

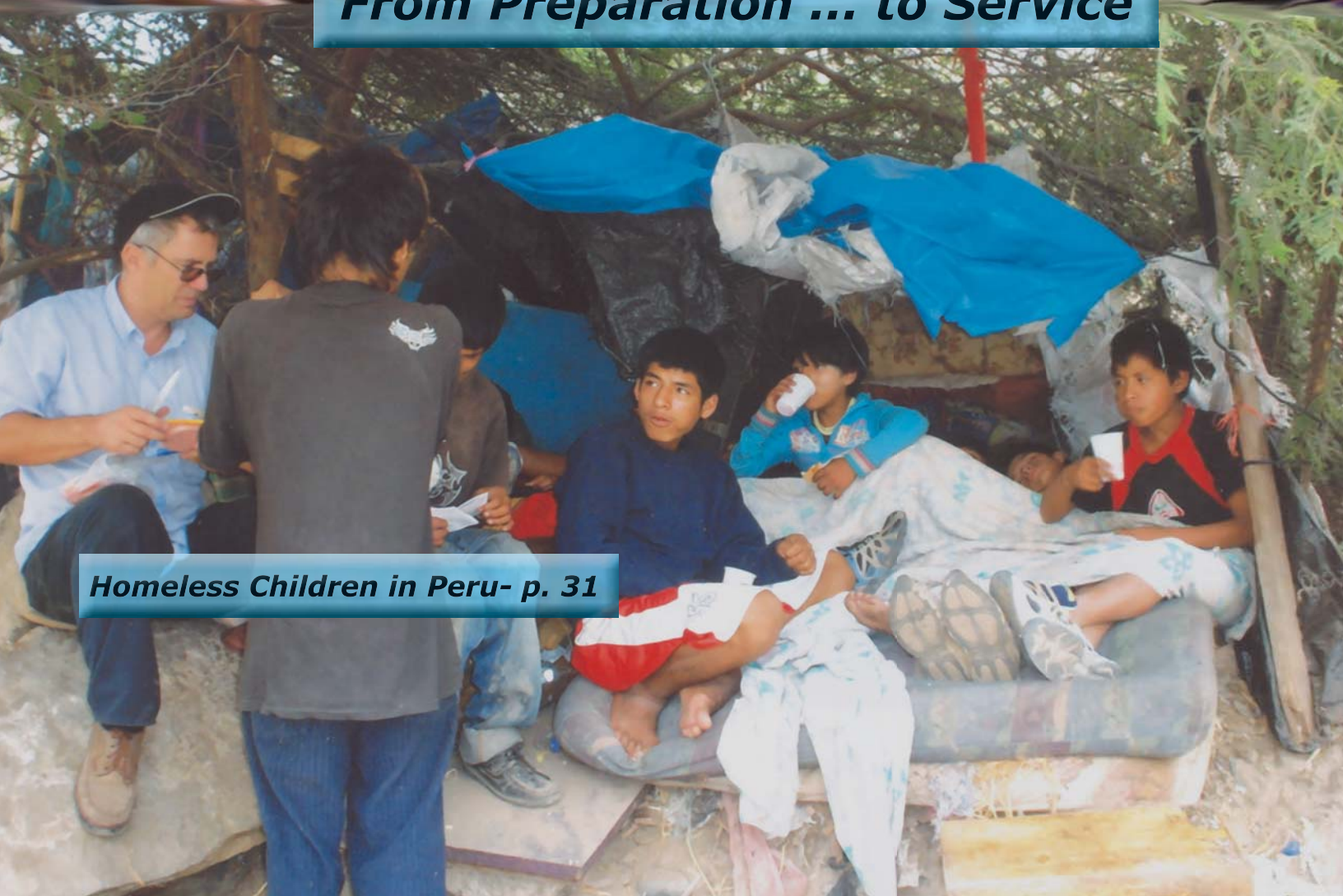
# The Remnant

What if  
Jesus  
really meant  
Every word  
that He  
Said?

**2009 Youth Bible School- p. 18**



**From Preparation ... to Service**



**Homeless Children in Peru- p. 31**

# The Remnant

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## From the Editor

In the last issue I made a comment about President Obama winning the Nobel Peace Prize. Since then, an ironic thing has happened. Ten days before the President flew to Oslo, Norway to actually accept the Peace Prize, the White House announced the deployment of an additional 30,000 troops to Afghanistan.

Strange how history repeats itself ... In the 1960s Vietnam was the target. In that skirmish, American “Christians” joined the throng to liberate that poor country from the “perils” of Communism. To do so, B-52’s and F111’s flew through their naive, Asian skies blanketing them with napalm and cluster bombs. Pondering our most recent war, I thought about the Nobel Peace Prize winner of that day, Martin Luther King Jr. Now, while I don’t think Jesus would have marched on the White House, I do think King had some good things to say to the church of his day. During his speech in Washington D.C., King revealed what winning the Nobel Peace Prize meant to him.

I cannot forget that the Nobel Prize for Peace was also a commission—a commission to work harder than I had ever worked before for “the brotherhood of man.” This is a calling that takes me beyond national allegiances; but even if it were not present, I would yet have to live with the meaning of my commitment to the ministry of Jesus Christ. To me the relationship of this ministry to the making of peace is so obvious that I sometimes marvel at those who ask me why I’m speaking against the war. Could it be that they do not know that the good news was meant for all men—for Communist and capitalist, for their children and ours, for black and for white, for revolutionary and conservative? Have they forgotten that my ministry is in obedience to the One who loved his enemies so fully that he died for them? What then can I say to the Vietcong or to Castro or to Mao, as a faithful minister of this One? Can I threaten them with death or must I not share with them my life?

And as I ponder the madness of Vietnam and search within myself for ways to understand and respond in

compassion, my mind goes constantly to the people of that peninsula. I speak now not of the soldiers of each side, not of the ideologies of the Liberation Front, not of the junta in Saigon, but simply of the people who have been living under the curse of war for almost three continuous decades now. I think of them, too, because it is clear to me that there will be no meaningful solution there until some attempt is made to know them and hear their broken cries. They must see Americans as strange liberators.

King called us “strange liberators.” You would think that if 6000 years of world history would have taught us anything, it would have taught us that war always begets more war. The kingdom of God follows a different course. Jesus said, “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you.” (Jn. 14:27) When everything in life seems counterfeit these days, I am thankful that “all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.” (2 Co. 1:20)

There are many challenging articles in this issue. Don’t miss Mike Fisher’s article on the mixed message of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, or Chester Lehman’s challenge of everyday church life; both challenging articles. Phil Haines of Georgia gives an insightful look into the danger of our churches becoming a morph between conservative Christianity and the world. Paul Lamicela submitted another engaging report of Bible school, bringing the messages and experiences to life anew. Mike and I did a book review on Bercot’s new book *Will the Theologians Please Sit Down* and some sobering thoughts about Judgment Day. Michael McDaniel sent us an article on humility entitled *Fork Lift Theology*, reminding us that the way up is always down. And finally, the Seed Sower award of this issue went out to Chris Armstrong, who is ministering to the river children of Huaycan, Peru.

A “Thank You” to all who responded to the request to send in articles, poems, and songs. We have used a few in this issue, and plan to use more in the future. Keep them coming! ~Bro. Dean

# The Tragedy of Dietrich Bonhoeffer



*Dietrich Bonhoeffer with confirmants in 1932*

It was April 5, 1943 in Berlin, Germany. Dr. Karl Bonhoeffer answered a knock at the door and was surprised when two men asked to speak to his son Dietrich alone in his room. As a result of the conversation, during which he was neither notified of his arrest nor shown a search warrant, Dietrich Bonhoeffer was forced to accompany the men, who were SS agents, to a military prison.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was himself in the service of the Abwehr, the intelligence-gathering agency of the German army. However, his position as a government agent and as a member of a well-respected German family was not sufficient to ward off his arrest when large amounts of money contributed to the relief of Jewish refugees were traced to him.

After Bonhoeffer was in prison for about eighteen months, during which he enjoyed preferential treatment and constant communication with the outside, an attempt to assassinate Hitler occasioned a thorough shakeup within the Abwehr. High-ranking officials were implicated in the plot, and any person remotely connected to the scheme was summarily dealt with. Bonhoeffer was found to be complicit in the plan and fell victim to Hitler's wrath. He was hanged in Flossenburg on April 9, 1945, just three weeks before the Allied Army took the city.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer is known throughout the Christian world today as a hero and Christian martyr. "Totally committed to Jesus Christ and to the church, he gave himself both in life and in death for his fellow men, proving that grace and discipleship are indeed costly," says Dallas M. Roark in *Dietrich Bonhoeffer*.<sup>1</sup>

In *Great Leaders of the Christian Church*, Richard Pierrard declares, "[Bonhoeffer] decided that the only way to secure peace would be to eliminate Hitler. For him, treason had become true patriotism ..."<sup>2</sup>

"Any Christian would do well to read the works of one who gave his life in direct connection with his Christian convictions. There have been many martyrs in this century, but few who so vividly recorded the circumstances that led to their martyrdom with both theological astuteness and a vision for future posterity." So says Todd Kappelman in an article for Probe Ministries titled "Dietrich Bonhoeffer, The Man and His Mission."<sup>3</sup>

Even secular sources acknowledge his death as a direct result of his Christian faith. The website of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum states: "Bonhoeffer has become widely known as one of the few Christian martyrs in a history otherwise stained by Christian complicity with Nazism."<sup>4</sup>

Bonhoeffer's life is dramatized and eulogized in all forms of media, ensuring along with his extensive literary contributions that he will remain a personality definitive of his time, and influential in ours.

Dare we challenge the view of Bonhoeffer as a Christian martyr? Does our distance from the evils he faced disqualify us from drawing conclusions and holding opinions contrary to those of the world around us?

Are we guilty—as Anabaptists—of cheering from the stands, as Christians with a differing view of the use of violence engage evil in ways we believe are contrary to the teachings of Jesus? Or are we bold enough to point out the contradiction and take the risk of being labeled "pacifist" or "leftist"?

Even Bonhoeffer did not consider himself a Christian martyr. He viewed himself as being imprisoned as a political conspirator. When he became involved in the plot to kill Hitler, he took steps to remove himself from the Confessing Church, the denomination he had helped to found, in protest of mainstream churches that supported Hitler's government.

When in prison, he refused to be put on his church's prayer list, saying that only those who were put in prison for their actions or proclamations on behalf of the church should be on the prayer list. He obviously did not see himself as being punished for acting as a Christian.

Bonhoeffer's death at the hands of the Nazis was a tragedy in many ways; however, it seems most tragic of all that he gave his life for a cause so contrary to the teaching and example of Christ. Not only that, his death seems a tragedy because of the inexplicable contradiction that is evident between the principles he strongly held and clearly articulated in earlier times, and the actions that brought on his end. A brief look at a few of Bonhoeffer's key theological ideas will serve to illustrate this antithesis.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was born into a prominent family with a strong academic heritage. He chose the field of theology at an early age and entered the ministry at twenty-four with an impressive resume both in theological training and scholarly work of his own. By the 1930s, he had gained the attention of the international theological community and was developing key ideas such as his concept of discipleship, which ran counter to the popular notion that he termed "cheap grace."

The rise of Hitler and the Nazi party interrupted his career. As German nationalism captured the imagination of the German people, most German Christians were caught in the tide. Bonhoeffer viewed this trend with alarm and became part of a movement that not only criticized the Nazi government, but also the Christian institutions that largely supported Hitler's government. He helped to form a dissenting church, known as the Confessing Church.

By 1937, when his work *Nachfolge* (later titled *The Cost of Discipleship* in English) was published, his theology had developed in several ways that seem beyond amazing considering the spirit of the times. Let us peruse his views on the subjects of discipleship and revenge.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer's concept of discipleship was a strong critique of modern Christian teaching on salvation. The phrase "cheap grace" that is common today appears to have come from his work. According to Bonhoeffer, this "cheap grace" is defined thus: "an intellectual assent to [the forgiveness and love of God] is held to be of itself sufficient to secure remission of sins."<sup>5</sup> Elsewhere, he says that "cheap grace means the justification of sin without the justification

of the sinner [that is, the actual making the sinner to act righteously]." He goes on, with some sarcasm:

"Grace alone does everything, they say, and so everything can remain as it was before. "All for sin could not atone." The world goes on in the same old way, and we are still sinners "even in the best life" as Luther said. Well, then, let the Christian live like the rest of the world, let him model himself on the world's standards in every sphere of life, and not presumptuously aspire to live a different life under grace from his old life under sin. That was the heresy of the enthusiasts, the Anabaptists and their kind. Let the Christian beware of rebelling against the free and boundless grace of God and desecrating it. Let him not attempt to erect a new religion of the letter by endeavoring to live a life of obedience to the commandments of Jesus Christ .... Instead of following Christ, let the Christian enjoy the consolations of his grace!"<sup>6</sup>

Bonhoeffer countered this idea with a concept he called "costly grace," suggesting that the church no longer stands in the path of true discipleship. "We confess that, although our Church is orthodox as far as her doctrine of grace is concerned, we are no longer sure that we are members of a Church which follows its Lord." In light of this cutting accusation, he concludes that "We must therefore attempt to recover a true understanding of the mutual relation between grace and discipleship."<sup>7</sup>

Speaking of Jesus' call to Levi in Mark 2:14, Bonhoeffer writes,

"According to our text, there is no road to faith or discipleship, no other road—only obedience to the call of Jesus."

"When we are called to follow Christ, we are summoned to an exclusive attachment to his person. The grace of his call bursts all the bonds of legalism. It is a gracious call, a gracious commandment. It transcends the difference between the law and the gospel. Christ calls, the disciple follows; that is grace and commandment in one. 'I will walk at liberty, for I seek thy commandments' (Ps. 119:45)." "Discipleship means adherence to Christ, and, because Christ is the object of that adherence, it must take the form of discipleship."<sup>8</sup>

**Cheap  
grace:  
an intellectual assent  
to the forgiveness and  
love of God is held to  
be of itself sufficient  
to secure remission  
of sins.**

He goes on to propose that, in relation to faith and obedience, “only he who believes is obedient, and only he who is obedient believes.”

It is quite unbiblical to hold the first proposition without the second. We think we understand when we hear that obedience is possible only where there is faith. Does not obedience follow faith as good fruit grows on a good tree? First, faith, then obedience. If by that we mean that it is faith which justifies, and not the act of obedience, all well and good, for that is the essential and unexceptionable presupposition of all that follows. If however, we make a chronological distinction between faith and obedience, and make obedience subsequent to faith, we are divorcing the one from the other—and then we get the practical question, when must obedience begin? Obedience remains separated from faith. From the point of view of justification it is necessary thus to separate them, but we must never lose sight of their essential unity. For faith is only real when there is obedience, never without it, and faith only becomes faith in the act of obedience.<sup>9</sup>

Bonhoeffer’s view of discipleship cuts across the grain of modern Christianity which so often separates obedience to Jesus from salvation in Him in such a way as to eliminate the call to actually follow Jesus in life. Coming from a Lutheran, this idea seems particularly refreshing to those of us who have been familiar with its terminology, at least, in our own Anabaptist tradition. He refused to separate faith and obedience even in the sense that one followed the other because of the need to recognize the “mutual relation between grace and discipleship.” Following Jesus in obedience is intrinsic to salvation; any other view cheapens the grace of God.

Summarizing Bonhoeffer’s view of discipleship, Dallas M. Roark writes:

There is only one way of understanding Jesus: He meant it as He said it. All subterfuges based on ‘reason and conscience, responsibility and piety’ stand in the way of complete obedience. The usual type of rationalization of the commands of Christ are dealt with mercilessly. This refers to the reasoning whereby we reinterpret Jesus to mean that we need not leave all, but simply possess the wealth of the world as though we did not possess it. The com-

mand to follow is reduced to developing a spirit of inward detachment.”<sup>10</sup>

Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s view of discipleship which calls for obedience as intrinsic to salvation directly impacted his interpretation of Jesus in another key area. Like his concept of discipleship, his views about revenge relate well to our Anabaptist heritage and also certainly ran counter to the spirit of the time, both in prewar Germany and throughout the world.

His treatment of the subject involves both what is sometimes called “personal” nonresistance and the Christian view of the role of civil government. He begins by addressing the concept of rights. Followers of Jesus, he says, renounce all personal rights.

This is contrary to the Old Testament, in which personal rights are protected by a system in which all evil is repaid in kind. Not so in the teachings of Jesus. Bonhoeffer then says:

The right way to requite evil, according to Jesus, is not to resist it.

This saying of Christ removes the Church from the sphere of politics and law. The Church is not to be a national community like the old Israel, but a community of believers without political or national ties. The old Israel had been both—the chosen

people of God *and* a national community, and it was therefore his will that

they should meet force with force. But with the Church it is different: it has abandoned political and national status, and therefore it must patiently endure aggression. Otherwise evil will be heaped upon evil. Only thus can fellowship be established and maintained.

At this point it becomes evident that when a Christian meets with injustice, he no longer clings to his rights and defends them at all costs. He is absolutely free from possessions and bound to Christ alone. Again, his witness to this exclusive adherence to Jesus creates the only workable basis for fellowship, and leaves the aggressor with him to deal with.<sup>11</sup>

He criticizes the Protestant Reformers’ relegation of this principle to “private life.”

The Reformers offered a decisively new interpretation of this passage, and contributed a new idea of paramount importance. They distinguished between personal sufferings and those incurred by Christians in the performance of duty as bearers of

**Following Jesus in obedience is inseparable from salvation; any other view cheapens the grace of God.**

an office ordained by God, maintaining that the precept of nonviolence applies to the first, but not to the second. In the second case we are not only freed from obligation to eschew violence, but if we want to act in a genuine spirit of love we must do the very opposite, and meet force with force in order to check the assault of evil. It was along these lines that the Reformers justified war and other legal sanctions against evil. But this distinction between person and office is wholly alien to the teaching of Jesus. He says nothing about that. He addresses his disciples as men who have left all to follow him, and the precept of nonviolence applies equally to private life and official duty. He is the Lord of all life, and demands undivided allegiance. Furthermore, when it comes to practice, this distinction raises indissoluble difficulties. Am I ever acting only as a private person or only in an official capacity?<sup>12</sup>

As Bonhoeffer concludes his chapter "Revenge," he states, "The cross is the only justification for the precept of nonviolence, for it alone can kindle a faith in the victory over evil which will enable men to obey that precept."<sup>13</sup> Christ's death on the cross was both the supreme example of vanquishing evil through suffering, and the only empowerment we have to follow in the steps of Christ.

But one of the thorny aspects of this concept of "non-resistance" as it is lived out in real life has to do with the relationship of Christians to the state. Bonhoeffer tackles the issue squarely and unequivocally. He declares that there can be no wars of faith, and that Christian love cannot be compatible with patriotism.

He is very specific concerning the nature of Christian interaction with civil government, and it is at this point where the deepest questions arise concerning the relationship between what Bonhoeffer says and what he later does. From Romans 13 he draws the idea that for a Christian to utilize force in order to conquer evil, he must stoop to the world's standards.

To resist the power is to resist the ordinance of God, who has so ordered life that the world exer-

cises dominion by force, and Christ and Christians conquer by service. Failure to realize this distinction will bring a heavy judgment on the Christian (verse 2): it will mean a lapse into the standards of the world.<sup>14</sup>

Bonhoeffer eloquently describes the Christian church as a community that is in the world, yet not of it. Christians are "strangers and aliens in a foreign land, enjoying the hospitality of that land, obeying its laws and honouring its government." Hospitality is not always a word that best describes the sentiments of the government toward Christianity, but Christians are also joyful in times of persecution. "They are patient and cheerful in suffering, and they glory in tribulation. They live their own life under alien rulers and alien laws. Above all, they pray for all in authority, for that is their greatest service."<sup>15</sup>

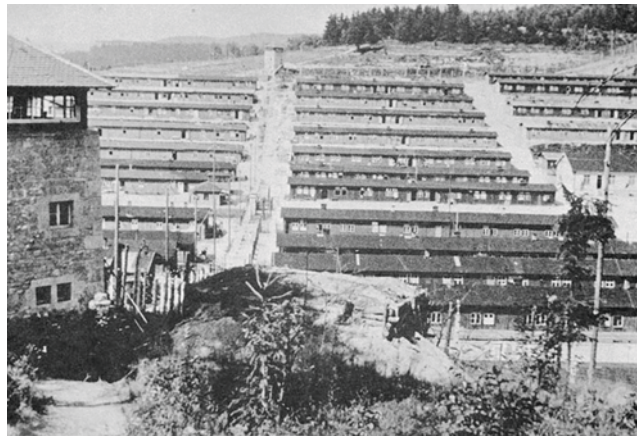
Christians after all are only in this world temporarily, on their way to heaven. In what might be considered one of the more stunning and beautiful statements in the book, Bonhoeffer rapturously portrays the nature of the church in the world: "Amid poverty and suffering, hunger and thirst, they are meek, merciful, and peacemakers, persecuted and

scorned by the world, although it is for their sake alone that the world is allowed to continue, and it is they who protect the world from the wrath and judgment of God."<sup>16</sup>

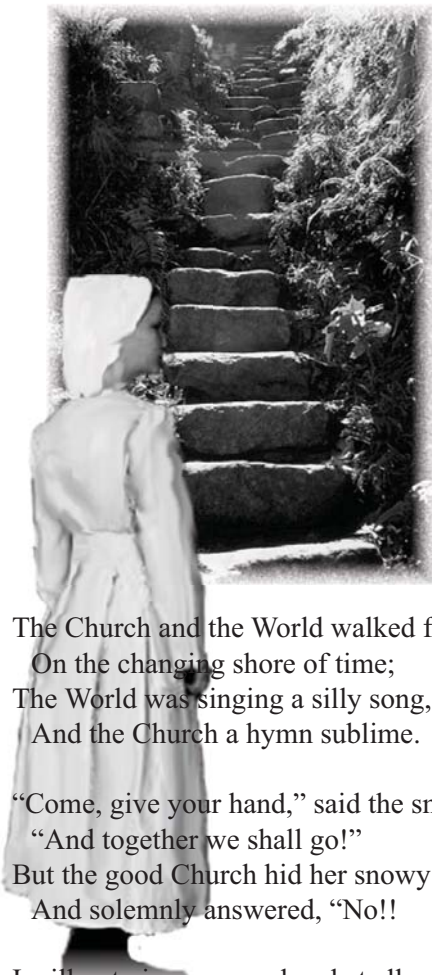
How and why on earth could a man so convinced of the power and efficacy of Christian love in the world, and so disparaging of the good that could come of the use of the sword, come to the point of being a conspirator in an assassination? Unfortunately this question remains largely unanswered, and those who attempt to discover the reasoning behind this contradiction admit it is a difficult task.

One of the only clues we have as to Bonhoeffer's reasoning is the well-known statement he is said to have made to his sister-in-law: "If I see a madman driving a car into a group of innocent bystanders, then I can't, as a Christian, simply wait for the catastrophe and then comfort the wounded and bury the dead. I must try to wrestle the steering wheel out of the hands of the driver." The untimely death of Dietrich Bonhoeffer in the Nazi death camps sealed away forever

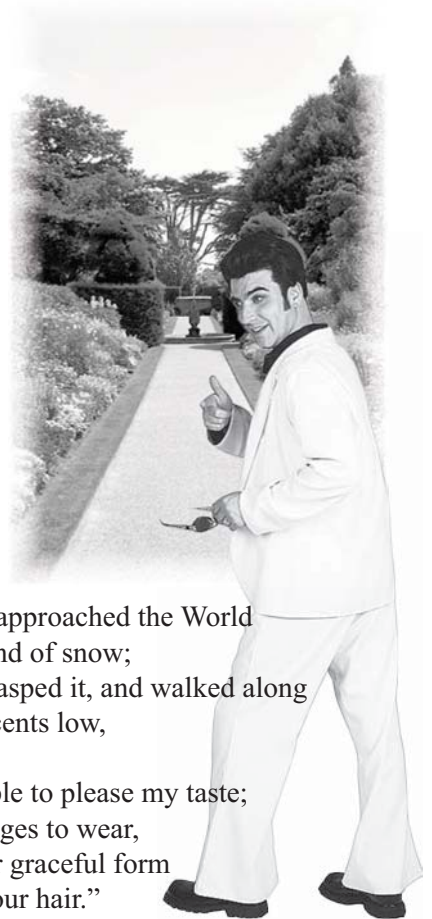
*Continued on p. 34*



**A view of Flossenburg Concentration Camp, where Dietrich Bonhoeffer was hung for his involvement in a scheme to assassinate Adolf Hitler. Why did he take part in something he earlier condemned?**



# The Church and the World ~Century 21~



The Church and the World walked far apart  
On the changing shore of time;  
The World was singing a silly song,  
And the Church a hymn sublime.

“Come, give your hand,” said the smiling World,  
“And together we shall go!”  
But the good Church hid her snowy hand  
And solemnly answered, “No!!”

I will not give you my hand at all,  
And I will not walk with you.  
Your way is the way of eternal death,  
And your words are all untrue.”

“No, walk with me a little ways,”  
Said the World with a kindly air.  
“The road I walk is a pleasant road,  
And the sun shines always there.

Your path is thorny and rough and rude,  
But mine is broad and plain;  
My way is paved with flowers and dews,  
And yours with tears and pain.

The sky to me is always blue,  
No lack, no toil I know;  
The sky above you is always dark;  
Your lot is a lot of woe.

My way, you can see, is a soft, easy one,  
And my gate is high and wide;  
There is room enough for you and me;  
So let’s travel side by side.”

Half shyly the Church approached the World  
And gave him her hand of snow;  
And the false World grasped it, and walked along  
And whispered in accents low,

“Your dress is too simple to please my taste;  
I have pinks and oranges to wear,  
Sensuous hues for your graceful form  
And sprays to fluff your hair.”

Then added he, with a shake of his head,  
Shielding his eyes in the glare,  
“It makes much sense in this fierce sunshine  
Your comely calves to bare.”

The Church looked down at her plain, modest clothes  
And then at the dazzling World,  
And blushed as she saw his handsome lip,  
With a smile contemptuous curled.

“I will change my dress for a prettier one,”  
Said the Church with a smile of grace;  
So her simple garments were stashed away,  
And the World gave, in their place,

Beautiful satins and flowery sheens,  
With roses and lace and swirls;  
While over her forehead her bright hair fell  
In two bouncy, enticing curls.

“Your house is too plain” said the proud old World,  
“Let us build you one like mine,  
With kitchen for feasting and rec room for play  
And cabinets never so fine.”



So he built her a costly and beautiful house;  
Awesome it was to behold!  
Her sons and her daughters met frequently there,  
Shining in purple and gold.

There were cushioned seats for the lazy and rich,  
To sit in their glutton and pride;  
But the poor who were clad in humble array,  
Were scorned 'til they went outside.

They talk of judgments and fire and pain,  
And the doom of darkest night.  
They warn of a place that should not be  
Mentioned to ears polite!

I will send you some of a better stamp,  
More brilliant, educated, fast;  
Who will show how men their flesh may please  
And go to heaven at last.

**Powerpoints and films in the halls were shown,  
And the World and his children were there.  
Laughter and music and Ping-Pong were heard  
In the place that was meant for prayer.**

Powerpoints and films in the halls were shown,  
And the World and his children were there.  
Laughter and music and Ping-Pong were heard  
In the place that was meant for prayer.

The angel in mercy rebuked the Church,  
And whispered, "I know thy sin."  
Then the Church looked sad, and anxiously longed  
To gather the children in.

But some were away at the midnight bowl,  
And others online did play,  
And some were hangin' at Pizza Hut:  
So the angel went away.

Then said the World in soothing tones,  
"Your children mean no harm—  
Merely indulging in innocent sports,"  
So she leaned on his proffered arm,

And texted, and chatted, and uploaded photos,  
And walked along with the World,  
While countless millions of precious souls  
Over the fearful brink were hurled.

"Your preachers are too old-fashioned and plain,"  
Said the smart World with a sneer.  
"They frighten my children with dreadful tales  
Which I do not like to hear.

The Father is merciful, great and good;  
Loving and tender and kind.  
Do you think He'd take one child to heaven  
And leave another behind?"

So she called for pleasing and smart divines,  
Deemed gifted and great and learned;  
And the plain-spoken men who had preached the cross  
Were out of her pulpits turned.

Then Mammon came in and supported the Church  
And sat in a well-padded pew;  
And preaching and chorals and floral display  
Soon proclaimed a gospel new.

"You give too much to the poor," said the World,  
"Far more than you ought to do;  
Though the poor need shelter, food, and clothes,  
Why thus need it deprive you?"

And afar to the heathen in foreign lands  
Your thoughts need seldom roam.  
The Father of mercies will care for them:  
Let charity start at home.

Go take your money and buy nice shoes  
And cars and pickups fine;  
And phones and iPods and cameras,  
The latest and costliest kind.

My children, they dote on all such things,  
And if you their love would win,  
You must do as they do, and walk in the way—  
The up-to-date way they're in."

The Church her purse snaps tightly shut  
And shamefully lowered her head.  
She whimpered, "I've given too much away.  
I will do, sir, as you have said."

A voice came down from the hush of heaven,  
From Him who sat on the throne;  
"I know your works and what you have said—  
But alas! You have not known,

That you are poor and naked and blind,  
With pride and ruin ensnared;  
The expectant bride of a heavenly Groom  
Is the harlot of the World!

**So the poor were pushed out of her mind;  
She heard not the orphan's cry;  
And she silently covered her MasterCard  
As the widows went weeping by.**

So the poor were pushed out of her mind;  
She heard not the orphan's cry;  
And she silently covered her MasterCard  
As the widows went weeping by.

You have ceased to watch for that blessed hope,  
Have fallen from zeal and grace;  
So now, alas! I must cast you out  
And blot your name from its place."

Thus they of the Church and they of the World  
Journeyed closely, hand and heart.  
And none but the Master, who knows all things,  
Understood they had once walked apart.

Then the Church sat down at ease and said,  
"I am rich and in goods increased.  
I have need of nothing, and naught to do,  
But to play, to sing, and to eat."

The sly World heard her and laughed in his sleeve,  
And mockingly said aside,  
"The Church has fallen, the beautiful Church;  
Her shame is her boast and pride."

Thus her witnessing power, alas, was lost,  
And perilous times came in;  
The times of the end, so often foretold,  
Of form and pleasure and sin.

Then the angel drew near the mercy seat  
And whispered in sighs her name,  
And the saints their anthems of rapture hushed  
And covered their heads with shame.

This old poem (*see note at end of article*) sadly depicts the state of most churches in America. The average American Christian is hardly any different than the world about him. He watches the same movies, listens to the same music, roots for the same sports teams, and pursues the same American dream. Yet this stands in direct opposition to Scripture that states, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." (2 Co. 6:17)

The Christian and the world are polar opposites. Just as the North Pole is a world apart from the South Pole, so should be the Christian from the world. Its values, goals, hopes, and dreams are diametrically opposed to each other. The world has only the here and now, but the Christian lives for that which is to come. The world lives by what is most pleasurable, the Christian seeks first the approval of God. The world lives only for self, but the Christian seeks the good of others. These great differences that the followers of Christ have with the world about them led Jesus to say in His prayer to the Father, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." (Jn. 17:16)

But can Jesus still say the same of His followers today? Are they not of this world? Is there a distinction between the Christian and the world? The Bible has clear, distinct words to those who try to follow Christ yet still be a friend of this world.

**Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. (Ja. 4:4)**

To be a friend of the world is to be an enemy of God. **Stop, think, ponder**—what a serious matter to be found the enemy of God. The church is the bride of Christ. When her affection is given to another (the world), she is labeled an adulteress. How disgraceful, shameful, and loathsome that title should be! Yet this is what we become when we become friends with what God hates.

The church's greatest desire should be a longing to be a pure, chaste bride for Christ. This is accomplished by separating ourselves from the world and its evil influence. This doctrine of separation from the world should stand as the cornerstone of the Church. The reasons for this separation are expounded in 2 Corinthians 6:14-16.

**What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God. (2 Co. 6:14b-16a)**

The answer to these five questions is an unequivocal NONE! There is no fellowship, no communion, no concord, no part, and no agreement between God's kingdom and Satan's kingdom. Yet too often man tries to have part with each of these opposing kingdoms. They want the blessings and promises of God, yet enjoy the pleasures of this world. Jesus said this divided affection is impossible. (Mt. 6:24) The Christian has to choose between the love of the world and the love of the Father. We cannot have them both, for Scripture says:

**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. (I Jn. 2:15-16)**

In these verses we also see a description of what composes the world: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. The desires of the flesh are for food, drink, and fornication. While each of these desires can rightfully be fulfilled, the world places an undue affection on them, particularly fornication. This perverted view of intimacy

can be seen in the world's movies, television shows, and songs.

The lust of the eyes is for pretty things: nice houses, vehicles, clothes, furniture, collectibles, motor homes, boats, sporting equipment, cell phones, computers, entertainment systems, play things ... and the list goes on. Again, some of these may be legitimate, but the world plays on continually getting more, bigger, and better. The world's philosophy is "he who dies with the most toys wins." This is completely opposite to the Christian's view of life.

The pride of life consists of a desire for recognition, for prestige, and to be important. Man's pride seeks to be well thought of, to be honored by others, and to have authority over others. This pride of life displaces God by putting self on the throne that was intended for God. This amounts to nothing less than idolatry. The Christian is to keep himself from these lusts of the world. God's Word says "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this ... to keep himself unspotted from the world." (Ja. 1:27)

To keep oneself unspotted from the world requires a separation from the world. If we watch the world's television, listen to the world's music, read the world's books, and go to the world's places of entertainment and recreation, we will soon become like the world. Our interest in serving God diminishes as we serve self. We do little in fulfill-

ing the greatest commandment, to "love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." (Mt. 22:37) When we do fulfill the greatest commandment, there is no interest for the things of this world.

Imagine a wife who tells her husband, "I love you, but tonight I want to go out with Bill. We are friends too, and I want to spend a little time alone with him as well." What will that husband's response be? Quite likely a fury of jealous rage will overtake him. So with God when we want to two-time on him and enjoy the companionship of the world. God is a jealous God. (His name is Jealous; see Ex. 34:14.) He wants a people devoted entirely unto Himself. This complete devotion entails a separation from all other gods. He does not want to share that love with another.

In the Old Testament the Israelites were to drive out the wicked neighboring nations so they would not "make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice." (Ex. 34:15b) This



**The expectant bride of a heavenly groom has morphed into the harlot of the World!**

Old Testament principle of separation applies to the New Testament as well. We may no longer be tempted to go a whoring after other gods, but Satan tempts with the lusts of this world to draw our devotion away from God.

While we are no longer commanded to drive out the inhabitants of the land, we are commanded to drive out the world. We do not follow the world's fashions. We do not listen to world's music. We do not enjoy the world's entertainment. We do not follow the world's sports. We do not invest in the world's retirement plans. The Christian's distinct lifestyle is characterized by not patterning ourselves after the world. This fulfills Scripture that teaches:

**And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind. (Romans 12:2a)**

When we separate ourselves from the evil influences of the world we are fulfilling Ephesians 5:11, "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." The true Christian will hate the violence and immorality that Hollywood spews out. The true Christian will hate the world's music that sings of good times and love affairs. The true Christian will hate the greed and dishonesty that is so prevalent in today's business world. The true Christian will hate the undress of American society. Yes, the Christian will be quite different than the world about him.

This difference with the world will not win the Christian favor with the world. The world will mock and hate us as we reprove them of sin. Yet this is to be expected as Jesus prayed, "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." (Jn. 17:14) Jesus also said, "because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (Jn. 15:19b)

The early church understood this call of separation from the world. They placed great emphasis on not being part of the world and its evil system. The world did hate them because of this. The early church experienced much martyrdom and persecution as a result. However, today many reap the reward for not compromising their faith by being friends with the world.

Today the choice is ours to make. Someday we too can reap the reward if we choose God above the pleasures this world offers. But woe unto the church if we join hand in hand with the world and enjoy its companionship. Woe unto the church if it is ashamed to be different. Woe unto the church if it loves those things that God hates. Woe unto the bride of Christ if she is found to be an unfaithful harlot, drunk with the love of the enemies of her espoused.

We close with reflecting on the poem at the beginning. Have we exchanged our white robe for satins and silks? Do we now live in a house full of feasting and play? Do our preachers no longer warn of judgment but instead say that



Imagine a wife who tells her husband, "I love you, but tonight I want to go out with Bill. We are friends too, and I want to spend a little time alone with him as well."

we may live as we please and all go to heaven at last? Do we spend our money on ourselves rather than feeding the poor and spreading the gospel to the lost? Are we rich and increased with goods, but in the end will find our name has been blotted from the book of life? ~Phil Haines

*Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. (2 Pe. 3:13-14)*

Phil and Wanita Haines live near Waynesboro, Georgia, where Phil works in the food business. They, with their seven children, attend Burkeland Mennonite Church. This article was originally written for a newsletter, *A Call to Holy Living*, which is mailed to pastors throughout the US. This article is the eighth in that series.

*The poem at the beginning of this article was originally written in the 1800s or earlier. There are several versions published, and more than one author has been attributed to it in the past. The version used above is a mixture of several versions, modernized in a few places. The article originally used an older version of the poem.*



# TEMPTED

-by Marita Horst

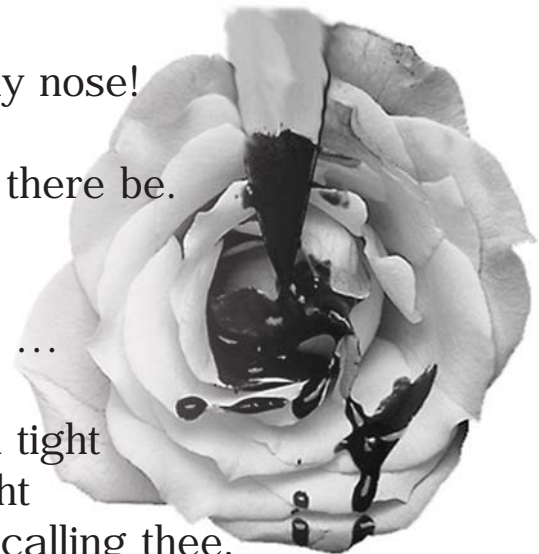


Like the sweetest rose it came  
In a swirling velvet frame;  
All my mind could see was that—  
Not all, for I saw Christ and stalled—  
But this, it lured me, called  
As dazzled there I sat.

I scarcely knew what had come  
When it was there, but from  
Where it came I knew well;  
In swelling symphony it sang,  
Grabbed all my passions, rang  
With lovely, longing swell.

Surrounded now, I reached and took  
And held it—and the look,  
The feel, the smell was sweet to me.  
But gone the scent beneath my nose!  
This in my hand is not a rose!  
A long, cruel thorn is all there be.

A thorn whose blood will dry,  
A mark whose tears will cease to cry ...  
But the scar, the memory  
Of that velvet rose I grasped tight  
Will linger on to haunt me: fight  
Against the velvet roses calling thee.



# Forklift Theology

Michael McDaniel



Strange title, right? Let me explain. I have a vinyl siding business, and recently purchased a forklift to unload and position 12' long pallets of siding. Having never operated a forklift before, I learned quickly that the controls were opposite of what I felt was logical. For example, I pushed the lever forward to lift the pallet, since to me that appeared to be “up.” Wrong. It lowered the pallet *down* instead! Conversely, to lower the pallet, I instinctively pulled back on the lever, which—to me—logically meant “down.” Wrong again. It lifted the pallet *up*! The first few times driving the new machine, I found myself falling right back into my predictable pattern of dropping the pallet down when I meant to raise it up, and vice versa. I thought about painting the little arrow indentations on the knob with colors that would dictate the proper action.

Then the Lord brought back to my remembrance an old saying that could help me with my dilemma—“*The way up is down!*” That seemed to fit this situation perfectly. Now when I want to lift a pallet, I know that I must pull back on the lever—pull it *down!* It is totally counterintuitive to me, but, hey, it works! And isn’t that just how it is in God’s economy? The only way “up” is to first get “low” by humbling ourselves. This kind of thinking is foreign to the world’s mindset. In fact, it is downright ludicrous! Everyone knows that if you want to climb up the social ladder, you must promote yourself above others. Then, others will honor you and hold you in high esteem. But that is totally opposite from how God thinks! We learn in Isaiah 55:8-9: *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

Let’s look at some passages that reveal God’s *higher thoughts* to us:

Mt 23:12 And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

Mt 18:4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Lu 18:13-14 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Now that is *forklift theology!* Oh, we know these and many other scriptures that teach us that the way up—to be highly esteemed by God—is to be lowly and contrite of spirit. But how often do we find ourselves instinctively pushing the lever forward (to go up), when we should be pulling it back (down) instead? Sometimes we have to drop a few pallets in life before we learn this lesson. And, sadly, many never do learn this lesson. Our crafty foe has led us to be filled with pride and self, and we are driven to be puffed *up, up, up!* And that is precisely and predictably when we fall *down, down, down!* Not once, but over and over again. It is kind of like me instinctively pushing the lever up when I should have been pulling it down. Our Lord said that if I “exalt myself” then I shall be abased. On the other hand, Jesus said that if I *humble* myself ... I will be exalted. Not in the eyes of men, but in God’s eyes; and those are the eyes that matter, amen?

## Humble yourselves

Now we come to the application—just how do I *humble myself* before God and man, so that God will lift me up? Some believe that you cannot rightly “humble” yourself, but that you must *be* humble inwardly by the new nature in Christ. While I agree with that sentiment to a degree, Scripture clearly says in James 4:10: “**Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.**” Again, Peter said: “**Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.**” (1 Pe 5:6) Therefore, we are to actively humble ourselves before God, and employ that *forklift theology* that says “the way up is down.” How do we accomplish this “descent”?

## It all begins in our mind

Paul said in Romans 12:3, “*For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.*” Although there are many aspects of humility, we want to focus in on the idea that humility is having the proper perspective about God, ourselves, and others. The Puritan writer, William Law, said:

Humility does not consist in having a worse opinion of ourselves than we deserve, or in abasing ourselves lower than we really are; but as all virtue is founded in truth, so humility is founded in a true and just sense of our weakness, misery, and sin. He that rightly feels and lives in this sense of his condition, lives in humility.<sup>1</sup>

True humility does not mean that we denigrate or demean ourselves, or constantly put ourselves down. That is false humility and contrived. Some equate self-abasement with some sort of self-flagellation, beating themselves up. No, a true sense of humility must come after we see ourselves as the sinners that we are, and our need for the Saviour. As we walk in this constant awareness of our *nothingness* and His *all-ness*, we walk in true humility. Matthew Henry also expressed this idea:

Humility is an estimate of ourselves as we are. It is a willingness to be known, and talked of, and treated just according to truth. It is a view of ourselves as lost, poor, and wandering creatures.<sup>2</sup>

## How do you see yourself?

When we begin to see ourselves for who we really are, it can be very humbling. The more we see God for who He is, and realize what Jesus did for us, the smaller we become in our own minds. God becomes incomprehensibly large, and we shrink in comparison. Suddenly, our “good” does not seem so good anymore, and we realize the limitations of our own goodness. Our self-righteousness diminishes as God’s righteousness grows infinitely bigger. Our selfishness is exposed and God’s self-*lessness* is magnified. Finally, we realize that our love for others is pitiful compared to God’s

love for man. Our perspective begins to change, and we become very small in our own eyes, as God becomes preeminent. Our hearts become a funnel, willingly receiving greater love, joy and peace. (Ga 5:22) As Matthew Henry observed, “*humility is founded in a true and just sense of our weakness, misery, and sin. He that rightly feels and lives in this sense of his condition, lives in humility.*”

## Destroy the self life

Let’s back up another step. Before we can truly see God for how great He is, we must destroy the power of the self life that feeds our pride. As long as we are on the throne of our hearts, God cannot be. As long as we are large in our own eyes, God will not commune with us. So many Scriptures tell of God’s intolerance of pride and self-centeredness:

Pr 8:13 The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.

Ps 138:6 Though the LORD be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off.

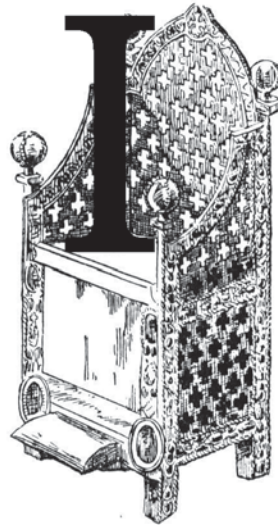
Pr 29:23 A man’s pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the

humble in spirit.

Ja 4:6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

## God’s wounds that heal

How are we *dethroned*, so that Christ may reign? There are many ways that this can be accomplished. God may use discipline or trials and tribulations to break down the strongholds of *pride* and *self* in our lives. As He does this through His Holy Spirit, *self* diminishes and God increases. Why? Because any events in our lives that undermine



**As long as we are on the throne of our hearts, God cannot be.**

and destroy self, also exalt God and promote *humility*. J. Gregory Mantle, in his book *The Way of the Cross*, stated: “*True self-discovery wounds our pride and spoils the good opinions we form and cherish of ourselves.*”<sup>3</sup> As this happens, the Spirit plants the seeds of humility in a prepared and plowed heart.

## Humility through serving others

As we see God for how great He is, another wonderful thing happens—we begin to become increasingly aware of the needs and interests of others around us. Philippians 2:3-4 says: *Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.* As we affix our gaze upon the Holy One, we will begin to also see His children and their needs. This is a sign that the immature selfish believer is becoming a mature selfless believer. He humbles himself and takes up the basin and the towel, as did Christ when He washed the disciples’ feet. The Master-Servant has shown us how to humble ourselves and serve our brethren. Matthew 20:28 tells us: “*Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*” Roy Hession, in his classic book *The Calvary Road*, stated:

**This is a sign  
that the immature  
selfish believer is  
becoming a mature  
self-less believer.  
He humbles  
himself and takes  
up the basin and  
the towel.**

“The low position we take toward the Lord Jesus is judged by Him by the low position we take in our relationship with our fellows. An unwillingness to serve others in costly, humbling ways, He takes to be an unwillingness to serve Him, and we thus put ourselves out of fellowship with Him.”<sup>4</sup>

Another wonderful quotation regarding Christian service is by F.B. Meyer:

“I used to think that God’s gifts were on shelves one above the other and that the taller we grew in Christian character, the more easily we should reach them. I find now that God’s gifts are on shelves one beneath the other and that it is not a question of growing taller, but of *stooping lower* and that we have to *go down, always down*, to get His best ones. ***In Christian service, the branches that bear the most fruit hang the lowest.***”<sup>5</sup>

## Is the way down too hard?

Forklift theology is an unpopular theology, and one that is rejected by the world. Even the religious world promotes

self-esteem, prosperity, and easy-believism ... all easy roads, and well traveled. Many are traveling these “upward” roads today, and few are on the downward path. How is it with you, today? Is what I have promoted too hard, and too unrealistic? Consider the question posed by Roy Hession, in *The Calvary Road*:

“Does it seem hard and forbidding, *this way down*? Be assured, *it is the only way up*. It was the way by which the Lord Jesus reached the throne, and it is the way by which we too reach the place of spiritual power, authority, and fruitfulness.”<sup>6</sup>

I am still new to my forklift, and when I want to lift the load, I still instinctively want to push the lever *up* instead of *down*. But now that little phrase keeps coming back to me before I push it ... *the way up is down*. True with forklifts ... true with life! ~

<sup>1</sup> William Law, as cited in *AGES Digital Library* (Rio, WI: AGES Software, Inc, 2000)

<sup>2</sup> Matthew Henry; *Matthew Henry Commentary* as cited in *AGES Digital Library* (Rio, WI: AGES Software, Inc, 2000)

<sup>3</sup> Gregory J. Mantle, *The Way of the Cross* (Rod and Staff Publishers, Inc.; Crockett, KY; 1993); p.19

<sup>4</sup> Roy Hession, *The Calvary Road* (CLC Publications; Fort Washington, PA, 2002)

<sup>5</sup> F.B. Meyer, *Topical Encyclopedia of Living Quotations* (Bethany House, Minneapolis, MN: 1982) p. 102

<sup>6</sup> Hession, *Ibid*



Michael and Kayra McDaniel live in Milbank, SD and attend Milbank Christian Fellowship, a group of zealous believers whose outreach extends from their next door neighbor to Tanzania. Michael can be contacted by writing to 47709 Reich Road, Milbank, SD 57252.



# Tricki Complex

Chester Lehman



James Herriot, the beloved English veterinarian, recounts in one of his books the humorous story of Tricki Woo. An otherwise sensible person, his owner, Mrs. Pumphrey, imagined that Tricki descended from an ancient Chinese dynasty, and she coddled her dog like royalty. No delicacy was denied him—scones, fudges, liver pudding—he had it all, and his figure showed it. When Tricki’s health declined, Mr. Herriot remonstrated that Mrs. Pumphrey had to take things in hand and withhold treats. And she claimed to do so, in minute amounts for a short time, perhaps two scones instead of three; but she simply couldn’t bear any deprivation of Tricki’s appetite (she truly “loved” him). The day came when his fat and poor health immobilized him; he could no longer romp with the other dogs, and Mr. Herriot whisked him away to his own office for a few days of cure—no food. Tricki became a new dog.

We see in Mrs. Pumphrey a tragic phenomenon. In a circumstance of boundless indulgence, one can initiate a slight withdrawal, then crow about heroic restraint. Ten steps toward debauchery, one step back, and we have a new saint. Wise men shake their heads.

Let’s speak of our youth in their mission endeavors (in generalized terms, of course). We see a commendable awakening of responsibility toward the Great Commission. Some good things are happening at the veterinarian’s office. What, though, is happening at home? Churches may congratulate themselves on pulling off smoothly the monumental task of a youth group mission trip, but is the living at home showing the fruit of fullness of character and service to others?

Young person, do you want to do “hard things” for God? Do you have a burden for the building of His kingdom? Good. Start with learning to sweat in the garden over a hoe or in the street over a broom. Stick with a job—paid or unpaid—even when it becomes unpleasant. Bring erratic sleep

and diet schedules into disciplined productivity. In your *limited* use of communication technology, save your “pearls” for special people rather than spewing out your life details all over the public face. Erase from your vocabulary those words borrowed from worthless movies—the words you text but which can’t be printed here. Cut the worthless movies. Stay at home and enjoy stillness instead of racing over the continent to throw your offerings at the next tournament. Read a book. Go to church, your church, every service ... Sunday School, too.

Share a room cheerfully with a sibling. Cultivate respect for your authorities and live within the bounds they set for you. Realize that obsession with non-rules detracts just as much from knowing Christ as obsession with rules. Do all of the above, then remember something: For the most part, these are quite ordinary things, or they used to be. Tricki Woo complex. Do what is right in the pit of daily living before you dream of serving God by smuggling Bibles in the darkest corner of the earth. Otherwise, don’t attempt to convince anyone that God has called you to a work. What your home life is here will become your home life over there.

To all of us: let’s stop feeding Tricki Woo. He’s too fat. (Hear this, Mom and Dad Pumphrey.) Our mission efforts should result in real service rather than rite-of-passage badges into glorified sainthood for adventure seekers—adventure seekers flinging around money. “Mission” trips are not enhanced by being rich men’s playgrounds (rich men are already preoccupied with needle eyes).

Have I raised your ire? Maybe there is hope for Tricki Woo. ~

*Chester and Janice Lehman live near Odon, IN, farming a small orchard to pay the bills and to make contacts for Christ. The family of eleven attends Shalom Mennonite Fellowship, where Chester pastors and crusades against mediocrity. Chester may be contacted by writing to 13381 E - 1325 N, Odon, IN 47562.*

## Introduction

God in His mercy and grace blessed us with another week of Youth Bible School this past November. We heard many inspiring, challenging, and convicting messages about faith, “What would Jesus do?”, and the kingdom of God. In this article, I have attempted to share some of the highlights of the week. This year I have also included several testimonies from other students.

## David Janzen

*Faith*—one of the most common words in Christianity, but what really does it look like in action? The Bible gives record of many people who had true faith. Many of these are mentioned in Hebrews 11. Faith is closely linked to the

this about several of these people of faith: “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.” (He. 11:13)

Bro. David Janzen challenged us through Old Testament examples to believe God and show our belief by basing our lives on His Word. Noah and Abraham proved that they truly believed God by obeying His seemingly outrageous, staggering commands. How do we know if we have faith? Our faith is evident if we take God seriously enough to obey Him.

Bro. David’s message on Thursday was especially meaningful to me. He talked about how God tests our faith. Test-

# Youth Bible School



unseen. The Israelites “believed” only when they saw—that is not faith. They never trusted God for who He is. They never accepted the fact that He is always faithful, whether the impossible situation is behind or directly ahead.

Real faith rests in the nature and character of God. It believes that God is good and that He will never let us down. It is exemplified in Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice his own son, believing that God would still keep His promise and give him descendents. Real faith trusts everything, including the fulfillment of God’s own promises, into the faithfulness and nature of God. The writer of Hebrews tells us

ed faith is precious. Peter tells us this in 1 Peter 1:7: “... that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.” There are many examples in God’s Word of people who shine because of their testing. What would we know about Job if God had not allowed him to be tried? Would the prophets have had such a witness without suffering? Would Abraham, the “father of faith,” have been given that name if he had not sacrificed his stability, his sensibility, and his son on the altar of trust? Would we have such

intense, passionate Psalms had David not been through the “valley of the shadow of death”? And perhaps the most radiant example of suffering, tested faith in the Old Testament: Joseph. Could he have saved his family, could he have carried God’s plan forward, could he have proven his integrity, and could he have foreshadowed Christ Himself without experiencing the tremendous injustices that he endured? We look at these people and many others in the Bible and know, beyond a doubt, that their faith was genuine. And God is glorified by their resounding acclamation that He is worthy of trust even in the hottest fire.

I have also watched people in my own life experience trials, injustices, and sorrows and come through them victoriously, shining brighter than ever before. I have seen their

that they obeyed it in the face of cruel deaths. In the accounts of the lions’ den and the fiery furnace, God miraculously delivered them from their otherwise certain fates. However, Hebrews 11:35-38 explains to us that sometimes people of faith are not rescued. Many times, their experience is the following: “... others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.”

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faith strengthened through those times. And that has had a tremendous effect on my own life and on how I handle the small trials that I face.

Testing can come in the form of hard times, difficulties, and injustices, but Bro. David shared three other important types of tests that God allows in our lives to prove and even increase the genuineness of our faith:

## **Compromise**

Sometimes we are tempted to compromise. Daniel, as well as his three friends, believed God’s Word to the point

## **Identification**

Moses proved his faith in the unseen, the intangible—he chose to identify with the oppressed people of Israel instead of to live a life of ease and affluence in Egypt. He was “... esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.” (He. 11:26) He considered the *suffering itself* to be worth far more than Egypt’s riches. That is faith—it is not by natural sight that one values suffering above riches. It was because he trusted God, because he was looking to the reward in the future. Bro. David’s challenge to us was

this: “Identify yourself with the rejected Nazarene.” Whom we identify with makes clear whether we are living by faith or by sight.

### Passion / lust

“Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.” (Ja. 1:13) Our desires and passions often tempt us to do evil. Joseph’s belief in God’s moral absolutes kept him from yielding to Potipher’s wife. His actions revealed the caliber of his faith.

We can have “strong consolation” (He. 6:18) because God cannot lie and He always keeps His promises. God promises that “he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.” (1 Pe. 2:6) Let us take God at His word and build our lives on His promises. He will be faithful!

Bro. David talked about Jesus’ parable of the wise and foolish house builders. (Mt. 7:24-27) Both of their houses were tested to see if they were stable. The people who hear and obey God’s Word that Jesus spoke are those who will pass the test.

Job endured devastating trials: his possessions, his family, and his health all taken from him in the blink of an eye. But Job’s faith was real, and in the end, God could point to Job and say, “*That* is faith.” May He say the same about us.

### Dean Taylor

“What if Jesus really meant every word that He said?” This question reverberated throughout Bro. Dean Taylor’s messages for the entire week. Every day, he had on the platform a large board with these words spray-painted on them. Bro. Dean used many illustrations and object lessons throughout the week to make his teaching clear and memorable.

God’s Word is meant to be performed as a whole, like a symphony. We should not apply various commandments to our lives as disjointed bits. Bro. Dean said that instead of “applying God’s Word to our lives,” we should “apply our lives to God’s Word.” When applied in this way, as a whole, the symphony of our lives will be a testimony to the Great Composer.

Jesus began a revolution. Some of His followers were even accused of turning the world “upside down.” This revolution, unlike most others, was a revolution based on love. We, as Jesus’ followers, should be passionately loyal to Jesus Christ and we should be strongly committed to the

principles of His revolution. But, as this is a revolution of love, our passion must be motivated by love.

Bro. Dean stressed the importance of practically living out the teachings of Jesus: in simple obedience, not explaining away principles that we do not like. Christianity is not simply a mental issue; it must be lived out and obeyed in real life.

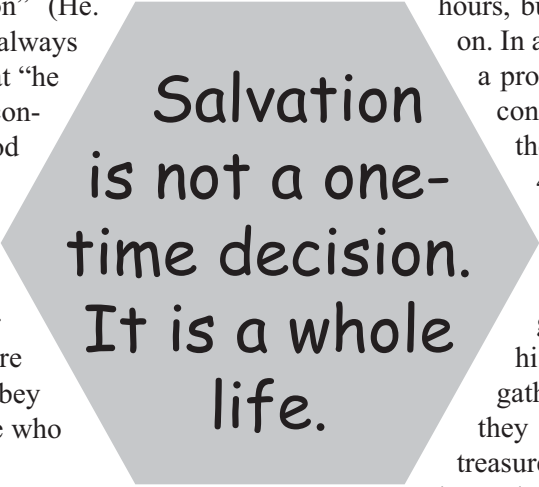
Salvation is not a one-time decision. It is a whole life. It’s not real if there is no life of obedience to back up the profession. Bro. Dean gave the analogy of a broken clock.

It reads the correct time twice every twenty-four hours, but it is useless. It cannot be depended on. In a similar way, a person may have made a profession of faith, but if their life is not constantly “ticking” in obedience to God, the profession is empty. In Luke 6:43-45, Jesus uses trees instead of clocks to discuss our lives: “For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.”

How can we be “followers of Christ” if we do not follow Christ? Is our relationship with Christ a set of answers to a “theological test” or is it *real*? Judgment Day will not be a theology test. It will instead reveal the reality of our faith, as evidenced by our entire life, including our actions. Are we walking by the grace of God? Will our lives pass the test? Are we pretending? God cannot change the person you or I are pretending to be. We must be honest about who we really are.

The holiness of God is the cornerstone of the Christian life. God calls us to be holy as He is holy. We as Christians are to be “set apart” from the world and to God. Out of our understanding of the holiness of God should flow our behavior and views on a whole range of practical issues—including thoughts, clothing, money, and the poor. (Bro. Dean expounded on this wonderfully in his series from YBS 2007.) Therefore it is imperative that we have a right view of God!

Bro. Dean actually spent much of Wednesday’s session talking about the importance of helping the poor. Loving our neighbors as ourselves is the second greatest command, and caring for poor people is a practical way of showing that our love is real. Jesus makes this clear when He tells us how He will recognize us as His followers: “For I was an



Salvation  
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life.

hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.” (Mt. 25:35-36)

On Friday, Bro. Dean had a special demonstration to emphasize that the main thing in the Christian life is to have *reality*, not to be able to explain and understand every aspect of theology totally perfectly. He had two of his daughters come up, gave each of them a genuine pearl, and asked them to look at it and describe it as best they could. Then he had one of the students come up, gave him a stack of reference books, and asked him to create a pearl based on all the scientific knowledge about pearls that we have. The little girls were not able to give very much information about the pearls when Bro. Dean had them speak into the microphone, but they had in their possession the real thing. The student (Ryan Grice) produced three objects that each had a few of the characteristics of real pearls but all fell short of being genuine pearls. He tried to rationalize the lack of results with statements such as, “We have to remember that we are in a different dispensation,” and “We walk by faith, not by sight.” But these excuses did not change the fact that he did not have a real pearl. Bro. Dean’s point in all of this was that having a practical, living, vibrant reality is the primary concern of Christianity.

The Kingdom of God is something that starts out very small, as in Jesus’ parable where it was represented by yeast. But it permeates every part of the dough and has a huge effect on the final product. As we live the way God wants us to live, we should permeate the world and have an influence in it. We start out small and weak, but we grow and spread. Bro. Dean gave this quote: “No one can do everything, but everyone can do something, and together we can change the world.”

Let us obey Christ’s simple command: “Follow me.”

## **John D. Martin**

Bro. John D. Martin shared with us the centrality of the concept of the kingdom of God in Jesus’ teaching. God’s heart from the very beginning, in the Garden with Adam and Eve, was to create a world in which to share His benevolence, peace, love, and joy with His creation through His rule. Ever since sin ruined humanity, God has had a passion to have a people who would display to the world what He originally wanted. God’s kingdom now should still be a testimony to the beautiful, harmonious, benevolent, and holy character of God and of those who follow His ways. In the

New Testament era, the church is intended to be a unified testimony to the world of God’s character.

Bro. John D. taught on various characteristics and attributes relating to the kingdom of God and how we as Christians (citizens of God’s kingdom) are to live. He spent two sessions dealing with how the concept of the kingdom of God relates to the practical issues of money/possessions and peace/nonresistance.

On Wednesday, Bro. John D.’s message was titled, “The Kingdom in Practice.” He talked about three evidences of a renewed mind. A renewed mind is the “mind of Christ,” which means it conforms to the character of Jesus.

Paul tells us in Romans 12:2, “Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” How do we renew our minds? Bro. John pointed us to the very next verse for the first step: “For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think.” The first evidence of a renewed mind is having the humility of Christ.

Jesus’ great emptying of Himself in Philippians 2 is the supreme demonstration of humility. The Bible tells us that even though Jesus was in “the form of God,” He did not consider equality with God something to be retained. Instead, He “made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men ...” (vv. 6-7) Jesus was willing to relinquish His glory and His privileges as God, all of which He deserved. Why are we so reluctant to relinquish all of our rights, prestige, and reputation—none of which we deserve—instead of taking the example of Christ and not counting them things to be grasped? Bro. John D. believes that if everyone in the kingdom of God would be willing to go all the way to the “bottom,” virtually all the Church’s problems would disappear. Pride is a major problem among us as professing Christians.

The Bible promises us that “he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.” (Mt. 23:12) Indeed, this is what happened to Jesus at the end of the passage in Philippians 2: “Wherefore [because of His humility and obedience] God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name ...” We can definitely afford to humble ourselves. God will take care of us. But our humility must be sincere—humbling ourselves for the purpose of being exalted later is not true humility.

Why  
are we  
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to relinquish  
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prestige, and  
reputation?

The second evidence of a renewed mind is displaying the character of the Beatitudes—which again is the character of Christ. Bro. John discussed each one and showed how Jesus demonstrated them.

“Blessed are the poor in spirit”—Someone who is poor in spirit has the attitude of a learner. Jesus, being God, is all-knowing, but the Bible says that even He learned obedience through what He suffered. (He. 5:8) He learned what it feels like to be obedient as a man in a sin-cursed world.

“Blessed are they that mourn”—As we look at ourselves, we should mourn over our sinfulness. When we look at the world around us, we should mourn over their sin and the suffering and needs that abound. Jesus was “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.” (Is. 53:3)

“Blessed are the meek”—To be meek is to be kind, gentle, and patient; not assertive or harsh. Jesus said, “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.” (Mt. 11:29)

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness”—If we strongly desire to do what is right, to obey God’s Word, and to treat other people rightly, we “shall be filled.” It was said of Jesus that He “loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.” (He. 1:9)

“Blessed are the merciful”—God has been and continues to be so merciful to us, and He wants us to follow that example. Jesus commands us to be “merciful, as your Father also is merciful.” (Lu. 6:36) The greatest demonstration of Jesus’ mercy was His Incarnation and His redemptive death for His sinful creation. But throughout His life, we often read in the Gospels that He “had compassion” on an individual or on a crowd. And think of the mercy He showed to His disciples time and time again!

“Blessed are the pure in heart”—Those who have a single focus, who are completely committed to God, who turn away from sin—they “shall see God.” Jesus said that He “always [does] those things that please him.” (Jn. 8:29)

“Blessed are the peacemakers”—Reconciliation is very

near to God’s heart. Peacemakers, Jesus said, will be known as God’s children. They reflect the heart of reconciliation that is so important to God that He sent Jesus to die in order to be reconciled to us. II Corinthians 5:19 says, “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.” Continuing on, the next words are these: “and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.” Ephesians chapters 1-4 speak of how Jesus’ redemptive work allows us to be reconciled both to God and to each other. It is tragic that we are more often piece-makers than peace-makers.

“Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake”—If we are truly following Christ and advancing His kingdom, we can expect opposition. Jesus experienced it; He told us in John 15:18, “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.”

The third evidence of a renewed mind is showing the forgiveness of Christ. In the Lord’s Prayer, we ask God to forgive us the same way we forgive other people. That is a frightening thing to pray! Jesus forgives us and lets us go free, treating us as if we had never sinned against Him. He holds no grudges against us. In fact, He no longer remembers our sins. (He. 8:12, 10:17) We are also called to release those who have wronged us. It is painful, because we have to “absorb” the pain and the hurt instead of taking it out on them. But God is telling us to follow His example and do what He did for us! (See the parable where Jesus teaches about forgiveness in Matthew 18. I have found it very convicting in my life.)

Joseph exemplified true forgiveness. He totally released his brothers; he allowed no bitterness to remain in his life. In fact, the name he gave to his first son means, “God has made me to forget.” I’m sure he still remembered everything that had happened to him, but as Bro. John said, “he could have recounted it all without a tinge of bitterness or unforgiveness.”

If we, by the continual workings of God’s grace in our lives, demonstrate these three evidences, we can rejoice that God is renewing our minds. And this is a very important

Forgiveness is  
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part of what it means to be a citizen of God's kingdom—to think like the King Himself!

~ Paul Lamicela

## Testimonies from Students

Following are several testimonies from other students who were blessed by YBS 2009.

### Bethany Esh:

David Janzen's messages on faith were life-changing to me. His thorough and creative approach to this age-old topic awoke a deep longing in my heart to possess true, living faith. Bro. David presented the fact that our perfect example of faithfulness is Jesus. He never gives up on me because He is living with expectation that He will see me face to face. It was this that motivated Him to endure the agony of Calvary. He deserves my absolute trust because He has proven Himself faithful.



The wonderful clearing of burdens as the Lord directed different ones to give up or lay aside various things!

### Jennifer Chapman:

I loved Dean Taylor's theme of W.W.J.D. and the way he tied it in to every aspect of life. I was especially challenged by the simple yet profound question spray-painted on his easel—"What if Jesus really meant every word that He said?" It has truly changed the way I read the Bible, and given me greater faith as I approach God in prayer. I want my life to be different, as I take each Scripture literally, and, in turn, do what Jesus did.

### Andrew Lamicela:

I really enjoyed my first year of chorus practice at Bible School. Brother Earl did a great job organizing and directing such a large group. I especially appreciated "O Thou in Whose Presence" and "If Ye Then with Christ Be Risen." After watching for several years, it was wonderful to be able to participate. I look forward to next year!

### Jessica Stamper:

I was especially blessed this year of Bible School by the practical, heart-to-heart messages that we were given. Spe-

cifically, John D. Martin's messages challenged my walk with God in a real way. He stated that salvation is not an end; rather, it is a means to an end—the kingdom of God. Salvation is an expression of the kingdom. I went away from this Bible School challenged, but also longing to have a heart of love and zeal for the glory of God on this earth.

### Jeffery Chapman (a prayer group leader this year):

Prayer and sharing time was a real blessing this year! God

moved in the hearts of every one that was present. It was a blessed time of sharing personal testimonies, where God has brought us from, and the wonderful clearing of burdens as the Lord directed different ones to give up or lay aside various things. It was a time where various different cultural backgrounds were present and sweetly blended their hearts to seek the face of God, and His will for each of their lives. Truly, the prayer and sharing time was a blessing in many ways, and hearts were changed by the power of God.

### Michelle Ramer

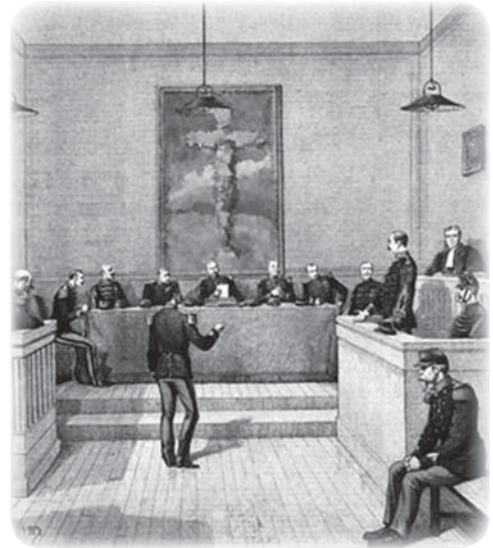
Probably the most outstanding day to me was the last day, Sunday. Bro. Tanner Leabee preached a message called *Ye Are Not Your Own*.

We so easily get the idea that we are our own person, that we have rights and deserve to be treated the best. Don't we remember that we are bought property? Let the fact that you are not your own and were bought with a price govern and motivate all your life. We treat someone else's property with special care because it isn't ours. Oh the carefulness we should take with someone else's possession! Did He buy you so you could do with yourself what you want?

Now we are possessed ... possessed by God. Because of what Jesus did, you're His. The trials that come our way were filtered by God. If you're your own, you have to fill your own dreams and desires. You work out your own things. But when you're run by Him, you're connected to the right power source! What an honor to be owned by Him!~

# Judgement Day Is Not a Theology Test

Dean Taylor



*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. (2 Co. 5:10)*

What's the boldest example of evangelism that you have ever seen? For me, it was when I was fresh out of anesthesia school. I was working in a hospital that employed a lot of foreign medical students and residents. Because of all the students, the operating rooms there were usually bustling with all kinds of people—not just the surgeons and their residents, but the X-ray people had their trainees, the scrub techs had their trainees, the lab techs had theirs, etc ... I guess you get the idea—the operating rooms were packed!

Well, it had been one of my first days on the job there in this teaching hospital. I was just about to administer the anesthesia to put my patient to sleep when he looked up at me and said, “Is this it? Am I going out now?”

I told him, “Yes, I am about to start the anesthesia.”

Then he said “Before you do, I want to talk to the main surgeon who will be doing my surgery. I have a question for him.”

I told the residents nearby, and they quickly ran up to the head of the bed and said that they could answer any questions that he had.

He asked, “Thank you, but are you the main surgeon?”

The resident told him he was not the main surgeon—that the main surgeon was in his office and would be coming out soon—but that it would actually be a while before he would get there.

But the man insisted, “I want to talk to him ... I must ask him a question.”

After trying a few more times, the resident finally gave up and called for the chief surgeon. He was in his office, which was about 10 minutes away.

As we waited there, I guess we all just figured that this guy simply needed a little reassurance about his surgery. As I recall, I think it was a knee surgery of some kind. I think we all just assumed that he wanted to hear which leg they were planning to operate on—straight from the chief surgeon's mouth.

As time crept by, we each tried to ask him if we could help him with his question. But he was still insistent—he would speak to the head surgeon. It seemed like a long time; but finally, after about 10 long minutes, in rushed the chief surgeon to hear “the question.”

Now, allow me to describe some of the details of this scene. This patient was lying down on his back on an operating table, with nothing on but a surgical gown. Surrounding him are the surgical techs (who help with the surgery), residents (who also help), x-ray techs, a few drug salesmen, and standing at the head of the bed were me and a Hindu anesthesiologist from India. In my hand was the anesthetic agent needed to put him to sleep.

As the chief surgeon came around to the head of the bed, the man looked up, pointed his finger at him, and asked “Are you the main surgeon?”

“Yes, I am sir. How may I help you?”

“I have a question for you.”

“Yes sir, what is it?”

The whole room was dead silent as all waited in suspense to hear what “the question” would be.

And then, right there—flat on his back on the operating table—with his finger pointing up at the surgeon, he asked the question, “If you were to die tonight, and you had to appear before God, and He asked you why He should let you in—what would you say?”

The surgeon was speechless ... I was speechless ... the whole room was speechless! We all just sat there in com-



plete silence! It was one of those attention-grabbing, potentially defining moments, when the silence seemed almost deafening. Then suddenly we were riveted out of the moment by a joke cracked by the Hindu anesthesiologist: “He would say that he took care of you, so then God would let him in!” Everyone had a good laugh and the surgery began.

Well, I’m still impressed with that scene today. However, while I believe that this is a good question to get someone thinking, I have to wonder if this line of thinking is completely biblical. Of course, the right answer to the question from a solid, born-again believer should be something like, “I trust in nothing but the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. I put my faith in Him, alone. He is all my righteousness and all my salvation.” Good answer, right? I certainly think so.

But ... who said there was going to be an oral exam on Judgment Day? From what I read in Scripture, Judgment Day will be based on the reality of my life here on earth. On that day, it will be revealed whether I lived my life by grace through faith, or not. Quoting a creed or a theological doctrine will be irrelevant.

It is surprising how regularly this “theology test” scene gets brought up in our thoughts and sermons. I admit, the whole idea is very attractive: Learn the right answers with sincerity and be ready to give them to anyone who asks. So, theoretically, when we get to Judgment Day, instead of worrying about a bunch of do’s and don’ts (or rather did’s and didn’ts), we simply answer the big theological questions and then walk right on in.

The only problem with this idea is that the Scriptures never mention this scene anywhere. From every indication given to us, on Judgment Day the time for theological answers will be over. Any talking on our part seems to be merely rendering an account of what we did or what we said. The Bible simply describes Jesus judging us based on the reality of our life—not a theology test.

## Judged by works?

Paul said in some pretty clear words that *everyone* will stand before the judgment seat of Christ. To the Church of Corinth he wrote, *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* (2 Co. 5:10) Modern Christianity is very quick these days to explain away the whole idea of a Judgment Day—especially for the Christian. But to do so really twists the Scriptures. Jesus repeatedly taught through the Gospels the need for genuine conversions. The theme “You will know them by their fruits” resonates through almost every other chapter. Every picture Jesus gave of a judgment

day was inextricably connected to what grace actually *did* in a believer’s life. A Christianity based solely on mental assent and verbal profession was firmly condemned: “*Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.*”<sup>1</sup>

## Saved by works?

Does all this mean that we come to Christ through our works? Not at all. When Jesus was asked “*What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?*” Jesus answered, “*This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.*” We cannot save ourselves. The only way to come to Christ is to believe—by faith. However, when this truly happens, the Bible says that we actually change. A few verses down from his sobering statement about Judgment Day, Paul said: “*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away;*

*behold, all things are become new.*”<sup>2</sup> In other words, when someone—through grace—became a follower of Christ, they actually followed

Christ; it’s that simple. As Paul said in the letter to the Ephesians: “*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 should walk in them.*”<sup>3</sup>

James shared the same thoughts when he said “*I will show you my faith by my works.*”<sup>4</sup> Put simply, James said that the grace-motivated works that Christ performs in and through us are the *evidence* of our faith. James was asking, “Is your faith real or not?” To James, reciting a creed or a list of theological truths was not evidence. As a matter of fact, James compared a faith that exists only in the mind to the faith that demons have! “*You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?*”<sup>5</sup> Our faith—is it real or is it not? Our faith-motivated works are the evidence now—and they will be the evidence on Judgment Day as well.

## Modern corruption

Like so many other controversial subjects, I have found that when reading books just a few hundred years back, it is amazing to find that preachers on many sides of the theo-

Judgement Day will be based on the reality of my life here on earth.

1 Mt. 7:21

2 2 Co. 5:17

3 Ep. 2:8-10

4 Ja. 2:18

5 Ja. 2:19

logical spectrum are in agreement on this topic. Spurgeon, in his sermon *The Great Assize*, preached:

Ask ye now, who is it, or who ARE THEY THAT WILL HAVE TO APPEAR BEFORE THE THRONE OF JUDGMENT? The answer is plain; it admits of no exemption: "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." This is very decisive, if there were no other text. We must all appear; that is to say, every one of the human race. We must all appear. And that the godly will not be exempted from this appearance is very clear, for the apostle here is speaking to Christians. He says, "We walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident. We labor." and so on; and then he puts it, "We must all appear." So that, beyond all others, it is certain that all Christians must appear there. The text is quite conclusive upon that point. And if we had not that text, we have the passage in Matthew, which we have read, in which the sheep are summoned there as certainly as are the goats; and the passage in the Revelation, where all the dead are judged according to the things which are written in the books. They are all there.

John Wesley, in his sermon also called *The Great Assize*, said:

"Had all men a deep sense of this [Judgment Day], how effectually would it secure the interests of society! For what more forcible motive can be conceived to the practice of genuine morality? To a steady pursuit of solid virtue? A uniform walking in justice, mercy, and truth? What could strengthen our hands in all that is good, and deter us from all evil, like a strong conviction of this, "The Judge stands at the door;" and we are shortly to stand before him?"

### **Saved by grace—evidenced by works**

Speaking on the topic of judgment by works, I thought John Piper put it well when he said, in a sermon preached back in 1980:

It is by grace we are saved through faith; not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. But the heart that is full of faith will overflow in attitudes and actions very different from those which flow from unbelief. Therefore, our deeds will testify truly to the genuineness or absence of faith, and it is not inconsistent for God to judge us according to our works. But we must understand that this judgment according to works does not mean

we earn our salvation. Our deeds do not earn, they exhibit our salvation. Our deeds are not the merit of our righteousness, they are the mark of our new life in Christ. Our deeds are not sufficient to deserve God's favor, but they do demonstrate our faith. Please keep that distinction clear in your mind regarding our attitudes and actions: they do not earn, they exhibit; they do not merit, they mark; they do not deserve, they demonstrate. And therefore, "God will render

to every man according to his deeds," **including Christians.**"<sup>6</sup>

I like that statement: "they do not earn, they exhibit; they do not merit, they mark; they do not deserve, they demonstrate." That statement makes you think ... if salvation is by faith, and the evidence of

that faith is works, then faith must be a lot more than mere theology! Faith must be visible, real, and powerful!

### **Send your sins ahead of you**

In the last chapter of the Bible Jesus lets us know that on Judgment Day it will be too late to change. "*He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still. And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.*" (Re. 22:12)

Now is the time we can make an eternal difference. Paul told his young disciple Timothy that, "*Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after.*"<sup>7</sup> Likewise, John wrote in his letter to the churches, "*And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins.*"<sup>8</sup> According to the apostles, on Judgment Day the "reality" of whether we confessed and repented of our sins and brought them to Christ will determine whether we will meet Christ as an Advocate or as a Judge. If we repent and bring our sins to Jesus now, He has promised that He will forgive them and even blot them out!<sup>9</sup> If we refuse to open up our sins beforehand and "*send them on ahead of us to judgment*" as Paul put it, then we await a fearful judgment.

6 August 31, 1980 (Morning) Bethlehem Baptist Church. (Emphasis mine) It should be noted that some of Piper's other teachings take the punch out of what he says here.

7 I Ti. 5:24

8 I Jn. 2:1-2

9 Is. 43:25; He. 8:12

What could strengthen our hands in all that is good, and deter us from evil, like a strong conviction of this: The Judge stands at the door?

## Sins of omission

After the Apostle John gave us this beautiful truth about how to deal with sins in our past, he also reminded us how genuine sin-washed souls will act: *“And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.”* What a blessing: in Christ we are forgiven—free—and faithful!

So ... if you were to die tonight and you were to appear before God, what would you say? The answer is that you would say nothing except to render an account of your life.

The bottom line will be whether you were genuinely saved by grace through faith while here on earth—or—whether you were not. On that day you will bow to Jesus, either as your Advocate<sup>10</sup> or Judge.<sup>11</sup>

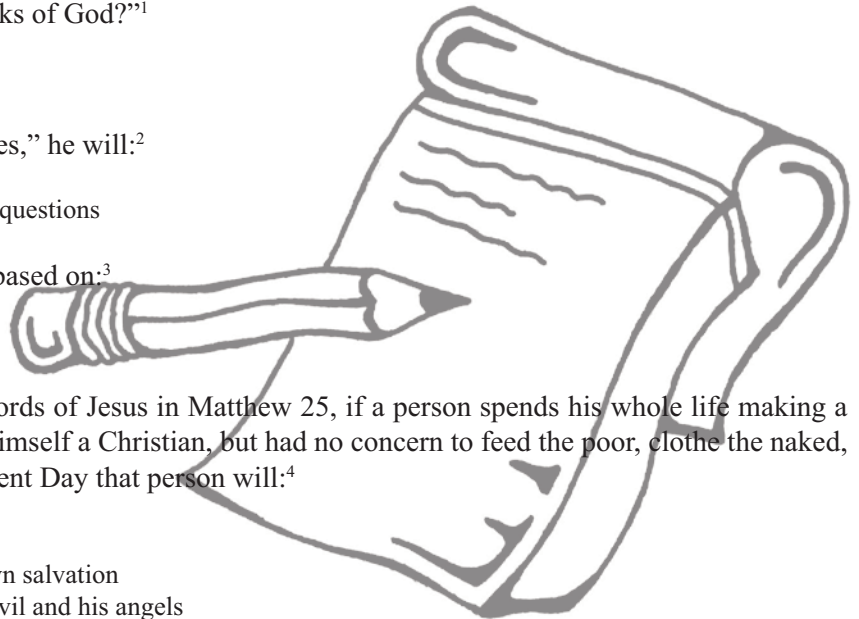
*“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.”* (Jude 1:24-25) ~

10 “Seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” (He. 7:25, and see also 1 Jn. 2:1)

11 “The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.” (Jn. 5:22)

## Judgment Day Theology Test

1. According to Jesus, how can we do the “works of God?”<sup>1</sup>
  - a) Try very hard
  - b) Martyrdom
  - c) Believe on the Sent One
2. According to Jesus, if a person really “believes,” he will:<sup>2</sup>
  - a) Buy a Christian T-shirt
  - b) Learn the answers to important theological questions
  - c) Bear fruit that is evidenced by good works
3. According to a Jesus, Judgment Day will be based on:<sup>3</sup>
  - a) Words we tell the Judge
  - b) Works
  - c) Good intentions
4. According to a literal interpretation of the words of Jesus in Matthew 25, if a person spends his whole life making a profession of Christ, all the while considering himself a Christian, but had no concern to feed the poor, clothe the naked, receive a stranger, or visit a prisoner; on Judgment Day that person will:<sup>4</sup>
  - a) Lose a reward
  - b) Have his crown taken away
  - c) Be thankful that he didn’t try to earn his own salvation
  - d) Go into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels
5. Things specifically mentioned by Jesus that we would be judged by on Judgment Day:<sup>5</sup>
  - a) Saying the “sinner’s prayer”
  - b) Church membership
  - c) Baptism
  - d) Feeding the poor
6. According to Jesus, if a person professes Jesus with his mouth, even calling Him “Lord,” but his life isn’t really changed, on Judgment Day that person is:<sup>6</sup>
  - a) Lost
  - b) Saved



1 (C) Jn. 6:28

2 (C) Mt. 7:15-27

3 (B) Re. 22:12. See also Ro. 14:10, 2 Co. 5:10 (To name a few). This includes how we talked on earth: Mt. 12:35-37

4 (D) Mt. 25:31-46

5 (D) Mt. 25:31-46

6 (A) Mt. 7:15-27



A book review by Mike Atnip

Imagine a sizable group of neighborhood bullies gathered in the shadows of a dark alley, just “hanging out” and practicing their aim by throwing big rocks at an empty dumpster. Bang! Crash!

The neighbors are irked, but none dare stick his head out the window to tell the troublemakers to be respectable and let everyone rest in peace. No, those bullies would probably chuck a rock or two at the window from whence the voice came.

Suddenly, a squat, slightly balding old man steps into the alley. Sizing up the situation, he calmly walks up to the gang of bullies, and with a firm but calm voice, commands them: “Sit down, boys! You need to learn a few things.”

The daunting courage of the old man throws them off guard for a few seconds, but on recovering they look at each other with quirky smiles. One of them takes a step forward and spats out, “And just who do you think you are to tell us what ...”

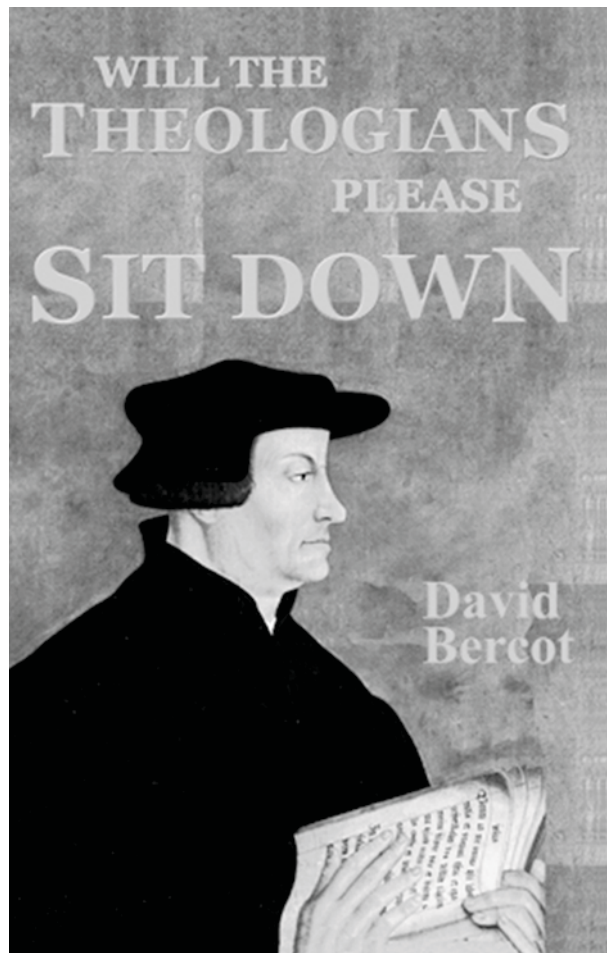
His voice abruptly breaks off as the old man grabs him by the shoulders, picks him off his feet, and sits him down with a plop on the pavement. Thoroughly shaken by the strange turn of events, the rest of the bullies stare blankly. But the old man is not through. “Did you hear me? I said sit down!”

When their obedience still does not manifest itself promptly, the invader calmly grabs another punk and repeats his former actions. Realizing by now that the old man means business, the rest meekly take their seats.

Meet David Bercot, the brave “old man” who sits the bullies down in his latest book—aptly titled—*Will the Theologians Please Sit Down*.

Bercot actually titles one of the chapters *Learning to Stand up to Theological Bullies*. With a righteous passion that springs from a deep love for the children of the kingdom, Bercot says: In the end, the theological bullies have largely had their way. From what I’ve observed, we kingdom Christians often are weak when it comes to evangelism. That’s because “keeping quiet” has been deeply etched into our collective psyche. We’ve thrown out the bulk of our forefather’s teachings and replaced them with the doctrines of those who have bullied us. When a person reads the typical doctrinal textbooks of today’s

Anabaptists, Moravians, Brethren, and other kingdom Christians, he or she finds that they basically teach the doctrines of Athanasius, Augustine, Luther, and



Calvin—with mere additions of nonresistance, free will, and the head covering.

Do you grasp now what I said about Bercot being the brave “old man”? How many folks will stand up to such “big-name” theologians like Augustine, Luther, and Calvin? How many will walk up to them and say calmly but firmly, “Will you please sit down?” Inferring, of course ... and be quiet!

Bercot begins his book by introducing a new word in the title of the first chapter, *doctrinarianity*. But instead of defining the term in a typical dictionary method, he tells the true story of Caspar Zacher, a man accused of being a heretic. This was in 1562 in Europe, which means that if he is found guilty, he will certainly die for his crime.

Caspar denies being a heretic. Declaring himself to be a good Lutheran, he emphatically declares that he has nothing to do with those Anabaptists.

When his neighbors begin testifying, Caspar gets nervous; they tell how he is an envious man, quarrelsome, a swearer and a curser who nearly always carries a knife with him.

But to Caspar’s great relief, he is declared innocent. The judge explains:

The witnesses are uniform in testifying that you are an envious and quarrelsome man. You frequently curse in public, and you go about town carrying weapons. You are a thoroughly disagreeable man, justly hated by your fellow townsmen. But, fortunately, you are obviously not one of those detestable heretics, the Anabaptists. For the life you live is exactly opposite theirs. They would never have you. You are just as you say, an orthodox Christian.

Bercot sums up well the happening, saying “Christianity had become “Doctrinarianity.”

In other words, Christianity had been transformed from a religion centered on bearing good fruits to one centered on believing the right things—the doctrines promoted by the “theological elite.” Bercot makes it clear that good doctrine is necessary; that is, the simple teachings of Jesus. As an example, Bercot quotes Tertullian’s (2<sup>nd</sup>-century) “statement of faith.” In fact, he includes the whole statement ... all 63 words of it! He then notes that the Westminster Confession of Faith, published by the Puritans of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, contains 12,079 words. In another place, he mentions John Calvin’s *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, comprised of at least ten volumes.

But it is not just the mass of words, rather it is the whole shift in emphasis—from bearing fruit to believing right—

that stirs the heart of the author. Beginning with the second century, Bercot traces the development of sophisticated theology. Starting with Origen, who unwittingly got the ball rolling, he then looks a bit at the details of the Council of Nicaea. Instead of heeding the advice of one old wise bishop to “just drop it,” the Christian church by and large became embroiled in a large theological debate about a matter on which the Bible itself was silent.

Next came excommunications, then exiles, and eventually shedding of blood as one side then the other built a position around their doctrinal belief. To their disgrace, they—quoting Bercot—“guttered the Sermon on the Mount” so as to defend their “doctrinarianity.”

From the 4<sup>th</sup> century on, the bulk of those people claiming to be Christians followed the teachings of the “theological elite.” There were always a few who clung faithfully to the simple New Testament teachings, but doctrinarianity became the rule of thumb.

Along came Martin Luther and John Calvin. Seeing some of the errors of Catholicism, these men began to make reforms. But ...

Sad to say, instead of returning back to Christianity, they only reformed doctrinarianity. At this point in the story, Bercot focuses for a couple of chapters on this grave mistake. The Protestant reformers reformed the doctrinal lines, but failed to revive simple, primitive Christianity. Following on their heels, many commentators and subsequent theologians have simply repeated what they learned from Calvin and Luther. Bercot uses for an example the slightly twisted interpretation that John Calvin gave of 1 Corinthians 11. He then lays before the reader seven examples from popular commentaries on the same chapter, each of them basically perpetuating Calvin’s error.

From there, the author leads the reader into some examples of how twisted historical ideas get perpetuated as fact. He also touches on how the theological bullies push their way, many times intimidating the common man by his knowledge of Greek and his supposed access to little-known information from Jewish Rabbis, which gives him an edge over—so he thinks—the simple reader of Jesus’ words.

Winding down his story, Bercot comes back to his main point: bearing kingdom fruit vs. believing right. Knowledge is not fruit. One can know all sorts of correct things about God. He can even pretend to know more about God than what the Bible actually tells us. But the bottom line on Judgment Day is not going to be about what we believed, but about how much fruit we bore while on planet earth.

**Christianity had become doctrinarianity.**

Perhaps you may be wondering, “*If Bercot seems so intent on tearing down popular theology, just what theology is he promoting?*” Actually, if you are looking for a book that expounds correct Christian theology, this one will be a disappointment to you. While the author does bring out a few examples of false theology and poor hermeneutics, he really doesn’t seem intent on making you believe this or that. His point is ... well, let me say it this way:

Imagine Jesus sitting on a Galilean hillside, amidst a group of noisy theologians disputing about correct soteriology.

**But the bottom line on judgment day is not going to be about what we believed, but about how much fruit we bore while on planet earth.**

David Bercot enters the scene, and begins to ask all the theologians to just sit down. After asking them to—or making them—take a seat, he does not step up on a rock to set everyone straight on the proper view of salvation. Instead, he also meekly takes a seat at the feet of the Teacher.

The Teacher, once the group has quieted down, begins His class by saying, “Welcome to Soteriology 101. Today we are going to do a thorough review as to how a person gets saved.”

Then, standing to His feet, the Teacher looks around at the students and says, “Follow Me.” With that, He turns on His heels and walks away, heading for the closest village to spend the day visiting the sick, speaking kind words to the weary, visiting those in prison, and offering hope to the downtrodden.

If the above scene rings true to you and a “Hallelujah!” erupts from your soul, *Will the Theologians Please Sit Down* will be a fresh breath of air for you. If the scene I just described leaves you a bit bewildered or maybe a tad angry for taking such a “light” view of salvation—or perhaps seems to be outright heretical—then *Will the Theologians Please Sit Down* is even more so a “must read” for you.

I end this book review with the final words of the last chapter:

It’s time for the children of the kingdom to stand up for Jesus and the gospel He preached. And it’s time for the theologians to sit down. ~

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*Will the Theologians Please Sit Down* can be ordered from Scroll Publishing, PO Box 122, Amberson, PA, 17210, or online at <http://www.scrollpublishing.com>.

Like fallen leaves so men have died,  
And time did quick their name erase;  
Like winter scenes they’re passed aside  
By those who must give others place.

There are but few whose name lives on  
For wealth or pow’r or noble cause;  
But none does match the tribute strong  
To one for whom the world does pause.

Each passing year poor maid and king  
Bestows respect on Jesus’ name;  
Cathedral bells will world-wide ring,  
The streets will hush the day He came.

The world that met Him once with hate  
And scarce begrudged Him half His years  
Today His birth will celebrate  
With solemn vigil, gifts, and cheers.

Such transformation, clear, sublime,  
Such retribution fitting, just,  
Can only be explained sublime!  
Unless—forebear—such made distrust!

Unless it is that He’s not here  
To strip our mock devotion bare;  
To challenge our traditions dear,  
Our pageants nor our icons spare.

Not here to ask, ‘Why call me Lord,  
And yet My words explain away?’  
Make no mistake, religion’s sword  
Would surely pierce His side today.

No, nothing’s changed—the world nor Christ,  
His love is strong and friends are few;  
The same whose will was sacrificed  
Today requires as much from you.

Sincerely seek to know His will  
And then in love His words obey;  
Obedience plain is better still  
Than all religion’s vain display.

—J. from Ky.

# SEEDS OF THE KINGDOM

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## *Seed Sower Award*



*The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field. Matthew 13:24  
And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works. Hebrews 10:24*

In this series, we are highlighting the work of those who are currently busy introducing the seeds of righteousness, peace, and joy into this sin-filled earth, with the hopes that at least a few lives will receive the Word and be eternally changed. The purpose in turning the spotlight on these works is not to glorify those men and women who are actively advancing the kingdom of God, but rather to stimulate YOU, the reader, into doing YOUR part in YOUR corner. Neither is the purpose meant to be that of asking the readers to donate financially or personally participate in these projects, although that is certainly an option in some cases. Take these ideas, tweak them to fit your situation, and begin to plant the kingdom of God in your environs. The inclusion of any person or church in these articles is not an endorsement by *The Heartbeat of the Remnant* of every doctrine and practice that the spotlighted individuals or churches may represent in other areas of their life. As well, the spotlighted person/group may not endorse all aspects of *The Heartbeat of the Remnant*.

*In this issue, we are going to look at the efforts of Chris Armstrong, who lives in Huaycan, Peru. Chris works as one of the distributors for Mount Zion Literature Ministry (featured in this series two issues back), but one of his main goals is to reach out to the many homeless children that live in Lima, Peru and its suburbs. The following is not a verbatim transcript of our interview with Chris, as I rearranged some of the information (and added a few details) to better organize the material for print.*

**(The Heartbeat of the Remnant)** Chris, can you give me a brief overview of what you are doing with the children there?

**(Chris Armstrong)** At the moment, we have about 40-50 children here in Huaycan that come to our Sunday School. That is our focus right now. Our plan is to build an orphanage out in the jungles, close to San Ramón in the Department of Junín, about 5-6 hours from here by bus, on the other side of the Andes Mountains. We bought one lot and are planning to buy another. Our plan is to translate the children from the city to the jungle, to the community;

sort of a community of children, hopefully self-supporting within a few years. We plan to raise our own food and teach the children the Bible and also trades. What we don't want is for the children to be idle.

At the moment, we have about seven people interested in working with us. We eventually want to have up to 50 to 100 children in our little community.

**(THR)** Are those working with you in this orphanage project Peruvian people, or Americans?

**(CA)** They are Peruvians, and live at San Ramón. I don't actually know very many US people, as I am a Canadian; and I don't know much about US culture. I spent twenty years working as a missionary on an Indian reservation in northern Canada after I was converted. I have a hard time with the American system, to be honest. I live here in this slum of about 200,000 people on the east end of Lima. The city of Lima itself is very large [close to 8 million]. It is hard here, as the people only make a dollar or two a day. The children don't really have fathers, as they leave for work in Lima at about 6:00 in the morning and get home at 11:00 at

night. And the children run wild; you can imagine what it is like. Street gangs of 8- or 9-year-olds. Some of them used to attend our Sunday School, but they started fighting and left, and now they stone and egg my house, and mock me sometimes. So we have some challenges.

**(THR)** Now the children that you are planning to take to the other side of the mountains, I assume they are orphans?

**(CA)** Yes, they will be abandoned children. The problem here in Lima is that statistically there are about 200,000 children that work for a living, basically making their own way. Some of those are orphans, but probably most of them have a mother somewhere, although she likely has never been married. The children I am currently working with live down along the river that runs through the middle of Lima. I am talking young, like down to 6 or 5 and even 4 years of age just living along the river bank. They have some pretty serious needs. Very immoral. They have no parents. So we tell them, "We are going to take you off the streets." They say, "That's nice! Where is your *casa de refugio* (shelter)?" But at this point, we have to tell them that we don't have one yet. So, we are going along, *poco a poco* (little by little) as the Lord leads. So we are doing what we can, preparing the place in San Ramón.

But it is a bit hard for me, as my book sales take a lot of time. I have about 30 bookstores I keep supplied, plus some individuals. So that takes a lot of my time at the moment.

**(THR)** So, from what it looks like now, do you have a projected date when you can get the orphanage going over there?

**(CA)** Well, we are working at it on a Peruvian scale, so it will be a while, but meanwhile we are doing what we can

here in the city. I tried to work with some other orphanages, but they allowed TV, dancing, rock music, and would not discipline the immorality when it was caught in the home, so I had to leave. We don't use the radio or TV, or even computer. We don't want the children to learn from the world.

**(THR)** Other than funds for a building, what would your biggest need be?

**(CA)** I would say a teacher or two for the school, and maybe people with an evangelistic heart of compassion to help find the really needy children and have a transition home here in the city to prepare the children for the home. They would have to prove themselves a little before we would incorporate them from right off the street into the place in San Ramón. And, of course, praying for the children. But once the buildings are up and the place is running, I don't see a lot of need for money to support it.

**(THR)** Now in Bolivia where I lived for five years, we had to be careful because some mothers would want to give away their children so that they could be freed up enough to go have another party. Do you find that there?

**(CA)** Yes. For example, an unmarried neighbor here, 19 years old, has three children already. Two of her boys are in our Sunday School. They are dirt poor, and she doesn't really have a job. The neighbors are reporting her to the authorities for not taking care of the children. It is a hard situation.

Street children have a lot of needs, so if anyone wants

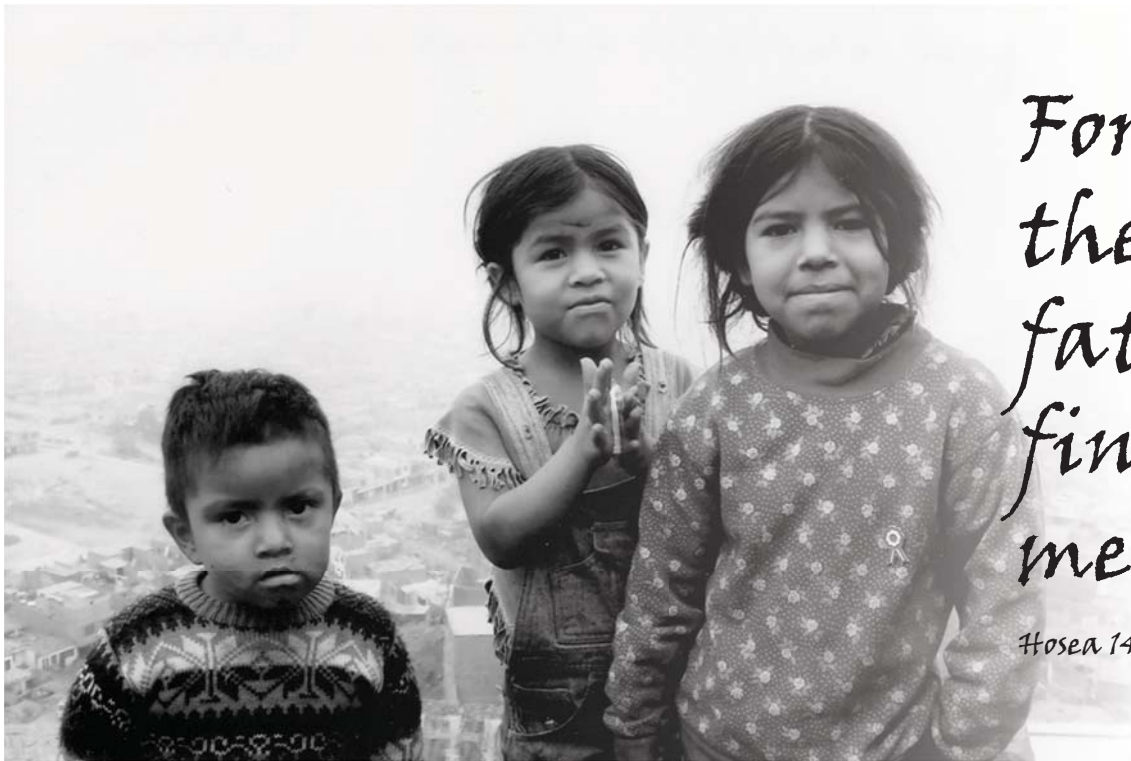
to work with them, it takes a lot of patience. When I worked in one orphanage here, we would go from 7 am to midnight, full speed. The children would spit and fist fight. They would even pull a knife if they had one, and one even used a fork on me one time. One 8- or 9-year-old boy would get angry every time I talked to one of the female staff. I asked



**Some 2,000 children live in improvised shelters like this one along the Rimac River that flows through Lima, Peru. In the bottom photo (and the front cover), Chris Armstrong shares a snack with the boys and the one 9-year-old girl (in blue on cover photo) that lived with them.**







For in  
thee the  
fatherless  
findeth  
mercy.

Hosea 14:3

him what the problem was, and he ripped off his clothes and put them on a dog, and said, “That’s me.” The thing he was struggling with was that he lived down along the river since he was 3 or 4, and was immorally used every single day of his life since then by the teenage boys down there. It’s a challenge!

The children on the river inhale 65 bags daily of glue. So when we go down to the river, you have to go before 10 am, or by the end of the day they are so drugged out that it is useless to try to work with them. Boys 8 to 10 years old. They are drug addicts because no one loves them they say, and they steal because no one supports them. There are no government programs to help them.

**(THR)** One of the reasons of publishing these articles is to stir people up, to remind us that on the judgment day the sheep and the goats will be divided along the lines of how they spent their life on earth. There are a lot of Christian people who do not believe that we are going to be judged by what we did here on earth. So we want to remind people that if we don’t spend our life here blessing people, we won’t make it to heaven in the end.

**(CA)** Well, I see that materialism is blinding the eyes of the people in North America. People tell me they believe in living humbly, and I think, “Ok, you believe in nonresistance, you are humble.” Then they invited me to the US once to speak at some meetings, and I see their houses; one of them cost more than \$400,000. I have a hard time thinking that is living humbly ...

**(THR)** I have been thinking about that very thing lately, and I think that some day we are going to pay for it. I am not thinking of going to hell, although that is true also, but if time lasts, God is not going to sit back and watch one person have a \$300,000 house and another not have anything. It is not right; it is unrighteousness.

May God bless you for “doing righteousness” and not shutting up your bowels of compassion (1 Jo 3:7,10,17) and using your life to spread love among the poor!

Thanks for sharing with us! ~



**Chris, his wife Angélica, and their adopted son, Enrique, in front of the chapel where they have Sunday School for about 40-50 children from their community.**

Continued from p. 7, Dietrich Bonhoeffer  
what more we might have learned about the meaning of this tragedy.

Bonhoeffer decided he could not live with the consequences of putting to practice the idealistic interpretations of the teachings of Jesus as elucidated in *The Cost of Discipleship*. He cut ties to the Confessing Church he had helped to form, which would not, according to Dallas M. Roark, have approved of his actions. His ties to the Abwehr assassination conspiracy are unimpeachable.

As Anabaptists, who believe that following Jesus means loving our enemies, we see the decision Bonhoeffer made as being a tragic manifestation of weakness rather than strength. Despite the heroism and courage he displayed, he experienced what might be called, using his own words, heavy judgment as a result of lapsing into the standards of the world. "All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." (Mt. 26:52)

What might be learned by this tragedy?

A story such as this can leave one shaken in terms of confidence that one can remain faithful to Jesus and his will in sorely trying times. Certainly our attitude toward those who suffer dilemmas of this sort must be merciful; who is to say how we would respond were we to walk through similar difficulties? However we do know that we are not ordered to carry burdens that cannot be borne. With the temptation there will be a way of escape, we are promised.

How can escape be possible when one seems to be faced with a choice between two evils? Bonhoeffer felt there was none, and he chose what he viewed as the lesser of the two evils. Corrie ten Boom, a well-known contemporary of Bonhoeffer, was caught between revealing the presence of Jewish fugitives in her home and lying to the authorities; she chose to tell the untruth. Quakers prior to the Civil War in the United States struggled with being truthful to the authorities in relation to assisting runaway slaves. There are stories of their refusal to speak when questioned, and of their justifying apparent lies by saying that no man could really be a slave.

We live in the real world with real ethical and moral dilemmas. We also serve a real and indwelling Christ with real answers to the complexities and the evils we face. And we can be certain from Scripture that evil is not to be overcome with evil. We can also be sure both from the promises of Scripture and the example of Christian martyrs through-

out history that it is possible to face death and not capitulate to evil or become evil ourselves.

From prison, about nine months before his execution, Bonhoeffer wrote to a friend about his desire to have faith. He said, "I thought I could acquire faith by trying to live a holy life, or something like it. I suppose I wrote *The Cost of Discipleship* as the end of that path. Today I can see the dangers of that book, though I still stand by what I wrote."

The dangers of radical discipleship are real. However, as Bonhoeffer's story shows, compromise of the radical teachings of Jesus has its own dangers. The path he took led him from the one sort of danger to the other.

In conclusion, let us enjoy a short but insightful moment from Bonhoeffer's earlier days. Dallas M. Roark tells the story:

[Bonhoeffer] became student pastor at the Technical College in Berlin, and at the same time was requested to take over a confirmation class of fifty rowdy boys who lived in one of the roughest areas of Berlin. As the elderly pastor and young Dietrich ascended the stairs of the multi-storied building where the boys were, the children dropped rubbish on the two men below. At the

top of the stairs, the pastor tried to gain attention by shouting an introduction of Bonhoeffer. Some of the children only heard the word "Bon" and began to chant it, until the bewildered, frustrated old pastor left.

At first Dietrich stood in silence against the wall while the boys chanted. Then he began to speak softly to those near him. Out of curiosity the others began to be quiet. When the noise had subsided, he told them a story about Harlem and promised more next time if they behaved. Not only did he win their attention for class instruction, but he moved into their neighborhood for two months to live among them. This most "hopeless" class was carried to its completion, and many of the boys remained long-time friends.

This is the kind of love that we are promised will overcome evil. First we must make sure we are not the ones who pour rubbish on other people's heads, and then we must reach out to the rubbish-dumpers. There is plenty of rubbish-dumping going on in this world, to be sure, and there is no doubt that as followers of Jesus we will have a little rubbish dumped on us before it is all said and done.

**Bonhoeffer  
decided he  
could not live with  
the consequences of  
putting to practice the  
idealistic interpretations  
of the teachings of  
Jesus as elucidated  
in "The Cost of  
Discipleship."**

This wonderful anecdote illustrates both the dangers and the abundant rewards of radical discipleship. Following the word of Christ is dangerous; but its rewards are real and the suffering it might cause is not to be seen a tragedy.

In contrast, the suffering that comes from deviating from the path of Christ is truly a tragedy. Although there is much about this dedicated student of the gospel that we can admire, it is in this way that we must see the end of Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

(Endnotes)

<sup>1</sup> Dallas M. Roark, *Makers of the Modern Theological Mind: Dietrich Bonhoeffer* (Waco: Word Inc., 1972) Dust jacket.

<sup>2</sup> Richard V. Pierard, "Dietrich Bonhoeffer: the Struggle against Hitler." Article in *Great Leaders of the Christian Church*, John D. Woodbridge, Ed. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1988) 353.

<sup>3</sup> Todd Kappelman, "Dietrich Bonhoeffer: the Man and His Mission" <http://www.leaderu.com/orgs/probe/docs/bonhoeffer.html>.

<sup>4</sup> "Dietrich Bonhoeffer." Online exhibition by website of United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. <http://www.ushmm.org/exhibit/online/bonhoeffer/>.

<sup>5</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1963), 45.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. 46,47.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. 60.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. 62,63.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. 69.

<sup>10</sup> Dallas M. Roark, *Makers of the Modern Theological Mind: Dietrich Bonhoeffer* (Waco: Word Inc., 1972), 79.

<sup>11</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1963), 156, 157.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. 160.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. 161.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. 293.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. 303.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. 303,304.



Mike and Michelle Fisher make their abode near Bedford, Pennsylvania, where Mike puts beans on the table by working in a grocery store. They and their five children meet regularly with the Burning Bush Mennonite congregation. Mike is involved in local prison ministry and also works part time for Christian Light Publications. He and his family enjoy gardening together in the summer and are looking forward to winter evenings reading by the fire.



## Gott Mit Uns (God With Us) Whose side is God on?

Gertraud "Traudl" Junge was the secretary for Adolf Hitler during WWII. After the war, Traudl carried a lot of remorse about her involvement with the Nazi Party. Shortly before her death in 2002, she recorded her experiences and regrets on a video interview entitled *Blindspot*. Throughout the interview, Traudl recounts her time with the Nazi party, and especially her time with Adolf Hitler. As she recounts this sad time, most of her memories come across more like confession than anything else.

There was one thing in the interview that caught my attention that I think has relevance with the Dietrich Bonhoeffer story. In the interview, Traudl mentions the emotional effect on Hitler after the assassination attempt on his life by a bomb placed in a briefcase at a meeting with his staff. Bonhoeffer was involved with the assassination attempt, and it was this involvement that led him to give up his earlier nonresistant stand.

Interestingly, Traudl recounts that after the assassination bombing failed, Hitler was more convinced than ever that God was protecting him and his mission. She says that Hitler personally took Mussolini to the site of the bombing and boasted of his deliverance with a "triumphant" smile. Traudl laments that after the assassination attempt, all hopes for peace were lost. Hitler was more than ever convinced with his motto "Gott Mit Uns" (God with us), and that it was his job to rid the world of evil.

"What if you could kill Hitler?" In only a few decades after WWII, the question has become almost proverbial in nonresistance debates. Here we see a perfect example that when human means are used to accomplish a spiritual end, the result is often devastating. Instead of ridding the world of Hitler, the assassination attempt only emboldened him. ~Dean Taylor

**"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Pr. 16:25)**

*The Heartbeat of*

# The Remnant

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**Holy Ghost, dispel our sadness;  
Pierce the clouds of nature's night;  
Come, great Source of joy and gladness,  
Breathe Your life and spread Your light.  
From the height which knows no measure,  
As a gracious shower descend,  
Bringing down the richest treasure  
Man can wish, or God can send.**

**Author of the new creation,  
Come with blessing and with power.  
Make our hearts your habitation;  
On our souls Your graces shower.  
Hear, O hear our supplication,  
Blessed Spirit, God of peace!  
Rest upon this congregation,  
With the fullness of Your grace.**

*Johann Cruger*

*Praxis Pietatis Melica, 1648*