild oats, get them to sow wheat and barley. You fill the bushel measure with good corn and there will be no room for husks.

Oh, for one generation of holy men and women. Shall it be the next? Fathers and mothers, you, under God, are to decide whether from your families shall go forth cowards, inebriates (drunkards), counterfeits, blasphemers, and whether there shall be those bearing your image and carrying your name festering in the low haunts of vice, and floundering in dissipation, and making the midnight of their

lives horrid with a long howl of ruin. Or shall from your family altars come the Christian, the reformers, the teachers, the ministers of Christ, the comforters of the troubled, the healers of the sick, the enactors of good laws, the founders of charitable institutions, and a great many who shall in the humbler spheres of toil and usefulness serve God and the best interests of the human race.

You cannot as parents shirk the responsibility. God has charged you with a mission, and all the thrones of heaven are waiting to see whether you will do your duty. We must not forget that it is not so much what we teach our children, as what we are in their presence. We wish them to be better than we are, but the probability is that they will only be reproductions of our own character.

There is a mysterious phenomena that occurs in the Harz Mountains of Germany known as the "Specter of Brocken". Among these mountains travelers in certain conditions of the atmosphere see themselves copied on a gigantic scale in the clouds below them. At first the travelers do not realize that it is themselves on a larger scale. When they lift their hand or

move their head this they see a giant monster doing the same, and with such enlargement of proportions that the scene is most terrifying. Likewise with us, the probability is that many of our faults that we consider small and insignificant, if we do not put an end to them, will be copied on a larger scale in the lives of our children, and perhaps dilated and exaggerated into spectral proportions. You need not go as far as the Harz Mountains to see that process.

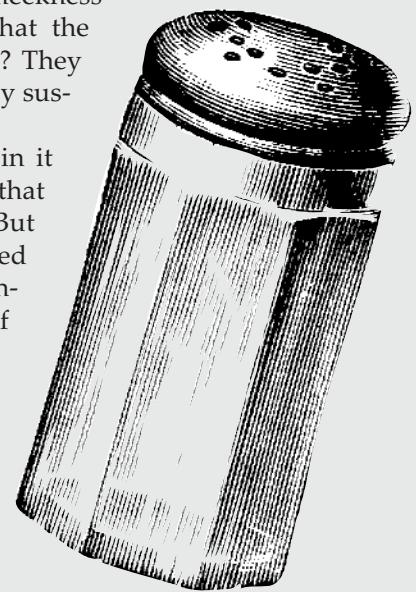
The first thing in importance in the education of our children is to make ourselves, by the grace of God, fit examples to be copied. The day will come when you must confront that child, not in the church pew on a calm Sabbath, but amid the consternation of the rising dead, and the flying heavens, and a burning world. From your side that son or daughter, bone of your bone, heart of your heart, the father's brow his brow, the mother's eye his eye, shall go forth to an eternal destiny. What a joy yours will be if at last you hear their feet in the same golden highway, and hear their voices in the same rapturous song, illustrations, while the eternal ages last, of what a faithful parent could, under God, accomplish! □

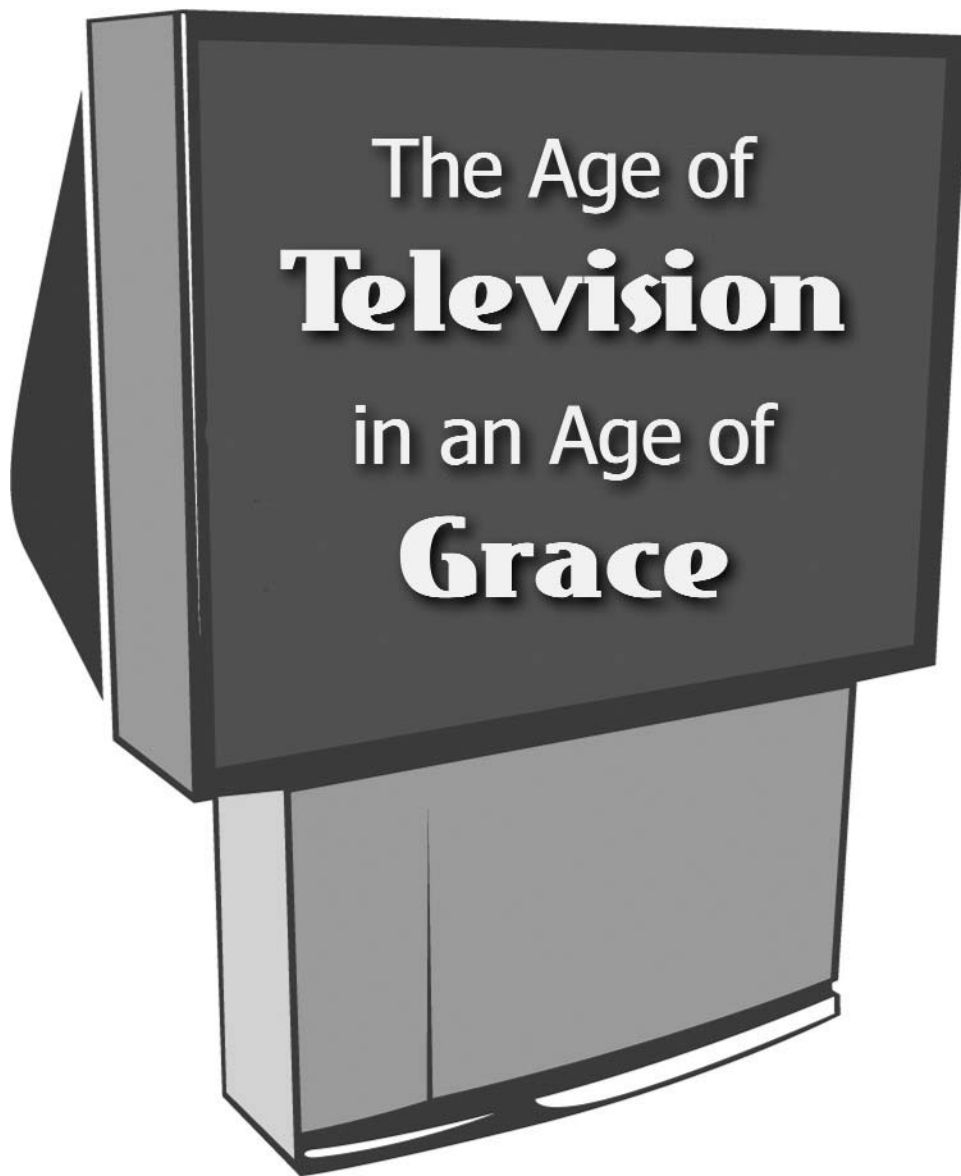
THE SALT OF THE EARTH

Who can estimate the force of a righteous life? Men have little faith in such a force, we know, but it is a force, nevertheless. Men say that meekness is weakness, strict conscientiousness is childishness, and that the uprightness of faith exists only in theory; but do they speak the truth? They believe in energy, self-will, most of all in hard cash; but how little do they suspect the power which exists in the faith of a feeble child!

Rock salt is tangible; men can see it, can feel it; they place faith in it because they can trace its beneficial effects; and so they do not doubt that rock salt is a *power* in preserving any matter to which it may be applied. But when Jesus Christ spoke of "the salt of the earth", they either misapplied His words or they wondered; only a few disciples discovered His meaning, and those few in every age have been misunderstood by the rest of mankind. And "the salt of the earth" is a mystery still to the mass of mankind. They never look for it; they do not suspect its agency or its presence. And while God takes care of this salt, and pounds it and refines it and sometimes put it through severe processes that it may not lose its savour, men are unconscious that it preserves the world.

Can we wonder that when tribulation, time and time again, never fails to bring us to brokenness, consistency and harmony with His designs, that God frequently has chosen to apply it?





*For by grace are ye saved through faith;
and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:
Not of works, lest any man should boast.*
Eph 2:8-9

To many of us, this is a favorite verse, and rightly so. Above all people of any age in history, the church of Jesus Christ today is blessed and favored. Without merit of our own, God has chosen to grant to us pardon, acceptance, and an invitation to enjoy relationship with Him far more intimate than any previous age has known. Ours is the Age of *Grace*, and in these later times this Age of *Grace* happens to co-exist with another age—the Age of Television. Unlike most former generations, every Christian today is confronted with the presence, the attraction, and the influence of television, and the responses of

observation that, where we land with television has everything to do with how we view *grace*. Bear with me a bit as we focus on what the Bible has to say about *grace*, and how *grace* relates to the matter of television.

I'll not hide my own position on television. I am of those radical ones who have chosen complete abstention, not because of some legalistic church rule, but because of my relationship with God. It was not an easy decision to remove TV from my life. I grew up with it, and did not know anyone else in my circle who abstained from it. Nor was it a sudden

God's people are quite varied.

Some feel complete liberty to watch television with little or no restraint. Others exercise some restrictions to one degree or another, and some take the radical step of complete abstention. Some churches even make a rule forbidding their members from owning or watching television, which is often viewed as a legalistic tradition of men, a man-made law by which "*faith is made void, and the promise of God made of none effect*" (Rom 4:14). Some would go so far as to say that those who abstain from, or forbid television, have "*fallen from grace*" (Gal 5:4), and will refer such to Paul's declaration: "*I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain*" (Gal 2:21).

Grace is a big issue in the discussion of television, as it is in any discussion of the practical matters of life. It has been my

decision, but over time, God impressed me with certain truths that changed my thinking. I wish to share those truths with you, the honest, seeking soul, who wishes to know God's heart on every issue of life.

The Definition of Grace?

Grace is a big word and carries various shades of meaning throughout the Bible. "Unmerited favor" is probably the most common definition, and, as the word is used in Ephesians 2:8-9, "For by grace are ye saved...not of works...."

"Unmerited favor" is a valid definition. But grace means more. In John 1:14, Jesus (*the Word*) is referred to as being "full of grace and truth." Was Jesus full of unmerited favor? Of course not. His favor was merited, so much that the Father publicly declared: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt 3:17). What then was Jesus "full of?" May I suggest that the "grace" that Jesus was "full of" refers to His God-like qualities and abilities, or, as John 1:14 puts it, "...and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." Jesus' glorious God-likeness was such that the writer of Hebrews speaks of Him as "...the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person" (Heb 1:3). That is what the word "grace" is referring to in John 1:14. So then, our view of grace must include God-likeness, the possession of God-like qualities and abilities. More could be said of grace, but for our purposes here let us understand that we are indeed saved by "grace" (*unmerited favor*) and salvation is a "gift," but the work of grace in the life of a Christian is far greater than the simple attainment of "unmerited favor" with God. Salvation is only the beginning of the work of grace.

The Prerequisite and Objective of Grace

The Age of Law was a necessary age in that it set the stage for the Age of Grace. The law made manifest the righteousness and holiness of God, and His hatred and judgment of sin. Further, the law made manifest our human propensity to sin, even under the threat of harsh punishment. The law also brought to light the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and our helpless, desperate need of a Savior—a reconciler to atone for our sin and bring us into a right relationship with the God against whom we had rebelled and broken all ties. Indeed, "the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Gal 3:24).

With all of that accomplished, the foundation is now laid for God to build the kind of relationship with man that He has longed for, worked for, sacrificed for, and waited for – a relationship based on gracious love, rather than cold law. It is only after the Age of the Law has done its job that God can now proceed with His task of working in us "both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Phil 2:13) as we are "conformed to the image of his Son" (Rom 8:29). To this end were we *foreknown*; with this objective were we *predestinated*:

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise and glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved" (Eph 1:4-6).

Take special note of the place of grace here, that our salvation is all about the "praise and glory of his grace." And it does not end with this present age, but, "That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (Eph 2:7). Yes, our acceptance with God is of grace, "unmerited favor." But our conforming "to the image of his Son" is also of grace, as is the "holiness" that we were *chosen* for. All that we can become is of the working of God's grace in our lives, as Paul, the champion of grace, put it:

"But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me" (1 Cor 15:10).

The Liberty of Grace

Under the Old Covenant, God's people were under the law, bound to the law, governed by the law, obligated to the law, and related to God on the basis of law. There was nothing wrong with the law in itself, in fact, as Paul explains, "...the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." (Rom 7:12). Yet, because of the depravity of man, no one was ever able to keep the law. Peter calls it "...a yoke...which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear" (Acts 15:10). In addition, the law had a number of bad effects on us, such as the increase of sin: "For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth

fruit unto death" (Rom 7:5). Paul continues: "But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead" (Rom 7:8). Again, the problem was not with the law, but with us, our indwelling sin or sin nature or flesh. And as long as we are under law we will always respond wrongly to that law, which is "weak through the flesh" (Rom 8:3). If we are to ever have a right relationship with God, we must be liberated from the law, which is precisely what the New Covenant is designed to do:

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit (Rom 8:3-4).

This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other...But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law (Gal 5:16-17).

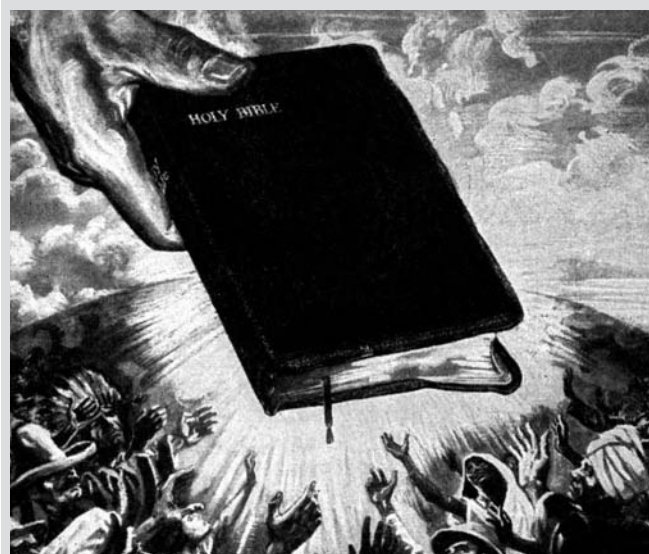
Law and Spirit, as law and grace, simply do not mix; one will always negate the other. To remain under law insures that sin will remain in dominion over us, and we will not be able to fulfill the "righteousness of the law." Paul puts it this way: "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace (Rom 6:14). The obvious implication—to remain under law keeps us under sin. Therefore, by the grace of God, we are "dead to the law" (Rom 7:4), we are "delivered from the law" (Rom 7:6), we are "free from the law" (Rom 8:2). Dead, delivered, and free "to serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter" (Rom 7:6). Hallelujah! Thank God for His amazing grace.

The Misuse of Grace

How wonderful to rejoice in the liberty offered to us by New Covenant *grace*. However, along with the "New" Covenant, comes a "new" challenge. We must be careful not to misuse this liberating *grace*, as Paul warns:

For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh.... (Gal 5:13).

This misuse of *grace* is a very real temptation and danger for us all. The flesh seems to have the ability to corrupt everything good that comes from God, and New Covenant liberty is no exception. It is just pretty easy to stretch our liberty a bit too far, to the point of disobeying God's New Testament commands, and still feel like everything is OK because we are "not under law but under grace." Paul sees it coming, so right in the middle of his discourse contrasting *grace* and *law*, Paul slips in this caution to "use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh." Just several verses later, Paul identifies exactly what the works of the flesh are:



If we are to ever have a right relationship with God, we must be liberated from the law, which is precisely what the New Covenant is designed to do.

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like.... (Gal 5:19-21).

Does this remind you of anything you have seen on TV lately?

Do you suppose it was in the heart of God to grant liberty to His New Covenant people so they could watch "the works of the flesh" acted out by expert actors, in living color, amplified by dramatic

music and sound effects? Was it in God's heart to liberate His people from law, only to be entertained and amused by *"the works of the flesh?"* Perhaps you have never considered the prevalence of the *"works of the flesh"* in TV programming.

The Power of TV

Paul also makes reference to the matter of subjecting ourselves to the *"power"* of something, and he states that he *"will not be brought under the power of any."* Does TV exercise *"power"* over us? Consider these statistics:

99% of American households have TV, and 66% have 3 or more (Television...TV Free Am), with 806 TVs per 1000 people (Encarta).

Truly, I know of few things more powerful than TV. It draws like a magnet, it captivates, it holds, it consumes. I have to confess that if I walk into a room with a television on, I have all I can do to avoid looking at it. Though I consciously turn my head away, I soon find myself looking at it again. Though I try to carry on a conversation with someone, I soon find myself tuned into the TV and not hearing a word being said to me. My only options are to shut it off, leave, or give in to its power over me. And even shutting it off is not a good option because once it is off I am strongly tempted to turn it back on. Is your experience similar to mine? And is it God's intent that His trophies of *grace* should be given over to the power of the tube?

Interestingly, 49% of Americans say they watch TV too much, but they keep watching. And 73% of parents would like to limit their children's TV watching, but they don't. The average child will see 20,000 commercials/yr, and by age 65, the number totals 2 million. And 92%

of parents feel that commercials make children too materialistic, but they still let them watch (Television...TV Free Am). Even young people themselves (77% of them) say there is too much immorality on TV (fornication, violence, and profanity). Still, everybody keeps watching. Why? For the same reason that smokers, alcoholics, and drug abusers don't quit, though they know they should. It's called—addiction:

Millions of Americans are so hooked on television that they fit the criteria for substance abuse as defined in the official psychiatric manual, according to Rutgers University psychologist and TV-Free America board member Robert Kubey. Heavy TV viewers exhibit five dependency symptoms—two more than necessary to arrive at a clinical diagnosis of substance abuse. These include: 1) using TV as a sedative; 2) indiscriminate viewing; 3) feeling loss of control while viewing; 4) feeling angry with oneself for watching too much; 5) inability to stop watching; and 6) feeling miserable when kept from watching. (Television...TV Free Am).



Truly, I know of few things more powerful than TV. It draws like a magnet, it captivates, it holds, it consumes. Is it God's intent that His trophies of grace should be given over to the power of the tube?

pleasure becomes our pleasure, their anger becomes our anger, their lust, our lust. When the actors we watch commit fornication, do we not also, at least in heart? Our participation in this sin is, at best, *vicarious*, which means *"enjoyed or felt by a person as a result*



By the time the average child completes elementary school he will see 8,000 murders on TV...Saturday morning childrens shows have 20-25 violent acts per hour...and most violent acts go unpunished.

of his imagined participation in an experience that is not his own;" (Funk & Wagnalls 1454). And how long will it be until this sin is carried out in the flesh? "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications...." (Matt 15:19). Who among us can afford not to "flee fornication?" And what of other such commands:

Abstain from all appearance of evil (1 Thes 5:22).

Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world (James 1:27).

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world (1 Jn 2:15-16).

And be not conformed to this world.... (Rom 12:2).

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing.... (2 Cor 6:17).

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. (Phil 4:8)

Who can obey any of these commands, and many others like them, while watching television? Does such disobedience not constitute sin?

Violence

By the time the average child completes elementary school he will see 8,000 murders on TV, and 200,000 acts of violence by age 18, including 40,000 murders. Prime time shows have 3 to 5 violent acts/hr., Saturday morning childrens shows, 20-25 violent acts/hr. Most violent acts go unpunished and are often presented as humorous (Television...TV Free Am).

Why so much violence on TV? Obviously, Americans love it. We find it entertaining, amusing, not unlike the ancient Romans. And we wonder why we have school shootings, mass murders, road rage, and domestic violence in *one fourth* of American homes (Gellert 72). Was it in the heart of God to ransom us from the fall, only to be entertained and amused by violence? What is God's heart in the matter of violence? He stated His reason for destroying the ancient world by a flood:

The end of all flesh is before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them...." (Gen 6:13).

Again, God reveals His heart toward violence:

The Lord trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth (Ps 11:5).

Does that mean what it says, that God actually hates people that love violence?

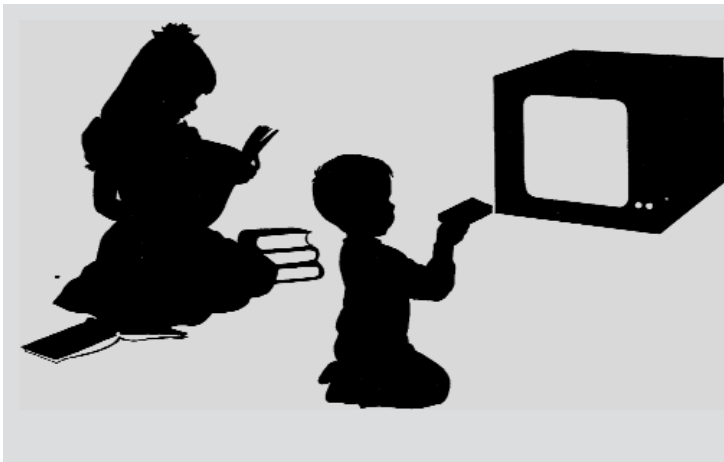
The Defilement of Children

We have looked only at immorality and violence thus far, and have said nothing of the array of other sinful attitudes, behaviors, and untruth that television promotes, IE: evolution, pride, rebellion, smok-

ing, drinking, suicide, the occult, the general “works of the flesh,” and the overall distorted, anti-Christian views of life. What becomes of the New Testament command to bring up our children “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Eph 6:4)? Who is raising the children of America, parents, or TV? Perhaps you have never compared the amount of time your children spend under the influence of TV, compared with the amount of time under your influence, or their school teachers. While eating dinner, 66% of Americans regularly watch television. On average, children spend 3.5 min/wk in meaningful conversation with their parents, compared with 1,680 min/wk watching TV. The average American youth will

Effects of Television

Some feel that TV really does not affect human behavior. There have been over 4,000 studies conducted to examine TV’s effects on children (Television...TV Free Am). Long term studies have been done in communities that had no television, such as in British Columbia. In one study, for example, researchers noted the amount of violence of school children on the playground before the introduction of TV to the community. Then, 2 years after TV was introduced to that community, the same chil-



Who is raising the children of America—parents or TV? Satan wants your children in his kingdom... On average, children spend 3.5 minutes per week in meaningful conversation with their parents, compared with 1,680 minutes per week watching TV.

spend 900 hrs/yr in school, compared with 1500 hrs/yr watching TV (Television ... TV Free Am). And in the long run:

By the age of 6, the average American child will have spent more time watching television than he will spend speaking to his parents in an entire lifetime (Eden Communications).

The stakes are high, and the war is real. Satan wants your children in his kingdom, and one of his most effective drawing cards is the TV. Are you sure you want the TV to be your child’s closest companion and primary mentor? What price will be paid for such a babysitter? At the time of life when a child is most moldable, impressionable, teachable, this is when Americans turn their children over to the TV, the most effective teaching machine ever invented. Just when a child is establishing his value system, his world view, developing his thinking and reasoning skills, we give him over. Yes, we take them to church, send them to Sunday school, and maybe even a Christian school, or even to the extreme of home schooling, but how quickly a TV will undo all of that.

dren were observed on the playground, demonstrating a 160% increase in violent behavior (Gellert, 96). This study, and many others like it, seems to suggest that TV really does affect behavior.

The leading cause of death in America for teens is auto accidents, many of which are alcohol related. Interestingly:

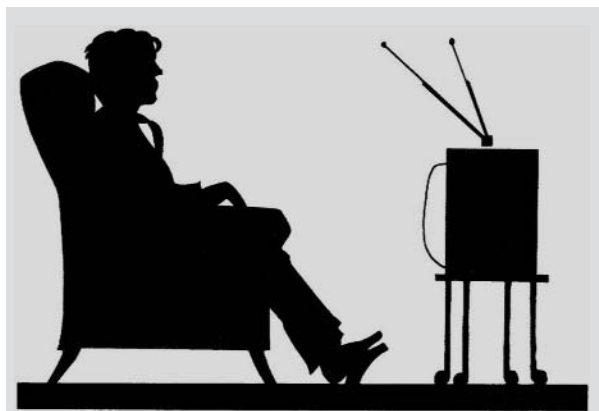
A young person will see messages encouraging alcohol consumption an average of 75,000 times on TV before he or she is of legal drinking age (Watkins, i).

Do you suppose there is any connection? And consider the money advertisers spend to sway people’s behavior. In 1993 the leading 100 TV advertisers spent over \$15 billion on commercials (Television ... TV Free Am). Advertisers, obviously, think TV can influence behavior, and even most children agree—66% of children (ages 10-16) say that their peers are influenced by TV, 62% say sex on TV influences kids to have sex when they are too young, and 65% say certain shows encourage kids to disrespect their parents (fornication, Violence, and Profanity). Numerous studies have drawn clear correlations

between TV and its effects such as inactivity and junk food eating contributing to obesity, shortened attention span, negative effects on brain development and academic performance in school, sleep problems due to fear and terror from horror shows, behavior problems, desensitization, etc., etc., etc.

What about all the Good Shows?

Based on all the numbers we have seen so far, it seems evident that “good shows” must be few and far between. Does the little bit of “good” out there justify, make up for, or shield against the immense amount of bad? Even if a parent tries to control the shows the children watch, you cannot control the 20,000 commercials/yr. that the average child sees, many of which promote ungodliness. And there are few good shows that do not have some bad woven into them. Most nature shows are presented from an evolutionary perspective, and many come uncomfortably close to animal worship with their animal-rights agenda. Other educational shows are presented with immodesty and an assortment of humanistic, anti-Christian values. And even if a parent sets high standards, most commonly those standards are compromised and creep downward as the family searches for more and more shows to watch.



How do you suppose it sits with our Lord when His New Testament trophies of grace practice such stewardship? In a world overwhelmed with unmet needs, what Christian can afford to spend time watching TV?

According to the A.C. Nielsen Co., the average American watches more than 4 hours of TV each day (or 28 hours/week, or 2 months of nonstop TV-watching per year). In a 65-year life, that person will have spent 9 years glued to the tube (Television...TV Free Am).

Beyond the monetary value, what is the spiritual value of the hours you spend on TV? How many Christians complain that they don't have time for prayer, Bible study, good works, and evangelism? Most Wednesday night prayer meetings draw a pitiful percentage of the congregation because we're

just too busy. Are we not stewards of the time God has given us? How do you suppose it sits with Him when His New Testament trophies of grace practice such stewardship? You know the parable of the talents in Matt 25:13-30. The talents represent all that God has given us. What became of the unrighteous steward who did not use what his master gave him in the way his master wanted? This parable is immediately followed by the story of the separation of the sheep and the goats, the deciding factor being how they spent their time. The sheep, God's trophies of grace, somehow found time to do the good works of meeting the real needs of hurting

people, while the goats did not. In a world overwhelmed with unmet needs, what Christian can afford to spend time watching TV?

Stewardship of Time

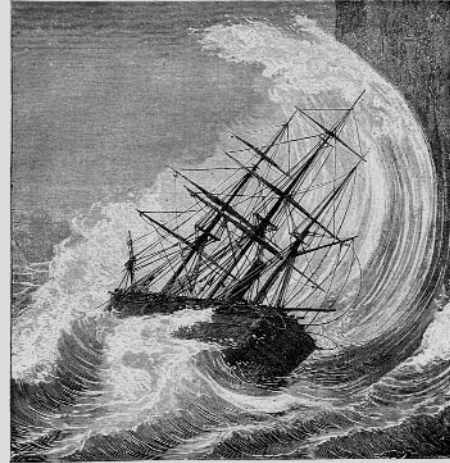
Collectively, Americans watch 250 billion hours of TV/yr. At the low wage of \$5.00/hr., that puts a value of \$1.25 trillion on our TV time (Television ... TV Free Am). What is the monetary value of the hours you spend watching TV? Consider the long-term:

Conclusions

I have made some unwise decisions in my life, but eliminating TV over two decades ago was not one of them. I have never for a moment regretted that decision, my only regret is that I did not make it sooner. □

Rejoice!

by Ebenezer Manting, 1890



"Rejoice evermore" says St Paul, "Rejoice!" Rejoice! Says the sun as it smiles upon the world and makes me smile. Rejoice! Says the babbling brook as it splashes among the stones and flings back the sunrays in a broken sheen. Rejoice! It says again in a still, gentle murmur while it deepens as if with satisfaction full. Rejoice! Say the willows as they fling their cooling shade upon the banks and rustle their feathery branches. Rejoice! Say the birds among the leaves. Rejoice! Says my heart as I rest upon the grass; and as I turn again to the Book of my delight, the Apostle chimes in once more, "Rejoice always: and again I say, rejoice." How easy! How delightful! When the heart is in tune and the world also!

But...what if it is otherwise? Rejoice, says St Paul. But the rains descend, and the floods come and beat upon my house. Rejoice! But the sun has gone and the moon is hidden: darkness and "the sons of night" are abroad upon the face of the earth. There are a thousand causes for fear!

"Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation" (Habakkuk 3:17).

Is it a mockery to tell a man to rejoice in bereavement or distress or extreme sorrow from any cause? Some men, yea many men, indeed most men, would take it so. Ay! Is not indulged sorrow well nigh universal? Did not Elijah give up in something very much like despair and Jacob refuse to be comforted? Job let loose his first heroism of faith, and cursed the day of his birth! Yea! And "we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Rom 8:22)

But, "rejoice!" is to fit all the phases of human life. "Rejoice always: and again I say, rejoice." There can be no mistaking the apostle's language; neither can there be any doubt that he perfectly understood what he was saying. And if any man was more than ordinarily acquainted with the ups and downs of life, and was more than usually versed in all that men call pain, distress and trouble, that man was St Paul. Such an exhortation from such a man comes with a propriety none can question which every man must feel. Add to this the weight of inspiration and a disregard of it becomes positively criminal.

Yet it is to teach men to "rejoice evermore!" It is not that they do not strive to rejoice, for is not the world full of devices for securing joy? But it is that they run astray, and are deceived. The foes of man are about him and within him, and they contrive to rob him of joy while he is in the pursuit of it, and yet succeed in alluring in the same direction, to complete his dissatisfaction in despair and woe. Man is made to be joyful, and the universal instincts which prompt him to the search are proofs of this. But there is only one true source of joy for him, and the disappointment which awaits him in every other direction is likewise a demonstration of this. "Joy in the Lord!" "Righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost!" The way to be happy is to find joy in the Lord. □



Lately, most of the letters from our readers have been full of encouragements. We want each of you to know how much we appreciate your support and especially your prayers. Please do pray that God would continue to anoint and sanctify His work.

“Hi Brethren! Calvary greetings to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I really appreciate what God is using you for in His vineyard at this perilous time. I pray that the Good Lord continue to bless you and make you more vibrant for His work at this end time in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen!



The latest publication of “The Heartbeat of Remnant” that was for July/August 2006, Vol 12, No.3, has also being a lovely one. I read about the article written by Rachael Weaver, titled “An Open Heart & Home”. I was happy because this is the real way God wants us to behave. Good hospitality is one of the Christian virtue that all Christians must develop in him or herself, but it is quite unfortunate that it is not so most especially in this part of the world (Nigeria, Africa). A lot of things are happening in the Christian fold nowadays that does not encourage Christians here to keep an open heart & home with other fellows. The believe is that if you give somebody an inch, he will take a mile. More so, it is of a necessity to render helping hands to those that need our help and also do good to everybody including your enemies,

because the Bible says, “Love your enemies, do good to those that hate you and pray for those that despitefully use you.”

Nigeria, West Africa



Dear brothers and sisters in God,

I have being receiving and distributing “The Remnant” in Sri Lanka for nearly one year now. We find the articles very inspiring and spirit filled. The emphasis you give for righteousness and separation from forbidden or unclean things is very remarkable in the present world. Many churches would dare to touch these fearing they loose the congregation and the wealth.”

Sri Lanka



“Dear Sirs, I just wanted to send you a note of encouragement for the very spiritual magazine you keep printing. Every time I receive it I can hardly put it down until every word is devoured. And I always enjoy the material from front to back. I have been passing the articles to others who think they might help. I pray God keeps supplying your needs to keep this magazine in print and also that He would bless you and lead you. Thank you!”

Virginia



Someone who is concerned by our title, "Heartbeat of the Remnant:"

"The Heartbeat of the Remnant suggests a degree of high esteem that this fellowship has; a type of spiritual pride and elitism that promises to causes much spiritual confusion and heartache. A more modest title for the mail-out and for the group- such as Poor In Spirit- would be more reassuring that the publication is not operating with serious spiritual delusion of pride. All great saints of the ages find themselves aghast at their own lack of holiness; not how they are the only ones left. And when a prophet stated that he was the only one left who had not bowed the knee to Baal, God pointed out a multitude of others, other remnants, who had not. I encourage you to a little more humility in your view of yourself. Yours in hope of the resurrection" Signed Blind Ben

Missouri

Thank you, Ben, for your honest concerns here. Your comments will give me the opportunity to clarify our intentions. It is true that we believe we are living in perilous times, and that by and large, we believe that a great part of the Church of Jesus Christ has gone into apostasy or compromise. However, just like the story that you mentioned about the times of Elijah, we also believe that God continues to preserve a remnant for Himself.

In calling our magazine "The Heartbeat of the Remnant," I would like to make it clear that we are not saying that we are that entire remnant—God forbid! What we are attempting to do in this magazine is to hold up the holy, spirit-filled attributes that we read about in God's Word as describing that true remnant of God. Then, with hearts inspired and vision clearer, we desire to encourage ourselves, and anyone else who will listen, to endeavor by God's grace to be added to that number. --Bro. Dean



TENTING TIME

How apt we are to forget that this is only a "tenting-time", and that rest is not permanent here, but elsewhere, further on. We drive our stakes and fasten our tent-cords, and then settle down as though we were quite contented and did not wish to move any further.

"Master, it is good for us to be here." And if the Master sees it necessary to disturb us, and make us march on to something better, He sends a gust and overthrows our tent. Is not this a scriptural view of calamity as experienced by the Christian? Who, then, is

wise? Is it he who by his persistency in pilgrimage needs no tribulations? But who shall say of himself, or of whom shall it be said by another, that he needs no affliction? That is true wisdom which while thankful for and encouraged by Christian sympathy in extremity, is most of all thankful to God for the proof which the visitation affords that He has not forgotten His servant in his folly, but has graciously stirred up his nest, and quickened his spiritual perception and moved his weary feet to pursue the journey to the Land of Rest.

The Untrodden Way

by Ernest Little, 1907

The pathway of the year
Is hidden and untried;
I will not fear, for at my side
Is One who cheers
Through all the years;
I do in Him confide.

Through darkness compass me,
And clouds about me fall,
They cannot harm;
Through all the days
God is my Guide, I shall not slide,
He orders all my ways.

When at my journey's end
I reach the land of light.
I shall forget
The perils past,
And wond'ring, trace the way of grace
That brings me rest at last.

The Heartbeat of

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