



# The Remnant

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***... is praying for enduring revival.***



# The Remnant

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## From the Editor

I know it may sound ridiculous, but last month my 12-year-old son received a credit card application in the mail. What made it all the more humorous was the fact that the company sponsoring the credit card was none other than General Motors. I guess I found that rather ironic—wasn't it General Motors that had recently needed to borrow \$19.4 billion from the U. S. government in order to avoid bankruptcy? And wasn't the U. S. government the world-leading capitalist country that, itself, has had to borrow over \$2.5 trillion from Communist China, in order to prevent global financial collapse? So, I now ask the question—why was a company that was borrowing billions of dollars from a country that is borrowing trillions of dollars from another country, now sending my 12-year-old son (or anyone else, for that matter) a credit card application? Shouldn't someone be asking some questions?

Satan is the father of lies. It is his aim to make us all think everything is okay when, in fact, things are in deep trouble. Just as in the days of Jeremiah, one of Satan's favorite techniques is to say "Peace, peace; when there is no peace." Je. 6:14 When catastrophes happen, people can tend to start thinking more about God. Satan knows that; he also knows he can easily control people when he plays on their lusts and passions.

Well, it would seem that Satan is in his heyday. This year we have seen entire western countries go "out of business." In the news, haunting pictures from Detroit, Michigan reveal a former icon of American industrialism now reduced to shambles. Yet, the world goes on as if nothing is happening—and they send my 12-year-old credit card applications.

For the church, this is a day of opportunity. As the false structures of this world begin to topple, there will be those who "wake up" and realize they cannot put their trust in them. Thus, we must continue with our commission to harvest souls. However, we need to be on guard, lest we too become ensnared in putting our trust in those things which are quickly passing away. Our trust is not in "the economy," but in God, who feeds the sparrows. In John's revelation, we read that we will one day sing the triumphant "song of Moses" in heaven. Re. 15:3 In that song, Moses prophesied of the demise of worldly nations, and the triumph of God's kingdom. The following is a part of that song:

*For they are a nation void of counsel, neither is there any understanding in them. O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end! How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the LORD had shut them up? For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges. For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter: Their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps. Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures? To me belongeth vengeance and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste. De. 32:28-35*

Yes, brethren, "their foot shall slide in due time." Will we find ourselves singing with that triumphant throng, or will we weep and wail with the merchants when things unravel? If our hearts are singularly devoted to the only Lamb of God, we need not fear as the world fears. The nations of this world have nothing for us. We already know the end, so let's make sure we're awake and ready when their securities fail. But let's also make sure that we have something superior to offer them when they do.

In this issue, we take a look at what we do have to offer a world out of control: the good news of deliverance into another kingdom, one that will never go belly-up. Next, we have some testimonies of how grace worked in three individual's lives, empowering them to do what was right in the sight of God. For the sisters, we include an encouraging article about teaching little ones to sing. And for those sisters who have a calling to singlehood, we have a testimony from one who only recently came to realize just what a high honor that calling really is.

Then we turn our attention to us men, with some biblical instructions on modesty in the way we dress and act. And finally—amid various other poems and short exhortations—we take a peek into a book about a little-known revival that occurred in what is now the Czech Republic.

May your heart be lifted up with this issue of *The Heartbeat of the Remnant!* ~Bro. Dean



# What is the Gospel?

Mike Atnip



Just what is “the gospel”? Etymologically speaking, the word “gospel” came from contracting the words “good spell.” In centuries long past, a “good spell” was a positive, exciting epic story. It was something to tell around the supper table and spread among the neighborhood. Something *good* had happened!

Today, we generally refer to a “good spell” as “good news.” “Did you hear what happened last week over in ...”

Unfortunately, the mass media will fill our minds—if we are foolish enough to let them—with all kinds of bad news: airplane crashes, oil spills in the Gulf of Mexico, endangered species, murders, and political bashings of every stripe.

It seems the natural man has a thirst for the gory and the ugly. One would think that amid the din of embezzlements, suicide bombers, and drug trafficking, the human heart would get so disgusted with bad news that he would begin a quest for something positive; some good news.

The good news is that a “good spell” has been told to the human race. It is an epic story of divine proportions, with positive, tangible results stretched out over many centuries of time ... and with the power to bring good results yet today! Who will turn aside with me from the roar of the news media to search out just what this piece of good news is?

There are, of course, many pieces of good news, even within the Bible. There are many “good spells,” but there is *the* “good spell,” upon which we will focus. It is first announced as a present reality in ...

## The gospel according to Luke

According to Luke, the gospel was first preached by the missionary Gabriel. Now Gabriel was an angel, but we are told in Luke 1:26-27 that “in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin’s name was

Mary.” Focusing our attention on the word “sent,” we notice that in the original language the word is a form of the verb “apostello,” which looks very much like our English word “apostle.” There is a reason for that, because that is exactly what happened: Gabriel was “apostled,” or commissioned as a message-bearer for God. In other words, he became a missionary to break the good news to earth. Let’s look at his message.

## And the good news is ...

*Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Lu. 1:30-33*

In a nutshell, the gospel that was preached by Gabriel on that glorious day was that she, Mary, had been chosen to be the mother of a king. This king’s name would be—if it were translated—Jehovah-Rescues. This was no insignificant detail, because in those days God gave names to people that represented their outstanding character trait. To be essentially named God’s-Rescue-Squad is quite the character trait!

If this piece of good news had been given all by itself, it would still be outstanding. However, several centuries of prophecies had been building up about a king that Jehovah would send some day! Some day—it had been promised time and again—some sweet day, God would send a special king to liberate humanity. Some day ...

And now, Mary had just been told that she would be the mother of this promised king! Imagine how her heart must have skipped a beat or two! What good news; both to her personally, and to humanity in general!

## The problem

God, being a merciful God, began to give promises of grace basically as soon as mankind fell for the lies of Satan. By surrendering himself to what Satan said, and disbelieving the words of God, mankind sold himself into the dominion of the devil. Since God desires man to worship Him freely, He let humanity have a free will. Man was created in the image of God, but chose to submit himself to the “wisdom” of Satan, and not stay committed to—have faith in—what God had said. Man got himself into a mess; God really had no legal obligation to rescue him.



Some day a descendent of Eve would stomp on the head of the enemy!

But God is righteous! To be righteous is to do what is right, even if there is no legal obligation. To do what is good because of an obligation is not true liberty; it is legalism. But to do what is good because of love ... now *that* is the righteous character of Jehovah!

And so God in His righteousness saw the mess humanity had gotten himself into. Legally, He was under no obligation to rescue man. Man made the decision to step out from under God’s dominion and into Satan’s control; it was *man’s* responsibility to get himself out of his own mess.

But ... God knew man was unable to escape from sin’s grasp by his own strength, so He “did righteousness” and set in motion a rescue operation. The rescue was to occur later on in history, but God submitted man in hope and began to share promises of that glorious day when Adam’s sin and its consequential bondage to Satan and corruption of character would be undone.

## The first promise of deliverance

Only ten verses after Eve took the first bite of unbelief, we encounter God offering a promise of deliverance to His children, who now found themselves outside of His communion. In Genesis 3:15, we see God condemning the enemy with an eventual overthrow: “And I will put enmity

between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”

Some day—some sweet day—a descendent of the woman would stomp on the head of the enemy. Yes, the enemy would temporarily cripple the descendent, but the very heel that was crippled would be the heel that would smash the head that bit it. And ... we all know that the head is representative of authority. It was a simple but clear word picture: someday a descendent of Eve would take away the authority of Satan. Satan had stolen man’s loyalty to God by getting him to submit to his words instead of God’s words ... but the war wasn’t over yet! The righteous character of God would someday rescue His rebellious creation.

## A prophet like unto Moses

Skipping over many prophecies of the future rescue mission, we stop for a moment to look at the prophet Moses prophesying that God would send mankind another prophet “like unto me.” De. 18:15 Since God does not have a body, He sometimes needs a physical mouth to speak to someone. So He “borrows” a mouth. The person whose mouth God “borrows” is called a “prophet.” This is especially needful if the person God wants to speak to is out of communion with Him. God cannot speak into that person’s heart in a Spirit-to-spirit conversation, so He uses the mouth of another person—the prophet—to communicate His message.

So we see in Deuteronomy 18:15-19 a message from God to humanity, telling us that someday—some sweet day—He will send another prophet that would be as great as Moses.

*The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.*

At first impulse, we immediately think of Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ successor. However, we find an interesting note in Deuteronomy 34:9-12:

*And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the LORD commanded Moses. And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, in all the signs and the wonders, which the LORD sent him to do in*

*the land of Egypt to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land, and in all that mighty hand, and in all the great terror which Moses shewed in the sight of all Israel.*

We see that the author knows about Joshua, but then goes right on to say that Joshua was *not* equal to Moses. So the promise of another prophet was not fulfilled in Joshua the son of Nun. Some day, another great anointed prophet was to arise; someone who would have the authority to make laws and lead God's chosen people out of bondage.

## A high priest like Melchizedek

In the middle of David's psalms, we find a curious line:

*The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. Ps. 110:4*

Who was David referring to? In the first verse of the Psalm, we find the answer: "my Lord."

Consider the following attributes of this "Lord."

- \* He would sit on the right hand of Jehovah.
- \* His would use his enemies as a footstool.
- \* His servants would serve Him willfully.
- \* His atmosphere would be charged with holiness.
- \* He would rule gloriously.
- \* And—most importantly for our present study—He would be a special priest of God.

Who was this prophecy referring to? And when would it come to pass? The promised anointed one—the Messiah—would serve simultaneously as both priest and king. Added to the former prophecy concerning the Messiah being a prophet of God, this would make Him to be God's prophet, priest, and king! Truly, this promised anointed man would be like Melchizedek ... the only man in the Bible who had served simultaneously as God's prophet, priest, and king!

## God's promised king in prophecy

While the Messiah would serve as prophet, high priest, and king, the prophecies give the greatest emphasis on the kingship of the Messiah. Space only permits us to look briefly at just a few of these promises, but what promises they are! Isaiah 40:9-11 is where we will begin.

*O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his re-*

*ward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.*

We will focus on three points in these verses:

1. "good tidings"—These words are the same as "gospel." We find Isaiah prophesying about the gospel that would someday be announced to the whole world. The next point reveals just what that "good news" would be ...
2. "the Lord GOD will come ... and rule"—The good tidings is that someday Jehovah would set up a kingdom. From this point we move into the next, which describes the type of kingdom it would be ...
3. "he shall feed his flock"—This coming kingdom would be characterized by a shepherd gently carrying a hurt lamb.

Moving a couple of chapters ahead in the book of Isaiah, we will look briefly at chapter 52, verse 7:

*How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!*

Once again we see the gospel as being the announcing of God reigning in goodness and peace. For people continuously oppressed by enemies, such an announcement would make their hearts leap for joy!

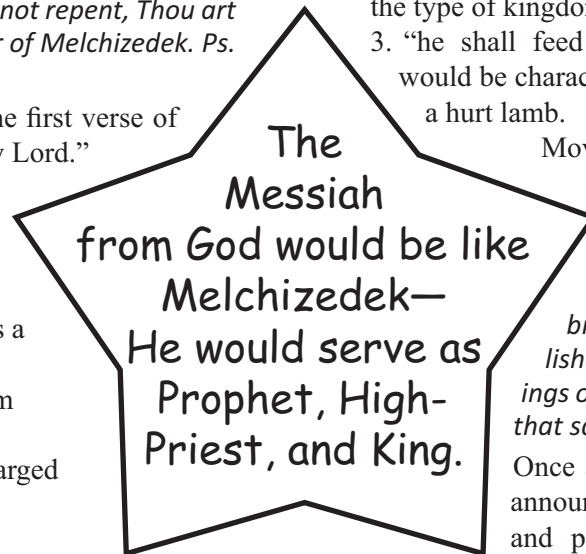
## The good news of grace to the earth

Moving on (and realizing that we are only catching a few of the prophecies), we come to Isaiah 61. For the sake of space, we will not print the text here. Let's walk through this beautiful chapter, noting a few high points.

Once again we find hints that someday a gospel would be preached. To whom? To the meek, the brokenhearted, the captives, and the prisoners.

What was this good news? It would be the coming of Jehovah's grace (literal rendition of "acceptable year of the Lord"). And what would this grace do?

- \* It would give comfort.
- \* It would cause men to produce righteousness like a tree produces fruit, to the glory of the LORD.
- \* Areas of life that had long been ruined would be restored to productivity.
- \* What God's people formerly served in bondage would now serve them instead.
- \* People formerly disconnected with God would serve as priests and ministers.





\* For all the shameful actions in the past, doubly glorious deeds would replace them.

\* God Himself would direct the labors of His people.

\* God would make an eternal covenant with His people.

\* His people would be recognized on all sides as a people blessed by God.

\* Righteous deeds and praise would cover God's people like a cloak, beautifying them; they would sprout out of His people like seeds in a fertile garden.

What a "good spell" that was! I can imagine readers of Isaiah's prophecies lifting their eyes to heaven and saying, "Let your kingdom come soon, LORD!"

Before passing into the New Testament, we will briefly consider one more prophecy of the gospel. Nahum 1:15:

*Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace! O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows: for the wicked shall no more pass through thee; he is utterly cut off.*

Here we see a prophecy of a messenger coming over the mountains with some good news: The wicked usurper would be "utterly cut off." What a promise! He who before walked to and fro among God's people wreaking havoc would someday simply be cast out of the land ... forever.

Realizing that we have skipped over many prophecies concerning God's kingdom, we will now move into the fulfillment.

## The glad tidings are announced

Eighty and six times the four writers of the gospels reference the kingdom of God, or the kingdom of heaven. Mere numerical statistics should not decide what is the most important aspect of God's message to humanity—but can we ignore 86 references as insignificant? While the theme of salvation is in one sense synonymous with the kingdom of God, it is interesting to note that the four Gospels only speak half as many times in terms of "salvation" or "saved" as they do to God's kingdom.

Going back to the missionary Gabriel's announcement to Mary, we find that his good news was that she would be the mother of the promised king.

Moving into the next chapter, the gospel is preached to some shepherds in their fields at night:

*And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.*

And the gospel was ... the Messiah has been born! The promised Prophet, High Priest, and King!

Moving on into chapter 4, we find Jesus in a synagogue, reading Isaiah 61, which we looked at earlier. What was His conclusion about this time of grace that was to come?

*This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.*

All of those promises were set to begin manifesting themselves. The time of liberation had come! The time when God's Anointed would come and break the shackles of sin, self, and Satan, and begin to reign in the hearts of men, just like He had before man believed the lies of the enemy and was taken captive in the Garden of Eden.

Once again men would begin to live in peace one with another—instead of fighting for material gain. Once again would husbands and wives love one another—instead of seeking personal gratification. Once again the poor would be remembered—instead of every man fending for himself. Once again man would live for the glory of God—instead of living for pleasure.



The Messiah would do a work of pure grace by transplanting his own heart into the heart of men who did nothing to deserve it.

## But how?

How would this all come to pass? How would the King pull it off to get self-centered little wretches—like we are all born as—to become gentle, kind, holy, and charitable?

## The “secret”

The secret to entering the kingdom is given to us by the prophet Ezekiel in 36:27—

*And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.*

God, recognizing man’s inability to salvage himself from his own mess, would do a work of pure, unmerited favor: He would take a piece of His own heart and transplant it back into man. Man’s own heart was desperately wicked; perverted and degenerated, corrupted by the cancer of selfishness. And man was powerless to cure the disease.

But the Messiah would heal man of all his diseases!



The beauty of the kingdom of God is not that the enemy is totally eradicated, but that Messiah’s kingdom is set up—and continues triumphant—smack in the middle of enemy territory!

## “Whosoever will ...”

One of the biggest questions—and a valid one—that often comes up is how come, if the kingdom of God has come to earth, not everyone is serving the King? Is the Anointed One unable to conquer? Why is so much evil still on earth if Jesus is reigning?

The answer lies in the will of man. God wants people to serve Him of a free will, to obey Him out of love, not by force. Jesus could easily come and make up an army and force everyone to outwardly live up to a certain standard. Or, He could come and make zombies out of all of us, taking our freedom of choice away and making us do what He wants. But we are not animals, and He does not want us to be animals. He wants us to be men and women, men and women who voluntarily submit ourselves to His lordship.

## The beauty of willful love

Here we are, in a world in which the vast majority go rushing on in sin and pleasures, fighting and warring, hating and sassing to each other. In the middle of it all stands Jesus, calling for His sheep to turn around and walk a different path, to march to the beat of a different drummer. It is totally a free-will choice, in which all the odds are against man to choose to be an oddball and go against the flow of the mass of humanity. But that is the beauty of the whole system!

We see a man. He is in the midst of a frenzied crowd, rushing down a slippery slope. We see the heart of that man is just like the rest of the crowd about him—greatly enjoying all the delights that his flesh offers him. And we see an enemy hovering over him, whispering lies to him.

But ...

The man hears the voice of the Messiah calling him into another kingdom; and the man decides to hearken. The world about him is against his choice. The desires of his own heart pull him away from the call. The devil himself is telling him it is all a delusion. But ...

He decides to change his allegiance and return to the King ... because he loves Him!

Would it be so beautiful, so meaningful, if everything were the opposite? If everyone about him was urging him to repentance? If his own body didn’t really delight in fleshly pleasures? If the devil was ignoring him and even encouraging him to return to God? No, it only adds to the beauty of God’s kingdom that it was set up right in the middle of the enemy’s kingdom. It is like the glory of an earthly army that drops a load of paratroopers into the midst of enemy territory, and they successfully set up camp—surrounded on all sides by those that hate them!

## A common error

One common error of man is to try to bring the rule of God to reality by force. This is either by armed force or by political force. Jesus refused both. When some wanted to make Him a political king, He disappeared from the scene! Whoever wanted Jesus to reign over them would have to personally give Him permission. Unless and until a man was willing to serve Him of his own will, Jesus would not sit on the throne of his heart.

Consider the following quote, attributed to Napoleon in his exile.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> While this is attributed to Napoleon, I cannot vouch for its authenticity. Many people have falsely attributed sayings to famous people. In spite of this uncertainty, the quote contains some fundamental

Allegiance in Messiah’s kingdom is based totally on love to the King, not political or military might.



Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne, and I myself have founded great empires; but upon what did these creations of our genius depend? Upon force. Jesus alone founded His empire upon love, and to this very day millions will die for Him. ... I have inspired multitudes with such an enthusiastic devotion that they would have died for me ... but to do this it was necessary that I should be visibly present with the electric influence of my looks, my words, of my voice. When I saw men and spoke to them, I lightened up the flame of self-devotion in their hearts .... Christ alone has succeeded in so raising the mind of man toward the unseen, that it becomes insensible to the barriers of time and space. Across a chasm of eighteen hundred years, Jesus Christ makes a demand that is beyond all others difficult to satisfy; He asks for that which a philosopher may often seek in vain at the hands of his friends, or a father of his children, or a bride of her spouse, or a man of his brother. He asks for the human heart; He will have it entirely to Himself. He demands it unconditionally; and forthwith His demand is granted. Wonderful! In defiance of time and space, the soul of man, with all its powers and faculties, becomes an annexation to the empire of Christ. All who sincerely believe in Him experience that remarkable, supernatural love toward Him. This phenomenon is unaccountable; it is altogether beyond the scope of man's creative powers. Time, the great destroyer, is powerless to extinguish this sacred flame; time can neither exhaust its strength nor put a limit to its range. This is it, which strikes me most; I have often thought of it. This it is which proves to me quite convincingly the Divinity of Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup>

While Napoleon seemed to have grasped the secret of conquest in the kingdom of God—pure, voluntary love—many Christians struggle with trying to mix political conquest into the formula. Consider the following quote by an author promoting mixing politics and the kingdom of God:

*This is the crux of Christian political action. This is the task that confronts us: salvation and godly rule. We are to be more than just salt: preserving. We are to be light: reclaiming (Matthew 5:13-16).*

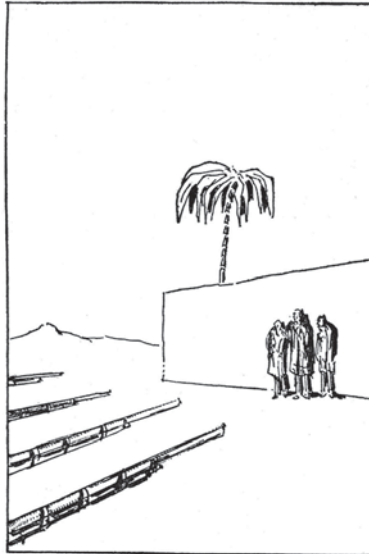
points about serving another person out of love.

<sup>2</sup> Henry Parry Liddon, *The Divinity of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, 22nd ed. (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1908), p. 150.

We are more than just priests. We are overcomers (Revelation 2:7), more than conquerors in Him (Romans 8:37).

... Does this then mean that God-fearing, Bible-believing, law-abiding believers in the Lord Jesus Christ have no place in the political sphere?

Obviously not.



Jesus will not set us before a firing squad, demanding obedience. We serve Him willingly or not at all!

Christians have an obligation, a mandate, a commission, a holy responsibility to reclaim the land for Jesus Christ—to have dominion in the civil structures, just as in every other aspect of life and godliness.

But it is dominion that we are after. Not just a voice.

It is dominion we are after. Not just influence.

It is dominion we are after. Not just equal time.

It is dominion we are after.

... Thus, Christian politics has as its primary intent the conquest of the land—of men, families, institutions, bureaucracies, courts, and governments for the Kingdom of Christ. It is to reinstitute the authority of God's Word as supreme over all judgments, over all legislation, over all declarations, constitutions, and confederations.<sup>3</sup>

tions.<sup>3</sup>

## Thy will be done

Jesus instructed His disciples to pray that God's will would be done on earth, just like it is done in heaven. Yet we never find the Messiah forcing His will on anyone. Either you served the Messiah willingly, or you continued serving the devil. *Free will* and *force* simply cannot be mixed; either we love by choice or we do not love at all. One cannot be forced to love. And God will only accept a relationship of love with humanity. Force—either political or military—can never bring about the kingdom of heaven.

I know I am repeating what was said above, but that is the beauty of Christ's rule: men serve Him faithfully, smack in the middle of fierce circumstances that hinder him from doing so. It is like a man that loves his wife and is faithful to her, when he lives in the middle of a red-light district.

*Continued on page 33*

<sup>3</sup> George Grant, *The Changing of the Guard: Biblical Principles for Political Action*, Biblical Blueprint Series Vol. 8 (Dominion Press, 1987), pp. 49-51.

# Three Stories of Grace

## Three typical American “Christians.”

Three happily-married people with families they love.

Then, three very *shocking* moments of truth: **“I am living in adultery!”**

It takes grace to obey, to align ourselves to the teaching of Jesus. Our flesh will usually go into outright rebellion at His calls to righteousness and holiness.

But to glorify Him in all we do, we must obey His revealed will.

And that takes grace.

These three testimonies reveal how the grace of God enabled people to crucify their natural desires and let Christ reign in them. Agony, doubts, objections from well-meaning friends and family; but finally peace and freedom as they submit themselves to the righteousness of Christ. Yes, they are testimonies of “the true grace of God!” 1 Pe. 5:12

*Kathleen Naylor, Myerstown, PA*

Dear readers, I write this to you in my dear Savior’s name, for His glory.

I grew up a strict Catholic girl, never hearing God’s plan of salvation. I was never told to read the Bible and never knew anything about a personal relationship with God.

At the age of twenty, I was married to Robert. This five-year marriage was agonizing, as he committed adultery numerous times. (I have long ago forgiven him and have been praying for his salvation for 28 years.) It ended up that I had to live with a family in Doylestown, Pa. Divorce papers were delivered to me at this home. I knew nothing of it and never signed anything.

Two years later, I was working in a convenience store in Piscataway, NJ. I felt very distant from God. I whispered a prayer in my heart as I worked, “God, draw me closer to you.” I did not yet realize that God had even heard my prayer.

Three weeks later, an older gentleman came in the store and began reciting scriptures and telling me about Jesus. Through his persistent witnessing, I was brought to salvation, in 1982.

In 1985, I married Mark Naylor, who was also a babe in the Lord. We met at Central Bible Church in Boundbrook, NJ. Our pastor told us it was okay to get remarried, since both our spouses had committed adultery on us and we were the innocent ones. We believed him and were so very happy together. We had two children. Never could we imagine the agony we would go through later.

Up until about 2002, we had experienced Pentecostal, Evangelical, Baptist, and Non-Denominational churches, but not one ever taught on divorce/remarriage, modest apparel, or the dangers of “eternal security” teachings. Half of the people in those churches were divorced and remarried.

According to the following Scriptures, marriage is “until death do you part.”

*For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Ro. 7:2-3*

*Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever*

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## *Mark Naylor, Bethel, PA*

I grew up Catholic, following all the Sacraments. The Church led me to believe that I was going to heaven, but in my heart I knew I wasn't saved.

I got married early in life, at age 18, to a girl named Karen. Everything went fine for the first four years, but then we began having arguments and disagreements. Karen was working evenings, and one night when I went to see her, she wasn't there. I found out she was having a relationship outside the marriage. It seemed that my entire life was coming unraveled. I remember one night when I was crying and hurting pretty bad, being outside gazing into the heavens. I didn't truly know the Lord at this time, but I said, "God, if you're out there, make yourself known to me."

I started using drugs and alcohol around this time, to cover up the pain inside. My mom noticed what I had been doing, and it hurt her pretty bad. She came one night to talk to me and pleaded with me to stop using drugs and alcohol. She told me that my brother Butch had started going to this church called Central Bible Church, and asked if maybe we could go together on the next Sunday. I went, just to make her happy. Going to this church was a lot different than going to the Catholic Church. The people seemed friendly and happy, and I just couldn't figure out what made them tick. It took about three Sundays before the Lord opened my eyes, ears, and heart to the gospel message. I got saved that day.

I tried to reconcile my marriage to Karen, but she told me she was seeing somebody else and didn't want things to change. A few months later, I tried leading her to Christ, but she said she wasn't ready for a commitment at that time. She asked me for a divorce a few months after that, so we got divorced.

It was about two months after this that I met Kathleen. We became very good friends, and our relationship started to grow. I went to the pastor to see if it would be okay for us to get married. He said it was, because both of our spouses had committed adultery, and besides, "God was a God of second chances." So Pastor Bill married us. We had two daughters together.

As time moved on, we attended various Evangelical churches, but ended up in Oregon in a home church, and home schooling. This led us to the Godly Home tapes by Bro. Denny Kenaston. In 2002, we moved to Pennsylvania and started attending Ephrata Christian Fellowship, and enjoyed it very much.

One day, Bro. David Cooper asked if he could come over and talk to us. He confronted us on our being di-

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## *Joanne Smith, Monett, MO*

I grew up in a non-religious home with my dad and my brother. My grandma took us to her little Independent Fundamental Baptist church every now and then, but not regularly. We did not really care to go, but enjoyed getting rewards for attending and bringing a Bible. In our minds, it was worth enduring the two hours for the treats.

When I was eight years old, I "accepted Jesus into my heart" after attending the annual Baptist Bible Camp (that was always so fun!! Lots of games, goodies, food, crafts, etc. ... with a little about Jesus sprinkled in here and there). I remember I was "saved" while in the back of my grandma's car riding home from camp. For some reason I was sitting on the floor. My grandma's dear friend was in the front passenger seat—she helped "lead me to Christ." I was trying so hard to figure out how

**My first time through the Gospels, I came to Jesus' teachings on divorce and remarriage in Matthew 5. My heart jumped and felt like it stopped for a second.**

Jesus could fit into my heart ... did He shrink down or something? And, why did I get Him all to myself? Could He split up and go into other hearts too? Or, maybe He just spent a little time in my heart and then made His rounds to other hearts? I had no idea. I remember I had a funny image in my mind of the classic-looking Jesus (longer brown hair, white robe, sandals, a trim beard, etc.) standing there somewhere amidst the chambers of my heart with all the blood, vessels, etc. holding on to bars like He was in a cage or something. Strange! What was He doing there? Just hanging out, I guess.

Time passed and I had nothing to do with church. I didn't like to go there, and no one but grandma seemed to care if I went. I continued to grow more confused and eventually got bitter. I no longer attended church when I was in my teen years, and thought anyone who believed that stuff was a brainwashed hypocrite. I wanted nothing to do with it. I had better things to do with my time—drugs, drinking, smoking, hanging out with friends, etc.

When I was sixteen, I got pregnant with Tylor. His father and I knew we did not want to be together, so he left (a mutual agreement) and I raised Tylor alone. When Tylor was about eight or nine months old, I met Michael. Handsome, funny, smart, a good singer ... we started

*Continued on page 13*



*Kathleen Naylor - Continued from page 10*

*marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery. Lu. 16:18*

*The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Ps. 12:6*

We moved to Bethel, PA, approximately eight years ago. We visited Ephrata Christian Fellowship for a while, but God led us strongly to Harmony Christian Fellowship, where we have been attending for over seven years.

One evening, precious David and Cherie Cooper came to visit Mark and I. With love, anguish, and Scripture pouring out of their godly hearts, they explained to us that we were living in adultery. We were shocked to hear all of this, as no one had ever made it known to us before. How I wish it had been! How I wish I had been under godly preachers as I am now, who preach all of God's Word and not just tickle the ears and keep the pews filled. What agony this would have prevented!

That evening will be forever in my memory. I'll never forget the pain on Cherie's face. What loving, obedient servants they were to come to us with such devastating news, the truth. Oh, how I thank my Lord for sending them!

However, I was not thankful at the time. I was stunned and confused. That evening, as Mark and I began the search of our lives, the Coopers kindly left us with some tapes to listen to on this truth. I nearly wore those tapes out over the next year of my seeking God, all the while hoping it was not true.

Satan was not happy. This became more evident as my seeking was consuming me. *Praise ye the LORD. Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in his commandments. Ps. 112:1 Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul. Ps. 66:16*

How the dear sisters at Harmony church loved me, patiently showed me Scripture, and fervently prayed. *For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. He. 4:12*

I spoke to Mark, saying that I'd be moving out of our bedroom into our daughter Kelsi's room if God showed me that we really were living in adultery. At one point in my search, I spent three days with a precious Christian lady friend in another state. For three days, all we did was search the Scriptures and pray. We went to a Christian bookstore

and stayed there for six hours, reading every book we could find on the subject. The books we read were by some very well-known, looked-up-to authors, pastors, and speakers.

Sadly, not even one believed what God says in His Word about divorce and remarriage. I was still confused as we left the store. When the three intense days of searching, studying, and agonizing were over, my friend—who is one of the most intelligent, kind ladies I've ever met—looked at me and said, "Well, Kath, you're convinced now that you and Mark are okay, right?"

I said, "No, I am not convinced."

I'll just say that God's love and patience for me is so deep. He knew that I was a thickhead, but he also knew that I wanted to be clear with Him and walk pleasing in His

sight, in all His truth. So, for the one-hundredth time, I knelt down in my prayer closet (the bathroom) and cried out to Him: "Lord, I beg you to show me the truth, and I will obey You."

It was a moment I will never forget. God graciously and lovingly poured out His truth into my heart right there, no doubts at all ever again—I was living in adultery.

I nearly crumpled to the floor with agony, but also with relief, if you can comprehend those feelings. I had desperately wanted God to tell me, "You and Mark are okay." That evening, I told Mark what God had revealed to me, and even in his agony he so kindly and respectfully said, "You and Kelsi take the big room, and I'll take Kelsi's room." Her room is the size of a stamp.

I tell you this in all truthfulness, that even though Mark didn't share my conviction on the subject at that time, he never looked at me the same way again. Never again did he touch me or ask me. This is only God's love and mercy. Mark had nothing but agony, love, and respect in his heart. We lived as brother and sister, yes, under the same roof. But the adultery stopped. This continued for a time, until God eventually worked it out that Mark moved into a separate home.

I'm so grateful to my Lord for all He has done and is doing. How He sustains me! How He carries me!

I'm so thankful for my brothers and sisters in Christ who help, love, and encourage me. They cannot fathom just how much. I cannot stress enough to read the Scriptures on divorce and remarriage. God's Word is true and clear.

We must set aside our own pain and dwell on the pain it causes our Lord if we remain in adultery. We must repent. When all is said and done, only what is done for Christ will last. Eternity is forever. To God be all the glory! ~

**It was a moment I will never forget ... God revealed to me that I was living in adultery!**

*Mark Naylor - Cont. from page 11*

vorced and remarried. I took it pretty hard and asked him to leave. I didn't believe what they were saying was right. I was distressed in my spirit, and started searching the Scriptures. I was hanging on to Matthew 19:9 and Matthew 5:31-32, believing that infidelity on the part of a spouse justified putting him/her away. But I couldn't find any scriptures that supported remarriage.

For two years, I continued to search, searching in the Greek and Hebrew, hoping that the church's stand on divorce and remarriage was wrong. It was during this period that Kathleen and I separated rooms. I somehow just wanted to hang on to the fact that I was right, that Kathleen and my "marriage" was okay in God's eyes. At one point, I thought I found scriptures in 1 Corinthians 7 to support our being married, but as I read them in context, I saw that they were talking about something completely different than I thought. I realized that I was only divorced from my first wife by worldly law, and not by God's law. I also read something that confirmed this in Romans 7:2-3. It said that the only separation that would allow me to be remarried in God's eyes would be the death of my first spouse. Even though at that moment I knew it was true, I still did not want to accept it. My walk with the Lord started really growing cold, and I wasn't fellowshiping.

In November 2007, Kathleen and I separated houses. Kathleen was afraid that I would be upset, but I respected her wishes and moved out. We stayed friends and are still friends today.

After I moved, I read the series of articles in *The Heartbeat of the Remnant* by Dean Taylor titled "The Exception Clause." The information there helped back up what I already knew to be true. Regrettably, I was still too stubborn to acknowledge this truth out front.

In May 2009, we went to a tent meeting in Amherst, Virginia at Dayspring Christian Fellowship. While Jerry Mawhorr was preaching, I felt the Lord tugging at my heart. The Holy Spirit let me know that I was wrong for being angry at Him and at the church people who had told me the truth. I asked the Lord's forgiveness, and He restored me.

I thank the Lord that He put it into my heart to ask David Cooper for forgiveness for the way I felt toward him. I visited him a few weeks after I got back from the meeting, and the Lord blessed our time together. I also asked the other brothers that I had been bitter against for forgiveness. I am now back in fellowship at Harmony Christian Fellowship. I thank the Lord for His love, patience, and mercy in my life. ~

*Joanne Smith - Cont. from page 11*

hanging out, and eventually I got pregnant with Brianna. We were married about nine months after she was born, and when she was two years old, I had Corban.

Michael eventually left. He'd come back on and off, but mostly he was gone. Eventually he stayed gone and I was determined to make a better life for me and my children. I did not intend to divorce him; I had been through a lot as a child, and it was set in my mind that once I was married, I would not divorce. I believed in my vows that said "til death do us part." While I would claim to not believe in God at the time, I still had a fear in my heart and a general knowledge of right and wrong (God gave all of us the knowledge of good and evil). Unfortunately,

**I would have liked to believe that "not under bondage" meant I was free to remarry, but that's not what it really says.**

the world came in and persuaded me to believe it was all right to divorce and just move on. Even some of his Christian family members were telling me I was "too good for him anyway and deserved better." So I filed for divorce. I had no idea where he was at the time, and he did not protest or show up for the hearing.

I met Bobby when Corban was about a year old. I did not intend to date, but for some reason I went ahead and did it anyway. We dated for quite a while, and he eventually moved in. For some reason, I had it in my mind that it would not be right to marry him, but he was so kind, loving, etc. Once again, the world came in and convinced me it was "my right" to remarry. Even though I still had a small prick in my heart, we went ahead and married about four years after we met. In this time, I hardly heard a word from Michael.

A whole new world opened up for me and my children when the idea of home schooling was presented to us. I took my children out of school and never looked back. I had no idea how I was going to do it, but I knew in my heart that it was what we must do. I found out quickly that the majority of parents who home school do it for religious reasons—I was the minority in every group we visited. So here I was, bitter towards Christianity, yet surrounded by professing Christians.

Not too long into our first year of homeschooling, Tyler asked if we could start going to church. I was the kind

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That they may teach the young women ...

# Offcasts or Firstfruits?



## Part 1

My story starts out as any normal teenager. I was a young girl full of desires and ambitions. One of them was to someday be swept off my feet by “Prince Charming.” I envisioned myself with a row of healthy, active children and a loving, supportive husband. After all, wasn’t that what every young girl did? Only “odd” girls with “queer dispositions” didn’t marry.

I would always scrutinize the girls that didn’t get married, trying to figure out why they stayed single. For the most part, I *thought* that I could figure out why nobody wanted them. In my opinion, either they were too rigid, too snobbish, too opinionated, too independent, or too incompetent. But once in a while I would get stuck! I would run across what I thought was a very sweet, godly young woman that still was not selected. She was meek, under authority, cheerful, beautiful, virtuous, and well ... all the qualities that I thought godly young men would want. Hmmm, now what was the “problem”?

There had to be a “problem,” correct? “Normal” people got married. Everywhere you looked, there were couples with children. People just expected you to get married. Pastors teach on marriage, on child training, winning the hearts of children, etc. Parents constantly say, “You’ll need to learn this so when you get married ...” Or, “If you ever get married, your husband will want you to ...” Friends and family constantly match you up with this person or that. It’s no wonder young people grow up expecting to get married; and I was no exception.

However, as time progressed “Prince Charming” never came along. Yes, there were some offers of friendship, but never any that I felt were from the Lord. One by one the years rolled by. One by one most of my friends got married. I saw the sparkle in their eyes, the spring in their step; and I felt my heartstrings being tugged. Again and again, I had to commit my future to God. He knew what was best for me.

For years, I only knew that in my head. I tried hard to pull that knowledge from my head to my heart; then one day it happened. I was busy working in the office when my co-worker informed me about the spiritual status of a certain brother and the direction that he was taking his family. It was breaking his wife’s heart, and she was struggling how to handle this extremely difficult situation.

At first, I was devastated! Suddenly the realization hit me: when he was a young man, he was on fire for God! His heart of compassion and fervor won everybody’s heart—including mine. When he asked another young girl for her friendship, I experienced my first and only heartbreak. Now, after years of outstanding work in the church, he had turned his back on it.

What if I had gotten what I had wanted? I would have been married to this brother. I would now be in his wife’s shoes! Even though my heart ached for my friend, I could not help but lift my heart in praise to God. “Oh Lord, thank you, thank you, thank you!” I would a thousand times rather be in my shoes than in hers! “Oh, Lord, You were looking out for me! I could only see through this narrow tunnel vision, while You saw the whole picture. You saved me from



a life of misery! I will never again doubt You or question the path that You have for me to tread. I am incapable of making my own plans. I see Your way is so much higher than mine! Yea, higher than any man, because no man could have ever predicted this outcome!”

It was at this point that God revealed His intimate love for me. I felt in such close union with God, I felt His presence so near and sweet! I knew He cared for me with an everlasting love. He had not forgotten me! He was there right beside me and leading me one step at a time. I could not see tomorrow, but now I wasn't worried because I knew He was directing me. I knew that I could trust Him explicitly because of His overwhelming love for me. **He** would be at my side! He was my husband. He would give me comfort, encouragement, and direction. He would be the one that fills my love-tank to full and overflowing!

Time went on. Even though I thought I was comfortable in being single, I could still not get away from the stigma of singlehood. I didn't fit in anywhere. I was too old to mingle with the young people, but felt out of place with the married ones who were often talking about children, home situations, etc. Few people could relate to the things that an older single faces, because they all got married at a young age. In fact, many didn't seem to have a clue on what to talk about to us singles, except for our work.

I felt a little like the low-caste Hindus must feel in India. It seemed like the married ones didn't really accept you as having “attained” until you said “I do.” I felt like unless I get married, people will not accept me as “spiritual.” At least it seemed that way, because they always gave the responsibilities to married people, rarely—if ever—to single people.

People, young and old, didn't seem to know what to do with you because you didn't really fit in anywhere. It bothered me. The Bible didn't even talk much about older singles. The preaching was never for older singles. It was always directed towards fathers, mothers, children, families, and/or for the whole congregation. There were Bible Schools for the young people, Couple's Nights for the married, and children's class for the children. Where did we fit in? What was wrong? Were we single people even supposed to exist? Is that why we just fell through the cracks?

I tried to bury any kind of negative thoughts and keep busy in the kingdom of God. I knew I was in the center of God's will and that was all that mattered. Christ was my all in all, and if other people thought me strange, well ...

However, if the truth be told, I thought myself as sub-standard. I figured everybody looked at me the same way as I had looked at other older singles. I noted the same reaction (when I told my age) in some of the young people as I had had when I was their age. And it just confirmed to me ... “I was unusual!”

## Part 2

As I threw myself into the service of the kingdom, I gave little thought of what people thought of me. I was too busy! I worked long hours and engaged all my faculties to prosper His work. However, when I was asked for another year of commitment where I was serving, I wavered. How long could I go on like this? I was getting burned out! I loved my work, but part of me was pulling to just have a normal life with normal pay. I had given enough years to this service; it was time to “pass the torch.”

I prayed and sought advice. People and circumstances seemed to point me to go on, but I knew I could not do another year without some clear direction from my heavenly Husband! I knew the responsibilities would be great and—without assurance from Christ—I knew I could not handle the pressure. I prayed and prayed, yet I couldn't seem to get a clear answer. I sought His Word, hoping something would leap out at me.



**A very quiet voice told me to go to Revelation. I was astounded!**

One night after reading a couple books of the Bible, nothing seemed to stand out. “Please, Lord,” I pled, “show me where you want me to read. Give me direction!” A very quiet voice told me to go to Revelation. I was astounded! “Revelation?!” I couldn't have heard correctly! Why Revelation? Of all places! I recalled hearing a brother saying something about “the hundred and forty and four thousand,” so I decided to check it out.

*And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouths was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God. Re. 14:3-5*

At first my heart sorta fell. Ahh, this was talking about guys, not gals. It said “which were not defiled with women.” I decided to check into the Greek definition of “for they are virgins.” My heart leapt. Its primary meaning is “a maiden” or “an unmarried daughter.” (Although by extension it includes undefiled boys and men.)

Now that I was certain it could apply to me, I carefully reread and analyzed that scripture. I could certainly relate to being able to sing as it were a new song that no man could relate to except the hundred and forty and four thousand singles. (How often I had thought that nobody could relate to my experiences, except singles?) But what really stood out to me was the part of being called “the firstfruits”!

Firstfruits! That was what God always asked for. It was the biggest, the best, the flawless, the most perfect fruit available. That was who I was! I met all of the mentioned qualifications. I was redeemed from among men. I was unmarried. I followed the Lamb whithersoever He went: and here He was saying I was His firstfruit.

I was utterly overwhelmed! How could measly little me be His firstfruit? This great King of the universe, who spoke the world into existence was telling me *I was His firstfruit*. I was the apple of His eye. Why was I chosen from the masses of people to be *His firstfruit*? I truly felt like He had reached down and somehow sorted me out from the millions, and said, “You are **mine!**” This great King of Kings, who measured the waters in the palm of His hand and used the earth as His footstool, had selected *me* to be His prize! He had searched me out and given me a special calling that only a few on earth have ever experienced. I had a *special* calling. I felt so elite, so called out and separated unto Christ. I was thrilled! I could picture myself far off in the heavenly places in the palm of His hand, with nothing to do but to serve Him. That was my whole calling! I was honored beyond words! Why would God choose to call me—me who felt like an offcast—to be His firstfruit?

I wasn’t of less value in God’s eyes, regardless of what man thought. In fact, at that moment, my opinion of what man thought dropped away. Who cares? I now knew what position I had in Christ. I was Christ’s pride and joy, and I was found totally faultless before Him. That’s all that mattered!

Suddenly my decision was clear. Since my whole purpose in life is to serve Christ and follow Him whithersoever He goeth, where could I do it better than right here in full-time service? In fact, now that I know how He truly feels about me, I’m delighted to do it! To go anywhere else in self-gratification would be stepping right out of His palm and lowering my status with Him. Yes, I know He would still love me, but I don’t want to grieve Him or be out of the center of His will!

It is so different serving now! I used to serve because that was “the Christian thing to do.” But I’ve discovered that if you’re doing it because you feel it is your “Christian duty” to do it, you soon start feeling burned out, taken advantage of, and disgruntled because of lack of appreciation. But when your serving stems from a heart of love for your Lord and your position in Christ, your service just flows out naturally with positive results.



Firstfruits! That was what God always asked for. It was the biggest, the best, the flawless, the most perfect fruit available. That was who I was!

In conclusion, even though I have expressed my singlehood journey, I by no means wish to indicate that marriage is not beautiful and God-ordained. I have been blessed by many of the marriages I have seen, and know that God does have marriage in store for most people. It is a beautiful picture of Christ and the Church. If God would call me to marriage, I would gladly comply. I know if I would resist God’s will I would immediately be called out of God’s hundred and forty and four thousand firstfruits, because one of the qualifications is to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. But as for now, I am glad to be called ... His Firstfruit!

### —An Anonymous Firstfruit

*A note to all my fellow firstfruits:*

When the realization of the high honor of singlehood for Christ dawned upon me, it almost irritated me. How could something this beautiful be made to look so unappealing? To be single in many of our Anabaptist churches seems to be a special disgrace, and we buy into that lie! Whatever God has a special design for, the devil will take extra pains to tear down, whether it’s a godly home or a godly single person’s role. Let what God says and feels about you be your measuring stick! *We are special in His eyes!* ~

# Handmaid of the Lord

*Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. Lu. 1:38*

Sarah Raber

1.

Though our names and ages vary, yet no title's necessary,  
Old maid, young maid, single ladies—no such titles in God's Word.  
Yet there is a title given when a maiden walks with God,  
The exalted high position of a Handmaid of the Lord.  
Such an honor, such a calling for His humble handmaid fair,  
Let me cherish every moment He's entrusted to my care.  
I His handmaid give to Him my heart's devotion full and free,  
Working only for His glory, in His service let me be.

Chorus

Be it therefore to Thine handmaid, Lord according to Thy Word,  
Let Thy servant wash the feet of the servants of my Lord.  
Thou dost guide and order every life according to Thy will,  
I will follow as Thou ledest, and my heart be yielded still.

2.

Free to travel, free to serve, free to study and to learn,  
Free to care for things above, offering heart and hands of love.  
Single eye, single goal, singleness of heart and soul,  
Singled out to serve with passion, joyful in my single role!  
Though my future be unknown to me, 'tis not unknown to Him,  
If He offers me "Prince Charming," yet may it never dim  
Any of my heart's desire, any of my first true love;  
May I first and foremost, always, live for Him who reigns above.

3.

Single doesn't mean rejection, poor material, second-rate,  
Singlehood is not a curse, is not brought on by chance or fate.  
But positions of true honor, jewels kept with jealous care,  
Chosen for a special purpose, being for His work prepared.  
Whether called to joyful singlehood, or called to marriage sweet,  
Let us live within the moment—worship at the Master's feet!  
True fulfillment in our life will come by resting in His will,  
He the greatest Lover of all time our hearts shall truly fill!

This song was written for a Single Sisters' Meeting. A pdf and mp3 file of the words and music may be downloaded at:  
<http://www.elcristianismoprimitivo.com/english/handmaid-of-the-lord.htm>



As news reports from Iran leak stories concerning their growing political unrest, pictures of protests, demonstrations, and riots reveal a sad condition. Among the complaints—one that has caught a lot of the American attention—is the discrimination of women. Notable figures from within Iran have begun to speak out openly about some of the problems. CNN recently reported, “Increasingly, women’s voices are gaining power as their numbers rise and their demands grow louder. Even the granddaughter of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the architect of the Islamic Republic, voiced frustration at the way women are treated.”

This kind of talk has certainly taken over in common conversation. It seems nowadays that everywhere you go people speak about what they see as injustice in the treatment of the Muslim women. That word—*injustice*—seems to be the common cry. What I have most often heard expressed is not so much a complaint about the Muslim veil or their conservative dress, but the complaints about the glaring inconsistencies people see between Muslim men and women. “The men,” they say, “look like everyone else, while the women are covered from head to toe.” I tend to chuckle a bit and shake my head in agreement with this glaring contradiction. But lately, as I look around Lancaster County, I’m beginning to wonder if it isn’t rather ironic that I should be so amused at their inconsistency.

I recently read through the Quran. In so doing I noticed that, similar to the New Testament, the Quran has more specific things to say about the dress of women than it does the dress of men. I assume that Muslim men, noticing the absence of a “law” concerning dress, interpret this as a license to dress however they want. This caused me to ponder ... “*In what way are we Christians different?*” Admittedly, the New Testament is more specific about the dress of women than it is of men. But aren’t Christians supposed to be led by the *spirit* of the law more than the letter of the law? As the spiritual leaders of our homes, I feel we men ought to be able to discern this conspicuous inconsistency more readily than a people who are living by law.

Coming from a culture that thought very little of modesty, my wife and I had to struggle our way through what the Bible had to say about the modesty of women. From the start, the mere thought of having my wife wear dresses really stretched me. And while my wife had always had long hair since we were married, coming to terms with what the Bible says about women having long hair was yet another stretch for me. And then, of course, the teaching we found in 1 Corinthians 11 on the covered head was the toughest biblical concept of all to accept.

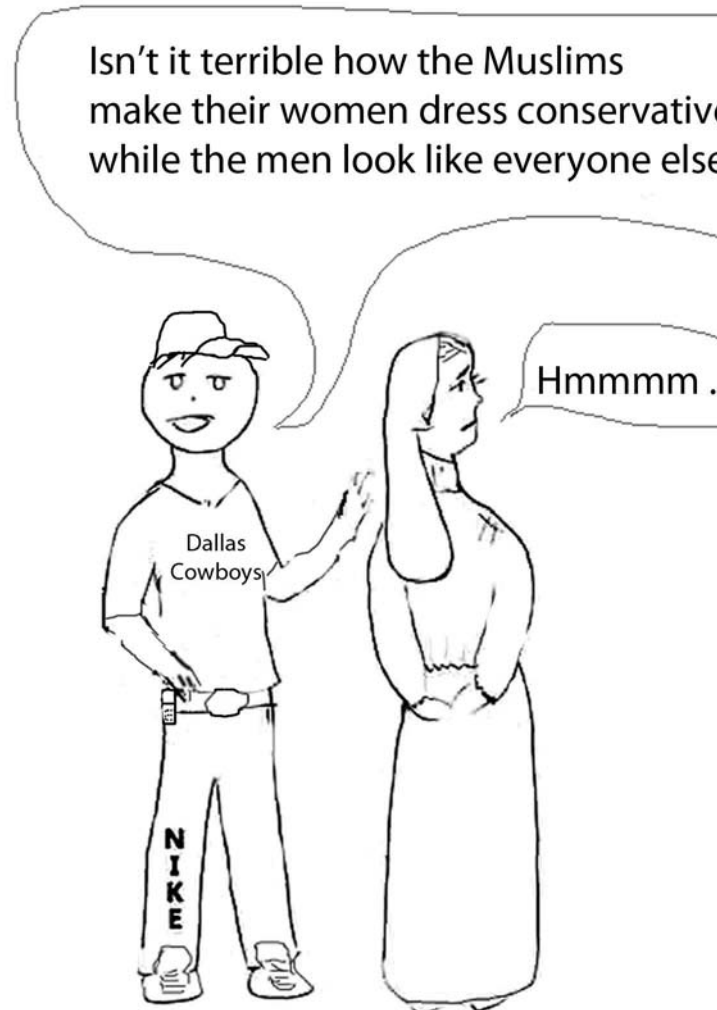
Because of my pride, I had a lot harder time accepting all of it than my wife did. She was the one who had to make all

# Modesty

Dean

the changes, such as no longer styling her hair, not wearing her makeup and jewelry, and then disposing of almost every single piece of her wardrobe in exchange for more modest and feminine dresses. Looking back, I’m ashamed to admit I was more embarrassed being *seen* with someone who was dressed in biblical attire, than my wife who was actually making such profound changes. Eventually, when I finally surrendered to the words of Scripture, we both found great peace together.

After I finally surrendered, I remember wishing that I could be the one who had to do the “hard part.” Coming from my background, making a change like putting on a head covering was as about as hard as going to the mall in a

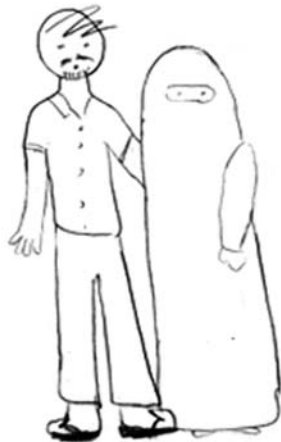


# for Men

Taylor

clown suit. One of our local sisters here, Christine Lamice-la, described her experience by saying that when she first put on the covering, “The way people looked at me, it was like going out in public sporting a big green nose.” I wonder how many of our sisters can relate to her experience?

As we continued to look deeper into the issue, I realized that, while the Bible might certainly have more *specifics* mentioned for my wife, those same biblical principles should be as applicable to me as they are to her. Moreover, as I consciously chose to embrace these biblical principles as the leader of my home, I was also hit with the profound sense of responsibility that my wife *needed* me to lead out in this area as much as any other.



## Biblical principles summed up in three biblical words

In 1 Timothy 2:8-10, we find three words that can act as a tremendous guide to discipline the way we dress as men: *adorn*, *shamefacedness*, and *sobriety*. Paul writes:

*“I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.”*

While the clothing issues addressed in this passage are specifically directed toward women, as the spiritual leaders of our homes they certainly can be used as a guide for men as well. Men, let’s not miss an important parallel that the Apostle makes here: the women’s dress guidelines, such as shamefacedness and sobriety, are given in the context of being “in like manner” to the holy/worshipping behavior of the men. If we could just take those three words—adorn, shamefacedness and sobriety—and cause everything in our closet to pass through this filter, I wonder what effect that alone would have on our wardrobe?

The word “adorn” is an interesting one. It comes from the Greek word *kosmeo*. This is where we get our word for the cosmos or universe. It means “to put in order, arrange, make ready.” Our God is a God of order, and it is significant that He employed this word to describe how he wants His saints to dress. The other two words are pretty self-explanatory: shamefacedness and sobriety. Ask yourself ... do these three words describe your wardrobe? Do these three words guide your manner of speaking? What about your hairstyle?

## Separation

Without question, one of the most forgotten New Testament teachings in the modern American church is the doctrine of separation. You know how it goes ... when a discussion on separation comes up, most Christians today will promptly reach for their favorite misquotation of Paul’s ministry to the Greeks and Jews (i.e. Greeks to the Greeks, and Jews to the Jews)<sup>1</sup>. However, even a casual look at the passage reveals that Paul was not speaking about a proclamation of his newfound liberties, but of the renunciation of his own comforts. One honest look at this doctrine can be life changing. Paul addresses this issue numerous times to the Gentile converts of Corinthians.

Let’s take a look at another such passage in 2 Corinthians 6:11-13. In this instance, Paul begins his teaching on separation with a rebuke:

<sup>1</sup> Common misinterpretation of 1 Co. 9:19-23 (See box on the next page.)

*Ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged. Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels. Now for a recompense in the same, (I speak as unto my children,) be ye also enlarged.*

What Paul is saying here is that he has a heart full of things to say to them. But in saying these things, he wants them to know that he is not trying to *restrict* them or spoil their fun. However, he lets them know that their real *restriction* is actually coming from their passions, not from godly disciplines. To get through this mental block, he challenges them to open their mind to hear what he has to say. Then he spells it out for them more specifically (vss. 14-16):

*Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for 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; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

If that is not powerful enough, he goes on to link this teaching of separation with a wonderful promise (vss. 17-18):

*Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*

Finally, he sums up his teaching with an accent on the *promise* and summarizes that our response to this promise should affect both the inside and the out (2 Co. 7:1):

*Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the*

**flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.**

Wow!

## The restrained strength of meekness

Perhaps the most appropriate word we could use to define the behavior of a Spirit-filled man of God would be the word “meek.” Numbers 12 tells us that “Moses was very *meek*, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.”<sup>2</sup> Unlike the modern rendering of the word *meek*, the ancient usage of the word, *praos*, is full of powerful meaning. Instead of painting a picture of being weak, mild, and cowed, it instead portrays a picture of *power*—power that is directed, self-controlled, and disciplined.

Gerald Heard, speaking of the ancient Greek word *praos* says:

*They used it for wild animals which had been tamed, trained; for wild horses which had been made able to work with men. There is then in this definition nothing weak or spiritless, but rather the description of energy which, instead of exploding, is now channeled and directed. The tamed are not the tame ... The trained are those whose powerful impulses have been put into understanding service.*

None of these definitions should be an exact rule or law to us; but if we would allow ourselves to be led by the spirit behind the words, they should at least serve as a guide. Perhaps we have more to go on than we originally thought when we ponder these forgotten spiritual concepts:

*Meekness, as being strength in control.  
Adorn as representing setting things in order.  
Shamefacedness and sobriety, as taking them at face value: i.e. shamefacedness and sobriety mean shamefacedness and sobriety.*

<sup>2</sup> Numbers 12:3



Considering the general concepts of being “in order, “separated” and “sober,” may I suggest a simple application that I have found useful:

- If it is unzipped—zip it.
- If it is hanging out—tuck it in.
- If it is untied—tie it.
- If it is unbuttoned—button it.
- If it is sticking up—comb it down.
- If it is hanging down—pull it up.
- If it is flashy—subdue it.
- If it is revealing something that it shouldn’t—cover it up.
- If it looks like the world, smells like the world, and sounds like the world—separate from it.

You probably get the idea. This not an exact science, but, at the very least, it is a pretty basic discipline that engages the concepts of orderliness, discipline, and separation (which, by the way, is the very definition of the word “holiness”). We know it is the heart of God that we be a special people, set apart and clearly distinguishable from the world around us—for we know God desires a *holy* people.

## Timeless teaching

Since the time of the New Testament, the Spirit of God has inspired godly men to look at the principles in God’s word and apply them to every aspect of their lives—including the way they dressed. The church has never invented some kind of universal pattern, but godly men in every age have taken the way they dressed very seriously. As the world further twists God’s pattern, and continually tries new angles for us to copy, the church must be on guard—prepared and willing to stand apart.

In the early church, Tertullian (A.D. 150-220) made an interesting remark that revealed that as things in the world were growing more and more immodest, the Christians were increasingly starting to stand out from the world around them. Apparently, the simple, modest design of the *mantle* was growing out of style; and more and more people were adapting the more immodest style of the *toga*. Because of this, Tertullian said that the mantle had, by default, “begun to be a Christian’s vesture.”<sup>3</sup>

Cyprian, writing in the later 200s, noted that when a person was truly born again, it would require a reexamination of all parts of their life—including their manner of dress. Speaking about his conversion, Cyprian said:

*I used to regard it as a difficult matter, and especially as difficult in respect of my character at that time, that a man should be capable of being born again ... When does he learn thrift, who has been used to big banquets and sumptuous eating? And he who has been glittering in gold and purple, and has been noted for his expensive clothes, when does he reduce himself to mundane and simple clothing?<sup>4</sup>*

## John Wesley

In an unusually candid sermon preached by John Wesley in 1789, insightfully entitled “Causes of Inefficacy of Christianity,” we get a rare glimpse into the heart of an older and experienced man of God. In a portion of this sermon, there is a cry that, quite frankly, gives me chills. Speaking almost as though he was a defeated minister, he humbly confesses that he fears that it was way too late to make any

3 The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. IV, p. 12

4 The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. V, pp. 275

## Ever met a meek workhorse?



The real meaning of “meekness” came alive to me when I went to buy a horse while in South America. “Es manso,” the seller told me.

That hit me a bit strange, for I knew that “manso” was the word used in the Spanish Bible for meekness. When I realized that “manso” meant “broke,” I began to better understand the real power of “meekness.”

Take, for example, the seven “mansos” workhorses in the picture at the left. The one man has even left his plow, and those big, strong horses just stand there. A picture of wimpyness? Ha! No way!

At a word or a slap of the reins, those five or six tons of muscle and bones will immediately step up and put every ounce of strength to turning sod. A slight tug on the reins will turn them left or right, or stop them dead in their tracks.

Meekness is not weakness! Meekness is to let great strength be guided by a gentle tug on the reins. -

of the changes he felt were necessary in regard to dress. In his sermon, Wesley takes a look back, and—surprisingly—states that it would have been better to have had some kind of church guideline on the matter. I think it is very important that we listen to what he said:

*I am distressed. I know not what to do. I see what I might have done once. I might have said peremptorily and expressly, "Here I am: I and my Bible. I will not, I dare not vary from this book, either in great things or small. I have no power to dispense with one jot or tittle of what is contained therein. I am determined to be a Bible Christian, not almost, but altogether. Who will meet me on this ground? Join me on this, or not at all." With regard to dress in particular, I might have been as firm (and I now see it would have been far better,) as either the people called Quakers, or the Moravian brethren; I might have said, "This is our manner of dress, which we know is both Scriptural and rational. If you join us, you are to dress as we do; but you need not join us unless you please." But, alas! the time is now past; and what I can do now, I cannot tell.*<sup>5</sup>

Later, in another sermon entitled "On Dress," based on 1 Peter 3:3-4, Wesley cries out, almost pathetically:

*Let me see, before I die, a Methodist congregation, full as plain dressed as a Quaker congregation.*<sup>6</sup>

## Charles Finney

Charles G. Finney (1792-1875), the revivalist and president of Oberlin College, boldly wrote:

5 Sermons, Volume 2, Sermon 116, The Works of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M., Cincinnati and New York, p. 439. Can be read at: <http://new.gbmg-umc.org/umhistory/wesley/sermons/116/>

6 Sermon 88, The Works of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M., Cincinnati and New York. Available to read at: <http://new.gbmg-umc.org/umhistory/wesley/sermons/88/> Or an audio version: <http://www.elcristianismoprimitivo.com/english/john-wesley-on-dress.mp3>

*Christians are bound to be singular. They are called to be a peculiar people, that is, a singular people, essentially different from the rest of mankind. To maintain that we are not to be singular is the same as to maintain that we are to be conformed to the world. "Be not singular," that is, be like the world. In other words, "Be ye conformed to the world." This is the direct opposite to the command in the*

# Free Indeed

*Krislyn Shank (age 17) Maryland*

You say you are free;  
Yet you are bound  
To pleasure,  
To hate,  
To the opinions of your peers.

I say I am bound;  
Yet I am free  
For service,  
For love,  
For submission to the will of my God.

And in this my bound liberty,  
I am far more free  
Than you are  
In your liberated bondage.

*text. But the question now regards fashion, in dress, equipage, and so on. And here I will confess that I was formerly myself in error. I believed, and I taught, that the best way for Christians to pursue was to dress so as not to be noticed, to follow the fashions and changes so as not to appear singular, and that nobody would be led to think of their being different from others in these particulars. But I have seen my error, and now wonder greatly at my former blindness. It is your duty to dress so plain as to show to the world that you place no sort of reliance in the things of fashion, and set no value at all on them, but despise and neglect them altogether. But unless you are singular, un-*

*less you separate yourselves from the fashions of the world, you show that you do value them. There is no way in which you can bear a proper testimony by your lives against the fashions of the world, but by dressing plain.*<sup>7</sup>

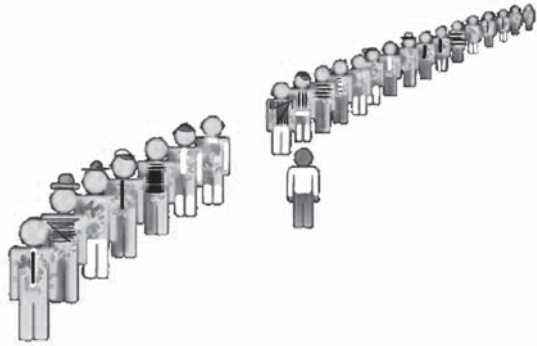
## Anabaptists

From the start of the Anabaptist movement, this doctrine has been of continual concern. Interestingly, the Roman Catholic theologian Franz Agricola, writing way back in 1582, wrote a book affectionately entitled "Against the Terrible Errors of the Anabaptists." He said:

*Among the existing heretical sects there is none which in appearance leads a more modest or pi-*

7 Finney, Charles, *In Regards to Fashion*: <http://www.elcristianismoprimitivo.com/finneyondress.htm>

ous life than the Anabaptist. As concerns their outward public life they are irreproachable. No lying, deception, swearing, strife, harsh language, no intemperate eating and drinking, no outward personal display, is found among them, but humility, patience, uprightness, neatness, honesty, temperance, straightforwardness in such measure that one would suppose that they had the Holy Spirit of God.



It is your duty to dress so plain as to show to the world that you place no sort of reliance in the things of fashion, and set no value at all on them, but despise and neglect them altogether. -Charles Finney

Finally, I leave you with a defining quote from Menno Simons, where he is speaking of the hypocrisy of the Catholics and Evangelicals who claim a biblical faith, yet ignore these elementary biblical principles concerning dress:

*They say that they believe, and yet there are no limits nor bounds to their accursed wantonness, foolish pomp, show of silks, velvet, costly clothes,*

*gold rings, chains, silver belts, pins, buttons, curiously adorned shirts, handkerchiefs, collars, veils, aprons, velvet shoes, slippers and such like foolish finery; never regarding that the enlightened apostles, Peter and Paul, have in plain and express words forbidden this to all Christian women.*

After making his point about dress—mainly in reference to women—Menno concludes with a punch for the men:

*If this is forbidden to women, how much more then should men abstain from it, who are the leaders and heads of their women. Notwithstanding all this, they still want to be called the Christian Church.*

Oh, brethren, let's remember that friendship with the world is still enmity with God! If our dress, hairstyle, music, and conversation is like the world, how long can we continue in this direction and still flatter ourselves with the great, New Age deception of "At least my heart is right!"

The biblical principles we have received as followers of Christ clearly state that we are called by God to draw a distinct line between the church and the world. Your line may not be the same as my line, but there should be a line.

At the very least, we should consider what kind of testimony it is when we have our wives dressed modestly, with dresses and head coverings, and we go around sporting jeans, the latest "moussed" hair fashions, and T-shirts which thoughtlessly propagate trite worldly slogans. Brethren, let us remember to take our place of leadership even in the small things, like the way we dress. Our wives need our support, and the world needs an example. ~

But it is marvelous, while many are taking all the trouble they can to array this poor body, they have very few ornaments for their soul; they forgot to dress the soul. . . . really the children of God cannot now be told by outward appearance from the children of the devil, and they really ought to be; there should be some distinction between the one and the other . . . everything in the Bible cries out against our arraying ourselves, and making ourselves proud by reason of the goodness of our apparel.

Some will say, "I wish you would leave that alone!" Of course you do, because it applies to yourself. But we let nothing alone which we believe to be in the Scriptures; and while I would not spare any man's soul, honesty to every man's conscience and honesty to myself demands that I should always speak of that which I see to be an evil breaking out in the Church. We should always take care that in everything we keep as near as possible to the written Word.

If some people had a little more piety, they would not require such a showy dress; if they had a little more godliness to set them off, they would have no need whatever to be always decorating themselves. The best earrings that a woman can wear are the earrings of hearing the Word with attention. . . . the very best dress we can ever wear is a garment made by the Holy Spirit: the garment of a consistent conduct . . . . It would be a good thing, perhaps, if we went back to Wesley's rule, to come out from the world in our apparel, and to dress as plainly and neatly as the Quakers . . . .

If you want ornaments, here they are: jewels, rings, dresses, and all kinds of ornament. Men and women, you may dress yourselves up till you shine like angels. How can you do it? By dressing yourselves up in benevolence, in love to the saints, in honesty and integrity, in uprightness, in godliness, in brotherly-kindness, in charity. These are the ornaments which angels themselves admire, and which even the world will admire; for men must give admiration to the man or the woman who is arrayed in the jewels of a holy life and godly conversation. I beseech you, brethren, "adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things." —Charles Spurgeon, Sermon Collection, vol. 1, pp. 516, 517.





That they may teach the young women ...



# Mothers, Sing with Your Children!

*Kyndra Steinmann*

It's the end of the day, and you have five things to do before supper is on the table. The preschoolers are tired and grumpy, and your husband is late getting home again. What do you do?

Sing!

It is morning and raining ... again. In fact, it has been raining all week, and you know the children have been cooped up too long and will fight with each other all day. As you go into their room to wake them up ... sing!

Sitting in the car, waiting for someone to come out of the store, the children are hungry, you've been running errands all morning, and it's time to go home and take naps ... how do you spend the time?

Sing!

Whatever the circumstance, singing can dramatically change the attitude with which you (and your children) deal with daily life.

I have been told by people who were not raised in Christian homes that they always enjoyed it when their mothers sang. The songs were not necessarily "Christian" or even "religious" in nature, but these children knew that all was right with their world because "Mommy was happy enough to sing."

Sisters, we have a wonderful opportunity to teach our children to have a cheerful attitude and to praise the Lord in every situation. We can show them by our example of song that everything is all right in their world. Our singing lets them know that Mommy is indeed happy, even when things

are going terribly wrong; because she knows that God is in control. Whether we stop what we are doing to sing with them, or continue with our work while they sit on a chair to calm down and sing with us, they are learning that they can praise God and adjust their attitudes.

This is not always easy. I have had many experiences of singing through tears, when having "one of those days." Sometimes I can barely sing above a whisper when I start, but God gives grace through my feeble effort, and slowly calm and peace descend first on my heart, and then in my home.

Almost any song in praise of God will help the situation, but I have found that hymns do the most to change my attitude. Songs such as *Praise to the Lord the Almighty* give praise to God for who He is, and refocus my attention from the last-minute rush of supper preparations to the One whom I am serving by making supper for my family. Songs that are actual Scripture verses set to music also help to refocus my mind and heart.

The following are some hymns that we like to sing together (hymn numbers are from *The Christian Hymnary*):

*Come, Thou Almighty King* (5)

*Come, Heaven-Bound Pilgrims* (16)

*Great God, Indulge My Humble Claim* (23)

*Blessing and Honor and Glory and Power* (26)

*Holy, Holy, Holy* (29)

## Teaching hymns and songs to preschoolers

Someone said to me the other day, “You must spend a lot of time singing with your children; they know so many songs.”

I started to think about that and realized that, actually, I do very little formal teaching of singing. We do have a singing time in the evening while I am finishing making supper. The children (ages three and two) sit on chairs, and we sing songs that they pick. I find this calming to all of us, but I rarely use this time to teach new songs.

So how do they learn new songs?

They hear them throughout the day, and they hear them sung by a person rather than on a recording. We do listen to recordings sometimes, but they rarely will sing those songs or request them. It seems that they think of recorded music as something to listen to, not something to participate in or imitate on their own.

Songs that they have heard their parents sing are obviously songs that—in their minds—they too can sing. How sweet

to hear their (sometimes garbled) renditions of hymns while they play or ride in the car!

I tend to sing whenever I am doing something that doesn't require my full attention—like ironing or washing dishes. The hymnal can easily be propped up where I am working. They play around, and sometimes I will tell them, “This is a new one, listen so you can learn it.”

If I really want them to learn a new song or hymn, I will sing it to them every time I sit down to rock them, for a week or so. That way they hear it once or twice a day at a time when they have nothing else to distract them. Preschoolers memorize very easily, so it does not take much for them to learn most of the words to a song.

Another place to practice new songs is during family worship. We have done this several ways; sometimes singing the same hymn every time we have family worship until we have all learned it, sometimes just doing that for a week until we are more familiar with it.

Preschoolers will probably not memorize hymns (or any other memory work) exactly word for word. Some words are too hard to say at this age, or have no meaning to them and are hard to remember. Try to explain new words, but don't worry too much about comprehension. They will understand what they are saying/singing better as they grow. At this age, all you are trying to do is to give them a mental

“library” of songs that they are familiar with and can help sing.

Keep your singing times relaxed and fun; this isn't a good time to train about sitting still, etc. You want them to pay attention, but don't worry too much if their attention wanders and they are finished singing after a song or two. Sing every day for just a little bit longer, and eventually they will be able to sing for a half hour or more.

Try to encourage them to sing out, but sing sweetly—not just loudly. This is mostly a matter of example, but at some point they will figure out that they can sing in funny voices or while making faces at each other. Explain that when we sing songs of praise, we are singing to God, and that being silly is not respectful. Then remind them as necessary, since they will not be old enough to always recognize what types of behavior are disrespectful.

## Singing in church

We want our children to think that church is for them too, not just something that they must endure while we participate in it. In our congregation, the Sunday service begins with singing and a short devotional. We encourage the children to sing all the songs that they know. Our three-year-old sits next to me on the end of the bench, where he can see the song leader. When a song number is given, I quickly look it up, and then whisper the first few lines to him. If he knows the song, that's usually enough to remind him, and I'll whisper to him to sing. If it's not a song he knows, I'll tell him to sing what he can, sometimes whispering the chorus or telling him to “sing the alleluias.”

I try to also encourage him by whispering that I liked the way he sang, or by smiling at him while singing. During the week we will work on songs that we sing in church. At one point, we started at the beginning of the hymnal and sang in family worship the hymns that we sing frequently in church. This gave the children a good familiarity with them, and also gave us the opportunity to focus a little bit on dynamics of singing, since several songs we sing frequently have lines that are sung louder or softer than others. Preschoolers



are not too young to learn to listen to the other singers and sing loudly or softly, and will enjoy practicing these kinds of things.

I also try to notice the children's singing in church and comment on it at home. "You sang really nicely on the al-leluias today." Or, "I like the way you sing nice and loudly during the children's message." These kinds of remarks really encourage them and help them to keep trying to participate in the service.



All of these ways to incorporate singing into daily life may seem time-consuming, but will soon seem natural if you work on singing with your children every day.

As a final encouragement to you to sing with your children, I will share the following. I have been writing this while in the hospital with our youngest child, two-month-old William. I sing to him throughout the day when he needs to be soothed or put to sleep. Although I don't sing very loudly, I have noticed that the rooms we occupy (we've moved into and out of the PICU during our stay) are calmer than the rooms around them. The nurses come in and out, and sometimes appear to have made an excuse to come in for a minute in order to have a moment or two outside of the often tense hospital atmosphere with its many demands. God gives grace when we honor Him, and I believe that He has blessed our rooms with peace in a way that others can see. May He also bless your homes as you sing with your children!

*Sam and Kyndra Steinmann attend Dayspring Christian Fellowship in Amherst, Virginia, with their three children, Frederick (3), Susannah (2), and William (3 months). Before her marriage to Sam, Kyndra served as a schoolteacher, which skills she used after her marriage (before having children of her own) in assisting others in their congregation with homeschooling. Since the writing of this article, William is home from the hospital, doing well. ~*

# Sober Minded

*Stephen W. Geise  
Ladybrand, South Africa*

It is appalling to me the amount of empty, silly foolishness that characterizes the western world, and nowhere is this drivel so prevalent than on blogs, websites, and other means of communications. **Our culture, as a whole, worships at the altar of entertainment and sacrifices to the god of humor.** But what is even more shocking is the nonsense that is spewed out by those who name the Name of Christ.

My mind turns to Titus 2:6, where young men are exhorted to be sober minded. When we see an individual with red eyes, slurred speech, and a staggering gait, we clearly understand what it means to be drunk and what it means to be sober. But it seems that when it comes to entertainment, somehow the word "sober" is confusing and difficult to understand. Christians have become intoxicated with frivolity and lightness, and think nothing of it.

It seems we have joined those of "Higher Criticism" and thrown out the Word of God. Truth is no longer relevant but relative. A very elementary perusal of the New Testament reveals eleven passages where we find the injunction to be "SOBER." (I Th. 5:6, 8; I Ti. 3:2, 11; Ti. 1:8; 2:2, 4, 6; I Pe. 1:13, 4:7, 5:8)

What are we to do with these commands? Are we going to foolishly fritter away our lives feasting on the swill of those who are spiritually famished? On what do you feed your soul? (Is. 55:1-3) Let me share the words of a song by E.A. Hoffman, which echo the longings of my soul.

Lord, I am fondly, earnestly longing  
Into Thy holy likeness to grow;  
Thirsting for more and deeper communion,  
Yearning Thy love more fully to know.

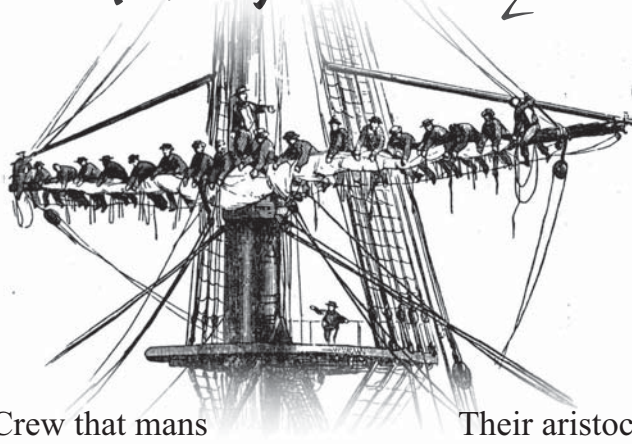
(Ch.) Open the wells of grace and salvation,  
Pour the rich streams deep into my heart;  
Cleanse and refine my tho't and affection,  
Seal me and make me pure as Thou art.

Dead to the world would I be, O Father!  
Dead unto sin, alive unto Thee;  
Crucify all the earthly within me,  
Emptied of sin and self may I be.

I would be Thine, and serve Thee forever,  
Filled with Thy Spirit, lost in Thy love;  
Come to my heart, Lord, come with anointing,  
Showers of grace send down from above.



# Ah, That Motley Crew!



Ah, that Crew! The Crew that mans  
That awesome Ship whose voyage spans  
From earth to heaven, the sea of time,  
A chosen Crew, a Ship sublime.

A Crew unlike all crews, aboard  
A Ship unlike all ships; the Lord  
And Captain, standing at the wheel,  
Is Christ Himself. Around Him kneel

The adoring Crew. They'll die, they'll live,  
Their sweat and toil and tears they'll give  
But for the chance to man His Ship  
On this immortal, heavenly trip!

Brave men they are, both young and old;  
By utter loyalty made bold,  
From every nation, come to serve  
With arm and sinew, heart and nerve,

They flee no danger, feel no fear;  
Their faith is firm, their mission clear;  
Their calling and commitment sure,  
Their hearts and motives all are pure

Through calm, through gale, through dreadful night,  
Old sailors, veterans of the fight—  
New sailors, doing all they can—  
They're all but students of the Man

Who guides the Ship. Not men of fame,  
No skilled elite who've earned a name,  
No pompous churchmen in the dress  
Of artificial holiness;

No robes too starched, no minds too great,  
To stoop and lift a fallen mate,  
Or dive into a murky wave  
Some dying sinner's life to save.

Their aristocracy, their pride,  
Their past has all been laid aside,  
Ah, what a Crew! Unlikely Crew,  
Each one unique, yet each one true;

Original, authentic, made  
For his own place, (no parts are played)  
Unswerving from the Pilot's plan,  
Their only Model is that Man!

For them He struggled, suffered, bled,  
Now their last drop of blood they'd shed  
For Him. In this, in this alone  
These varying men are all made one ...

They know their Captain! What a life!  
They are redeemed; no storms or strife  
Can kill their joy. Made free, made new,  
Oh, what a motley, joyous Crew!

Love is the watchword on the decks;  
With love they reach out to the wrecks  
Of other ships around them lost,  
To souls upon the billows tossed.

With hearts as tender as their Lord's  
They meet the foe and draw their swords  
And make the hosts of hell retreat.  
A love that never knows defeat.

They love so much it overflows,  
No greater joy a Crew mate knows  
Then when from billowy depths of sin  
A drowning man is brought safe in,

Finds joy and life forever new,  
And fellowship among the Crew.

—James Troyer  
—Santiago, Costa Rica



*Book review by Dean Taylor*

In the scientific world, mankind has learned ingenious ways to prevent making the same mistakes over and over again. You know what I mean—it's not like scientists are still trying to flap their arms and fly off a cliff or shoot arrows at the moon. They have simply learned through careful and painstaking study that things like that were tried and found to be ridiculous. While employing careful study of the history of trial and error, scientists were able to formulate sensible calculations and make better-informed decisions to determine what works ... and what doesn't. We all know the famous adage, "Those who do not learn their history are doomed to repeat it." The church, however, seems slow to discover that she is not exempt from this simple, inescapable truth.

In his latest book, *The Birth, Life, and Death of the Bohemian Revival*, Mike Atnip traces the roots, growth, and death of a challenging group of Christians that we would benefit knowing a lot more about—the Bohemian Brethren. In these Bohemian churches, we get a glimpse of the inheritors of the great Waldensian tradition. From this movement also sprang forth the seeds that later blossomed into the Hutterite and Moravian movements. But perhaps the factor that should most draw our notice—and demand our attention—is the fact that in this testimony, we see the progress

and demise of a group of radical Christians, not too far removed from our current faith and practice.

If you were to ask the average church history student who started the Protestant reformation, I think most would quickly respond, "Martin Luther!" While I think it would be dishonest to ignore his accomplishments, to think of Luther as originating all Protestant thinking is equally biased. Over a hundred years before Martin Luther ever dreamed about slapping a paper on the Wittenberg door, the church in Bohemia had already successfully broken with Rome and had begun to align their doctrine more closely with the Scriptures and the early church. In his book, Mike Atnip surveys the Bohemian Christians, highlighting such men as John Huss, Peter Chelcicky, Rokycana, John Amos Comenius, and others. But what is most provoking about the book is the historical record it gives us of the familiar ebb and flow of church growth and compromise, and the real-life glimpse at how staggering the consequences can be. The question I kept asking myself throughout the book was this: "Where am I in this picture?

The  
Birth,  
Life,  
and  
Death  
of the Bohemian  
Revival



Am I experiencing growth? Am I in the midst of a compromise? Or, am I dying?"

Mike begins the book by discussing a few of the sparks that led to the Bohemian revival. Starting with Peter Waldo,

Mike traces the movements that continued to catch fire in these Bohemian hills. Revival came when committed men took the Bible, looked at the words of Jesus, and put them into practice. Unfortunately, in time most of these zealous groups cooled off. However, a remnant always continued. Piercing through the next few centuries with a few burning and shining lights, Mike eventually crescendos to one of the main figures of the Bohemian movement—John Huss.

John Huss, awakened by Lollard evangelists influenced by John Wycliffe, started to preach in the common language of the Bohemian people. Huss spoke out against the immorality of the Roman Catholic clergy and challenged the church with many reforms. Predictably, Huss was eventually burned at the stake. But just like the times of the early church, the blood of the martyr became the seed of the church. Quoting Huss, Mike wrote:

Shortly before the flames were lit, John told them, “Today you roast a live goose”—the name Huss meant goose in Bohemian—“but within 100 years there will arise a swan that you will not be able to catch nor harm.” The flame was lit, and when it had done its duty, John’s ashes were thrown into the nearby river. In the place of his execution, a dead mule was buried: supposedly to convince any passersby that all arch-heretics stink pretty bad after they die.

Unfortunately, after the death of John Huss, his fellow countrymen stirred up a massive uprising. Military leaders like John Zizka, who were zealous with what they believed were important Protestant doctrines (like giving the communion cup to the laity), led armed revolts against Rome. Collectively, they came to be called the “Hussites.” However, just when it would seem that the revival was lost on political agendas, Mike tells us of another notable figure of the time—Peter Chelcicky. Mike, speaking of Chelcicky, writes:

Peter Chelcicky was one of the few South Bohemians who stuck to their earlier resolve to practice the Sermon on the Mount. His sword was a pen, which he used extensively in his later years, authoring over 50 books and tracts. ... As one-eyed, fiery John Zizka and Nicholas of Hussinec declared at Prague that the time had come for the faithful to take up arms in their own defense, Peter Chelcicky was present at the

debate, and contended that for Christians, war was a crime. “What is war?” he asked. “It is a breach of the laws of God! All soldiers are violent men, murderers, a godless mob!”

This revolution challenged all the prevalent political and religious attitudes of the day. Two main groups emerged from this time period. Peter Chelcicky collected one dedicated group of believers, zealous to put the Sermon on the Mount into practice. They eventually became known as the *Unitas Fratrum* (United Brethren). Conversely, the Hussites broke into two violent factions, even going to war against each other. When the one faction basically annihilated the other, the surviving Hussite group became the state church of Bohemia, which is in the modern Czech Republic.

After Peter Chelcicky’s death, a man named Gregory led the small, remaining group of the brethren to an abandoned village named Kunvald. Using the Sermon on the Mount as their creed, a community was birthed that became an oasis of radical Christian living. Mike writes about them, saying:

In their “brotherly agreement,” they decided not to testify in court, swear oaths, do civil service of any kind, manage inns, or get involved in buying or selling anything more than the bare necessities of life. They also decided that no one among them could hold worldly rank or privilege. No one should make dice, attend or work in a theater, paint pictures or play music for a living, go to fairs or celebrations of feast days, take interest on money, or be involved

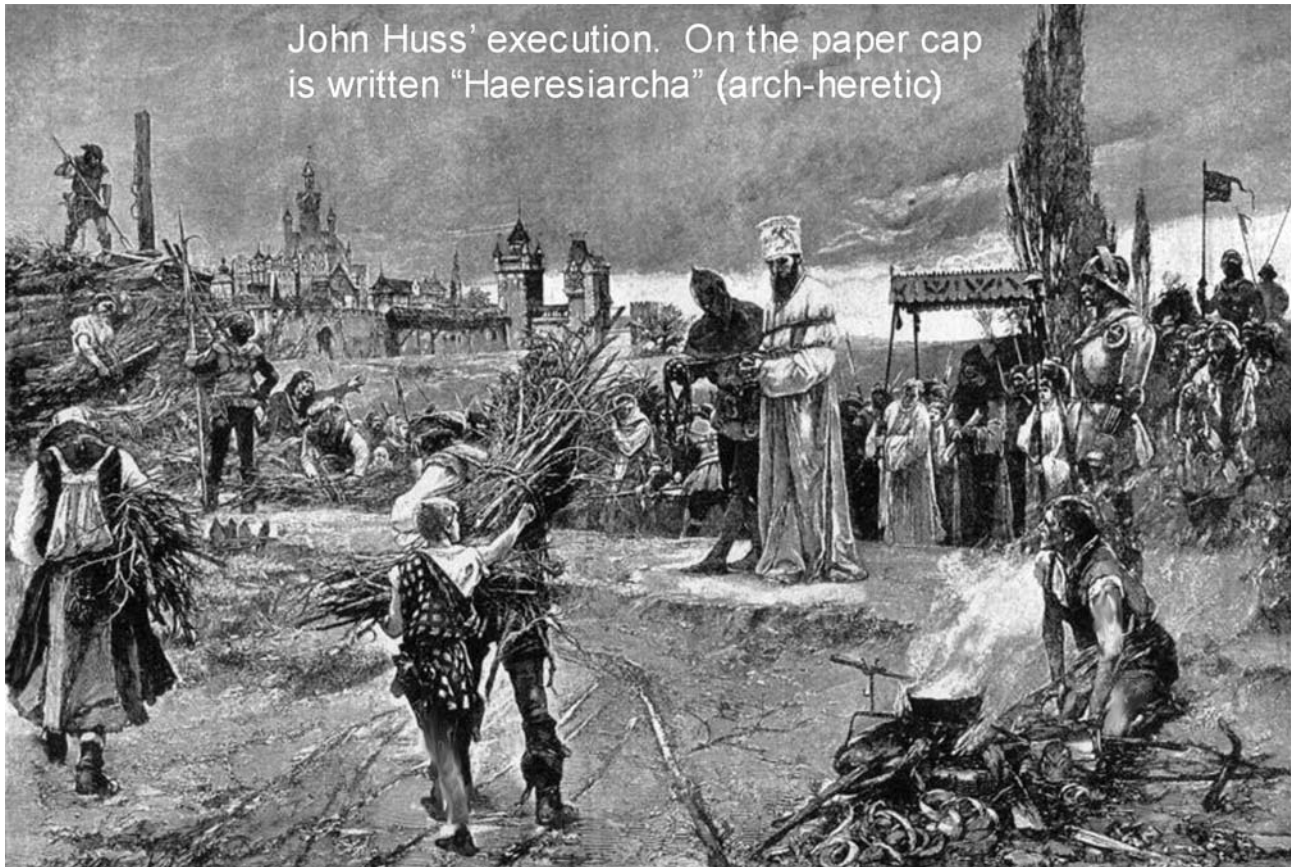
with astrology, witchcraft, or alchemy. A very modest type of gray and white dress was agreed on, and all were expected to take part in daily prayers and the care of the sick. Every member of the Brotherhood was, of course, most strictly forbidden to participate in the Government through the acceptance of any post, either in the general or communal departments, or in military service, as well as by any appeal or complaint to the Government. Complete equality was to prevail in the community; there were to be no poor and no rich. Before being admitted to the community, every wealthy person or member of a privileged class had to relinquish his property and his privileges. No “Brother” was to engage in trading,



**Peter Waldo, pictured above, died in South Bohemia, having been chased there by persecution. For several centuries the Waldensians had held a torch of light in Europe. But it was dying out when the Bohemian revival occurred.**



John Huss' execution. On the paper cap is written "Haeresiarcha" (arch-heretic)



John Huss began church reforms in Bohemia, but was killed before they were totally accomplished. After his death, the Bohemians had to decide whether to fight with the sword or follow Jesus. Sadly, only a small minority chose the latter. But this little faithful group experienced a revival of primitive Christianity.

lend money on interest, or keep an inn. On the other hand, the rules of the fraternity made it obligatory on each member to assist any Brother who might be in want. To live, work, and suffer in silence were the sole duties imposed upon the pious Christian. Although private proprietorship and the separate family were not prohibited, celibacy was regarded as a better state than that of marriage. The unmarried members lived in brother-houses and sister-houses, where they worked and shared their lives.

You will have to read the book to see what an influence this little group of believers had on those around them. However, one of the primary motivations Bro. Mike had in writing the book was to reveal what can happen to these radical groups over time. Because in this case—as in so many other radical movements—as the community grew, so did the challenges. Compromise after compromise, Mike traces how small changes eventually yielded big consequences—starting with issues like whether the local nobility could join the community and keep their estates, or even whether the brethren should participate in the local civil government.

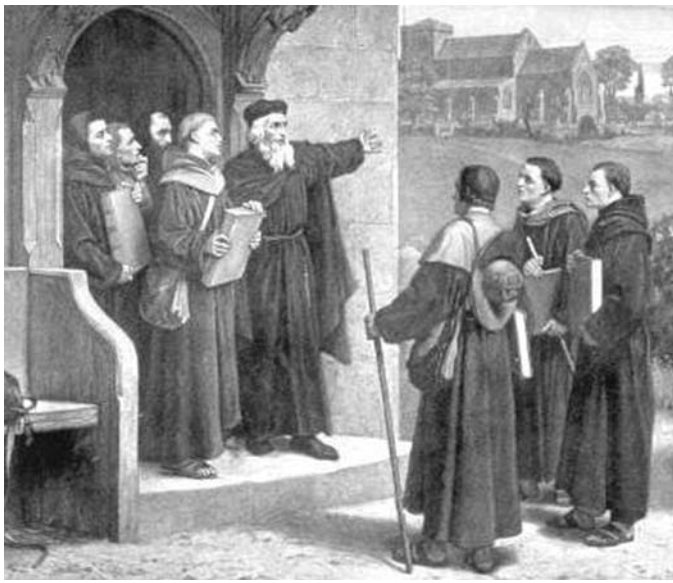
The movement eventually split. The majority sided with the land barons and civil government, desiring to go more into mainstream. A small remnant of the original group remained faithful.

Mike then shows us what eventually happened to the two groups. The compromising “big group” eventually joined with the state, took up the sword, and sought unity with the Hussites. Together with the Hussites, they became similar to the state-church Lutherans of Germany.

The remnant group remained faithful, establishing new communities throughout Bohemia and Moravia, continued to evangelize, and set up a printing press. They printed, among other things, Peter Chelcicky’s writings. Bro. Mike includes an impressive quote taken from a tract written from the “little group” to the “big group” over 500 years ago. Its timeless message is prophetic. Below is a section of that quote:

Throughout the centuries, the true Christian faith has been held by only a small minority of those who say they believe. Whenever the church grew very large, the seed of true faith disappeared among them, but

God preserves it among the faithful few. It is better to be on the right path with the chosen few than on the wrong path with the majority. It was to the small flock that Christ's words of comfort were directed, and when the great church fell away in the time of Constantine, it was only a few—the Waldensians—



Lollard evangelists, like those pictured above preparing to go forth, were one of the sparks of the Bohemian revival. Out of the Bohemian revival came the Moravian Brethren, who sent missionaries to many parts of the globe.

who stayed with the Truth. But now even they have departed from their former teachings. Every movement, even though God begins it, suffers decline and corruption with time, because of the enemy's wickedness. Now that is happening to the Unity of Brothers. Those looking on can see, by comparing the Unity to what it used to be, that what began in the Spirit is ending in the flesh. This is happening because the brothers wanted to avoid persecution and win large numbers of people into the church who were unwilling to make the sacrifices formerly demanded for entry into the brotherhood. Every word of Christ means exactly what it says, and He will in the end accept only those who accept His teaching. Heaven and earth will pass away before the least of His words.

I love history books, but what I liked most about this history book was that the author wrote it in such a way as to leave us with a challenge. At the end of the book, Mike reviews the ups and downs of these movements, and then turns and holds up a mirror to us. He leaves us with four searching questions.

- Lesson 1 - Drift. How do we respond to drift that happens in our movement?
- Lesson 2 - Applications to Principles. In what way did the early phase of these zealous movements make practical application to biblical principles? What affect did losing these applications have on the communities?
- Lesson 3 - Protestantism. Did the Protestant reformation help the Bohemian revival, or hinder it further?
- Lesson 4 - Is there hope? Can God still raise up a people to live like Jesus taught?

Summing up my appeal to you to read this book, on the back cover Bro. Mike gives us an excellent quote from Peter Chelcicky:

We are like people who have come to a house that has been burnt down and try to find the original foundations. This is the more difficult in that the ruins are grown over with all sorts of undergrowths, and many think that these undergrowths are the foundations and say, "This is the foundation" ... This makes the search more difficult, for if all said, "The old foundation has been lost among the ruins," then many would begin to dig and search for it and to really begin a true work of building upon it; as Nehemiah and Zerubbabel did. It is much more difficult now to restore the spiritual ruins—so long fallen down—and get back to the former state, for which no other foundation can be laid than Jesus Christ, from whom the many have wandered away and turned to other gods and made foundations of them."

Bro. Mike closes the back cover with his friendly invitation ... "Join me in an eye-opening trip back in time to see how Peter Chelcicky and others of his age dug deep, seeking the Living Christ."

If you have a heart for the direction of the church, or if you have a burden for a true expression of Christ to be represented here on the earth today, this book is a "must read." ~

*The Birth, Life, and Death of the Bohemian Revival* can be read online or downloaded as a pdf file at [www.PrimitiveChristianity.org](http://www.PrimitiveChristianity.org)

Printed copies are available from the author, who can be reached at Mike Atnip, PO Box 292, Ephrata, PA, 17522.

Printed copies are also available from Scroll Publishing at <http://www.scrollpublishing.com/store/more-Bohemian-Revival.html> or by writing Scroll Publishing, PO Box 122, Amberson, PA 17210, or by calling (717) 349-7033.



of parent that thought it was good to expose your children to as much as you could, as long as they were interested. If he had said he wanted to go to a Hindu temple or a Muslim mosque, I would have taken him.

Through a series of moves, we ended up in Washington (State). At this point, I began to seriously seek and follow the Lord and read His word. I ignored the Old Testament at first and headed straight to the Gospels. As I read them, I noticed that it seemed like many of the teachings of Christ were being ignored or twisted. I was confused as to why the church we were visiting would go directly against things Jesus said. I kept reading right through the New Testament and found several other things that just did not seem to add up. I kept my mind and heart open.

My first time through the Gospels, I came to Jesus' teachings on divorce and remarriage in Matthew 5. My heart jumped and felt like it stopped for a second. I remember thinking, "Surely it does not mean what it seems to mean? I must be missing something." I resolved to continue reading, but kept those words in my heart. Along came Matthew chapter 19 ... and with that, another prick in my heart. Then, of course, there was Mark 10 and Luke 16. Each time I read a new passage about divorce and remarriage, I felt so condemned and torn. I prayed for the Lord to help me understand.

I also prayed that He would show me if I was missing something; once again, I did not want to believe what it seemed to mean ... and why would I? My life was going along just fine the way it was: a loving husband, a good home, plenty of food to eat, and so on. I continued to read and got to Romans 7 where Paul wrote about how a woman is married to her husband as long as he is alive ... and if she marries someone else while he is still living, she is in adultery with that person. That's very clear, and I was feeling more condemned than ever; even still, I hoped and prayed I was missing something. Next was Romans 8:1 ... a verse I had heard many times already in the Baptist church, only it was longer than I remembered. Previously I had only heard the first part of it quoted: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." Isn't that wonderful?! Well, I thought it was until I read the rest of the verse: "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

There was my answer right there. I was feeling condemned because I was walking after the flesh instead of the

Spirit. Of course, I still did not want to believe it; I still held on and hoped I was missing something. I got to 1 Corinthians 7 and read more about what the Bible teaches; in verses 10 and 11 the Lord is very clear that if a woman separates from her husband, she is to remain single or else be reconciled to her husband. Verse 39 reiterates what was already said before about a woman being bound to her husband as long as he is living. I thought maybe there was a 'loophole' in the middle of the chapter. However, when comparing it to the rest of the scriptures I had already read, it did not add up. I would have liked to believe that "not under bondage" meant I was free to remarry, but that's not what

it really says. Even after all of that—and the verses about fornicators and adulterers not being admitted into heaven—I denied it all and tried my best to live my life as a "good Christian." I tried really hard to convince myself that since I was not a Christian when I got divorced and remarried, I was "washed in the blood" ... God forgot about my past and saw me as I was right then. That all sounded good, but it still did not add up.

I continued to read the New Testament; each time I read it, I saw new truths. Also, each time I read through it, I was more sure than ever that I was not living according to God's word. I noticed how in Matthew 19 and Mark 10, Jesus pointed the Pharisees back to the beginning. When

a man marries a woman, they are no more two, but one. This made it clear to me why a woman is married to her husband as long as he lives ... because as long as he is alive, they are still one flesh with each other. The only thing that separates you from your flesh is death. I once heard someone put it this way—it's like taking two balls of clay, one red and one blue, and mixing them together. You now have one ball of purple clay; they are no more two, but one. Now try to separate the blue from the red. You cannot.

Through all these struggles, Bobby was right there helping me and being so loving and patient. He was not a Christian, but he was such an encouragement to me. He told me once that he was not going to stand between God and me. At first, I hated that response. It seemed to me that it would have just been "easier" if he got mad, called me crazy, and kicked me out. However, God knew best; I needed to accept this, not take the easy way out.

Not too long after that, I was online and found a "What kind of denomination are you?" quiz. Looking back now, that sounds really silly, and I would not recommend trying to fit a denomination into your beliefs! But I answered the

It's like taking two balls of clay, one red and one blue, and mixing them together. You now have one ball of purple clay; they are no more two, but one. Now try to separate the blue from the red. You cannot.



questions and anxiously awaited the answer ... “Anabaptist.”

I did some research, since I had no idea what an “Anabaptist” was. Their history caught my attention ... a group that was actually being persecuted for obeying the teachings of Christ and willing to die for it.

An online research led me to a contact who pointed us to conservative Anabaptist congregations, but throughout this whole time, I was constantly struggling with my marital state. I tried my best to ignore what I knew the Lord was asking me to do, however it was to no avail. Bobby remained patient and supportive. Church problems eventually caused me to stop attending church for a while.

Sometime during the beginning of the summer of 2008, I was finally ready to step out in faith and follow the Lord. I had counted the costs for about three years or

**I had counted the costs for about three years or so, and knew that I must give up all that I had to be His disciple. That included Bobby.**

so, and knew that I must be willing to give up all that I had to be His disciple. Lu. 14 That included Bobby.

We split up, but did not tell anyone for months. In times past when I thought I was ready to take that step, I’d start talking to people and get so confused. It didn’t matter if they agreed or disagreed; it all confused me. This time I knew I had to keep it between Bobby, the Lord, and me. When I finally did start letting others know, most assumed it was “my church” that convinced me to take the path I was set to take. However, I had not been going to a church for two years or so at that point. I was just reading the Bible and earnestly seeking the TRUTH, no matter the cost.

We now attend the Church of Monett, in Monett, MO. I’ll just say that I’ve never met a church group quite like this—totally dedicated to serving the Lord and “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” Also, their heart for the lost is something I’ve never experienced before in any group we were ever a part of. They are willing to travel to the other side of the world if that’s what it takes to connect with those who are truly seeking and trying to follow the Lord on this narrow path He has given us to follow. ~

*The above was extracted from Joanne’s testimony at: <http://fewtherebethatfindit.blogspot.com/2010/05/my-journey.html>*

### *What is the Gospel? - Cont. from page 9*

Would the wife feel loved if she knew her husband was faithful to her only because she kept a shotgun behind the door, with the threat to use it if he dare not love her?

## Conclusion

Yes, the gospel has been announced, the “good news.” Jehovah has come to earth to reign over men once again! God’s anointed Prophet, Priest, and King has come, and He has set up a kingdom—an “alternative society” with a totally different set of values—in this wicked world. Whosoever will may enter and be freed from the bond-



**Man got himself into a pit from which he could not escape.**

age of sin. Satan’s head has been smashed, his authority broken, his days numbered until his final destiny in the eternal flames of hell. Righteousness, peace, joy, honesty, humility, gentleness, kindness, and thankfulness can once more sprout forth from the heart of man, by virtue of love—the Messiah’s lifeblood—transplanted into him.

Man got himself into a real mess; a pit he could not escape from, a disease for which he had no cure. But God has given man grace to escape, and to live out His will once again on planet earth.

What a “good spell”!

Have *you* surrendered to it—believed it?

**Have *you* let the Messiah speak to *you* His law (as the Prophet), reunite *you* to God by enlivening *your* spirit with His Spirit (as the High Priest), and change *your* citizenship to the Kingdom of Heaven (as the King)?**

**Whosoever will may come! ~**

## On March 26, 2010, John Esh and seven other

members of his immediate family went to be with the Lord they loved. Also privileged to go with them was Joel Gingrich. He had just become engaged to Rachel, John's beautiful and vibrant 20-year-old daughter. The others were John's wife, Sadie, his son, Leroy, and Leroy's wife, Naomi, and a baby. Two other single daughters, Rose and Anna, went with them as well. A friend of the family, Ashlie Kramer, was also killed in this horrific crash.

They were on their way to Iowa to attend a friend's wedding when their plans were interrupted by a semi-truck loaded with car parts that crossed the medium strip and hit their 15-passenger van head-on. The truck driver perished when he hit a wall on the side of the road and his cab caught on fire.

John was a minister in their church just west of Burkesville, Kentucky. His family also formed a gospel singing group called *The Eshes*. They were well known and much loved in their "New Order Amish" and conservative "Beachy Amish" churches. But it seemed that John's prevailing burden was for the people of his birth, the "Old Order Amish." He loved them and talked much of the richness of his heritage. But he also had a deep concern that many of them were lost. He longed to do more to help them to the mercy and grace of his Savior.

The following is part of a letter that John wrote some time ago.

-Dave Esh



"Brethren, my heart's desire  
and prayer to God for Israel is ..."

Dear Friends,

Greetings of love in Jesus' name.

I have many regrets. I still love and respect my people (the Amish) even though the system has some flaws and I'm afraid many do not understand the plan of salvation. I encourage those that are still with the Amish to do all they can to help as many of their brothers as possible to true faith in Christ and the cross, with mercy from God and forgiveness of sins. Please, Christian Amish, help your brethren to a strong personal commitment, prayer life, family devotions and reading the Bible in a language they can understand. Prevail in prayer for them; do what you can; share your faith. Win their hearts fully to faith in Christ. Don't try to pull them out of the Amish. God can take care of any necessary changes that need to be made, but work to have them born into the family of God. If I can do anything to help, I want to. My heart burns for the salvation of my own people, especially those that are my flesh and blood.

I appreciate many things about my upbringing and about Amish church life. The close communities, much interaction, discipline in many ways, learning to work, and the strong teaching on humility. The life-style made it needful to be more self-sufficient: large families, making our own clothes, growing our own food, the family table three times a day. Other churches also have these things to a certain extent, more or less, but the Amish are fairly constant with them, more so than most other groups.

It is possible to have all these things, though, and still be proud at heart, without saving faith, and with a heart that is spotted with sin, unwashed in the blood of Christ, without true victory, and not fully aware of the need, not knowing how to find perfect peace and rest for the soul. Being "Amish" will not save, but Jesus Christ will, if we give ourselves fully to Him.

Oh, please, please, there is a way. We still fail many times, but we know where the door is and where to find mercy. Please have your self-will broken, call on God through Jesus Christ for washing, for cleansing, for love, and forgiveness. Seek to lose confidence in your own ability, but find confidence in Christ. Assure your hearts because of Him. It is the only way. We only have a little time left. God wants to break us; will you allow Him? He wants to get rid of our self-life; will you lay it down? God wants to give us peace through Jesus Christ. Will you receive it? He wants our all or none. He wants our heart, our commitment, our love, our obedience. Are you willing to fully yield? Please do. Where you spend eternity will depend on it.

Oh, how can I, needy as I am, continue to help? How can I show the way and be an example? I need the prayers of those I love. Brethren, pray for me, and encourage me. I want to help. May the Lord be with all those that are concerned.

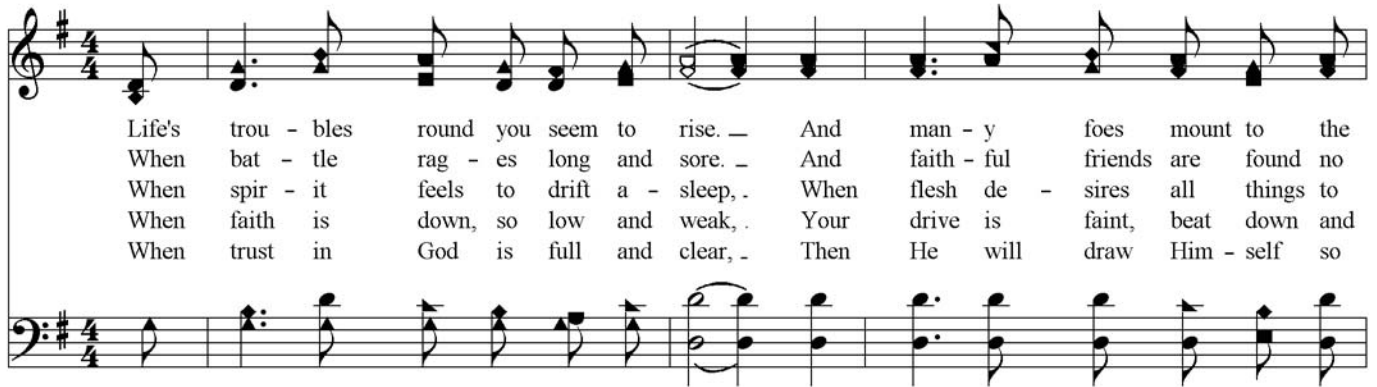
-John Esh

# GOD'S PEOPLE KEEP SINGING

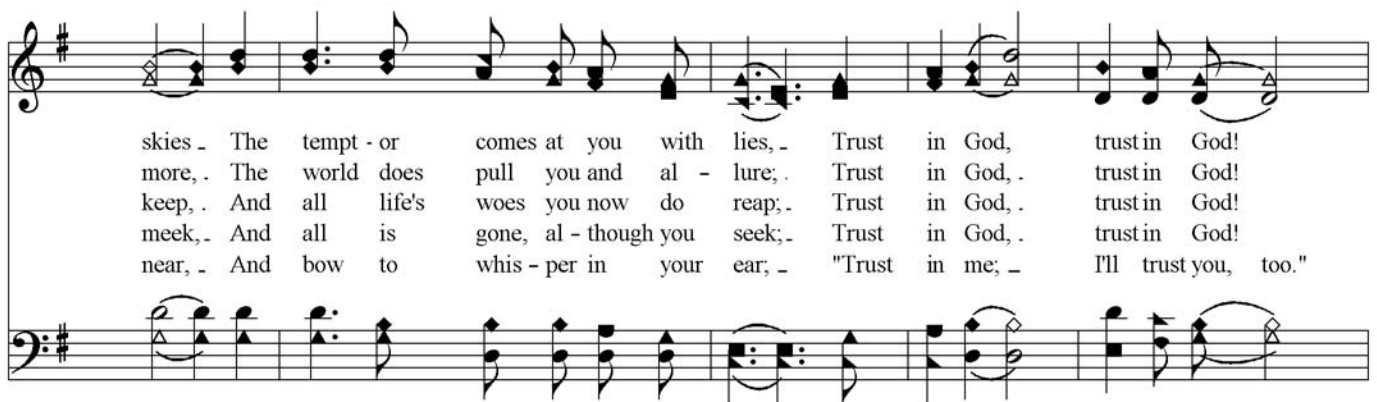
## Trust in God

Jeremiah Stump - 2010 (1994 - )

Anon.



Life's trou - bles round you seem to rise. — And man - y foes mount to the  
When bat - tle rag - es long and sore. — And faith - ful friends are found no  
When spir - it feels to drift a - sleep, — When flesh de - sires all things to  
When faith is down, so low and weak, — Your drive is faint, beat down and  
When trust in God is full and clear, — Then He will draw Him - self so



skies - The tempt - or comes at you with lies, — Trust in God, trust in God!  
more, — The world does pull you and al - lure; — Trust in God, trust in God!  
keep, — And all life's woes you now do reap; — Trust in God, trust in God!  
meek, — And all is gone, al - though you seek; — Trust in God, trust in God!  
near, — And bow to whis - per in your ear; — "Trust in me; — I'll trust you, too."

Jeremiah Stump lives near Denver, PA with his parents Dean and Vera Stump and his six siblings. Concerning the birth of this song (which was originally written as a poem, but was set to music with some minor changes to the wording), Jeremiah writes:

*At the time, our church was going through some difficulties, and I was feeling caught in the midst of it, often feeling confused by the different opinions and ideas. Although discouraged, these words came out, as I knew I could fall back on an all-knowing, unfailing Father, and fully trust in God.*

Yes, God's people keep singing in the middle of their trials!





The Heartbeat of

# The Remnant

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**We defy you, devil, death, and hell;  
For you are overcome!  
Even though flesh and blood are yet my companions,  
Christ has now tied you up and taken all your power!**

-Hans van Bilach, *Ausbund* #48

