

The Remnant

Ye languid, parched, and thirsty souls,
Why storm ye not the water holes
For draughts of truth—refreshing, clear?
What makes you shy away in fear?

The archers shoot their fiendish darts
That puncture limbs and poison hearts.
They never mourn, when one falls dead,
The empty vessel on his head.

Come forth with faith! Take up this Sword
Still offered by our Warrior Lord.
Beneath His banner, charge the foe;
And march where you have right to go!

-Darletta F. Martin



The Remnant

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Charity Ministries
400 W. Main St. Ste 1
Ephrata, PA 17522

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A "Thank You" to all who have sent in material for publication or have pointed us toward good materials. We are always looking for good solid articles, either current or from the past. Please send them to the address at the left. Articles or poetry already digitized is easier for us, but do not let that stop anyone from contributing. A handwritten article is still gladly accepted! ~The editors

From the Editor

This may seem hard to believe, but just this month the USA secured a huge, \$60 billion military contract with Saudi Arabia, with a shopping list that included the following: 84 F-15 fighter jets, 72 tactical Black Hawk helicopters, 70 Apache attack helicopters, upgrade packages on 70 used F-15s, as well as other military supplies. One would think that Saudi Arabia would be eternally grateful for the purchase.

However, my question is this: In a country that still does not have one single legalized church, and in a country that even maintains certain highways where non-Muslims are not even allowed to drive, I ask, was this really a good idea? I'm sure the purchase is bound to make a handful of Americans very rich, but at what cost?



In the 1940s, to combat Hitler, the USA—including US “Christians”—threw in their lot with Stalin and all of Soviet Russia. Joining with evil to stop evil is the way of the world. History now reveals that the evil committed by Stalin far exceeded the damage done by Hitler. Did we learn from our mistakes?

Well, let's take a look at our history a little after that. In the 1980s, one of the biggest threats to US interest and security was the nation of Iran. Radical Muslims had taken over the country of Iran, and this made the US—and other western countries—very nervous. The world has an old tactic it likes to employ at such times: “my enemy's enemy is my friend.” Well, the US put this old tactic into practice in a dangerous way. Just like the mistake made during WWII, when the US joined forces with Russia to defeat Hitler, in the 1980s the US found out that Iran's mortal enemy was Iraq. Consequently, the US began to substantially support Iraq's war efforts against Iran. The Reagan administration actually gave Saddam Hussein roughly \$40 billion in military aid to fight Iran. The US also gave Saddam Hussein billions of dollars to keep him from forming a strong alliance with the Soviets. In the

course of these events, Iraq became “the third-largest recipient of US assistance in the world.”

So what happened? I think most everyone knows that the billions of dollars given to build up Iraq and Saddam Hussein ended up being a really bad idea. To this day, over a trillion dollars have been spent in military spending to undo that mistake, and this does not take into account the damage and cost to Iraq to blow it to pieces and then try to rebuild it—all to undo a mistake.

But did we learn? Why don't we ever learn that all our actions have consequences? Evil seeds produce evil fruit. Solomon said in the book of Proverbs that, “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.” Pr. 14:12

And what about us? I think that this issue of *The Heartbeat of the Remnant* is a challenging one. Several articles this month probe deeply into our life, and force us to look at the consequences of our decisions. Is our faith real; is it demonstrating Christ and producing spiritual fruit? The first article by Pablo Yoder tells us the story of a man who has had to suffer much from the consequences of his decisions, but also demonstrates the redeeming power of how God can use someone like Pablo when they yield themselves to His Word.

Several other articles deal with taking up our cross, a theme that is silently passed over too much in our day. In previous issues, it was normal to try to focus the whole issue around one theme. Although we no longer strive for that goal, we could easily theme this issue to “The heartbeat of the remnant ... is to take up the cross of Christ.”

Mike Atnip's article on the “Romans Road” takes a look at some common misconceptions about the book of Romans, and shows how God wants to work a beautiful Christian walk through us all, to glorify Him. And then we have included a long article directed at youth, but profitable for all.

This issue is a “meaty” one. The articles are definitely more “heavy” overall than some past issues have been. We could apologize for that, but we feel no need to apologize for striving for maturity and depth. Our desire is captured by the poem on the cover. This poem was written from a meditation based upon Judges 5:11, “They that are delivered from the noise of archers in the places of drawing water ...” Yes, the enemy's archers are near the watering holes of God's Word and prayer, with a pointed design to chase off any who would drink of the refreshing water. We trust this issue of *The Heartbeat of the Remnant* will encourage you to “march where you have right to go”: the right to drink in the deep things of God! ~



Rosa's Bible

Pablo Yoder

Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again.
Luke 6:30

"I'd like to have a Bible ..."

What sweet words for a missionary to hear!

But a bit of irony mixed itself into the drama on this occasion. The man asking for the Bible wanted a specific Bible, the one he had seen upstairs on the desk, the one with the black zipper. And that was Rosa Shrock's personal Bible.

Her husband Tim kindly pointed to another Bible lying on a nearby table. "That's my wife's Bible upstairs, but you can have this one. Or if you'd like, Pablo has new ones at his house."

"No," the man insisted, "I want that one upstairs. Ask your wife if I can have it."

"Rosa," Tim called, "may he have your Bible?"

"Yes," was Rosa's kind reply, "he may have it."

Tim fetched the Bible and was ready to hand it over when the man suddenly set forth a condition: "I want to know if your wife is giving her Bible because she really wants to, or if she feels obligated. If she is not really willing, I will not take it."

"Rosa," Tim asked his wife, "do you give your Bible willingly?"

"Sure! He can take it!"

Does that sound like the sweet little missionary wife's natural response to a poor beggar who happened to take a liking to her black-zippered Bible? Well, the man asking for the Bible wasn't exactly a beggar. In fact, he was an gun-toting robber!

The episode began that fateful evening when several men showed up at Pablo Yoder's house asking for food ... and money. After giving them several pounds of cheese and some bread and all the money in the house, the robbers demanded to go to their neighbor Tim Shrock and make a collection there. After gathering his money and picking through his things—and taking the black Bible—they returned to Pablo's house. Here they threatened to kidnap Tim if more money was not given. Pablo and Tim explained that they didn't have any more money at the house, and that mission policy was to never pay a ransom.¹ Somewhat frustrated, they searched Pablo's house. Then they left. But not before Pablo had served them some hot coffee and Rosa had contributed a freshly-baked cake.

Thus ended Pablo's fourteenth robbery.

Not quite ...

The story of that donated Bible did NOT end there. More than a decade passed before the rest of the story came to light. Pablo recently wrote the following:

I am still almost trembling ... my heart has swelled to dangerous proportions ... and my spirit soars!

I just got finished having a two-hour interview with one of our worst Kusulí² robbers. He was converted a year ago, and agreed to give me his testimony for the upcoming book. He even agrees that I use his name openly in the book, because he has nothing to hide anymore since he is a Christian. Now I know his name is Alexis Castellón Lopez. He is an ex-murderer, kidnapper, and big-time assaulter. He's a man we have prayed for, for years. Thirteen years to be exact.

He is the robber that asked for Rosa's Bible the night that we were supposed to be kidnapped. Omar, the robber leader needed money to go to the US as a wetback and planned to kidnap foreigners until he had enough dough. (The same group kidnapped a European Union man two weeks later, and this man's bosom friend was shot and killed. Read the story called "Lost Opportunities" in the book *Angels in the Night*. Alexis was the tall, skinny robber that was the spokesman that whole evening.) When he asked for the Bible, he made it clear that it had to be a gift. If it was not given gladly, he would not take it. Rosa emptied out her personal things and gave it to him gladly. Tim put his hand on his shoulder and witnessed to him and told him that the Bible has power to save. He answered, "I am not a Christian now, but someday I just might be one."

The night of this robbery, Alexis admits that something held him back. He was the fearless type that assaulted at the drop of a hat. But that night, as he approached our house,

¹ This is the policy of many missions. If a missionary is kidnapped and a ransom is paid to release him/her, it is very likely that it will be a continuous thing; an easy source of income for the kidnappers whenever they need more funds. But if the first one is denied his demand, they will be discouraged from trying it again.

² Kusulí, Nicaragua, where Pablo lived when the robbery occurred.

AK machine gun in hand, fear gripped him. Though he didn't know us, the leader of the band did and had warned the bandits, "We are going to get dollars from them gringos [white foreigners]. But no one lift a finger against them. They are God's people."

Alexis remembered those words and backed off. He went back to the leader and begged to drop the robbery. He didn't know what held him back, but admits that it was mostly fear. The leader rebuked and ridiculed him, so he tried again. Just as he stepped out from behind our *rancho* to yell for me to open up the house, fear hit him again. He says that he looked up into the starry heavens and his chest was tight and he felt as if he couldn't breathe. But he forced himself to yell. And our fourteenth robbery was under way.

So near they didn't hit us that night! But since I know what I do now, I praise the Lord that they did. If not, Rosa's Bible would never found its way into the awful "Perrera"!

Two months later this man was caught and stuck in jail. He carried the Bible with him to the "Perrera" (Dog cage) jail in Matagalpa. There, the Bible was used mightily by God to save souls. Though this man himself was not converted during that time, God used the Bible in a mighty way. In the two months and 23 days he was there, 47 men were converted in his cell alone. The Bible was passed from cell to cell, and every day you could hear someone preaching with it. He tells how some extremely wicked men were converted during that time. (I will save these testimonies for the upcoming book!)

When Alexis left the jail, the cell mates begged him to leave the Bible with them. By then the third converted man was using it to preach to his cell mates. So he left the Bible, and the saga of the Book goes on, and only God knows what all has happened since, or where that anointed Bible ended up.

Especially Rosa prayed for weeks and months and years for this Bible. (We all did.) That's why this Bible was especially anointed. It was given as a gift to a robber during intense suffering and went out bathed in prayer.

Alexis hit us the second time because two of his buddies asked him to go back with them. Drugged and desperate, they came back for cash to buy drugs. At one point in the robbery, he asked me to open the bedroom where the family was hiding. He wanted to see a typewriter that I had in that room. For the first time, he saw my family. He says that the sacred scene hit him so hard that he wanted the robbery over with fast. Minutes later they were gone.

Euni [Pablo's wife] and the children sitting there on the bed did the job. We remember that he had rudely shown the flashlight into the family's faces. The other robber didn't. But when

he saw my wife and children, sitting there, heads bowed in fear and reverence, it struck him to the core. He went home and the next day, even as a sinner, he knelt down and begged God for forgiveness. He asked God to please not punish him for what he had done. And brethren, according to the rest of the stories in this upcoming book, that's probably the reason he is alive today. That, and because God knew that he would be converted and that his testimony would be useful to save more souls!

At the end of the interview I told this man that I had forgiven him thirteen years ago. But I wanted to do two things to prove to him that I was genuine. I gave him a hug, and we wept in each other's arms. Then I gave him a money gift. That brought a fresh set of tears from him. He in turn, asked my wife and me for forgiveness in the Name that is above all names. ~

This story and others will appear in Pablo's upcoming book, *The Price of Rejection*. This article contains copyrighted content, used by permission.



Pablo (left) gives the man who terrorized his family a tearful hug.

Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again. Lu. 6:38

Did Jesus Do It All On the Cross?

An early Anabaptist tract about Christ “doing enough”



Introduction

In the previous issue, we printed the tract on “have to” vs. “want to” obedience. The following tract was usually bound in the same Anabaptist books with the other one, and since the writing style is so similar, it is assumed both are by the same author. Michael Sattler, who probably penned the Schleithem Confession, is suspected to have written them, but they are unsigned, probably due to persecution to anyone whose name appeared as author of an Anabaptist tract.

The topic of this tract, as the previous one, is obedience. But this time the author does not deal with what kind of obedience we render, but rather if obedience is even necessary. The context is the Protestant Reformation, and the common—but mistaken—view held by some Protestants that “Jesus did it all on the cross; we only have to accept His perfect obedience to be saved.” This tract argues that Christ’s work is *not* finished until Christ has brought the believer to the cross with Him, and Christ is reigning in the heart of the believer. After all, a crucified Christ living in the heart of an uncrucified believer is an impossibility!

This version is a slightly more “free” translation than the more “scholarly” translations that others have made of the tract, but the original German text was consulted to keep it faithful to the author’s designs. Since the Scripture quotations are from an early German Bible (most likely the “Froschauer Bibel,” the tract was probably written before Luther had finished his translation)—or even just paraphrased by the author—the wording will be a bit different than what we are used to in our KJV. And, since the Froschauer Bibel did not have verse numbering, only the chapters are given in the references. The paragraph divisions, subtitles, footnotes, italics, and bold letters have been added to aid in readability and comprehension.

Keep in mind what the author is trying to bring forth: It takes more than “accepting what Christ did on the cross” to be saved. We must also take up our cross and put self to death. Only when self is on the cross and Christ is reigning as Lord over our entire being is His work finished.

Christ, the mercy seat

Paul says to the Romans in the third chapter, that they are all sinners and come short of the glory which God should have from them. However, without deserving it, they shall be made righteous by His grace, by means of the releasing which Christ accomplished. This is He whom God has foreshown to be a mercy seat, through faith in His blood. He did all this to demonstrate the righteousness which in God’s eyes has value, in that He forgave the sins which happened formerly under the divine patience.

He says; “From which also you are in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.” John the Baptist says in John 1, “Look, that is God’s Lamb, who takes upon himself the sin of the world.” John says in 1 John 2, “And He is the reconciliation for our sins.” Peter says in I Peter 2, “Who offered Himself for our sin on the tree, that we might be without sin.” As the prophet also speaks, in Isaiah 53, “We are made well through His stripes.”

Such statements, I say, and others like them, the scribes¹ interpret as if a person could be saved through Christ, whether he does the works of faith or whether he doesn’t do the works of faith. If it didn’t matter whether a person did any works, why then should Paul say in Romans 2 that God will give to everyone *according to his works*? He clearly says that eternal life shall be given to those who strive after glory, praise, and immortality, with perseverance in good

¹ This is a reference to the Protestants, as will be more clearly shown later in the tract.

works. But to those who are quarrelsome and are not obedient to the truth, but are obedient to the evil, there will come disfavor, wrath, tribulation, and anxiety, yes, upon all the souls of men who do evil.

Some verses about doing good works

Listen to what Paul, Peter, and John are saying in the following verses:

- Romans 2: Not those who hear the Law are righteous, but those who **do** the Law.
- Romans 3: He does not make void the law through faith; rather he establishes it.
- Romans 8: There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, that God did and sent His Son in the form of sinful flesh and through sin condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness which the Law demands might be fulfilled in us who now walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. ... If you live after the flesh, you shall die.
- Galatians 5: In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a **faith which works** by love.
- 1 Corinthians 13: If I had all faith so that I could remove mountains but have not charity,² I am nothing.
- Ephesians 5: For ye know that no whoremonger nor impure person nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words.
- Ephesians 6: For you know that everyone will receive from the Lord that good which he hath **done**.
- 2 Corinthians 5: For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that everyone may receive according to that which he hath **done** with his body, whether it be good or evil.
- Peter says in 1 Peter 1: And since ye call upon the Father, who without regarding the person, judges according to each man's **work**, so pass the time of your pilgrimage with fear.
- 2 Peter 1: And therefore offer, with highest diligence, through your faith, virtue; through virtue, knowledge; through knowledge, moderation; through moderation, patience; through patience, godliness; through godliness, brotherly love; through brotherly love, common love. For if such virtues abound in

Must we never—because of our faith in Him—renounce our supposed possessions and our own selves and suffer for His sake?

you, you shall neither be lazy nor idle in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he who lacks these things is blind and doth grope.

- John says in 1 John 1: If we should say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we would lie and do not the truth.
- 1 John 2: Hereby know we that we do know Him if we keep His commandment. Whoever says that he knows Him, but does not **keep His commandment**, is a liar. Whoever says he is in the light, but hates his brother, is in darkness.
- 1 John 3: Children, let no one deceive you. Whoever **practices righteousness** is righteous, just like He is righteous. But whoever practices sin is of the devil.

He who is born of God sins no more, because His seed remains in him, and he is not able to sin, because he is born of God.

Now let's look at what Christ says:

- Matthew 4: Improve yourselves³, for the kingdom of heaven is come near. He said to Peter and to others: Follow me.
- Matthew 5: Let your light shine for men that they may see your good works and praise your Father in heaven. You ought not to think that I am come to do away with the Law and the Prophets. I did not come to do away with them, but to fulfill them.
- Matthew 7: Therefore whoever hears my discourse and practices it, I will compare him to a prudent man who built his house upon a rock. And then a pelting rain fell and floods came and the winds blew and beat upon the house, but yet it did not fall, because it was founded upon a rock. And whoever hears my word and does not **practice** it is like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand.
- Matthew 10: Whoever confesses me before men, I will confess him before my Father in heaven. Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

What Jesus said about discipleship

Consider now what He says of the good seed which falls into the good earth:

- Matthew 16, Mark 8, Luke 9: If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross upon himself and follow me. For whoever wishes to preserve his life shall lose it, but whoever

² Note that the difference between love and charity is that charity is love in action! If my love is not active (doing good), I am nothing!

³ A literal translation of the Froschauer Bibel, for "repent ye" (besserend euch).

What is the “cross of Christ”?

The cross of Christ is a figurative speech, borrowed from the outward tree, or wooden cross, on which Christ submitted to the will of God, in permitting Him to suffer death at the hands of evil men. The cross mystical is that divine grace and power which crosses the carnal wills of men, and gives a contradiction to their corrupt affections, and that constantly opposes itself to the inordinate and fleshly appetite of their minds, and so may be justly termed the instrument of man’s wholly dying to the world, and being made conformable to the will of God.

—Taken from “No Cross, No Crown,” by William Penn

(The following picture helps to illustrate the point: Whenever our will “crosses” God’s will, we have a situation in which we need to put our will to death.)



Our will
God's will

Only after our will is killed can God take His will and use it to guide us to heaven!

loses his life for my sake will find it.

- Matthew 16: For it shall come to pass that the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father, with His angels and then will He repay each one according to his works.
- In Luke 10, Christ tells the scribe that he should love God with his whole heart and his neighbor as himself; thus would he live.
- Luke 13: Strive that ye may enter through the narrow door.
- Luke 14: If anyone come to me and hate not his father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, and also his own life, he cannot be my disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.
- John 13: I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. A new commandment give I unto you, that you love one another as I have loved you. So shall all men know that you are my disciples if you have love among yourselves.

Do we have to actually follow Jesus?

Further, as Christ therefore has suffered for us (He did not have anywhere he could lay His head, Matthew 8) must we never—because of our faith in Him—renounce our sup-

posed possessions and our own selves and suffer for His sake? If not, why did Jesus say the following to His disciples:

- Matthew 19 (to the young man who asked him how he might be saved): If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.
- It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.
- Luke 5 to Peter and Andrew (as was said above), “Follow me”? And to Matthew, “Follow Me”?

Did not Zacchaeus say in Luke 19, after he came to know the poor Jesus and had received Him, “Behold, the half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone I will restore fourfold”?

If we did not need to renounce our possessions and self, it would then be the case that Christ had lied when He says in Matthew 6, “You cannot serve God and mammon.” And that which Luke writes in Acts 2 about the upright Christian church which was once at Jerusalem would not be true: “But those who believed were together and had all things common.” Yes, the article of the Christian faith which says “A communion of the saints” would also be untrue.⁴

⁴ A reference to the “Apostles’ Creed.” But the German word “gemeinschaft” is used, which the author probably intended in the sense of “community” or “sharing.”

Tell me, why then does Jesus say in Mark 8, “Whoever wishes to come after me, let him deny himself, take his cross upon himself and follow me?” And, “whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it.” Why does He say in Matthew 5, “Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake,” and “blessed are ye when men revile you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you for my sake”?

Consider also Matthew 10 and John 15: “The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his Lord.” “It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord.” John 16: “They will put you in the ban.” “The time cometh that whoever kills you will think that he is doing God a service therein. Verily, verily, I say to you, You shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice.” Does not Peter also say in 1 Peter 2, “For you were called to this: because Christ also suffered for us, and left us an example, that you should **follow** His footsteps.

Suffering with Jesus

Yea indeed, if Christ therefore did enough by his sufferings which He suffered at Jerusalem, and nothing was left uncompleted of His suffering, why then does Paul say the following:

- Colossians 1: Now I rejoice in my suffering which I bear for you and fill up in my body that which is lacking in the afflictions of Christ?”
- 2 Corinthians 1: But as we have tribulation or comfort, it works out for your good.
- Philippians 2: And if I be offered as an offering and service to God for your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all.

In the same way, did not Christ chiefly establish the Lord’s Supper for this reason, namely, that they had to suffer just like Christ their Head did, and by means of death enter into glory; yes, that their death should not be theirs, but the Lord’s; and that they like their Head should be awakened from the dead? And what about the dear apostles and prophets, yes, even Christ Himself, and likewise the dear friends of God who suffer much at this time and who have testified for so many years—if the members of Christ must not suffer like their Head did?

Does Peter not say in 1 Peter 5, “Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God that He might exalt you at the right time? Cast upon Him all your care, because He cares for you. Be sober, watch, for your adversary, the slanderer, goes about as a roaring lion, seeking whether he can devour someone; whom resist, fortified by faith, since ye know that throughout your brotherhood which is in the world the same suffering is accomplished.”

Works of the law, or good works?

And for this reason, when Paul says in Romans 3 that those who are made righteous through Christ are made righteous without deserving it or without the works of the Law, he does not mean that a man can be saved without the works of faith (since Christ and the apostles demand such), but without those works which are done outside of faith and the love of God—such as circumcision and similar deeds, which the Jews did that they might become righteous.

Therefore, whenever Paul and Christ apply the term *righteous-making* [justifying] to works, they do not mean those works which originate in men; but those which originate in God and Christ, *through whose strength the man performs them*. These works are not performed by the man

Oh, this shows to every one’s experience how hard it is to be a true disciple of Jesus! The way is narrow indeed; and the gate very strait, where not a word—no, not a thought—must slip the watch, or escape judgment. Such circumspection, such caution, such patience, such constancy, such holy fear and trembling. This gives an easy interpretation to that hard saying, “Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.” Those who are captivated with fleshly desires and affections—for they cannot bear the cross—and those who cannot endure the cross will never have the crown. To reign, it is necessary first to suffer!

... O come! let us follow Him, the most unwearied, the most victorious Captain of our salvation: to whom all the great Alexanders and mighty Caesars of the world are less than the poorest soldier of their camps could be to them. True, they were all great princes of their kind, and conquerors too, but on very differing principles. For Christ made Himself of no reputation to save mankind; but these plentifully ruined people so they could enlarge theirs.

They dominated others, but were unable to conquer themselves. Christ conquered self, which is what always defeated them. This merited Him, therefore, to be the most excellent Prince and Conqueror. Besides, they advanced their empire by rapine and blood; but He by suffering and persuasion. He prevailed, never by compulsion; but they always did so by force. Misery and slavery followed all their victories; His brought greater freedom and happiness to those He overcame. In all they did, they fought to please themselves; in all He did, he aimed to please His Father, who is God of gods, King of kings, and Lord of lords.

It is this most perfect pattern of self-denial we must follow, if ever we will come to glory. To accomplish this, let us consider self-denial in its true distinction and extent.

—Taken from “No Cross, No Crown,” by William Penn

as if he received something originating from himself, but because God wishes so to give the man works that are truly *His* works, and not just the man's own works.

And why is there a mercy seat, except as a means for God to reveal His will? Why should God make known His will, if He did not wish that a person do it? Yes, how could God be satisfied with anyone who neither wishes to hear the will of God coming from His mercy seat, or who having heard and knowing about it, wishes to hold it only with words and not deeds? Would not such a person take away the honor from the mercy seat, the very mercy seat that was given to him for his own good?

Yes, man gives his own word and says that he heard it from the mercy seat. Yes, he curses and persecutes everyone who refuses to believe him. Will such boasting not lead to his damnation? Did Paul in 1 Corinthians 1, where he calls Christ the righteousness and wisdom of the believers, mean the outward Christ without the inward, and not much more the inward with the outward?⁵ Namely, since Jesus is the Word of the Father, He makes known to us the true obedience, which is the only thing that satisfies the Father.

I will mention that Paul at this place is not speaking of Pharisees or scribes (as if they were the righteousness of Christ), but of those who like Paul and others receive Him in truth **and remain** His disciples, living in accordance with what faith eliminates and demands from their life.

But what about those who boast so proudly of Christ? They allege that Paul wrote of them, when in fact they are the biggest persecutors of Christ and of Paul.

Who can claim the promises?

When John the Baptist says in John 1, "Christ is the Lamb which takes upon Himself the sin of the world," he wishes to be understood that this applies only as far as the world surrenders to Him in faith. That is why he says also in John 3, "Whoever believes in the Son has everlasting life; whoever does not believe in the Son shall not see life." In the same way also when John says in 1 John 2, "He is our reconciliation," he wishes to be understood that this applies only to those who so recognize Him. For although He is truly a reconciliation for the whole world, that does no one any good, except those who recognize and receive Him through faith. It goes without saying that those who receive Him keep His commandments. But he who does not keep the commandments, and yet boasts of Christ as being

⁵ In other words, some were looking at what Christ worked when He was in His flesh (the "outward Christ"), but refusing to acknowledge that Christ still wanted to work inwardly ... in their heart!

his reconciliation, is a liar. Such a person has never known Christ—just like John testifies.

And do we think that when Peter says in 1 Peter 2, "Who offered Himself for our sins in His body on the tree, that we might be without sin," that he meant that Christ so offered Himself that through Him men are exempted from the curse, whether they believe on Him or not, whether they put off the sinful or not, whether they have a change of mind through Him or not, as the Holy-Deed-Doers⁶ and scribes⁷ think?

That is so far out!

Why then would he say in 1 Peter 1, "Whom having not seen you love, in whom you also believe although you do not see Him ... and whereas you call on the Father who, without regarding the person, **judges according to every man's work**, conduct your life in the time of your pilgrimage in fear"?

Now those who are without faith, who have not ceased from sin, those sinning even worse than before,⁸ yes those with just as unwilling and ugly a disposition toward God and their neighbor as they had before—how can such people appropriate the words of Peter for themselves, since Peter did not write to them, but to Christians?

How Christ will finish His work

How is it now that Christ did not do enough for our sins? Answer: Christ will do enough—not only for ours alone, but for the sins of the whole world—insofar as they believe on Him **and follow Him** according to the demands of faith, as was already said above. Yes, just like He *was* "doing enough" as the Head of his community, He *still does* no less for His members day by day, so that He *continues* to "do enough" for those who are His. In the same way that He has done from the beginning, He *will continue to do* until His return.

Therefore, when one speaks about being made righteous through Christ, he must also speak of faith: repentance is not separated from works, yea, not separated from love, which is the anointing. For only such an anointed faith as one receives from the resurrection from the dead is true Christian faith. This anointed faith is the only kind that is counted for righteousness. (Romans 4)

⁶ A reference to the Catholic system: those who trust in their non-biblical ceremonial works, rather than by faith doing the good works that Christ has called us to.

⁷ A reference to the Protestants: those who threw out both ceremonial works *and* good works.

⁸ The author is probably making a comparison between the moral level of the masses when still under Roman Catholicism, and the even lower morality that occurred after the Protestant Reformation in some places.

It is not like a man could do this of himself, but he is enabled to do it through the strength of faith, so that a person's good works do not have their origin in man, but in God.

Dead works

Again, one must not promote the class of works of the Holy-Deed-Doers⁹—Law-like works—but must preach works that spring from faith; that is, a turning back from ceremonial works, possessions, and yourself through faith in Christ the Crucified. It is not like a man could do this of himself, but he is enabled to do it through the strength of faith, so that a person's good works do not have their origin in man, but in God. This is because the will and the ability to turn back to God do not originate from man, but they are gifts of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Truly happy then is the man who keeps on the middle path and does not yield to the Holy-Deed-Doers, who promise salvation or the forgiveness of sins through works that are done without faith—that is, through merely having done something. They thus veer to the left, preaching dead works; paying no attention to faith and not wishing to see or hear of a faith which is sufficient unto salvation. All their works are like tiny wild plums, that is, ceremonies devoid of faith.

Dead faith

Nor should a man on the other hand yield to the scribes,¹⁰ who although they have renounced works, yet veer to the right and under the name of “gospel” teach a faith without works, taking the poor and obedient Christ (who had nowhere to lay His head (Luke 9), and without either the murmuring complaints or the defense of men, said, (Luke 22) “Nevertheless, Father, not my will but Thine be done.” for their “finished work.” But ... they do not wish to hear what He says:

- Luke 9: Come, follow me.
- Luke 14: Whoever does not renounce all that he possesses cannot be my disciple.
- Mark 8: Whoever wishes to come after me, let him deny himself, take his cross upon himself, and follow me.¹¹

⁹ A reference to the Catholics who tried to become upright people by means of nonbiblical works, such as kneeling on sharp stones, making pilgrimages, saying repetitious prayers, etc., in the same spirit as the OT Jews often performed circumcision, Sabbath-keeping, dietary regulations, and similar ceremonial deeds. While kissing the feet of a statue of Mary has nothing to do with becoming holy, these deluded folks esteemed such works as a way to holiness. Hence the name “Holy-Deed-Doers.”

¹⁰ The Protestants.

¹¹ In hymn #7 of the *Ausbund*, Sattler wrote, “When Christ had gathered together a small host, He said that each one should take up his cross daily and follow Him with patience.”

Yes, the Father must also be a “fanatic” to them when He says, “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, **hear Him.**” They make of Christ, when He was in a human body, what the pope has made of the saints, namely a golden calf like the Jews of old. In other words, they confess Christ as David's Son, and yet they deny Him—yes, call Him a “fanatic”—because God's Word and Son *were sent into the world to tell to man the obedience or righteousness of His Father*; not only in words, but also with works. He did so that all who believe in Him might not perish in their death, but be delivered from death.

All their preaching and fruit are like prickly thistles; they have much to say regarding faith, and yet know neither what Christ nor faith are. They reject works without faith in order that they may embellish faith without works. They wish to obey God only with the soul—and not also with the body—in order that they may escape persecution. They think that faith is a useless and empty mirage.¹² For

this reason they are able to say that infants have faith, even though works of faith are not seen in them, even after these same infants are grown up. (If infants had faith, the work of faith and of the Holy Spirit would then be cursing, because of the bad language when they are just learning to talk.)¹³

Come out of her, my people!¹⁴

The Holy-Deed-Doers say, “Lo, here is Christ!” The scribes cry, “Lo, here is Christ!” Therefore, happy is he who departs from Babylon, that is, who neither believes the Holy-Deed-Doers nor the scribes, but submits with fear to the discipline of Christ, because the heavenly voice (Revelation 18, Isaiah 52, 2 Corinthians 6) cries out and says, “Come out of her, my people, so that you do not become partakers of her sins, that you do not receive of her plagues, for her sins have resounded unto heaven.” ~

In future issues of The Heartbeat of the Remnant, we hope to more fully develop this topic, with articles on the place of suffering in the believer, and the three baptisms (fire, water, and blood) ...

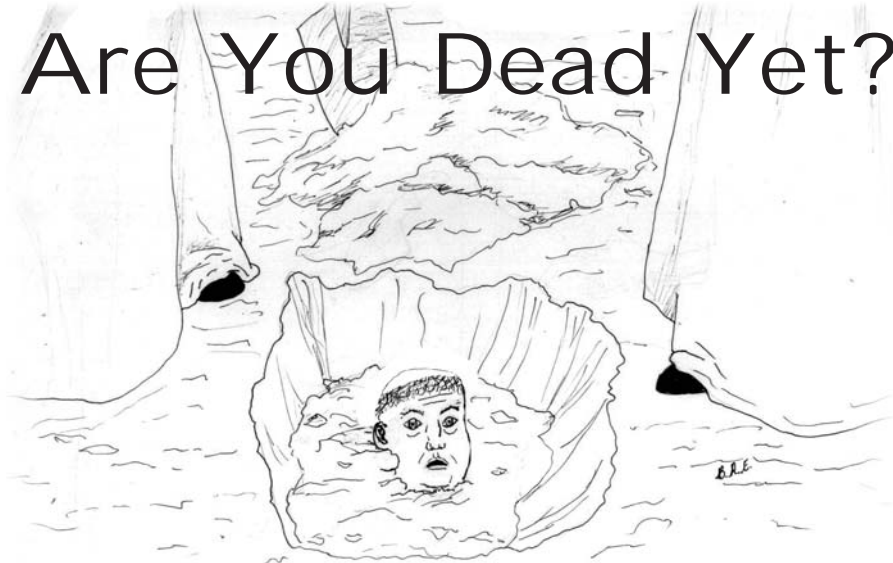
¹² In other words, faith has no substance or reality to it; they count faith as some dreamy state that is concocted up in the mind.

¹³ Hymn #42 of the *Ausbund* records that “The children in the lanes swear by the blood of Christ.” Such irreverent talk by baptized children is probably what the author is referring to.

¹⁴ A few preceding paragraphs from the original have been dropped here, dealing with figurative speculations concerning Catholicism being the first beast of Revelation 13, and Protestantism being the second. Those paragraphs do not directly affect the teaching of the tract on the topic of Christ finishing His work in us.

They reject works without faith in order that they may embellish faith without works.

Are You Dead Yet?



Based on a message preached by David Keeling on 10-3-10

Death sounds like a bad thing, doesn't it? Ughhh ... The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 2:15-17, "For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things? For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ."

Whenever some people hear what we preach, or see us, they just see nothing but death. The message that we preach is considered "negative" and "so unattractive." That is what people are really saying when they tell us, "Can't you give it a little more positive ... there's something about this; it just does not seem right ... Oh, I agree with all your words; they are truth and all but, boy, there's just something not right." What they are actually saying is, "There's a smell of death about it." But then others see it, and the same message is "life unto life." It depends on whether a person is dead to the world or whether he has life with this world.

There's a story about a man who had fallen into sin. I think he was a Catholic in a monastery, one of the monks. His fellows dug a deep hole and stuck him in it and asked him, "Are you dead yet?"

He said, "No."

So they started shoveling dirt back into the hole up to his knees and asked again, "Are you dead yet?"

"No."

They shoveled in more dirt, up to his hips this time, and asked, "Are you dead yet?"

"No."

"Are you willing to give up your sin? Are you dead?"

He still said, "No."

So they shoveled up to his armpits full of dirt and asked yet again, "Are you dead yet?"

He said "No," but he was beginning to get a little nervous. They shoveled it up to his neck; now only his head was sticking out above the dirt.

They asked, "Are you dead yet?" He knew the next step would cover his head up; he finally said, "I'm dead, I'm through with that sin, it will kill me." So they dug him out.

They were trying to teach him a point about death—what is it going to take to get us to die unto sin?

Jesus taught that "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." Before grain can produce anything it has to die. It's the same way with man; two worlds cannot live in your life; two lives cannot live in your body. We either have life in Christ or we have the life in the world. We are either dead to God and alive to the world, or dead to the world and alive to Christ. The Bible talks a lot about death and dying. In fact, whenever it speaks of baptism, that's a representation of death.

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Ro. 6:1-7

We are buried with him by baptism unto death. When we are baptized, that is a symbol/picture/representation of death that we have gone through.

If you were to die physically right now, what would that mean? That means that everything that's important to you right now would no longer be important, because you are dead. It has no value to you anymore. The life that you would have lived from that point on no longer exists; it's not there, it's gone because you are dead. No matter what age you are, the life in front of you is gone, it's over ... no more.

But then someone would come along and say, "Arise!" After you came to the realization that you had been dead—your life was over, nothing more was ever going to be the same—and then someone came along and said, "Rise again," what would every moment of your life mean to you from that point on? Every moment of that life should be different.

It is the same when we have died to this world; we are dead to this world, it's over. That's the finality of death—it's over ... now arise to a newness of life—a life in Christ. That's what baptism is supposed to be. That's when we have died to ourselves and this world, and from now on every moment of life we have is to be for Christ, because we are living for Him from now on. Our life is gone—we are buried and dead to this world. That's what Romans 6:11 is talking about:

Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

"Dead indeed unto sin" doesn't mean we will not be without struggles or temptations, but right here is how we get victory over them—to die.

But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. Ga. 6:14

I'm just as dead to the world as the world is to me. Whenever the world looks at me, they see death. The world doesn't want to be around death; they don't like it. Whenever they look at someone who is dead to the world, it's just like them looking at a dead man; they don't want to be around it. And when we look out into the world, that's the way we ought to be too. We ought to see all the world has to offer is just a bunch of death, and not be enticed by it or drawn to it.

A man said to us this weekend, concerning the cross, "Before Jesus died, the cross used to be a bad thing, scary, fearful. But when Jesus died, all the badness went out of it, and now it's a nice thing." That's what's wrong with Chris-

tianity today—their cross doesn't produce death to those who would take it up and follow Jesus. Their cross has become a "nice thing." Their "death" has become a "nice thing." But it doesn't produce the death that produces LIFE in Christ Jesus. Until a man passes through the cross and death, there is no life, no resurrection. Until you die, there is no resurrection; that's why there's so much fruitlessness in Christianity today.



People want to hang the cross around their neck, on the wall, paint pictures of it, put pictures of it on their Bible, hang it all over their churches, glorify it, sing about it ... the cross Jesus died on. But they don't want to get on it themselves and die.

People want to hang the cross around their neck, on the wall, paint pictures of it, put pictures of it on their Bible, hang it all over their churches, glorify it, sing about it ... the cross Jesus died on. But they don't want to get on it themselves and die to themselves. They don't want to die; they want the life, so they pretend they have it. They want a better life, so they quit a lot of their bad deeds and start going to church, but they don't want to *lose* their life. They don't want to face death, but that is the only way to life.

Jesus talked a lot about death:

And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it. Mt. 10:38-39

And in another Gospel it says (in the same context), "for my sake and the gospel's." If you keep/find your life, you will lose it. But if you lose your life, you will find it. That's the ONLY way; so whenever people hear the true gospel message they think, "Oh, you are putting a bad light on Christianity." That happens because they

see death there, and that is not attractive to the world; so they want to turn away from it. They turn away from the only thing that can bring real life to them from God. Paul said the world is crucified unto him, and he unto the world. He was dead to this world.

Before I began following the Lord, I was alive to this world. I loved this world, I wanted to be a part of this world, I didn't want to miss anything ... wanted to be involved in everything this world had to offer. I liked the flashy things, liked to have the best. I didn't care to be different than the modern world, in fact, I loved being different. But it was still the world; my world, my life. My dream in life was to have a huge farm with registered cattle and horses, have sales and show them, and really "make a big splash." I used to think that if I didn't have a pair of white ostrich boots and a \$200-\$300 cowboy hat and diamond rings on my hand

... I loved that. But when I died, I didn't want that anymore.

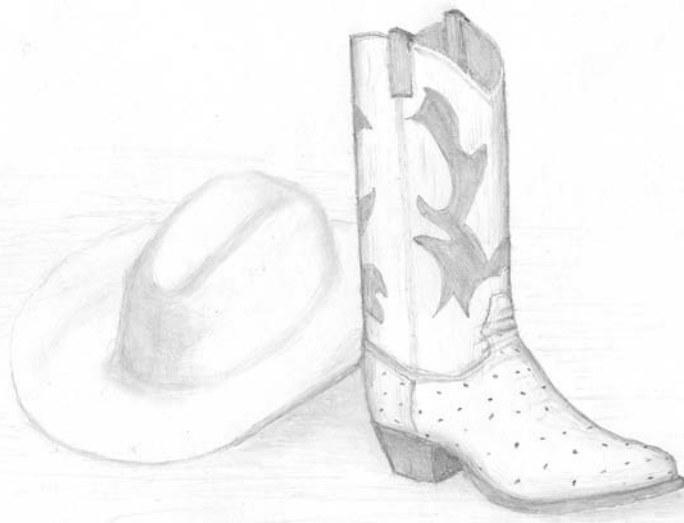
A lot of my friends, scattered around the country, were into auctions. They'd travel all over and make a big show at the auctions—it was so exciting to go to these big sales and see these cattle and horses bring big prices ... go to the shows and do all these things. I have friends in the auction business that lived this life; I thought that was neat, I loved it.

After I became a Christian and was living for the Lord, my brothers had bought the sale barn from one of the commission companies, and the first week that I started wearing suspenders when I was a Menonite, one of my brothers couldn't make it to the sale that day. So they called me and said, "You are going to have to go into the sale ring and be the ring man." On the first day that I put my suspenders on, had my beard, my plain blue clothes, no cowboy hat, no white boots, no big belt buckle ... suspenders and a beard ... they put me right in the ring where I had always wanted to be, right in the center of everything, among all the people I had always wanted to impress. There I was ...

Do you know how to die? One way is to go to the people that you are trying to impress and stand right up in front of them, but humbly dressed just exactly the opposite from what you would normally do to impress them. That will help produce death to those things in you. But when you die like that, Christ can then live in you.

Dead to the world ... this is the glory of the cross of Christ!

What do you love in this world? The best thing to do is face it, stand up against it right in front of everyone you know that that's all they care about, and openly die to it. Or would you rather have their praise? Would you rather be dead to Christ and alive to their applause? Alive to their envy? Or alive unto Christ? "He that findeth his life shall lose it, but he that loses his life for Christ and the Gospel shall find it unto everlasting life." Be real with yourself and ask, "Am I dead yet?"



I used to think that if I didn't have a pair of white ostrich boots and a \$200-\$300 cowboy hat ...

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. Co. 3:1-3

Bro. Kevn Stewart shared with me a couple of times concerning what the verse "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God" means. This happens, for example, when we are on the streets preaching and people (as they often do) walk or drive by and holler at us, "GET A LIFE!"

Do you know why they say that to us? Because our life is hid in Christ Jesus. They can't see our life; all they see is our death to the world. Our life is hid to them, because of their blindness.

I used to want to be a big shining light as a Christian—the world does too. They want everyone to know, "I'm a Christian." They get in a little bit of trouble and they say, "I'm a Christian ... I'm a pastor ... you can trust me!" They want people to know, they want to be a witness, and a lot of times it gains them a little bit of respect ... for why, I don't know. But it does, because people can still see their old life. But the lovers of this world are not going to recognize the life of the true Christian; all they are going to see is death, because our lives are hid with Christ in God. It's a blessing, because ...

When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Co. 3:4

... and all those people who thought they had life in this world and on this earth are going to find that when Christ appears, their "life" was actually death. And all their glory will vanish away ... sink right into hell, because they kept their life. They didn't pass through that strait and narrow gate of death; they kept their life.

There are a lot of things we would get a hold of if we could just get dead. We can't grow fruit, have life—we are not going to rise to life—until we die. What can the world do to us when we are dead? You can't kill a dead man. I've already died, what life are you going to take away from me?

I think that's one of the reasons why people get so hurt by churches—whenever they find out the church failed them, they get bitter because their life was in the church, instead of being dead to self.

Are you dead yet? Face death, take up the cross, and let it kill you in this world; let it crucify you. Remember His death until He returns.

For we are the savor of death unto death to this world, but unto God we are the savor of life unto life. Our life is hid in this world, but when He returns, our life shall appear. All that looked like death to the world will just bloom and explode into life in that time, and all this trash that looks like life in this world will just crumble like ashes into hell.

Praise the Lord! ~

David Keeling lives at Monett, MO, where he ministers at "The Church of Monett." David's early ambition was to be a millionaire by the time he was 30. He was well on his way to achieving his goal, until he decided to become a real disciple of Jesus. He now spends his time in weekly street-preaching and making disciples in various parts of the world, with regular trips to India, the Philippines, and Latin America. You can listen to the recorded message from which this article was taken, at <http://www.earlychurchtruth.com/englishsermon/areyoudeadyet.html>

What's wrong with this picture?

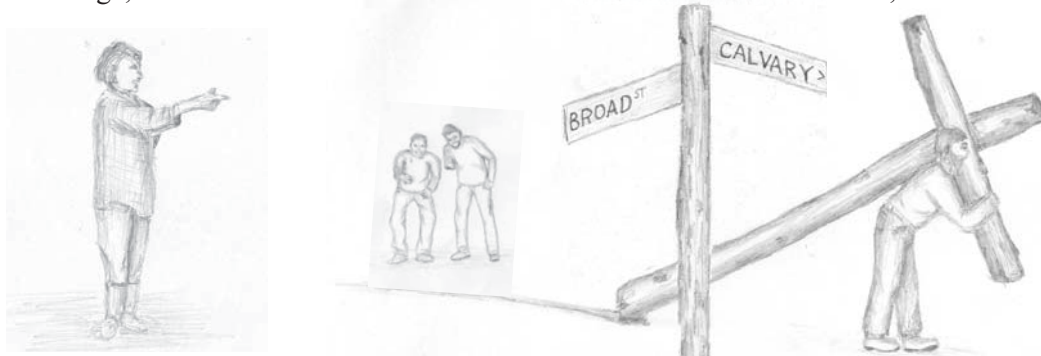


You have probably seen something like it on a tract somewhere, with a title along the lines of "How to Get to Heaven." But the picture is seriously in error, doctrinally. What is that error?

The man is misusing the cross! The man is supposed to be carrying the cross, not using it as a bridge. Nowhere are we told to use the cross as a bridge to heaven. But we are told, by Jesus Himself, that unless we take up the cross and follow Him, it is impossible to be His disciple. We must use the cross just like He did.

Readers of the previous issue will remember the comparison between Anabaptists and Evangelicals. The above picture and the one below graphically show the difference between the two theological mindsets. Paul told the Galatians, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Many people stop there, and assume that Paul was referring to what Jesus did on His cross. But, the verse doesn't end there! He continues, saying, "... by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." The cross that Paul gloried in was the cross of Christ in the sense of being just like the one Christ used, only Paul was the one bearing it now, following in Christ's steps. And through that daily death to self, sin, and the flesh, Christ could then live in Paul and glorify him. Without Paul taking up the cross, this could not have taken place.

Have you taken up your cross, or do you just plan to use it as a bridge after your body dies? Sorry, but the cross is not a bridge; it is an instrument of death to be used while we are on this earth, not afterwards. ~



Making Godly Decisions



*Based on a message preached by Joe Tindall on
Sept. 4, 2010, at Fivepointville, PA*

We have a lot of decisions to make in life, don't we? Individuals have decisions to make. Families have decisions to make. Churches have decisions to make. The very word, "decision," tells you that there is going to be results from your decisions, consequences. "Consequences" is not always negative, even though it has that connotation. It just means when you make a decision, something is going to happen because of your decision. If you choose black, you're going to have black. If you choose white, you are going to have something that is white. Those are the consequences.

Another dynamic moves into that when we become a Christian, because we are not primarily concerned about profit and color, but rather looking to advance with the Lord and draw near to Him. And some of the decisions we have are kind of hard to make, and it can be kind of complicated. I would like to simplify things a little bit, probably an oversimplification, in helping you make a good decision.

Turn to 1 John 3:1-3:

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

Does the world know you? It doesn't mean to know your name. It means to understand you. The world didn't understand Jesus, and here it says if they don't know your master, they probably won't know the ones who are following the master. They won't understand the decisions you make. They ask, "Why in the world did someone make a decision like that? Why would they leave their business and go to Africa? What are they thinking about? Why is he doing this and that for the Lord; he could be working and making money. Why don't they take vengeance? Why do people let them step on them like that? Why do they do that? I don't understand ..."

They do not understand the child of God, because the goals and desires of the child of God are different. Their priorities are different. Ours goals, desires, hopes, and fears are completely different from theirs. We're not after the same thing that they are after, and certainly not for the same motive.

So our decisions are going to reflect that difference. They have to. If not, something's wrong. Maybe our goals and desires aren't really what we say they are. Maybe we know what they should be, so when somebody asks us, we'll tell them of what our desires *should* be. But our decisions will reflect what our goals and desires *really are*. You can stand back and look at somebody, and if you could gain access to the decisions that they make, you would know what their desires are. Watch them long enough, and you'll know what exactly they are aiming at by the decisions that they make.

Expediency

Brother Paul, the Apostle, gives us a little insight into his life. And he tells us three things that he uses to analyze a problem that comes up when he is making a decision. Maybe it's something to buy, maybe it is something with the direction of the church, maybe it's something personal. But there are three things that he brings to bear on his problems, and I think we'll be wise to do the same thing. He gives things a test, so he can bring these things into his life or put them out of his life. These first of the three tests is, "all things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient." 1 Co. 10:23

We are going to skip over the whole question of whether a matter is legal or not. Let's assume that Paul was simply clearing the air with his statement. Obviously there are things that are clearly not legal to the Christian, but Paul sweeps the whole question of legality to the side for the moment. He says, "Let's look at this from another viewpoint: is it expedient?"

Expedient is one of the words we have to think about for a moment. When I worked for an electric company, we had people called "expeditors," a word which comes from the word "expedient."

Every electric utility job has a lot of details. You have to notify the traffic control, you have to notify the police, you have to tear up the road, there are all kinds of material to get, you have to maybe build a manhole, and all kinds of things ... just to get the job done. So they have expeditors. The job order would come down on the expeditor's desk, and he has to call for the permits, he has to do this or that to prepare for the job, he has to send somebody to mark off all of the utilities so they do not tear them up when they dig. There are all kinds of materials to order so that everything would be ready on the morning of the job.

So the expeditor does his job, and you the worker come in the morning and they'll hand you the paper for the job, maybe three weeks to a month after the expeditor first started working on the project. All the workers go to the yard, and all of the material is there in a big clump. They get the men to load it up on a truck, they go to the jobsite and everything is prepared so they can get to work. The expeditor helped them to get the job done as quickly and efficiently as possible.

In our text, Paul is essentially saying, "I have a goal. I have a destination. I want to get there. And I want to ask you concerning this thing, 'Is partaking in this thing going to be expedient for us as a congregation?'"

Then, we have to back up and ask ourselves. "Wait a minute. What is our goal? What are we trying to do? What is our calling? Is this thing we are considering really expedient; is it going to help us? Is it going to help us to move in the right direction? If it is, bring it on!"

Habits, music, whatever ... is it expedient to take it, or to leave it? Some things are being taken away from the church and we're just letting them go. Can we just drop things because it doesn't fit in today's society? Ask yourself. It is not a question if it is legal or not legal. It is a question if it is going to work. Is that really what we're about?

Is our calling to blend in and not be radical, not be extreme, not to be noticed? We do not want to put a yellow band on our sleeves so that people will know that we are "separate." That is not what we're talking about. We're talking about our calling. What are we going to be in this society? We are not called to be artificially different, but we are called to goals and desires and a direction that is going to make us separate. It is not our business to try to artificially get different, but it is our business to get serious with what God has for His people, and being conformed into His image. And if the society wakes up and gets converted, then we'll just be like society.

And if the society wakes up and gets converted, then we'll be just like society.

Beware of that "neither here nor there" land!

What?! Neither here nor there?!

The question is whether the thing we are considering is expedient to the goal. Is it consistent with the goals that He has here for us? Or do we have to skip a few verses when we read the Bible because we don't want to put them to practice? We think, "If we ever took that thing serious, people would mock us. They would say, 'You don't even make sense! That is awful to do something like that!'"

Beware the "never-never" land of "neither here nor there"! Beware, I tell you, of that land! You know what I mean, when folks say, "Well, it doesn't help, but it doesn't hurt either."

Pilgrims, you do not have the luxury to load your life up with things that are "neither here nor there." When Paul talks, he talks about walking circumspectly, he talks about diligence, he talks about pressing, he talks about the race, he talks about a fight. Circumspectly means looking all around, taking all things into consideration.

So if you are wandering around, making a lot of decisions that are "neither here nor there," guess what your life is going to be? It is going to be "neither here nor there"! That will happen because it lacks direction. Folks like that end up saying, "Well, we'll take this, it is not illegal. Bring that in, too. Bring the other thing in, and take this out, it is neither here nor there."

Beware of that "neither here nor there" land!

The giveaway question

It's kind of interesting when people come in for counsel sometimes. They come in and they say things like, "My car is broken down. I need to buy another car. It is this model, and that color and has these options. And it will cost this much. Do you think that will be alright?"

The question "Do you think that will be alright?" is what you call "a giveaway." What do I mean by "a giveaway?" It shows that we are not approaching things as we ought to be approaching them. We are saying, "Do you think I am going to 'get away with this' in the church? Is anybody going to have a problem with this?" If the person who asks that question didn't think that one of their brothers would be grieved by his decision, he probably wouldn't be asking the question. Sometimes all people are trying to do is to get somebody to say "yes" to something that they haven't looked at from the standpoint of expediency.

Because nobody, me included, wants to tell somebody "no." We don't like to do that. Well, let God tell you no. And

one of the ways that He does that is by putting that uncertainty in your mind. He gets us thinking, “You know, there is just something about this that I think that maybe some of the brethren would have a problem with.” Would that question in your mind be sufficient for you to understand that God is saying “no”? Is letting God lead you in that way “legality”? I don’t think it is. I think that’s giving your life for your brother! You are not a solo bird. What we do affects one another.

Do you know that when you spend your time on things that don’t have a positive good, you just fill your life and waste your time? You only have so much energy, you only have so much time, and if you spend it on nonessentials and on those things that “are neither here or there,” they are just there to make you feel good and pass your time. And that certainly is not expedient! Time is one of the most precious commodities that you have, and if you use your time on things that are questionably legal—you know, “I can do it because it doesn’t make any difference”—you are fooling yourself! Time makes a difference. Time you can write a letter. Time you can make a phone call. Time you can make a visit. Time you can meditate. Time you can read. Time you can pray. Time to do many things that other people (who are complaining “I don’t have time”) only wish they could do.

You have 24 hours in the day, just like it was from the creation to now. It is just a question on how you decide to use your time. If you’re out there and you have a computer and you run it for some information, that is perfectly “legal” ... and it is fun to read this, and it’s fun to do that, and it’s fun to communicate with these other people. Then you end up consoling yourself by saying, “I didn’t realize that two hours have gone by; but after all it is not “illegal.” I didn’t do anything that was really bad or anything, I just frittered some of my time that God gave me. Oh, I want to write to that sister; she asked for prayer and I want to write her an encouraging note. Well, I’ll have to do that tomorrow maybe ...”

We need to be proactive in our decisions. I mean, not sit back and wait until situations happen, then trying to solve the situation. I read a sign one time in which I think there is an application in a Christian’s life. It said, “Don’t sit back and let circumstances happen, go out and happen the circumstances.” What it means is go out and make things happen the way things should be happening. It is like maintenance on your truck or car. Go check to see if the oil is up where it should be. Go check to see if everything is right where it should be in your personal life right now. Don’t wait until things are falling apart and then start trying to fix them.

It is like the Uzza and the ark. They had the ark on the cart, with the oxen pulling. They were so happy and rejoicing, and they were getting blessed ... they were so blessed

CHO

“It doesn’t really matter

One way or the other—
The hairstyle I have chosen, or
The one that’s on my brother.

It doesn’t really make a difference

If cars are black or white,
Or if I wear a color shade
That you would think too bright.

Salvation, holiness, and love

Are heart and spirit things;
They don’t consist in what I drive
Or what my brother sings.

Why this fuss of right or wrong,

Bickering all the while?
My brother’s not like me. So what?
Embrace him with a smile.”

Is this the truth—the whole truth—

Or is it only half?
Is God the Author of these thoughts,
Or does the devil laugh ...

To see so many Christians

Behind this thinking hide,
And taking refuge in these “truths,”
Indulge in self and pride?

It doesn’t really matter?

But God says that it does;
And furthermore He teaches that
It’s not an idle fuss.

If details do not matter,

Why didn’t our Father say
So simply to each child of His,
“Be holy. Go thy way?”

Instead He gives in

On what to do
On how to treat our
And when, and

Of worship and its

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Of who should be a
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If we are rich
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CHOICES

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Christ you're free!”
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the building
w or gold.
don't save us
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behind them
r ruins you.

The clothes you wear, your hairstyle,
Each word you think or say,
The car you drive, the books you read,
The work you do each day;

The way you dress your children,
The songs you want to sing,
The preacher that you listen to,
The way your phone may ring;

Are all because of choices
God sees and understands;
He weighs each choice and its reward
In His all-knowing hands.

Say not, "It doesn't matter,"
This is the devil's snare.
The dress or car or shoe reveals
The choice that put it there.

When we are making choices,
Which question is our test?
"I wonder just what's wrong with it?"
Or, "Which way is the best?"

What is our deepest longing?
To glorify God's Name?
To build and edify His church—
A worker free of blame?

Or is our heart the garden spot
Where grow the subtle weeds
Of flesh and self uncrucified,
That trouble and mislead?

If we are making choices,
With heart and soul and mind
Completely given up to God,
His blessing we will find.

—Author unknown

that they were doing this. They got their idea from the Philistines ... they thought it would work. It did work for the Philistines! But what the Philistines wanted to do is to get rid of God. So the Philistines put the ark on the cart, and put some gold items on the cart. It worked beautifully; it got rid of God.

When the Israelites saw it, they saw that the cart carried the ark. Maybe they thought, "Hey, the guys won't get sore shoulders carrying the ark, and an ox and a cart are clean things. There are all kinds of benefits for using a cart to carry the ark." So they made a cart too, and put the ark on. Well, the ox stumbles, and behold, the ark is going down, the ark of God! Perhaps they remembered, "Do not touch the ark," but the ox stumbles and the ark begins to fall and Uzza is there.

What is he going to do, stand back and let it fall in the mud, or is he going to save it from falling? Why not save it from falling? Why not let it go? Perhaps he reasoned, "But if I let it go, we will have to pick it up anyways."

The whole problem was that they copied from the Philistines. Be careful on how you made your decisions and where you get your ideas from. Don't be fooled by the fact that when the Philistines carted the ark, they were carrying the ark away; and it worked. But if you try to bring it home, you have to do it God's way.

Building up, or tearing down?

"All things are lawful for me, but all things edify not." Edify means to build up, profitable for our goal, to build up in our faith, to make stronger, to enlarge. Is it edifying ... that activity that we are planning? Recreation can be a good thing if it is done in a good way. It renews the body and mind. Let's take a look at it though. Is it going to build up spiritually, and not just be a time of "having fun"? Is it going to build the wrong thing?

If you have to compromise some other principles so that we can have recreation, that is not edification. That is shrinking, tearing down. Maybe the activity will encourage an undesired boy-girl relationship. Or, maybe have the girls moving in indecent ways or bouncing off the boys when they go for the volleyball. There is nothing inherently wrong with exercising and enjoying it. But let's look at recreation closer. Are we doing our recreation with that idea called "neither here nor there"? If we are, remember there is no such thing as "neither here nor there."

We all want to edify each other in love. We can say that pretty easy; but does our decision say it? The decisions in our life are saying if that is true. We want to build up, and we refuse to pay spiritual prices to get something fleshly.

Continued on p. 35

The “Romans Road” Without Detours, Bypasses, and Dead-End Streets

Mike Atnip

A family friend was travelling with his motor home in another state. Night came upon him, and he stopped in a town along the way to ask a local person if they knew of a quiet, secure place close by where he might park and sleep for the night. “Sure,” replied the helpful man, and proceeded to give him some simple directions to a place not too far away.

Faithfully following the details, our friend made the correct turns and finally dead-ended ... right in the local cemetery! He never found out how hard the man giving the directions had laughed after he had pulled away.

Have you ever followed directions, only to end up where you didn't want to be? Or found out later that your map or GPS deceived you, taking you the “the long way around,” or perhaps to the wrong destination? It wasn't that you didn't follow the directions well; the map or GPS was simply wrong!

I appreciate bypasses. Most of them anyways, like when I am in a hurry to get to the other side of town. But a recent discovery has led me to realize that a well-known map used by many travelers is in error, and is leading men and women down streets and into a final end where they were never intended to end up at. This map is so well known and highly valued, that it seems no one even questions its authority. It is the so-called “Romans Road to Salvation.” This map is advertised with the following words: “If you walk down this road you will end up understanding how to be saved.”

The problem with the maps I have seen is that they have several bypasses in them, detours that take men onto a route that ends up on a dead-end street. Well, let me rephrase those words “dead-end street.” It would be more proper to call it “a street that ends up among the dead.” Just like my friend ended up in a graveyard, men who follow the typical Romans Road maps will end up among the dead.

Yes, that's right! Those popular Romans Road maps totally bypass some very important truths in Paul's letter to

the Romans. Let's take a look at Romans again, carefully, and look at a few points the popular road maps have detoured around. Unfortunately, a short article does not provide enough space to make a full commentary on Paul's letter to the Romans, so this short article is not intended to be a complete package in and of itself. It is written with the simple goal of alerting the reader of some missing aspects of the typical “Romans Road” map.

Before we begin ...

I want the reader of this article to note two things before he/she continues reading:

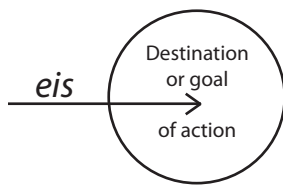
1. I will be referencing the Greek text in this article. No one needs to feel pressured, feel stupid, or feel like knowing Greek is essential to understanding the Bible. There is nothing wrong with the English wording; I refer to the Greek to give us synonyms (which often get our minds out of theological ruts) and to help guide us in the meaning of the English prepositions, which can vary greatly in meaning. The definition we apply to the preposition can entirely change our perspective. Which brings us to point two ...
2. As will be seen, those little prepositions (words like “for,” “by,” “of,” “through,” etc.) can change the whole meaning of a sentence, depending upon the definition applied to them. We tend to never look up their meanings in the dictionary, because we all know what “by” (for example) means, right? If this article does nothing else, it will challenge us to carefully consider the major influence of the definition that we place on prepositions. I encourage us all to not pass over the prepositions lightly.

The purpose of grace—*eis* obedience

Paul begins his letter with a lengthy salutation, and quickly brings in the topic of Jesus the Anointed. He declares Jesus to be both human (v. 3) and divine (v. 4). His divinity was proved by the authority that He manifested over death. Paul then immediately makes clear that it was by means of Jesus that “we have received grace and apostleship.”

Stop for a moment at the next word in verse 5: “for.” Don’t bypass that little word. Its significance is important.

Readers of the last issue of *The Heartbeat of the Remnant* may remember that same word expounded upon in 1 Corinthians 11:15 and remember that “for” has many meanings—27 are listed in my unabridged dictionary.



The Greek pronoun “eis” (into) points to the goal of the action. Grace is to take us “eis” obedience!

But don’t jump your guns! This time around the Greek word is not “*anti*,” but a different preposition: “*eis*.” While “*anti*” means “right in front of,” “*eis*” indicates an “entering into.” Picture a circle with an arrow going from the exterior “into” the interior. That is “*eis*.” “*Eis*” is used to focus on destination, where something is to end up at, the goal.

So here we are, looking at “grace and apostleship,” and wondering just where that is to take us next. Very simple ... into (*eis*) obedience to the faith among all nations!

Let’s take a brief look at Ephesians 2:10. I know this is outside of Romans, but the teaching is so similar that we can reinforce it with this verse: “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” Why were we created in Christ Jesus? “Unto good works!” Although the preposition used here is *epi* and not *eis*, the meaning is so similar in this case that *eis* could have easily been used. Look! The purpose of our creation in Christ Jesus was so that we could move into good works!

Back to Romans 1:5. The sentence doesn’t stop at “unto obedience to the faith among all nations.” We find another “for” following the word “nations.” And we find yet another Greek preposition translated as English “for.” (“For” is truly a flexible word!) This time the Greek word “*uper*” is used. This preposition is transliterated as “hyper,” which we see a

lot in modern English, such as *hyperactive*, or if someone is *hyped up*. Reduced to a one-word translation, “over” is the best we can do in English. But the idea is that of being “over and beyond, more than.”

Back to our text, we saw that grace was given to take us into obedience, then, “and over and beyond (*uper*) that, to glorify His name.”

The summary of Romans 5:1 is this: The reason grace was given to us is so that we could enter into obedience, so that His name would be glorified.

A very fundamental aspect that your typical Romans Road map detours around is the fact that God ultimately saves men for His glory, not for man’s good. God is saving you so that He gets glorified, not so you can feel happy in eternity! This is such a shocking new way to look at salvation, and the “why” of it all, that you will—if you are like me—need many days and weeks and months to ponder the whole thing before it will sink in enough to radically affect how you view Christianity. I urge you to ponder it well. I urge you to meditate on the fact that the ultimate reason why God sent grace into this world is NOT to make men happy and get them to heaven, BUT TO BRING GLORY TO HIS NAME!

Before parting this theme, let’s turn to Ezekiel 36. For the sake of space, the text is omitted here. But you need to read the whole chapter. And please do read it, right now, if you are not familiar with it.

In this chapter, God is promising to do marvelous things for His people. Promise after promise after glorious promise! Now, let’s focus on verse 22 and see *why* God is doing this. Was He doing it for their sake? NO! “I do this not for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for my holy name’s sake ...”

Then come more promises, including the giving of a new heart (v. 26), the sending of the Holy Spirit (v. 27), deliverance from uncleanness (v. 29), and glorious fruitfulness.

Then God drops the bombshell on us again as to *why* He will do these things.

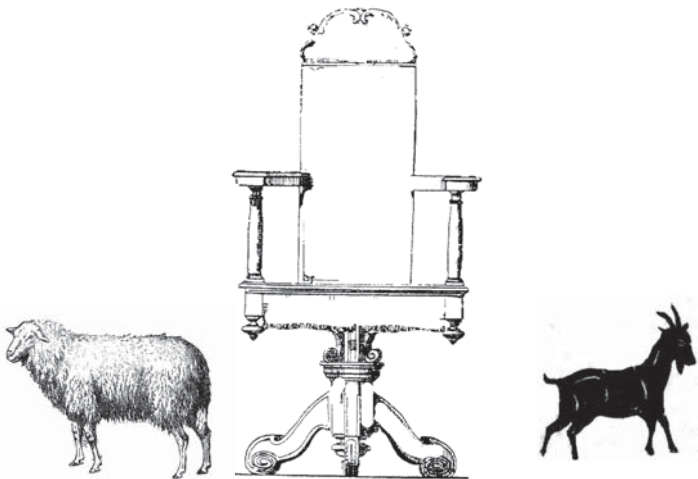
For our sake? NO! If you don’t believe me, then read verse 32: “Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God ...” Does it shock you that God did not plan our salvation for our sake, but for His sake? It did me!

When we think of the Romans Road to salvation, we need to make sure that we do not bypass this fundamental truth.

Did you know?
The main reason
God saves
man is for His
glory, not man’s
happiness?
Ezekiel 36

What will determine our entrance into heaven?

The next detour on the typical Romans Road map that we want to examine is the detour around Romans 2:5-16. The topic of these verses is the final judgment. Paul is explaining to the Romans what it is that will determine their eternal destiny, the criteria that God will judge them by. Verse 6 is really pretty plain: “Who will render to every man according to his deeds.” That is pretty clear, but we could make it plainer yet, perhaps, by using the two synonyms. The first is replacing “render” with “give,” and the second is to replace “deeds” with the word “works.” And before we do that, it should be made clear that the word “deeds” is from the same Greek word that “works” is translated from: *ergon*. They are completely interchangeable words, with practically no difference in their meaning. So, we end up with, “Who will give to every man according to his works.”



Before the great white throne, our works will determine if we are a sheep or a goat.

We really do not need to explain what this verse does NOT say, but just for clarification, let's list a few things that this verse does NOT say:

- Who will give to every man according to his hopes.
- Who will give to every man according to his doctrines.
- Who will give to every man according to his beliefs.
- Who will give to every man according to his faith.

Paul goes on to give us the two options at the final judgment. Verse 7 is option one, in which those who patiently persist in doing good works, seeking glory and honor and immortality, will be given eternal life. Verses 8-9 show us option two, in which the reward of those who disobey God is revealed. These will receive tribulation and anguish. Then Paul switches back (v. 10) to those who do good, and adds glory, honor, and peace to their reward.

Perhaps some may quibble about my phrase in the preceding paragraph about “patiently persist in doing good works.” My choice of words was deliberate. The word “doing” in verse 7 comes from the same word as “deeds” in verse 6, *ergon*; and in Acts 9:36, Romans 13:3, Ephesians 2:10, and other verses, the very same Greek words used in Romans 2:7 (doing good) are translated as “good works.” It is not a mistranslation to translate that verse like this: “To those who—seeking for glory, honor, and deathlessness—persist in good works, eternal life [will be given].”

Does that mess up your Romans Road map? If it does, you would do well to revise your map. That fact that we will all be judged by our works is reaffirmed by every—and I mean *every*—judgment scene presented to us from Matthew to Revelation. I know that is another shocking revelation to those of us who have been told—time after time after time—by the marketers of the typical Romans Road maps that good works have nothing to do with our salvation. But it is an indisputable fact that our works will determine our final destiny. Our beliefs will not be figured in the decision on that last great day.

The source of being made righteous—**Ex** faith

Our next look at the Romans Road is not really about a detour, but rather what could possibly be called a misreading of the road signs, a misinterpretation. I am referring to another little pronoun, “by.”

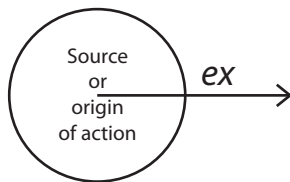
In particular, I am looking at this word “by” in connection with the word “faith.” Eight times the phrase “by faith” is used by Paul in his letter to the Roman brothers and sisters. The first occurrence is in chapter 1, verse 17, where Paul quotes from one of the prophets, saying, “The just shall live by faith.”

What does that little word “by” mean? Like “for,” “by” is quite a bendable little word, but with only 14 different entries for it in my unabridged dictionary instead of 27. Looking at the original language for some guidance as to what the intention is, we see the Greek preposition “*ex*,” sometimes spelled “*ek*.”

Ah! “*Ex*,” we all know what that is, right? *Ex*-Catholic, *ex*-miner, *ex*-president, *ex*-druggie ... “*Ex*” tells us the exact opposite of “*eis*.” Remember “*eis*”? We found that “*eis*” starts on the outside and goes into, indicating the destination, or the final goal. Well, turn that arrow around and start it on the inside and make it go out of the circle, and you have “*ex*.” You know what an *exit* is, don't you? You go out of something when you *exit*; out the door, out of the interstate highway system, out of the airplane.

Before proceeding any further, let's meditate a moment on someone who *exits* a building. If I say, “John went out the exit,” you know where he originated from, but you have

no idea whatsoever where John ended up. You only know where he started from. In the same way, if I say “John is an *ex*-Buddhist,” you know where John came from, but can you tell me what religion he now is? Can you tell me what all he went through on his way to get to his present religion? No!



The Greek pronoun “*ex*” (of) reveals the source of the action. Uprightness of character is “*ex*” (of, from) faith!

Ex only indicates origin or source. So if we say that “the just shall live *ex* (by) faith,” the only thing we can learn from that is that faith is the origin of life. That tells us nothing whatsoever where that life will take the just man. There is no indication where or what the final destination shall be of “the just.” All we know is that righteousness starts *ex* (from) faith.

Now let’s apply the same to Romans 5:23, where Paul states a conclusion: “a man is justified *ex* (by) faith, without the deeds of the law.”

The only thing we really learn from Paul’s statement is the source—the foundation—of the process that turns an unrighteous man into a righteous man. Paul’s conclusion really does not state what all else might be involved in the process, nor the final steps. In fact, we do not know if this is the only step, or if there are three other steps in the process, or 13 steps in the process. All we are told is the origin, the source, the beginning. All Paul has concluded here is that becoming righteous does not begin with doing the works of the Mosaic law. Becoming righteous does not start with sabbath days and circumcision. It starts in faith, “outside the territory of”¹ new moons, animal sacrifices, and other Mosaic ceremonies.

Remember how we talked about knowing nothing about where John went if all we know is that he exited the building? Or what religion he now professed if all we know is that he is an *ex*-Buddhist? In the same way, we do not know everything about justification from the simple phrase “*ex* faith.”

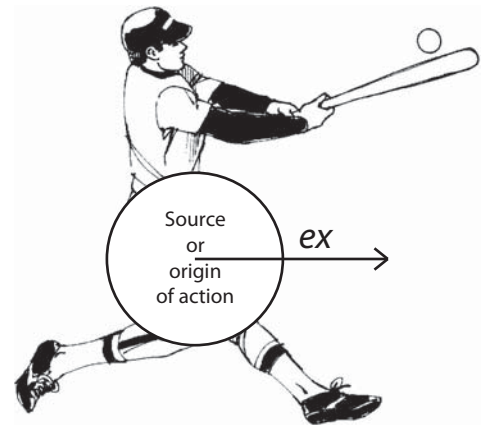
Do you get the point? The phrase “a man is justified *ex* (by) faith” is not saying that faith is the only thing involved in becoming righteous. It only tells us the beginning, or the source.

¹ Different way of saying the Greek word “*choris*,” which the KJV translates as “apart from.”

Perhaps a little analogy would help. I assume everyone reading this is familiar with the basic rules of baseball. The batter hits the ball, and then tries to run around all the bases without getting tagged. If he hits the ball hard enough, he may well be able to run around all the bases and get back home without having to stop at one of the bases. If he does make it all the way safely back home without stopping, it is called “hitting a home run.”

Now, let’s make a conclusion about hitting a home run, using our Greek preposition “*ex*” translated into English “by.” We can say that a home run is “*ex*” (by) hitting the ball. What does that tell us? It tells us that the home run came, started, or originated from that solid smack of the ball to the uttermost corner of the field. Does that mean there is no running of the bases involved? No, of course not. All it means is that the home run’s origin was the good hit. The batter must then run to first base, then to second, then to third, and finally back to home base to complete his home run. If he hits the ball clear over the fence and then refuses to run the bases, would his team get a “run” scored on their side. No!

And yet we can truthfully say that a home run is by (*ex*) hitting the ball. And Paul could truthfully say that justifi-



A home run is “*ex*” (by) hitting the ball.

cation is by (*ex*) faith. Was he saying that justification involves only faith? NO!!! All we can safely conclude is that becoming righteous has its source in faith. Paul then goes on to clarify that justification also begins “outside the territory of” doing the works prescribed by the Mosaic law. There may or may not be more than faith involved in justification. Romans 5:23 does not tell us if there are bases to run or not. It only concludes that a home run (justification) has its beginnings in a good smack of the ball (faith).

My whole point in this section concerning the phrase “by faith” is this: theologians have misinterpreted this phrase to mean that justification is totally accomplished by faith all by itself, when in fact it only indicates that justification originates or has its source in faith.

Check your Romans Road maps well, my friends! Make sure the road signs have not been misinterpreted!

Grace kingdomizing

What!?!? Kingdomizing? Let me explain ...

Turn your Bibles to Romans 5:21, to another very powerful verse that the typical Romans Road maps bypass. Here we read, “so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Let’s dissect this verse into smaller pieces for easier digestion. First, the words “grace reign.”

“Grace” is the noun, the subject. And it is doing something. Grace is kingdomizing!

Taking a look at the Greek text again, we see “*basileuse*.” The interesting thing about this word is that it is a verb, from the same root as the Greek word for “kingdom.” In our English language, “reign” is a good translation, perhaps the best official English translation available. “Kingdomize” is not an official English word, but it gives us a good word picture. Or, perhaps an even better word picture is to phrase it, “*grace makes kingdom happen through righteousness.*”

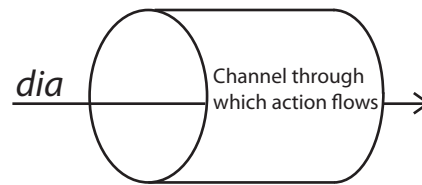
The purpose of Christ’s coming was to set up a kingdom, that is, to organize an “alternative society” that reigns over sin, self, Satan, death, and hell. And, Paul gives us a beautiful picture of grace “kingdomizing.” In previous times, our verse tells us, sin used to be king, bringing us to death. But now, grace abounds (v. 20) so that grace may kingdomize us *eis* (into—remember that preposition *eis*, with its reference to *goal or destination?*) eternal life.

Let’s look now at the phrase “through righteousness.” “Through” is another preposition, but with only eight definitions in my dictionary. Looking at the Greek for some guidance, we see *dia*. *Dia* is pretty simple to get the idea of, since we have so many English words that are prefixed with *dia*:- Diagram, diameter, diarrhea, etc.

The Greek preposition *dia* is used to indicate the channel by which something is accomplished. *Dia* is the pipe, so to speak, that is used to carry out the action of the verb. That is why it is translated “through.” At the gas station, you put gas in your car *dia* (through) the nozzle and hose that comes from the gas pump. In the same way, grace kingdomizes a person into eternal life *dia* (through, or by means of) righteous living.

Paul ends the verse by telling us that the whole operation is *dia* Jesus Christ our Lord. Here, the KJV uses “by,” in the sense of “by means of.” This last phrase sort of sums up the channel through which the whole operation flows—Jesus!

We end up with Paul telling us that in the same way that sin used to extend its kingdom in us, taking us into death, now grace would kingdomize in us, and by means of upright living would take us into eternal life—all through the “channel” of Jesus!



The Greek preposition “dia” indicates the channel through which the action flows. Paul tells us that grace would “make kingdom happen” in us “dia” Jesus!

The dead-end street

Remember the family friend I mentioned at the beginning, the one who ended up on a dead-end street in a cemetery? Well, your typical Romans Road map has a dead-end street in it, and unfortunately, most of them end up leading you there. Can you imagine!?

You see, most of the Romans Road maps that I have seen end up saying essentially that the road to heaven is called “Faith-Alone Avenue.” This well-known route is travelled by many pilgrims in search of eternal life. But it always dead-ends—just like my friend—among the dead.

The only place in the KJV where the words “faith” and “alone” are in the same verse is in a verse that also contains the word “dead”: “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.” Ja. 2:17

Dear reader, “Faith-Alone Avenue” is a dead-end street!

Conclusion

Putting some of the above points together, suddenly a different picture begins to emerge than what the typical Romans Road map gives. We see faith in God as a source from which springs the opportunity to experience a grace that will reign in us, leading us into obedience, righteous living, and eternal life. We then have no fear of the judgment day, in which our works will determine our destiny. This is because faith and grace have kingdomized us into a fruitful life of good works. God has performed the whole operation for one cause—for His name’s sake, for His glory! And all this was channeled through Jesus!

My friends, I sincerely suggest that you wad your old Romans Road map up and toss it *eis* (into) the trash can. Then, get out a fresh sheet of paper *ex* (out of) your drawer and carefully begin a new map, going through the Bible verse by verse, slowly and carefully. And, please, please do not use the few points in this short article as a complete “Romans Road” map. What I have written here is incomplete, a few points chosen out of many, just to highlight a couple of missing points. I reiterate: This article is NOT a complete Romans Road map.

And to you, dear young brother or sister who is just starting on your journey to heaven, I have some sincere advice. The book of Romans is filled with some of the deeper intricacies of Christian theology. Even the apostle Peter wrote that Paul's letters contain "some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." 2 Pe. 3:16 You would do well, young reader, to begin your Christian life with a focus on Jesus' teachings. Focus first on the example and commands of Christ, and then let Paul's letter to the Romans reinforce what Jesus taught. Too many people have "wrested" Paul's writings—separating them from Jesus' life and teachings—and then come up with what is supposed to be a simple "Romans Road Map to Heaven." But as we have seen, there are too many bypasses, detours, and dead-end streets in their maps.

Do you know that I have never, ever—not one single time—seen a Romans Road map that included Jesus' simple and clear statement that one cannot be His disciple if he does not take up the cross and follow Him? Taking up your cross is an absolute must, yet not one single Romans Road map has ever included that important step. I know that this teaching is not in Paul's letter to the Romans, but that just shows the folly of trying to make a roadmap to heaven out of one part of the New Testament. When you begin redrawing your roadmap to heaven, start with Jesus' teachings and life, and include the whole of the New Testament.

Fare ye well, fellow pilgrims! May grace abound in you and kingdomize you *eis* obedience. You will then have no fear of the coming Judgment Day! ~

The Potion in the Bottle

The ungodly are saying that we drink something out of a bottle, and the devil himself has no idea what is in that bottle. Whoever drinks from the bottle isn't happy [with the status quo] any more, acts differently, and has no concern for money or life. He must do whatever he is told to do.

Well, you people without God, I want to explain it to you. I will let you call it a "bottle." And it is true; the devil doesn't know what is in that "bottle"! And it is true that whoever drinks from that "bottle" becomes a different person!

The drink in this bottle is simply the smashed, beaten, ground up, and troubled heart, crushed by the mortar called "the cross." God's grapes have to be pressed in the winepress called tribulation, otherwise there would be no wine.

Our friend and brother Jesus drank of this drink while He was on the cross, mixed with vinegar and hysop. He offered some to the two sons of Zebedee, asking them, "Can you also drink of the cup that I will be drinking from?"

Yes, it is such a powerful "bottle" to drink from, that whenever someone drinks of it, he becomes another person, and his neighbors take notice.

It doesn't matter whether you call it a cup or a "bottle." In fact, a bottle serves as an analogy. A bottle is narrow at the top, and wide at the bottom, just like the way of salvation is also narrow, filled with fear and trouble. But once the trouble has been passed, the bottom is large ... just like God giving great comfort to us after our trials. When He disciplines us, it seems sad, not joyful, but afterwards it brings peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have waited patiently. The Lord allows no one to stay an orphan, but gives them comfort, which comfort is nothing less than a foretaste of eternal life. ~

—Leonard Schiemer, who wrote the above, spent six years as a Franciscan monk before becoming disheartened with their lifestyle and doctrine. After hearing Hans Hut preach, he was rebaptized in the Spring of 1527. For the next six months, Leonard preached and baptized many others. On November 25, 1527, his preaching activity was ended when he was thrown in prison. He was treated mercifully at first, and spent much time writing. It was probably during this time that the above was written. However, on January 14, 1528—only seven weeks after his capture—Leonard took his final swig from the "bottle" of suffering. After passing through the "narrow neck" of having his head cut off and his body burned, Leonard was given the glorious opportunity to rest forever in the "large bottom" of eternal consolation. Leonard's career as a rebaptized disciple of Jesus lasted a total of about nine months.

The above writing was extracted and adapted from *Spiritual Life in Anabaptism*, by Cornelius J. Dyck.

Sober-Mindedness Pressed upon Youth



Matthew Henry, the commentator (1662-1714)

Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded. Titus 2:6

The following article is from an earlier age, a time far removed from our “instant society” and the “whoever has the biggest toys wins” mindset of our current culture. Thus, it may seem like the uttermost of folly to many.

The English of this article has been modernized ... to a degree. Some of the old way of speaking has been left intact, with the express purpose of making the reader stretch himself a little bit and exercise the mind ... and THINK ABOUT what he/she is reading. After all, the first section speaks about the need of youth to mature their mind through THINKING about serious matters.

We suggest that the reader take the time to properly digest this article, to be mature enough to not lay it aside just because he/she may have to THINK and CONSIDER. Oh, that a generation of young men and ladies could arise to show our society a better way than the slovenly path of self-indulgence! ~

It is the great duty of all young people to be sober-minded. In this discourse I shall endeavor to show you,

- (1) what this sober-mindedness is
- (2) what considerations should engage you to be sober-minded
- (3) how to make such applications in your life

So, to begin, let us see what it is to be sober-minded. I beseech you suffer this word and receive it at your peril, for if it comes from God, it is at your utmost peril to refuse it. Give this exhortation its full scope.

- You must be considerate and thoughtful, and not rash and heedless.

To be sober-minded is to make use of our reason, in reasoning with ourselves and in communing with our own hearts. It is to employ those noble powers and capacities by which we are distinguished from and dignified above the animals. We learned to walk when we were children; when will we learn to think, to think seriously, to think to the purpose? Our heads are full of floating thoughts, foreign and impertinent. When will we be brought to close and fixed thoughts, to think with concern and application of the great things that belong to our everlasting peace and welfare? We were endued with reason and heart-communion for those great ends, that we might not receive the grace of God in vain, but being rational creatures, we might act like we should.

Some have recommended the study of mathematics to mature the minds of young people, but I would much rather it were done by a deep concern about the soul and another world. If such prevailed, it would eventually mature their thoughts to the best purpose. Because when we come to see the greatness of that God with whom we have to do, and the weight of eternity we are standing on the brink of, we will see it is time to think, and high time to look about us.

We must learn to think not only of what is smack in front of our eyes—of what merely strikes the senses and affects the imagination—but of the causes and consequences and reasons of things. We should discover truths and compare them with one another, to argue them and finally apply them to ourselves. We should beware of fastening upon thoughts that first pop into our minds, instead of fastening upon those that should come first and which deserve to be first considered.

Multitudes are undone because they are unthinking. Not considering life is the ruin of thousands, and many a precious soul has perished through mere carelessness. The Lord would have us “consider our ways,” and retire into our own souls and get to know our own heart. Assuredly, it would be the most profitable acquaintance we could fall into! While we covet to see the world, we are strangers at home. Take

Pure Christianity does not fear the scrutiny of a free thought, but it despises the impotent malice of a prejudiced one.

time to think! Desire to be alone now and then, and let not solitude and retirement be an uneasiness to you. You have a heart of your own you may talk to, and a God nigh with whom you may have pleasing communion.

Learn to think freely, for God invites you to do so: “Come now, and let us reason

together.” I encourage you to inquire and think impartially, as the noble Bereans did, searching the scriptures daily to see whether those things which the apostles told them were true. Pure Christianity does not fear the scrutiny of a free thought, but it despises the impotent malice of a prejudiced one.

So, beloved, learn to think for yourselves. Think of what you are, of what you are capable of, think of who made you and what you were made for. Think of why you were endowed with the powers of reason. Think of what you have been doing since you came into this world. Think of the great work you were sent into the world for; think of the vanity of childhood and youth—of how unavoidably those years are passing away—and determine whether or not it be high time for the youngest of you to begin to be religious and enter in at the strait gate.

As to your particular actions, do not jump for every adventure, like those that despise their own ways, but consider what you do before you do it that you may not have occasion to repent of it afterwards. Do nothing rashly. Always speak and act under the control of the great law of considering your ways. Ponder the path of your feet, that it may be a strait path. Some people take pride in being careless, and they glory in their shame. But you are not to be thus negligent; set your hearts to all those things that are testified, and think on them with the reason of men.

- You must be cautious and prudent, and not willful and heady.

You must not only think rationally, but after you have done so, you must act wisely. Walk circumspectly, look before you, look around you; look under your feet and pick your way, not as fools, but as wise. King David said, “I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way,” and his prayer was, “Lord, when wilt thou come unto me?” Accordingly, we find

that his purpose was performed and prayer answered, as “he behaved himself wisely in all his ways, and the Lord was with him.” God will guide those that govern themselves; but those that love to wander, God will leave to wander endlessly.

Put away childish follies with other childish things, and do not speak and think like children all your days. Adopt principles of wisdom. Fix to yourselves rules of wisdom, and be ruled by those rules, and acted by those principles. It is the wisdom of the prudent to understand his own way, his own business, and not to censure other people’s. Such wisdom will be profitable to direct your measures and steps in all cases. Youth is apt to be bold and venturesome, and therefore resolute and dogmatic, to its great bigotry. But you are not to be so. Let the place of reason and conscience give check to the violence of appetite and passion, let them rectify the mistakes and overrule the hasty dictates of humor and fancy. Let them reduce the arbitrary and exorbitant power of those tyrants called appetite and passion!

How often did Solomon press it upon the young man under his tuition to get wisdom? Recall this: “My son, be wise; wisdom is the principle thing, therefore get wisdom, get understanding.” You that are launching out into the world must take wisdom to be your pilot, or you are in danger of splitting upon some rock.

Be hesitant of your own judgments, and jealous of yourselves. Be careful not to take all things right and entire lest your resolutions resulting from your faulty considerations be proved wrong. Do not say, “I will do so-and-so ...” or “I am resolved to do such-and-such regardless of what may be said to the contrary ...” or “I will walk in the way of my heart, and in the sight of my eyes, whatever it may cost me ...” Never have any will except that which is guided by wisdom. Be willing to be advised by your friends in every case of moment and difficulty, and depend more upon the judgment of those who have more experience in the world than you. Consult with those who are wise and good. Ask them what they would do if they were in your case, and you will find that “in the multitude of counselors there is safety.” And if such advice does not prove well, you shall then have comfort knowing that at least you acted in mature deliberation, and that you did it for the best.

What brighter character can be given of a young man, than to have someone say “He is wise”?

What brighter character can be given of a young man, than to have someone say, “He is wise”? Or what blacker than to have someone say, “He is willful”? But would you be wise—not only regarded as wise—but be really wise?

Study the scriptures. By them you will get more understanding than the ancients, more than all your teachers. Make your observations upon the fortune and misfortune of others, taking a pattern by those who do well and a warning by those who do ill. Beloved, look upon both examples, and receive instruction. But be especially earnest with God in prayer for wisdom, as Solomon was, for such prayer is both pleasing and prevailing in heaven. "If any man" (if any young man) "lack wisdom" (if he understands that he lacks wisdom, his way to it is plain) "let him ask of God" (and he is encouraged to do it) "for the Lord giveth wisdom." The Lord delights to give wisdom, He gives it liberally, and He has a particular eye to young people in the dispensing of this gift. His word was written "to give to the young man knowledge and discretion."

For those who are willing, but do not care to be scolded, we are told that God gives and upbraids not. But if this were not enough to encourage the beggar at Wisdom's gate, there is an express promise to everyone who seeks in the right way: he shall not seek in vain. This is not a promise with a "perhaps," but one with the greatest assurance: "It shall be given him." Ja. 1:5 To all true believers, Christ is, and shall be, made wisdom.

- You must be humble and modest, and not proud and conceited.

Sober-mindedness is the same as lowly-mindedness. It is that same poverty of spirit on which Christ pronounced His first blessing (Mt. 5:3), and what is recommended to the younger when Peter writes to be "clothed with humility." 1 Pe. 5:5

I have seen more young people ruined by pride than perhaps by any other lust. Therefore let me press this upon you with all earnestness; it is a caution introduced with more than ordinary solemnity. It is this: "Let no man think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but think soberly." Let him think unto sobriety, let him think himself into a sober mind, and always keep in that good mind.

Keep low thoughts of yourselves, of your endeavors both outward and inward, of your attainments and improvements, of all your performances, and all the things you call merits and excellencies. Boast not of a false gift, of what you have not, nor be puffed up with what you have. Whatever you may have in you that is commendable, treat it as people would their own faults and diminish it, and look much at that in others which is more commendable.

If you are handsome, do not glory in it, nor in your beauty, nor in your ingenious wit. Does your face shine in any respect? Be as Moses was; as soon as he perceived it, he placed a veil over it, not wishing the people to see. Delight more to say and do what is praiseworthy than to be

praised for it. Remember: "What hast thou that thou hast not received?" And what have you received that you have not abused? Why then should you boast?

Keep up a quick and constant sense of your manifold defects and infirmities, of how much there is in you, and how much is said and done by you every day. Keep in mind that which you have reason to be ashamed of and humbled for, think of how many things you fall short in, and in how many more you come short of the rule. You will soon find no reason to be proud of what you know when you begin to see how much you are ignorant of, and you will see how "ungood" you are when you see how much you do amiss. Dwell much upon humbling considerations, and upon those that tend to take down your high opinion of yourselves. Keep up a humble sense of your necessary and constant dependence upon Christ and His grace, without which you are nothing, and will soon be worse than nothing.

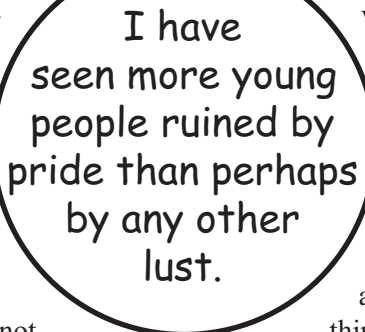
Think not yourselves too wise, too good, or too old to be reprov'd and taught to do better. When you are double and triple the age you are now, even then think not yourselves too old to learn, and increase in learning. "If any man thinks that he knows anything" (if he thinks he knows "everything," so that he needs no more instruction) "he

knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know." 1 Co. 8:2

If you deem yourselves wise, become fools that you may be wise. Be sensible of your own folly that you may become aware of how to attain to wisdom, and prepared to receive the grace of wisdom.

Have no confidence in your own judgment, nor be opinionative, nor look upon those with contempt that do not think as you do. Be not quick to say, "I hold to so-and-so ..." It is like a serious preacher once told a novice who was laying down the law with great assurance: "It best becomes you to hold your peace." Take heed of thinking yourselves above your business. You that are apprentices, think not yourselves above your service. Humility will make the yoke you are under easy to carry. Think it no disparagement to confine yourselves to your business. Be ashamed of nothing but sin.

It will be yet much worse if you think yourselves above your religion, above the restraints of it, as if it were a thing below you to be afraid of sin, or to make it a thing of conscience concerning your words and actions. But there cannot be a greater disgrace to you than loose walking. Nor think yourselves above the exercises of your religion, as if it were a thing below you to pray, hear the word of God, and join in acts of devotion, for the greatest honor you can do yourselves is to honor God.



I have seen more young people ruined by pride than perhaps by any other lust.

Beloved, let this branch of sober-mindedness appear in your looks and behavior. Let the show of your countenances be a witness for you, that you are not confident and conceited. Always keep up a due reserve of yourselves, and a due reverence to everyone about you—and especially to those above you. Be not pert in the way you carry yourselves nor fantastical in your dress. Humility and modesty reigning in the heart are the best ornaments, in the sight of God, and in all wise men. These are of great price, and you will find that “better it is to be of a humble spirit with the lowly than to divide the spoil with the proud,” for when “men’s pride shall bring them low, honor shall uphold the humble in spirit.” Yes, they shall be upheld, borne up, and borne out in that honor.

- You must be temperate and self-denying, and not indulgent of your appetites.

Let me now warn young men to dread the sin of drunkenness,¹ to keep a distance from it, to avoid all appearances of it, and all approaches to it. It has slain its thousands—nay, its tens of thousands of young people. It has ruined their health, brought diseases upon them, and cut them off in the flower of their days. How many fall as unpitied sacrifices to this base lust!

Take heed of the beginnings of this sin, for the way of it is downhill, and many, under the pretense of innocent entertainment and passing the evening in pleasant conversation, are drawn to drink in excess and make beasts of themselves. You should tremble to think how fatal the consequences are, how unfit it renders you for the service of God, yes, and for your own job in the morning. How many are thus besotted and sunk into a drowsiness that clothes a man with rags, and yet that is not the worst. It also extinguishes convictions and the spark of devotion and provokes the Spirit of grace to withdraw. It will be the sinner’s eternal ruin if it be not repented of and forsaken in time. The word of God has said it: “Drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God” and “Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it gives its color in the cup,” (when it is charming and tempting; do not be overcome with its allurements, for it shall) “... bite like a serpent and sting like an adder.”

If you saw the devil putting the cup of drunkenness in your hand, I dare say you would not take it. You may be sure this temptation comes from him, and therefore you ought to dread it as much as if you saw him offering it to you. If you saw poison enter the glass, you would not drink it. If strong drink be provoking to God and to the ruining of your souls,

¹ The author is undoubtedly speaking about drunkenness caused by the ingestion of alcohol. However, the same applies with being drunk on pleasures, addiction to adrenalin rushes, and such like. If the shoe fits, wear it.

Young people should not be solicitous to have all the delights of their senses wound up to the height of pleasureableness.

such then is much worse than poison! It is even worse than death: there is hell in the cup! I am sorry we cannot urge this more strongly against you, so much as gladly we would the scandal of it, for drinking has grown so fashionable. But whether you will hear or whether you will forbear, we will insist upon the sin of it, and its prejudice to the soul both here and forever, and beg of you to consider these things and frighten yourselves from it. We will insist likewise upon the real disgrace drunkenness is to a reasonable creature, to one who is hereby spoiled of his crown, and leveled with the brutes. We would convince you to shame yourselves out of it before God and your own conscience.

Drunkenness is a sin that is in a special manner shameful and hurtful to those who profess religion. You that have been well-educated and brought up in sober families have had examples of sobriety set before you.

You have known the honors and pleasures of sober conversation. What a reproach it will be to you if you take up the regimen of a drunkard! What a degeneracy! What a fall from your first love! Tell me, where will it all stop? Perhaps you have already given your name to the Lord Jesus, and dare to sit at His table, partaking of His cup and the cup of devils. Let Christians that are made kings and priests by God take a lesson which Solomon’s mother taught him: “It is not for kings, oh Lemuel, it is not for kings” (so it is not for Christians) “to drink wine lest they drink and forget the law” (forget the gospel). And yet this is not all I have to warn you of.

Young people should not be solicitous to have all the delights of their senses wound up to the height of pleasureableness. Be not “desirous of dainties, for they are deceitful meat.” Pr. 23:3 It is true that although the use of them is perhaps lawful, the love of them is dangerous. The indulging of the appetites of the body is oft injurious to the soul. Learn instead to relish the delights that are rational and spiritual, causing your mouths to be out of taste to that which is brutal and belong only to animal life. Be afraid lest by indulging the body and the lusts of it you come by degrees to the black character of those that were “lovers of pleasure more than the lovers of God.” 2 Ti. 3:4

The body is made to be a servant to the soul, and it must be treated accordingly. We must give to it as we would give to a servant: that which is just and equal. Let the body have what is fitting, but let it not be suffered to domineer, for nothing is so insufferable as “a servant when he reigneth.” Pr. 30:22 Be also careful not to pamper it, for “he that delicately brings up his servant from a child, shall have him become his son at the length.” Pr. 29:21

Be dead therefore to the delights of the five senses, and kill the love of ease and pleasure. Learn to endure hardness,

learn to deny yourselves, and you will then make it easy to bear the common calamities of human life, as well as sufferings for the sake of righteousness. Those that would approve themselves good soldiers of Jesus Christ must endure hardness, and they must accustom themselves to it. 2 Ti. 2:3

- You must be mild and gentle, and not indulgent of your passions.

This signifies moderation, a soundness of mind that is opposed to frenzy and violence. We have need of sobriety to restrain and repress not only our inordinate appetites towards those things that are pleasing to our senses, but also to our irregular resentment of those things that are displeasing; for mankind got a vexatious knowledge of good and evil by eating of the forbidden tree.

Young people are especially apt to be hot and furious, to resent rebukes and correction, and to study revenge like Simeon and Levi, whose fierce anger was cursed along with their cruel wrath. Their passions were ungoverned because their pride was not killed.

Young people are fond of liberty and therefore cannot bear having someone tell them what to do. They are wedded to their own opinions and therefore cannot bear contradiction, but are quickly all in a flame if crossed. They reckon it to their honor (when really it is a shame) to let their passions run free and not care what indecencies they are being transporting into by them, nor do they consider how mischievous the consequences may be.

Learn, therefore, to bridle your anger, and to guard against the sparks of provocation, that they may not fall into the tinder. If the fire be already kindled, put it out presently by commanding peace in your own souls and setting a watch before the door of your lips. And when at any time you are affronted, or think yourselves so, don't strive to give a smart answer (which will only stir up more anger), but aim for wisdom and grace of a soft answer (which will turn away wrath—Pr. 15:1).

You are setting out in the world now, and would have your passage through it be comfortable. Nothing will contribute more to that than a quiet spirit. "The meek shall inherit the earth" was God's promise, by David first (Ps. 37:11), and then after by the Son of David (Mt. 5:5). By the good government of your passions, you will make yourselves easy, and easy to those about you. A great deal of mischief both to others and to yourselves will be prevented.

If you let your passions control you now while you are young, they will be in danger of growing more and more headstrong as you get older, and of making you perpetually

uneasy. But if you get dominion over them now, you will easily keep this dominion and so keep the peace in your hearts and houses, and through the grace of God it will not be in the power of even sickness or old age to make you peevish, sour your attitude, or embitter your spirit. Put on therefore among the ornaments of your youth "as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness and long-suffering."

- You must be chaste and reserved, and not wanton and impure.

The lusts of the flesh which are manifest—adultery, fornication, uncleanness, and lasciviousness (Ga. 5:19)—are particularly called youthful lusts. And against those, in Christ's name, I am here to warn all you that are young.

For God's sake, and for your own precious soul's sake, flee these youthful lusts! Dread them as you would a devouring fire, or a destroying plague, and keep at a distance from them. Abstain from all appearances of these sins, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh, even the attire of a harlot. Covet not to know these depths of Satan, but take pride in being ignorant of the way of the adulterous woman. See all temptations to uncleanness as coming from the unclean spirit, that roaring lion who goes about continually, thus seeking to devour young people. O that you would conceive a detestation and abhorrence

of this sin and put on a firm and steady resolution in the strength of the grace of Jesus Christ to never defile yourselves with it! Remember what the apostle prescribes, as that which ought to be the constant care of the unmarried, to be holy in both body and spirit, and so to please the Lord. 1 Co. 7:34

Take heed of the beginnings of this sin, lest Satan get an advantage against you and the little thief who insensibly breaks in through the window, goes on to open the door for the strong man to enter. How earnestly doth Solomon warn the young man to take heed of the baits, lest he be taken in the snares of the evil woman! "Remove thy way far from her," saith he, because he that would be kept from harm, must keep out of harm's way. "Come not nigh to the door of her house," but go on the other side of the street, as though it were a house infected; lest you mourn at last when your flesh and body are consumed. Pray earnestly to God for the grace to keep you from this sin, that the grace may be sufficient for you, that the temptation never be so sudden, that it may find you awake and aware of it, and that you may not be surprised by it. Pray that it never be so strong as to find



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bridle your anger.**

you unarmed against it; but put on the whole armor of God that you may not be overpowered and overcome by it.

Get your hearts purified by the Word of God, and sanctified by divine love, for how else shall young people cleanse their way, but by taking heed thereto, according to the Word? Keep up the authority of conscience, and keep it always tender and void of offence. Make a covenant with your eyes, that they may not be the inlets of any impure thoughts, or the outlets of any impure desires. Pray David's prayer: "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity," that you may never look and lust. Modesty is the hedge of chastity, and the ornament of your age, so be sure to let your dress and conduct exemplify modesty, and as such to speak a chaste communication coupled with fear. Make it so that you know how to be pleasant and cheerful without transgressing even the strictest rules of modesty—and that you are ignorant of being anything but modest.

I would especially charge you that are young to take heed that no corrupt, filthy communication proceed out of your mouth. Never dare speak nor delight to hear anything that is immodest. "Fornication, and all uncleanness, let it not be once named among you;" indeed, foolish talking and jesting "which is not convenient" is very unbecoming for professors of such a pure and undefiled religion as Christianity. It is "evil communication" which corrupts good manners, and for which our Savior saith we must give account on the great day. Think, therefore, what a great dishonor filthy talk is to God, what a reproach it is to yourselves, and what mischief it does to those you converse with. Think of how great a matter a spark of this fire from hell may kindle, and how much the sin and ruin of souls you may have to answer for. God turns those to a pure language whom he brings to call upon his name. Zp. 3:9

- You must be steady and composed, and not giddy and unsettled.

In contrast to a roving and wandering heart, and a heart divided, this we commonly take to be signified by a mind that acts and moves steadily and is one with itself. Be therefore sober-minded, and let your hearts be fixed.

Establish them, and be not like Reuben who was "unstable as water," for those who are like that will never excel. Fix now serious godliness in your youth; fix heaven as your end and holiness as your way. Halt no longer, hover no longer between the two, but be at a point. You have been bidden to chose whom you will serve; stand no longer de-

liberating, but bring this matter finally at length to the issue you will abide by ... and abide by it. Fix yourself to whatever you were designed for in this world. Whatever it is that you are employed in, let your application to it be close and constant, and do not divert from it upon every slight and trivial pretense.

Learn to fix your thoughts, and be not wandering; let them not run from one thing to another, as a bird in flight—for thus thy thoughts run at length with fool's eyes to the ends of the earth. What thy hand finds to do and heart finds to think—which is to God's purpose—do it and think it with

all your might and pursue it until you finish it. Learn to fix your goals and act with a single eye, for the double-minded man—who is far from being sober-minded—cannot but be unstable in all his ways, and turns himself as the wind, and "he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea." Ja. 1:6,8

Act consistently with yourselves; understand your own ways. Do not have your ear open to every whisper and suggestion that would turn you from it. Be no more children tossed to and fro with every bait (Ep. 4:14), but in understanding be ye men, be ye fixed, let your foot stand in an even place, and let your hearts be established. Be not moved—and be not removed.

- You must be content and easy, and not ambitious and aspiring.

A sober mind is that which accommodates itself to every estate of life, and every event of Providence, so that whatever changes happen, it preserves the possession and enjoyment of itself.

You who are young must learn to reconcile yourselves to your current situation, and make the best of it, because it is the will of God it should be as it is, and what pleases Him should please us. This is because He knows better than we do what is fit to be done, and fit for us to have. Let this challenge all troubling and discontented thoughts. Should it be according to your mind? Shall you who are but of yesterday control Him, argue with Him, or prescribe to Him, whose counsels were of old from everlasting? It is folly to direct the divine disposals, but wisdom to delight in them.

He who determines the times before appointed, and the bounds of men's habitation, ordered what our rank and station should be in the world, what parents we should be born of, what lot we should be born to, and what our make and capacity of mind and body should be. In these respects there is a great variety ordained by Providence between some



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people and others, who yet are made of one blood. Some are born to wealth and honor, others to poverty and obscurity. Some seem made and marked by nature (that is, the God of nature) to be great and esteemed, while others seem “doomed” to be all their days little and low. You see many above you, who make a name for themselves in the world, and are likely to do so yet more, while you are of little importance. Yet, do not envy them, nor fret at the place God’s Providence has put you in, but make yourselves easy in it, and make the best of it, as those who are satisfied.

Possess your minds while you are young with a reverence for the divine Providence, its sovereignty, wisdom, and goodness; and bring your minds unto a cheerful submission of yourselves to all its determinations. Here I am; let the Lord do with me, and all my affairs, as seems good in His sight. This would have a mighty influence upon the conduct of your affairs, and the evenness of your spirits, all your days. Whatever earthly things are taken from you, or you lose the enjoyment of, resolve to be content. Don’t accept it because you cannot help it, “This is an evil, and I must bear it,” that is but a poor reason. But accept it because it is the will of God, whose will is His wisdom, “This is an evil, but it is designed for my good, and I will bear it.”

Lay your expectations low from this world, and don’t promise yourselves great wealth or esteem in it. It is God’s command. Ro. 12:16 Do not covet the riches of this world, do not set your eyes and hearts upon them, as if they were the best things, and as if they would make you happy, and you could not be happy without them. But condescend to people of low estate, and take as much pleasure in conversation with them as if they were company for princes and your peers. Or, as the margin reads it, “Be content with modest things,” with a modest habitation, modest diet, modest clothes, modest employments, if such be your lot. And instead of blaming it on Him, bless God for it that it is not worse, and believe that it is best for you.

Aim at advancing yourselves, not that you may live in more pomp and ease, but that you may be in so much the better capacity to do good. We commonly say of you who are young that “now is your time to make your fortune”; it is a heathenish expression, for it is not blind fortune, but an all-seeing Providence that we are governed by. But that is not all; it is not in your power to make your own lot; every man’s judgment proceeds from the Lord.

Let young people be modest and moderate, and sober-minded in their desires and expectations of temporal good

things, as becomes those who see through them, and look above and beyond them, to the things not seen, that are eternal.

- You must be grave and serious, and not frothy and vain.

This meaning we commonly give to the word here used. Him that is serious we call a sober man. And I put this last in the list of the ingredients of sober-mindedness, because it will have a very great influence upon all the rest. We should gain our point entirely with young people, if we could but prevail with them to be serious. It is serious piety we would bring them to, and to live in good earnest.

It’s not that we would oblige young people never to be merry, nor do we have any ill-natured design upon them to make them melancholy. No, religion allows them to be cheerful; it is your time, make your best of

it. Evil days will come, of which you will say you have no pleasure in them, when the cares and sorrows of this world increase upon you. We would not have you to anticipate those evil days.

It is mentioned as an instance of the promised prosperity and flourishing state of Jerusalem, that the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof. Zc. 8:5 No, religion prescribes cheerfulness to all those who are sincere and hearty in it.

Go your way, eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart, for God now accepts your works. Ec. 9:7 God expects

to be served by us with joyfulness and gladness of heart, in the abundance of all things. De. 28:47

And it is certain that none have such good reason to be cheerful as godly people have, none can be so upon better grounds, or with a better grace; so justly or so safely. I have often said, and I must take all occasions to repeat it, that a holy, heavenly life spent in the service of God and in communion with Him is without doubt the most pleasant, comfortable life that anyone can live in this world.

But that which I would caution you against under this heading is vain and carnal mirth, that mirth, that laughter of the fool, of which Solomon says, “It is mad,” and “What doeth it?” Innocent mirth is of good use in its time and place, it will revive the spirit and fit you for business. A merry heart does good like a medicine. But ... it must be used like a medicine, must be taken physically, only when there is occasion for it, and not constantly, like our daily bread. And like medicine, it must be taken by rule; as not too often, so not too much at a time, like opiates, which are taken by drops, and with great caution. When you make use of these

Aim at advancing yourselves, not that you may live in more pomp and ease, but that you may be in so much the better capacity to do good.

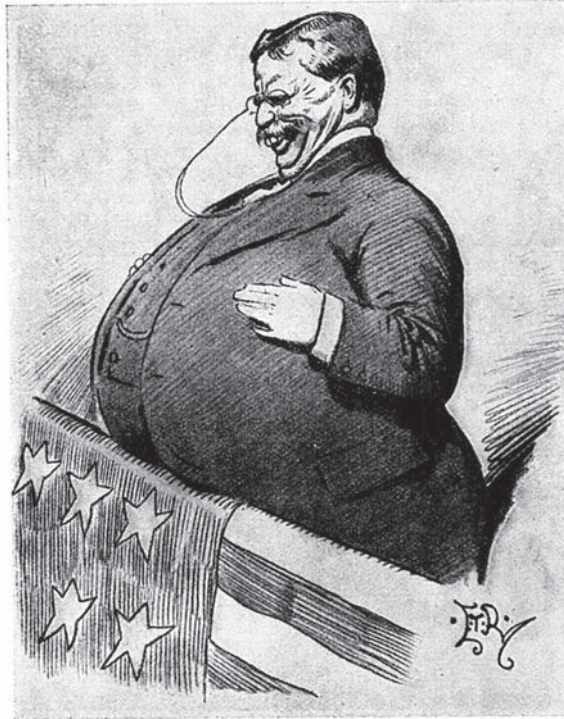
medicines, it must be done according to prescription, and you must take great care of yourselves lest that turn to your hurt and become a snare and a trap, which was intended for your health and welfare.

Allow yourselves in mirth as far as will consist with sober-mindedness, and no further. Be merry and wise; never let your mirth transgress the laws of piety, charity, or modesty, nor encroach upon your time for devotion and the service of God. Wise men will always reckon him over fond of his mirth, who will rather lose his friend than his jest. This is worse yet with he who will rather lose his God and a good conscience. Never make sport with the Scripture and sacred things, but let that which is serious always be spoken of with seriousness; for it is dangerous playing with sharp tools.

Take heed lest your mirth exceed due bounds, and transport you into any indecencies; that you give not yourselves too great a liberty, and then think to excuse it by saying, "Am not I in sport?" Pr. 26:19 Set a double guard at such a time before the door of your lips, lest you offend with your tongues; and especially keep your hearts with all diligence. Let the inward thought still be serious; and in the midst of your greatest mirth, retain a disposition habitually serious, and a reigning affection to spiritual and divine things. Such will make you indifferent to all vain mirth and pleasure, and set you above it, and enable you to look upon that with a holy contempt, which many spend so much of their time in with so great a complacency. A serious Christian, though, to relax himself and entertain his friends, he may allow himself a little mirth and recreation, yet he will make it to appear that he is not in his element, that he knows better pleasures, and that he has given spiritual things the preference. A believing foretaste of the milk and honey of Canaan is enough to put the mouth quite out of taste with the garlic and onions of Egypt!

But while I am pressing you who are young to be always serious, habitually so, always well affected to serious work, what shall we think of those who are never serious? Who are always merry, always jesting, always bantering, so that you never know when they speak in earnest? Who are always in pursuit of some sensual pleasure or other, and never

know what it is to be one quarter of an hour serious, from the beginning of the year to the end of it? Certainly they forget that for all these things God shall bring them into judgment, and they know not how soon. O that this laughter might be turned into the mourning of true penitents, and this joy into the heaviness of sincere converts, that it may not be turned, as otherwise it certainly will be, into the weeping and wailing of condemned sinners! The same Jesus who said, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted," has said also, "Woe unto you that laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep." Lu. 6:25



If you take the world for your guide, you will be bid to "laugh and be fat."

Shall I now prevail with you who are young, to value wisdom above wit, and that which helps to make you serious above that which helps to make you merry; and to take as much pleasure in sobriety as others do in vanity? It will be the honor of your youth, will arm you against the temptations you are surrounded with, and will not only mark you for something considerable in this world, but for something infinitely more so in the other world. And, if you understand yourselves aright, I dare say, one hour spent in the employments and enjoyments of a sober, serious mind will afford you more true comfort in the reflection, than many spent in mirth and gaiety, because it will certainly pass so much better in the account another day.

If you take the world for your guide, you will be bid to "laugh and be fat;" will be told that "an ounce of mirth is worth a pound of sorrow." But if you will attend to the dictates of the word of God (and it is fit that the word that must

judge us hereafter should rule us now), that will tell you that sorrow is better than laughter; and that it is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting. For by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better; it is made serious.

And thus you see what it is to be sober-minded, and how much of your duty it takes in. But are you content that it should take in all this? Can you say, that though in many things you come short, yet you esteem all these precepts, and all the things contained in them, to be right, and, therefore, hate every false way? You will then be very willing to have this sober-mindedness further pressed upon you. ~

In Pursuit of Virtue

—Judith Yoder

What is a virtuous woman?
Indeed,
that is an intensely momentous question.
For how can we attain that which we cannot define?
After sundry attempts to attain the ultimate,
a conclusion has been reached.

A virtuous woman
exudes an aura of quietness and confidence
even in the midst of direly vexatious circumstances,
because she knows she is in God's perfect will.

She is not afraid to stand
alone
or to be
"different"

if it glorifies God.

She does not heap up for herself
the tawdry tinsel
of this world,

nor help others build empires to self.

She realizes that there is a time to speak
and a time to be silent,

and is not found guilty of empty babblings.

She will not plague people
with long-winded eulogies of her accomplishments,
aspirations,
antiques,

figments of her imagination,
or grouching about her illnesses.

She whines not, neither does she flirt.

Her wisdom is boundless,
her tact and endurance indeed astounding,
and your likelihood of meeting her is virtually nil.

Why?

Because we have slipped into a
mindless,
spineless
torpor.

We have become quite imbalanced.

One extreme
is completely mealy and wobbly-souled,
the other,
odiously brazen.

We are in dire need of young women who will abstain
from being bedizened slaves to fashion and public opinion
and rise to resolute maturity.

Let us be totally dedicated to seeking God.

For only in seeking Him
Is true virtue and equilibrium found.

My Cranky Self

I grumble in the morning, "There's so much to do,
It's my turn to do dishes, why couldn't it be you?"
The baby is sick with a fever you say;
There goes my hopes of sewing today.
Don't touch me, don't bump, I already said "No,
I'm not gonna help you if you're so slow."
I complain and I grumble, 'til I'm all tied in knots.
I've been disrespectful to mom, and cross with the tots.

At night when upon my bed I lay
I feel very miserable as I think of my day.
"I'm awfully terrible," I tell myself with a groan,
Where is the good example that I should have shown.
In my dreams I'm so often lovely and sweet;
I imagine myself blessing those whom I meet.
I picture myself a kindhearted girl,
Singing and cleaning 'til my head's in a swirl,
Rocking baby brother who's teething and sick;
Laughing along with an annoying trick.

But I've been thinking, and come to a conclusion;
To think good works "happen" is just a delusion.
It takes time with God, reading and praying,
And with a tender heart, His will obeying.
And suddenly a flame in your heart will spark,
Glowing from within, it shatters the dark.
No longer need I be a sweet girl in my "dream";
I can be the *real* thing, a cheerful sunbeam.

—JoAnna Raber (Age 17) Ephrata, PA

GUILTY

I never cut my neighbor's throat,
My neighbor's gold I never stole;
I never spoiled his house and land;
But God have mercy on my soul!

For I am haunted night and day
By all the deeds I have not done;
Oh, unattempted loveliness!
Oh, costly valor never won!

—Marguerite Wilkinson

Continued from p. 19

Power to lay it down

Let's turned back to 1 Corinthians 6:12; there is one more point. We use "expedient" and "edify" to help make our decisions. But let's look now at "but I will not be brought under the power of any." It is not enough that it is "legal"—and might be expedient and edifying—but does this thing have the tendency to put me under its power?

Liberty can be defined as when you pick something up, you can also put it down. When you are in bondage, you can pick it up, but you can't let it go. Where is your liberty if you only can pick things up, but you can't put them down for your brother or sister or your wife or children? You are not experiencing liberty! You are experiencing the worst kind of bondage, because it is a spiritual bondage. I'm not talking about great big things, about earth-shattering things.

"Take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak ... and through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?" 1 Co. 8:9,10 Paul's conclusion is, "If therefore meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh as long as the world standeth."

We can ask, "Didn't he have the liberty to eat meat?" Of course he did! Let's subject the question to these three criteria: it was expedient for him, it would edify him ... but if he insisted on this "liberty," wasn't he under its power? When you sin against a brother and wound their weak conscience, you are sinning against Christ!

We have been delivered from the power of darkness and translated to the kingdom of His dear Son. If a decision requires the shades to be pulled down in our lives, you ought to put a big question mark on that thing. If it is something you are going to do that requires secrecy—darkness, undercover—it's a good indication that something is wrong. Take a look: What I am going to do, can it be done openly and freely before my brothers and sisters and before God?

If you are in the house and you pull down the blinds, what does it do? It keeps you from looking out, as well as others looking in. When you start operating in darkness, you are cutting off your perception of what's going on around you. And, you just cut off a valuable input in your life. If you do it enough, pretty soon you will be an island.

May God bless your decision-making! ~

He who sows justice makes an offering to God.
—Mark Felix (2nd-century Christian)

3rd Quarter 2010 Financial Report

Thank you for your support!



07/01/10 Beginning Balance	\$5,392.58
Receipts	
Tape Ministry Donations	\$46,583.34
Remnant Subscription Donations	\$5,407.00
Total Receipts	\$51,990.34
Disbursements	
UPS & Postage	\$3,003.49
Tapes, Albums, CD's & Labels	\$4,769.22
Equipment & Software Purchases	\$165.93
Equipment Maintenance & Repairs	\$0.00
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Rent	\$2,250.00
Telephone	\$703.39
Website Development & Maintenance	267.08
Building Improvements	\$0.00
Miscellaneous	\$278.82
Payroll Expense	\$21,950.01
Books & Catalogs	\$1,069.00
Remnant Publishing & Mailing	\$15,429.66
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**When our houses were of wood, our hearts were of gold; but
when our houses became golden, our hearts became wooden.**

Hans de Ries, Dutch Mennonite (1553-1638)