

The Remnant

Hijacked!

See page 16

5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

6 And he hath made us alive together with him, through his grace, when we were dead in sins: ye are saved by grace through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

7 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

8 For we are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which he hath prepared for us, that ye should walk in them.

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

10 For we are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which he hath prepared for us, that ye should walk in them.

11 Wherein we are saved by grace through faith; and that not of ourselves: it is the gift of God:

12 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

The Heartbeat of

The Remnant

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God did not promise us grace to make it easy for us, but to make it possible.

From the Editor

Looking down onto the floor of the Brooklyn Synagogue, our tour guide, Rabbi Beryl, explained the scene before us. He pointed out the men tightly and methodically wrapping their phylacteries around their arms, the married men donning their prayer shawls, and the rhythmic bobbing of austere, bearded men chanting liturgical prayers in conservative dress. Rabbi Beryl explained that these men were preparing for the Sabbath. Contrasting these acts of piety and devotion, other plain-dressed worshippers buzzed around, sharing sandwiches and casual conversation.

I was escorting a group of high school students on a tour of an Orthodox Jewish community located in Brooklyn, New York. Making the drive from the “horse-and-buggy” community of Lancaster County to the phylactery-wearing community of Brooklyn, New York, is full of many curious contrasts and comparisons. The obvious comparison was apparent. Walking around with my camera looking at men with dark clothes and long beards made me feel like a tourist in Lancaster County waiting for a shoofly pie and a buggy ride. On the surface, the tendency is to say that these Hasidic Jewish people walk around in dead, dry orthodoxy, following laws and regulations to earn their salvation. This same comparison is typically said of the Anabaptist/Old Order settings. However, I found some parts of their expression of being “in the world but not of the world” impressive.

What I found that was disturbing really surprised me. It was something a lot closer to my Evangelical background than I had thought. I found that instead of being “dry,” these people were actually very “spiritual.” I found that as far as “spirituality” goes in the general sense of the word, these people were closer to Charismatics than to Amish. They spoke of frequent personal revelations, and personal “spiritual” meanings to various parts of the Bible. The Rabbi even told me that some of the more “spiritual” men could tell the spiritual state of somebody just by hearing their name! They spoke of putting Scripture all over their houses. But more than just a reminder and an effort to get the Scriptures into their hearts, they felt that the Scriptures on the wall conveyed some kind of power. The Rabbi told me that if you have a problem in

your home—ranging anywhere from marriage problems to finances—inevitably the problem could be traced back to something messed up in the actual print of the Scripture on the wall, such as two letters touching in the script. He said that once the scribe fixes the messed up text, your problems go away!

This challenged me to think of how I really use the Word of God. The Word of God is simple. But if we don't follow the simple Word we tend to start making a lot of stuff up. We end up with strange “spiritual” meanings to simple Scriptural concepts. What's worse, we can tend to “spiritualize” away important Scriptural concepts. The commands of Christ are often replaced with excuses and euphemisms.

Concepts like “grace” and “faith” are morphed into spiritual nuances without real meanings. This must stop! The Bible is easy to understand—if we would just stop explaining it away! The Bible is not a spiritual “Juju” to be placed on the wall; it has real meaning for our everyday life. Furthermore, spiritual insights are great, but to trust them and miss the plain words of Jesus is really the worst bondage of all.

In this issue, Mike Atnip deals with some well-quoted verses that many people seem to use as an almost “*Abracadabra*” to give them an assurance of salvation. It seems if one can quote the words of Ephesians 2:8, they are counted as having entered the kingdom despite obvious disobedience

to the plain teachings of Christ. In other articles, we take a look at calculating our potential in the kingdom, and then a filtering system that will simplify and purify the decisions we make in our day by day walk. We also take a look at the simple teachings of the Bible concerning our clothes. The teachings of the Bible are not really hard to grasp ... but our human nature screams to find some way to get around them it seems. Oh, if we can but just have our room full of mirrors broken to see into the beauty of God's holy nature!

Rounding up this issue is also a response to a portion of a letter we received. It comes down to an issue of gospel vs. gospel. Simply doing what Jesus taught us versus turning the Scriptures into a “Juju” or “Abracadabra” to hang on our walls or quote from to make us feel good. Lord help us all!

~Bro. Dean





Beyond the Broken Mirrors

—Arlin Weaver

Imagine the proverbial man who lives in a room of mirrors. No matter which way he turns, everything points back to himself.

And it's a view he's very content with—because he's delighted to be the center of his universe. If he looks north, the view is graced with ... himself. To the south ... himself. East and west reflect the same image.

The man of the mirrors is content in his own glory—until the day a longing, vague and ill-defined, taunts him with hints of life beyond the mirrors.

This Mr. Ego is a narcissist, though, and not quickly shaken. Still, with passing years and building despair, the crisis comes, and in ultimate desperation, he cries out to the world beyond his mirrors.

He meets the Man who breaks the mirrored cell as a Liberator—and indeed, He is!

To the north is a limitless expanse of meadows, trees, and beauty. To the east are the ocean and the rising sun. To the south are inviting paths, happy homes, and busy villages. To the west are smiling faces, cheerful children, and gracious friends. This is the world beyond the broken mirror.

We've all been as foolish as the man of the mirrors. We've imprisoned ourselves by our own visions of self-aggrandizement; we've lived preoccupied with ourselves; we've embezzled God's great gift of life and spent it on ourselves.

And only God can convince us that our walls are confining, and that there is life beyond self. At first, the very idea of the world beyond self is strange to us. Then it teases us, and ultimately torments us. The tug of the infinite trounces the tawdry cheapness of the mirrored room.

“For none of us liveth to himself” (Romans 14:7).

The advent of the gospel in our lives demands the end of the mirrors—it dares to shatter them without apology. The call of the Liberator, Jesus, is for Mr. Ego to “deny [utterly disown] himself.” He goes even further, insisting that self must die—and die by crucifixion.

This Liberator redefines virtue, too. Instead of self-gratification and self-esteem, He gives us three true virtues: love, faith, and hope (see 1 Corinthians 13:13). These are like the great, expansive vistas outside the broken room of mirrors.

With love we discover others. Love introduces us to a world of relationships, of joyful interaction, and creative self-abandonment. With love, we become givers. With love, we share. With love, we uplift others. And with love, we forget ourselves—and our old mirror prison.

With faith we discover God. Faith is God-focused. We worship our Liberator—instead of haunting the temple of our sacrilegious self-worship. We live for God alone, we love God first, and we abandon self for God.

With hope we discover the infinite. Outside our room of mirrors, we begin our journey into an eternal future. Freed, God calls us to journey from our prison into His permanent, built-for-forever kingdom. Transience and temporal living are forgotten, and the things and virtues of God become eternally worth our investments.

I suspect you know where you live. If it's in a room of mirrors, then you're imprisoned.

But if God has broken your cell, and you have escaped the bondage of self, then the vistas beyond the broken mirror are yours.

Let God liberate self, and let Him teach you how to live in the freedom of love, discovering faith, and journeying with hope. ~

**With love,
we forget
ourselves—and
our old mirror
prison.**



What are you doing here?

Pablo Yoder

“What are you doing here?” was the question that God asked Elijah, the time that he ran, scared silly by the threats of a woman. Discouraged and tired from running, he was hiding in a cave, wishing to die. He had believed a bunch of the devil’s lies, and that is why this usually courageous prophet was acting so strangely. Then he heard that familiar voice, “What are you doing here?”

Fortunately Elijah was honest enough to answer truthfully to the owner of the voice. “I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts (true enough): for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain the prophets with the sword (again, true enough); and I, even I only, am left (Whoa! That’s a lie from the pit); and they seek my life, to take it away ... (True again; but the God that made fire fall from the sky that was so hot that it even burned stones and water, that gave you the stamina to run for miles with the speed of the antelope, that baked little miracle cakes out of thin air, and that came up with little cruises of water from nothing can take care of you, my dear prophet friend) ...”

Have you ever heard modern-day Elijahs whine the same way? “My church is full of problems and I am so alone. I am the only one left that really wants to serve the Lord or obey the Bible. Everybody is going liberal. Nobody loves me. Nobody cares. Nobody sees all the work I do for the Lord. I am worthless. I am so discouraged. I’m going to throw in the towel ...”

Today God calls you to come out of the cave of your discouragement to stand before HIM. It’s time to quit believing lies and to look at God Jehovah. Will he have to rend your life asunder with the awful winds of trials? Or

shake the very earth you stand on with the terrible earthquakes of upheaving circumstances? Or burn the dross from your gold with the hot fire of persecution?

Come out of the lonely grotto of your discouragement and listen for the still, small voice. The still, small voice of God says:

What are you doing here? Get back to the very place you ran from, and get to work. I have so much for you to do. Messages to deliver. Kings to anoint. Men to put to work for my kingdom ...

My kingdom has not died. Stop believing all those lies. I am not done with the church yet. I am going to win this battle.

I, Jesus Christ, will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it!

And look around you. Open up your spiritual eyes. You aren’t seeing right and it’s hard for you to believe, but I have chosen 7000 that have not bowed the knee to nor kissed Baal!

The time for moping is over, discouraged brother. If you are getting old, find your Elisha to replace you and make sure he has a double measure of your spirit. If you are a church leader, get others involved in the battle and clean up the church. God is more interested in revival than you are!

It is time to enter the battle. This is war! Spiritual warfare! God bless you as you take up all the armor of God and enter the fray. And don’t forget to listen daily to the still, small voice! ~

Calculating and Evaluating Your Kingdom Service

Jacob C. Berlin

Have you ever asked yourself, “How much can I accomplish for the Kingdom of God?” Like good servants and soldiers, we sincerely desire to do all that we can for our kingdom’s cause. However, all of us know that some people are simply more talented and gifted than others. Similarly, some people’s “lot in life” is outright more conducive to success and accomplishment, when compared to the “less fortunate’s” lot in life. This kind of faithless reasoning, sadly enough, is how most Christians calculate their potential service for the kingdom of God. On top of that, many Christians evaluate their kingdom service using man’s measuring sticks, instead of God’s measuring stick. In this article, I want to show you how to biblically calculate your Kingdom Service Potential (KSP) and then measure your Kingdom Service Evaluation (KSE). First, let’s look at calculating your KSP.

KSP: Kingdom service potential

Faithful Servant’s KSP Equation
$SW \times SG \times PG = KSP$
SW: Strengths and Weaknesses SG: Sovereignty of God PG: Promises of God
Doubtful Servant’s KSP Equation
$SW \times LL = KSP$
SW: Strengths and Weaknesses LL: “Lot in Life”

Doubtful Servant’s KSP equation

SW: Strengths and Weaknesses

This is the most important variable in the doubtful servant’s equation. He even has a mental list of his different strengths and weaknesses, along with their respective values. In order to obtain their net value, he simply subtracts the total value of his weaknesses from the total value of his strengths.

Hypothetical SW Chart	
Strengths (Value)	Weaknesses (Value)
Strength #1 (4)	Weakness #1 (5)
Strength #2 (7)	Weakness #2 (3)
Strength #3 (6)	Weakness #3 (6)
Strength #4 (6)	Weakness #4 (4)
Total: 23	Total: 18

Total Value of Strengths	23
<u>Total Value of Weaknesses</u>	<u>-18</u>
Net Value of SW	5

LL: “Lot in Life”

The only other variable the doubtful servant uses to calculate his KSP is his “lot in life.” In other words, the hand of cards that “fate” dealt him. This is merely a faithless and cowardly acceptance of the circumstances God has sovereignly placed him in. Like his strengths and weaknesses, the doubtful servant’s lot in life has its distinct advantages and disadvantages along with their respective values.

Hypothetical LL Chart	
Advantages (Value)	Disadvantages (Value)
Advantage #1 (5)	Disadvantage #1 (4)
Advantage #2 (9)	Disadvantage #2 (6)
Advantage #3 (8)	Disadvantage #3 (4)
Advantage #4 (6)	Disadvantage #4 (5)
Total: 28	Total: 19

Total Value of Strengths	28
<u>Total Value of Weaknesses</u>	<u>-19</u>
Net Value of SW	9

Faithful Servant's KSP equation

SW: Strengths and Weaknesses

This is the least important variable in the faithful servant's equation. Although he is keenly aware of his strengths and weaknesses, his focus is primarily on Christ and His power. The faithful servant does not possess exceptional strength, he only possesses exceptional *willingness* for Christ's strength to be displayed through him.

SG: Sovereignty of God

Remember how the doubtful servant multiplied his strengths and weaknesses by his "lot in life"? Not so with the faithful servant! Instead, he multiplies his strengths and weaknesses by the sovereignty of God. In other words, the faithful servant serves Christ's kingdom believing that God sovereignly orchestrates all things for His glory (Re. 4:11) and the Christian's good (Ro. 8:28). The doubtful servant resigns to an acceptance of fate, but the faithful servant chooses a perspective of faith.

PG: Promises of God

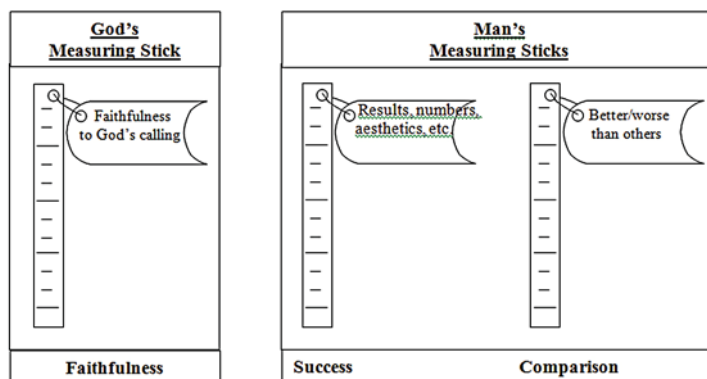
This is the most important variable in the faithful servant's equation. The promises of God do two things: First, they greatly increase the net value of SW by transforming all the weaknesses into channels of Christ's strength (2 Co. 12:9). Second, they multiply all the other variables by infinite, which is the number that best represents the power of God. The following are just a few of the many awesome promises of God:

<u>PG: Promises of God</u>	
<p>"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises." 2 Pe. 1:4</p> <p>"For all the promises of God in Him (Christ) are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2 Co. 1:20</p>	
1. Strength in Weakness	"My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness." 2 Co. 12:9
2. Servants God Uses	"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence." 1 Co. 1:26-29
3. Christ's Presence	"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Mt. 28:20
4. Future glory	"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Ro. 8:18
5. Forgiveness of Sins	"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 Jo. 1:9
6. No Condemnation	"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Ro. 8:1
7. Assurance of Salvation	"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life." 1 Jo. 5:13
8. Eternal Treasure	"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." Mt. 6:20
9. Deliverance out of Temptation	"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." 1 Co. 10:13

10. Persecution	“Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” Mt. 5:10
11. God’s Acceptance	“He that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” Jo. 6:37
12. God’s Care	“Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.” 1 Pe. 5:7
13. God’s Guidance	“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.” Pr. 3:5,6
14. God’s Joy	“In thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand are pleasures forevermore.” Ps. 16:11
15. God’s Love	“I have loved thee with an everlasting love.” Je. 31:3
16. God’s Mercy	“They (God’s mercies) are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness.” La. 3:23
17. God’s Peace	“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Ph. 4:6,7
18. God’s Power	“Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,” Ep. 3:20
19. God’s Provision	“But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” Ph. 4:19
20. God’s Sovereignty	“Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” Re. 4:11
21. God’s Thoughts	“How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! How great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand.” Ps. 139:17,18

KSE: Kingdom service evaluation

Now that you know how to calculate your Kingdom Service Potential, let’s take a look at how to conduct your Kingdom Service Evaluation. Keep in mind, God does not see things the way man sees them (Is. 55:8,9), nor does He evaluate things the way man evaluates them. When you apply the KSP equation to your life, you run the risk of using man’s measuring sticks instead of God’s measuring stick to measure your kingdom service. Two common measuring sticks that man uses are “success” and “comparison.” The measuring stick of success is concerned about things like results, numbers, aesthetics, etc. Similarly, the measuring stick of comparison ranks your kingdom service relative to the kingdom service of others. However, God’s measuring stick is simply faithfulness to His calling on your life. So don’t measure your kingdom service with man’s measuring sticks! This will only lead to discouragement or pride. Instead, measure your kingdom service with God’s measuring stick: faithfulness to His calling on your life!



Kingdom service case study: Goliath, Saul, and David

Goliath's KSP = SW x LL

Goliath's SW Chart	
Strengths	Weaknesses
Tall and strong	Proud and defiant
Experienced fighter	Serving the wrong kingdom
Well armed	

Goliath's LL Chart
1. Born into a giant family
2. Chosen to be Philistine champion

Saul's KSP = SW x LL

Saul's SW Chart	
Strengths	Weaknesses
Tall, strong, handsome	Insecure
Experienced fighter	Doubtful
Well armed	

Saul's LL Chart
1. Born into a wealthy family.
2. Chosen to be king of Israel.

David's KSP = SW x SG x PG

David's SW Chart	
Strengths	Weaknesses
Good heart	Small
Handsome	Inexperienced fighter
	Poorly armed

David's SG Chart
1. Born last of eight sons.
2. Chosen to be a shepherd.

David's PG Chart
1. God's deliverance from enemies.
2. God's power over earthly weapons.
3. God's glory displayed to the world.

Case Study KSE

God's Measuring Stick	Faithfulness to His calling
Man's Measuring Stick	Success and comparison

All of us are familiar with the outcome of the classic battle between David and Goliath. David was the victor, Goliath the loser, and Saul the coward. However, most people fall into the trap of using man's measuring sticks instead of God's measuring stick, to evaluate David's kingdom service. Although David ranked high on man's measuring sticks after his victory over Goliath, these are not the sticks God or David used to measure David's kingdom service. If you read the story carefully, you will see that both God and David were concerned about one thing: faithfulness to God's calling. This explains why God chose David to be king based upon David's heart while serving as shepherd, and not after his victory over Goliath. Faithfulness to God's calling also explains David's attitude concerning his father and King Saul. Remember how that after David was anointed king he continued to serve his father as a humble shepherd. On top of that, after David defeated Goliath he continued to submit to King Saul's authority. Why? Because he wanted to be faithful to God's calling on his life! He wasn't concerned about being successful in the eyes of men, nor outdoing the service of other men. Instead, his heart was purposed to rank high only on God's measuring stick: faithful to His calling.

Instruments of God

In closing, I want us to consider a meditation on God's power working through His kingdom's servants ...

Have you ever listened to a talented violinist? Beautiful music, right? Have you ever tried to play a violin? If you're like me, you don't even know how to hold one, much less play one! Even if I had a world-class, million-dollar violin, the best I could play is something that sounds like a high-pitched screech. However, if you were to give a low-quality violin to an experienced violinist, you would still hear beautiful music. This is because the violinist, not the violin, is the source of beautiful music. Dear brother and sister, you and I are like violins whose Maker greatly desires to play beautiful music on! However, He's not looking for high-quality instruments, as many people suppose; He's simply looking for *willing* instruments. So let's give up trying to be "great instruments of God." Instead, let's aspire to be "willing instruments of a great God!"

— Continued on p. 33



The Beauty of Holiness

by Dean Taylor

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? (1 Co. 6:19)

There are few areas in the Christian walk that cause more debate and conflict than the biblical teaching concerning Christian dress. It seems as soon as the issue is even hinted at, walls immediately rise and images of Pharisees with long phylacteries, tasseled robes, and furrowed brows quickly come to mind. While this is very unfortunate, it is not completely without reason.

The sin of hypocrisy is exemplified by the act of looking righteous on the outside while the inside remains corrupt and wicked. This is a real threat, and we who believe in dressing modestly must not ignore it. We cannot fool God with outer appearance while the inside remains wicked.

On the other hand, dressing immodestly and worldly doesn't make us spiritual either. While it is possible to dress righteously on the outside but still be wicked on the inside, it is impossible to purposely dress wickedly on the outside and remain pure and holy on the inside. Our outward appearance, while certainly not capable of regenerating the heart, does in fact reveal what condition our heart is in.

The same could be said of our speech. We can have a lofty spiritual vocabulary full of spiritual lingo with no real change in our heart. Such religious boasting is also called hypocrisy. We may feel and even appear righteous,

but if our lips are full of wrath, profanity, slandering, and blasphemies, it becomes obvious what is really in our heart. As Jesus said, "for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." (Mt. 12:34) God desires holiness inside and out. Not on the outside only—but neither on the inside only. As Peter exhorted: "As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." (1 Pe. 1:14-16)

Unfortunately, just as Israel slipped time and time again when it started to mingle with the world, the same could be said of the church today. By allowing the world's values, fashions, and moral standards to replace the clear Word of God, the church has lost ground to the enemy and, in essence, is committing adultery with the world and trading the sacred for the profane. There is great deception in the church today concerning almost every area of life, and the area of Christian dress is certainly no exception. Traditions of men, culture, and even church standards should all be examined by the light of God's Word. After all, what matters most is what God wants and how He desires us to be.

How would God dress me?

By reading the book of Revelation, we are permitted to snatch a few sacred glimpses of a place where the world and the devil have no influence. It is of this holy place that we are instructed in God's Word to regularly petition God for its replication here on earth. We pray, "Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven," but I wonder sometimes ... do we really mean this? The worship, adoration, prayers, and entire purpose in this holy place are without a question existing for no other reason than to give glory to God.

It is in this heavenly atmosphere that we see Jesus receiving His expectant bride ... "not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." When He receives us in this place, the Bible tells us that He will house us, feed us, and yes, even clothe us there as well.

In reference to the martyrs it says, "And white robes were given unto every one of them." (Re. 6:11) Of the great multitude of believers that John witnessed it is said, "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their

Be ye holy in all manner of conversation.

hands.” (Re 7:9) Jesus Himself is described here wearing a modest garment that covers all the way to his feet, “one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot.” (Re. 1:13)

The word “robe,” as it appears here in Revelation, is also found many other places in Scripture. It is translated from the Greek word “stole.” This was a loose outer garment, usually extending to the feet, worn by kings,



... like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot. (Re. 1:13)

priests, and persons of rank. It is the same article of clothing that Jesus describes the prodigal’s father calling for at his son’s conversion, saying, “But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him ...” (Lu. 15:22) It is a beautiful prospect to think of our heavenly father running to us and clothing us, not only with the righteousness of His Son, but even providing food, clothes, and a dwelling place as we live with Him there in our glorified bodies.

Agreeably, much of Revelation was written in metaphors and allegory. However, I believe that little snapshots like the final gaze of Stephen the martyr, the ascension of the resurrected Christ, the visions of John, and others like these are given to us to give us a glimpse of what heaven is going to be like. Nevertheless, because of the allegorical nature of this book, other parts of God’s

Word should be examined as well. More than just a heavenly expectation, God has shown us His will for how He wants us to dress right now while here on the earth.

What does God call immodesty and nakedness?

Often discussions about modest dress miss a very important point. When discussing modest dress, the object of concern is not necessarily the clothes themselves, but the nakedness that they are intended to cover up. If we focus on our clothes only, we can make the mistake of walking around conservatively dressed and still be exposing ourselves to a flood of nakedness in our homes through magazines, newspapers, catalogs, or worse. Until we understand what God calls nakedness, and that He considers it sin to look at it, we are somewhat missing the point.

God’s teaching on modesty and nakedness started right back in the Garden of Eden. When Adam and Eve first became conscious of their nakedness, they created a garment that they thought would be sufficient to cover themselves: “And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.” (Ge. 3:7) Like many today in their attitudes toward modern-day fashions and swimwear, Adam and Eve felt that as long as their reproductive organs were covered, they would be acceptable to God. However, God did not consider this a proper covering and so He completed their coverings Himself: “Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.” The word “coats” used here is from the Hebrew word, ‘ketho’neth,’ which can be translated tunic or coat. Even though they had made their own aprons, it is only after God gave them their leather tunics that the Bible says that God had “clothed them.” (Ge. 3:7,21)

Another graphic example of God’s heart toward the sin of nakedness is the incident with Noah’s sons. After the flood, Noah had begun to grow vineyards and make wine. On one occasion, Noah became drunk and fell asleep naked on his bed. His son Ham saw his father there and instead of covering him up, he ran and broadcasted the scene to the rest of his family. His other brothers, on the other hand, understood the shame of this and literally went out of their way to conceal their father’s nakedness. Note Ham’s insolence contrasted with his brothers’ careful respect: “And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward,

and they saw not their father's nakedness." (Ge. 9:22-23) Ham and his descendants, the Canaanites, became cursed by this incident and later became an enemy of Israel. Considering this in light of the flagrant disregard for modesty in our day can be frightening. What the world calls liberating, practical, or even funny is a travesty to God and His Word.

Still another sobering example of what God calls nakedness is found in His judgment on Babylon. In His prophesy He portrays Babylon as a woman being stripped and shamed. He cries, "Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen: I will take vengeance, and I will not meet thee as a man." (Is. 47:3) What is notable about this prophesy is what God is calling nakedness. He states, "...uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh." (Is. 47:2) The woman described here is being shamed by having her head uncovered and her legs showing all the way up to her thighs. Again, what our modern age would consider acceptable attire, God calls shameful. God hasn't changed, but our society certainly has.

What does the Bible specifically say about our clothing?

Deuteronomy 22:5 states, "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God." Throughout the Law, God speaks of many things as sin. However, to reveal an even stronger vehemence for a few of the most heinous crimes, such as homosexuality and bestiality, He reserved the word "abomination." The practice of unisex clothing styles and cross dressing are specifically mentioned as one of these "abominations." The effeminate styles of the modern man and the ever-increasing masculinity of the contemporary woman find no defense in the Word of God.

Although the subtleties of this unisex corruption can be seen creeping into all areas of our attire, nowhere is it more observable than in the area of women's dress. Throughout all ages, spanning over 6,000 years of human history, women of most all civilized nationalities have traditionally worn dresses. It has only been in the last 100 years that this general practice has even been challenged. Even today, in spite of the world's efforts to remove this timeless icon, public restrooms around the world still portray the universal symbol of the woman wearing a dress and the man wearing pants.

Some have reasoned that in biblical times there was not such a distinction between men's and women's dress. The commandment itself should prove otherwise; nevertheless, a careful reading through the Bible reveals clear

distinctions. While it is true that in biblical times both men and women wore a loose fitting outer garment, the men's outer garment did differ in that it was more suited for work. Furthermore, the men were instructed to wear pants under this garment.

These pants were called "breeches" in the KJV. (Exodus 28:42 and 39:28, Leviticus 6:10 and 16:4) In the middle ages they came to be known as "braies." When doing work, the men could reach around and tuck their outer garment into their belt. Combined in this way with the breeches, the robe formed a loose trouser. This would have been known in Bible times as "girding up the loins." Nowhere in scripture are there any instructions for the women to wear these "breeches." It should be noted that even secular historians agree that these breeches were worn by the men only, and not the women, right up through the Middle Ages.



Public restrooms around the world still portray the universal symbol of the woman wearing a dress and the man wearing pants.

Even more light in the New Testament

Like many other New Testament teachings, the teaching on modest dress was built upon Old Testament principles with further explanation and guidelines given in the New Testament. For example, when speaking on the husband and wife relationship in the home, Peter broadens the picture by including details concerning dress. He states, "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands." (1 Pe. 3:3-5)

I'm not sure how it could be stated any more clearly than his words, "let it not be the outward adorning," or his prohibition against plaited hair and the wearing of gold. Nevertheless, today millions of Bible-believing Chris-

tians have excused this passage as merely a cultural reliquary of times gone by.

Paul gives perhaps the clearest teachings on modest dress in the Bible in his letter to Timothy. In this passage, very specific words are used which give us reliable guidelines to know how God wants us to dress. Rightly dividing this passage and looking at each word with its Greek meaning is very enlightening. The passage reads: "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." (I Ti. 2:9-10)

A look at the key words of 1 Timothy 2:9-10

1. Adorn and Modest

The Greek words used here are very similar in meaning: "Kosmeo" and "Kosmios." These words both portray the idea of putting things in order, or of being orderly, to arrange, to make ready or to prepare. The use of these words speaks against sloppy, uncoordinated clothing. Often many of us, when we first become convicted about worldly clothing, react by rejecting the worldly styles and looking as sloppy as we can. Untucked shirts, tattered pants, and unkempt hair can sometimes make us feel like we are standing up against the fashions of the world. However, these words help us to keep a balance of maintaining modesty without being sloppy.

2. Apparel

The Greek word translated here for "apparel" is a very specific word: "katastole." This word literally broken down is two words, "kata," meaning "down," and "stello," meaning "to send." Used together in this context, the word was used for a garment that was known to be "flowing down." In ancient Greece the "katastole" was a free-flowing dress worn over a stole providing two layers to conceal the form of the body. This word designated a specific style of dress worn in that day. The well-known 19th century Bible commentator, Adam Clark, explained that in ancient Greece some of the women wore their clothes in such a way that the dress would be open at the bottom so as to reveal their legs. This style was termed "fainomhridev," or "discoverers of the thigh." The "katastole" type of dress mentioned here would have reprimanded this style of dress. Clark further commented on the "katastole" style saying, "A more modest and becoming dress than the Grecian was never invented; it was, in a great measure, revived in England about the year 1805,

and in it simplicity, decency, and elegance were united; but it soon gave place to another mode, in which frippery and nonsense once more prevailed." Today, the cape dress and some of the jumper-style dresses provide this type of double layer and free-flowing form that is similar to this "katastole" style.

3. Shamefacedness

Shamefacedness is translated from the Greek word "aidos." This lost word portrays a sense of shame or honor, modesty, bashfulness, reverence, regard for others, and respect. In Paul's day, the "katastole" style was occasionally adopted by the rich and embroidered with gold or put into flashy colors and patterns. So with this word he warned them against such deceptive and ostentatious abuse. Just like in Bible days, today it is not hard to see that sometimes even the "plain" dresses can get pretty fancy. The word "shamefacedness" certainly doesn't fit most of the images, styles, or attitudes sported in our world today. Therefore, this word alone could serve as a good gauge for us as Christians, as we seek to choose God-honoring clothing.



A Greek "katastole" was a garment that expressed hiddenness.

4. Sobriety

Sobriety is another challenging word coming from the Greek word "sophrosune." It means soundness of mind, self-control, sobriety. Vine's Bible dictionary states that, "It is that habitual inner self-government, with its constant rein on all the passions and desires, which would hinder the temptation to these from arising." This attribute is not an esteemed virtue in today's world. However, it is called for many times throughout the pages of the New Testament. It is a quality that the Lord expects each one of us to grow in. In Titus 2:4, the older women are instructed to "Teach the young women to be sober (sophrosune)."

5. *Broided and plaited hair*

Broided hair, mentioned in 1 Timothy 2:9, and plaiting of the hair, as mentioned in 1 Peter 3:3, come from the Greek words “plegma” and “emploke.” Both of them portray the image of hair with interweaving, braiding, or gathering of one’s hair into knots, like a basket or net. Simply put, Paul is speaking against elaborate, showy hair styles. To the Corinthian church Paul further explains that the hair of the women should be long and that the men’s hair should be short. He said, “Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her.” Moreover, he also teaches in this passage that the women’s head should be covered. “But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head.” (1 Co. 11:1-15)

6. *Gold, pearls, and costly array*

It would seem that these words would need no further explanation. Nevertheless, this Scripture appears to be all but forgotten in the majority of the church today. The words mean in Greek simply what they do in English. Therefore, the wearing of gold and pearls as jewelry, or wearing expensive-looking clothing is simply against the Word of God. Menno Simons spoke on this issue strongly, saying, “They say they believe, and yet there are no bounds to their foolish pomp, show of silks, costly clothes, gold rings, chains, silver belts, pins, and such like foolish finery. Peter and Paul have in plain words forbidden this to all Christian women. And if this is forbidden to women, how much more then should men abstain from it, who are leaders and heads of their women.”

Yes ... What about the men?

Although most of these prohibitions are aimed specifically at women, it would be presumptuous to think that God is not equally concerned with how men dress. The concern for wearing a two-layer garment by the women

was equally shared by the men in Bible days. The very idea of being clothed only in a one-layered robe was considered a type of nakedness, as with Peter in John 21:7: “Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher’s coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.” The Old Testament instruction for the men to wear breeches is another example of extra covering. Exodus 28:42 states, “And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness; from the

loins even unto the thighs they shall reach.” It is disappointing to see men walking around sporting their tight blue jeans and teeshirts, while their wives and daughters are dressing in two-layered, modest, long-flowing dresses with head coverings. This is a poor testimony to the world when they observe these obvious inconsistencies.

In conclusion, the intention of laying out these laws and teachings on modest dress is not to add a burden or bring condemnation to anyone, but to liberate from the tyrannies of the flesh and the pressures of a godless culture. With Paul we “conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.” Yet, in pressing on in sanctification, with Paul we also go on to ask, “Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.” (Ro. 3:28,31) In other words, while the Mosaic Law was nailed to the cross with Christ, its moral and ethical ide-

als are actually lived out to a higher degree in the kingdom that Christ established. Through grace God works His law and desires out in our lives, and when this happens it is a beautiful thing! Such teachings should not be grudged. Just as a bride with a twinkle in her eye rejoices to find ways to please her new husband, so we, as the bride of Christ rejoice to find ways to please our heavenly groom. Let us in all manner of conversation long with our whole being to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to Him; and with utmost purity rejoice to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness! ~



The natural woman (and man!) has an inbuilt hankering to display herself as attractive in the flesh, through clothes, jewelry, and hairstyle.

Letters from our readers

The following is a portion of a letter we received. We are only using one paragraph of the letter, since that is the portion we want to address in this reply.

It is just as preposterous to say that E.M. Bounds, by being a chaplain in the Confederate Army, was encouraging men to blast out the brains of fellow Methodists as to say that ministering to criminals in prison is encouraging them in their crimes. Take off those Anabaptist glasses. He should have no regrets for his attempts to turn the hearts of men to God, wherever that was. Thank God for those brethren who have felt the call of God to minister among those with whom they disagree, including criminals in prison. God grant that I write this with the same burden and spirit.

God be with you, F. M.

Dear F.:

First, we will address very briefly the “Anabaptist glasses.” It is precisely this reason why we use Anabaptism as an example (among many) to look to: Anabaptism had a “kingdom gospel.” We don’t uphold a kingdom gospel because the Anabaptists did, rather we uphold the Anabaptists as an example of a kingdom gospel.

Next, again very briefly: being a military chaplain is not the same as a prison chaplain, in that one is allowed to preach against war in a prison setting (at least some of them), but we do not know of a military in the history of the world that has allowed its chaplains to teach against war. To be a military chaplain and not teach loving and forgiving enemies as Christ taught would be the same as being a chaplain in a whorehouse and not teach against fornication and adultery.

And finally, the most important point: Our point is—and has been over the last couple of years—that Evangelicalism has a different gospel than Anabaptism and other “kingdom Christians.” Unfortunately, we are forced to use terms like “kingdom Christians” when we should just be able to say Christians. Also be aware that we use the terms “Anabaptism/kingdom Christian” and “Evangelicalism” to denote belief systems, not as an all-exclusive nor all-inclusive statement of condemnation or approbation of everyone who may use those terms to describe themselves.

What is a “kingdom Christian”? A “kingdom Christian” is one who looks upon *the gospel as being the coming of the kingdom of God*. This happened with the coming of the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth. A lot could be said

about this gospel, but to keep it short we will say that the Protestant/Evangelical definition of *the gospel is basically the blood atonement of Jesus*. So it becomes a comparison of “the gospel of the kingdom” vs. the “gospel of the blood atonement.”

OK, first of all, we do not deny the blood atonement. It is a *part*, a very important *part*, of the gospel of the kingdom. But that is the problem: some people have made the blood atonement to be the whole gospel, apart from the kingdom message.

It is like a starter on an engine. A starter is a very important part of an engine. Without a starter, engines don’t perform. But what if you take the starter by itself and call it the engine? Well, take the engine out of your car, but leave the starter in, and see how well your car goes!

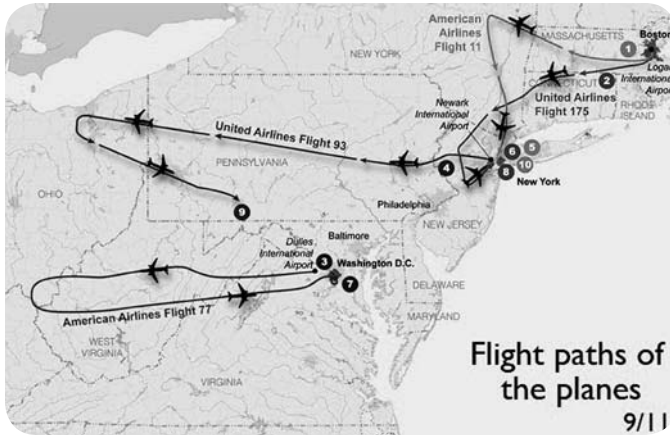
The blood atonement and the new birth are a means to an end. We are reunited (at-oned) with Christ by the birth of His Spirit within us, *for a purpose*. Catch that phrase, “for a purpose.” Being born again is not an end in itself, it is a means to an end. And that end is the kingdom of God—His will being done on earth right here and right now. The kingdom of God began with Pentecost, will grow exponentially greater with the second coming of Christ, and will continue forever and ever.

This message of the kingdom is what is missing in Evangelicalism/Protestantism. They have pushed the kingdom off into the future somewhere and generally state that only then (in the future sometime) will the Sermon on the Mount be lived out. A “blood atonement gospel” is presented without the kingdom of God on earth as the end result. Think about how little you hear about the kingdom of God in today’s modern American corner church. The four gospels talk about the kingdom of God around 120 times. In contrast, Jesus’ blood is mentioned in about five places in the four Gospels.

A lot more could be said, but we will state clearly and briefly—as we have done before—that we see Evangelicalism (kingdomless gospel) as the biggest hindrance to God’s remnant in these days of ours. We carry a special burden for people of Anabaptist heritage. It saddens us to see Evangelical theology replacing the former kingdom theology among Anabaptist people. It comes sneaking in through reading books, singing songs, and using teaching methods from Protestant sources. One example that comes to mind is the popular “Creation to Christ” materials that are being used by missionaries and evangelists.

As far as I can remember, I do not remember one mention made of the kingdom of God when that material was presented in one of “our” churches. Not one time! Imagine! The four Gospels talking about the kingdom of God

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Hijacked!

Mike Atnip

The most famous hijacking that has ever occurred is probably the notorious 9/11 attacks. Four airliners took off on ordinary runs to predetermined destinies, only to be taken over by men with a mission to destroy. Within a few hours both of the World Trade Center towers lay in smoldering heaps, and the Pentagon was damaged. An intervention of passengers on the fourth jet thwarted the plans to ram the White House as well. By the end of the day, almost 3,000 souls had been stripped of bodily life.

Despite the notoriety of that quadruple hijack, there is another quadruple hijack that has destroyed its ten thousands. And instead of commandeering airliners and turning them into potent bombs, this hijacking uses mere words. By taking four words and turning them in another direction than where they were intended to go, many have been deceived and stripped of spiritual life.

Those four words are found in Ephesians 2:8-9:

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

Grace, saved, faith, and works. Let's look at these terms in the context in which they were written. With each word we will start with the hijacked definition and then strive to turn it back to its intended meaning.

Grace

When it is used in the New Testament, [grace] refers to that favor which God did at Calvary when He stepped down from His judgment throne to take upon Himself the guilt and penalty of human sin. ...



“Grace” means “undeserved favor.” Even though you deserve to pay your own penalty for sin which is death in the Lake of Fire, God offers to pay your penalty for you through the sacrifice of His Son Jesus.

The above words represent a typical view of grace in a typical church in North America. But what is wrong with that definition? It reminds me of someone who takes a pie that is 12 inches in diameter, and cuts a slice one inch wide and eats it. Then he tells everyone he has eaten a whole pie. Not so!

The above view of grace takes one small aspect, the forgiveness of past sins, and makes that the whole of grace. And, that is not even getting into any debate about whether the viewpoint presented above about Christ's atonement is correct or complete. Is grace only about forgiveness of past sins? Let's look at what else grace accomplishes:

- Grace gives ability and power to missionaries. Acts 14:26
- Grace turns unjust men into just men. Romans 3:24
- Grace gives power to reign over sin. Romans 5:17
- Grace gives gifts to minister: prophecy, teaching, exhortation, etc. Romans 12:6
- Grace makes men to be wise architects in God's kingdom. 1 Corinthians 3:10
- Grace leads men to simplicity and sincerity. 2 Corinthians 1:12
- Grace moves the poor to give liberally. 2 Corinthians 8:1
- Grace moved Christ to live in voluntary poverty, to enrich us. 2 Corinthians 8:9
- Grace makes good works abound in men. 2 Corinthians 9:8
- Grace provides strength to the weak. 2 Corinthians 12:9
- Grace teaches us to deny self and live godly right here on earth. Titus 2:11-12
- Grace enabled Jesus to taste death. Hebrews 2:9
- Grace gives us the Spirit. Hebrews 10:29
- Grace enables us to serve God acceptably. Hebrews 12:28

To state that “in the New Testament, grace refers to that favor which God did at Calvary ...” definitely limits grace pretty severely! As can be deduced from the above verses, grace is *God's power working in humanity*. And yet, when people read Ephesians 2:8, I think it would be safe to say that a large number of them think only in that very limited scope of grace that deals with pardon for past sins. They eat a one inch slice of pie, thinking they are eating the whole thing!

Saved

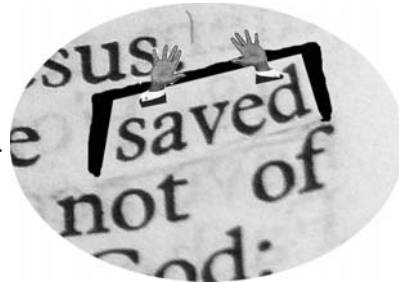
To be saved means “to be forgiven of all one’s sins.” At least that is what myriads of people seem to think. Has the word “saved” been hijacked?

Yes!

No one should think that I am indicating that “getting saved” (as a broad phrase often used in current church settings) does not include a total forgiveness of all past sins. However, the word “saved” in its *biblical* usage does not refer to the act of pardon, but rather *deliverance*. For a start, let’s look at the use of the word in the Old Testament. With a concordance or Bible software, check how the words “save,” “saved,” “salvation,” and “savior” are used in the Old Testament. What you will find is that those words are not expressly attached to the idea of forgiveness, not one single time! Yes, there are times when the context is not exactly given and the writer *could* be referring to the idea of forgiveness, such as in Psalm 6:4. *Return, O LORD, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies’ sake.*

But in every case where the context is clear, “save” and its various forms always have the meaning of “rescue” or “deliver from danger.” A couple of examples from among the many available:

- And the LORD looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee? Judges 6:14 Gideon saved Israel ... not by a sacrifice for forgiveness, but by a deliverance from enemies.
- So the LORD saved Israel that day: and the battle passed over unto Bethaven. 1 Samuel 14:23 God’s saving act was not a pardon.
- Therefore thou deliveredst them into the hand of their enemies, who vexed them: and in the time of their trouble, when they cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven; and according to thy manifold mercies thou gavest them saviours, who saved them out of the hand of their enemies. Nehemiah 9:27 Notice how that men are called “saviours” here!
- Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed; thou woundedst the head out of the house of the wicked, by discovering the foundation unto the neck. Selah. Habakkuk 3:13 Notice that God’s salvation was accomplished by killing Israel’s enemies, not by pardoning them of sins.



Moving into the New Testament, the same basic pattern is seen. Note that I am not saying that the word salvation in the New Testament never includes the idea of pardon of past sins, but that is not what the word in and of itself centers on. In the New Testament, it also carries the idea of healing, so that sometimes the same Greek word is translated “save” and sometimes “heal.”

A few cases where “saved” is obviously referring to a rescue, rather than a pardon:

- But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. Matthew 14:30 It is obvious here that Peter was not asking for a pardon, but a rescue.
- For the Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them. Luke 9:56 This was said by Jesus in the context of calling down fire from heaven.
- And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away. Acts 27:20

The list could go on. The point is clear that in these cases “saved” has a clear context of “rescue.” Now let’s look at some cases where the context is not so clear:

- And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Matthew 1:21 How will Jesus “save” people from their sins if they are only pardoned from the ones they have committed already? If there is no grace to conquer future sins, then we have not been saved from our sins.
- But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. Matthew 24:13 Again we find the same dilemma; if we only have a reprieve from past committed sins, but no power to endure in the future, have we been saved from sin?
- For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. Romans 5:10 How does the life of Christ save us? Does His life procure a pardon? No, his life, put within us, gives us power over sin.
- Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee. 1 Timothy 4:16 Can we pardon ourselves of our sins before God?

In biblical usage, “saved” always has a clear context of “rescued” or “delivered from.”

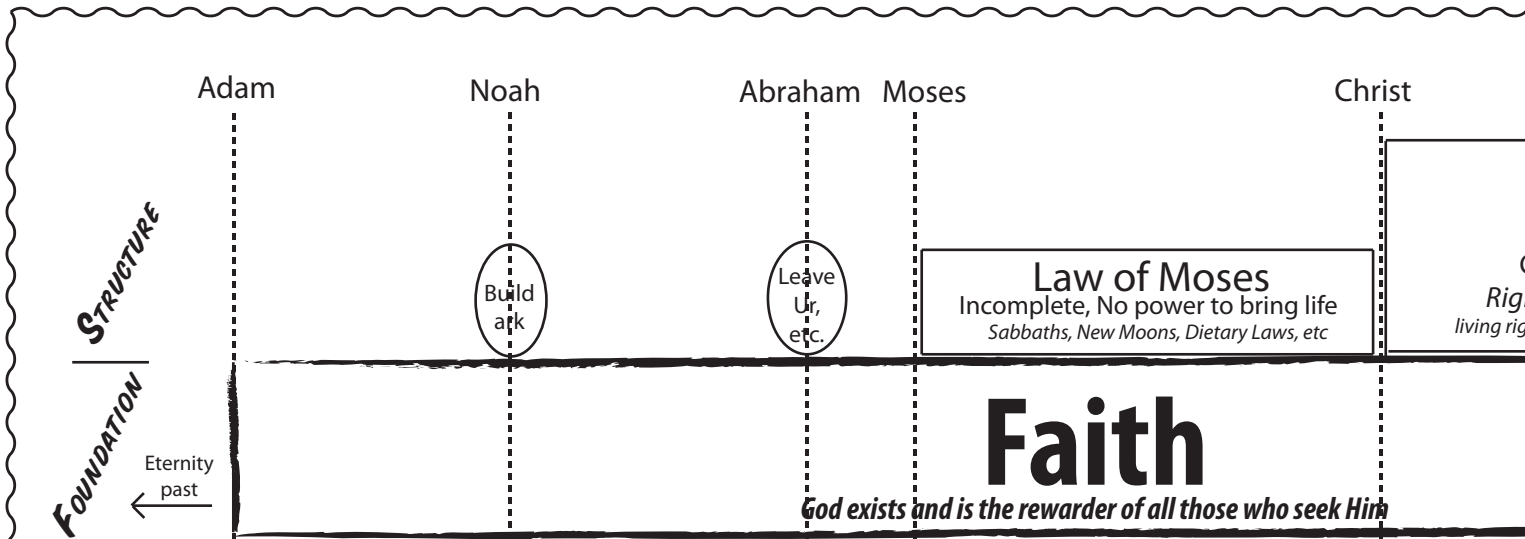
Obviously not. But by continuing in the teachings of Jesus, we rescue ourselves, not in the sense that we “lift ourselves by our own bootstraps,” but in the sense that we will continue to find grace to conquer, if we will but keep looking in faith to Him.

- Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost. Titus 3:5 In this verse, how did God accomplish our salvation? By a regeneration and a baptism of the Holy Ghost! “Regeneration” speaks of a remanufacturing, and “renewing” is a renovation. Both words speak of a transformation of character, not a pardon for past failures.
- Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins. James 5:20 To save a soul from death ... does that mean to only pardon past sins? The only way a person can be rescued from death is if the past deeds of death are pardoned and the future is made alive. If not made alive, the dead spirit will continue to produce evil fruit.
- The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 3:21 A very controversial verse, I know. But let’s pull out

the words in parenthesis and reduce it to “baptism saves us by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” Let’s skip the point, for this article, of how and when a person should be baptized with water. The point to focus on is how the salvation is accomplished: by the resurrection of Jesus. In short, we have to experience the same death Christ did, and the same resurrection, in our own hearts. We have to die with Him to our self-centered ways (take up the cross), and be brought to a new life by Him (experience the “first resurrection”). Christ’s resurrection in us accomplishes this, and that saves us—rescues us—from the power of sin.

- To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins. Luke 1:77 Ah, salvation equals pardon for sins! Maybe ... The word “remission” means to release in some cases (See Luke 4:18 where the words “deliverance” and “liberty” are used) while in other places it does seem to refer specifically to a pardon (See Mark 3:29). Let’s stick the meaning of “deliverance and liberty” into Luke 1:77 and see what happens: To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the deliverance and liberty from their sins. That sounds like exceptionally good news!¹

¹ Lord willing, in a future article I want to address “remission” and show how that ties in with the Old Testament jubilee.



By faith, not works ... The above chart shows how that the kingdom of God has a foundation of faith. The kingdom of God is actually the outworking of faith, the structure that is now the valid expression of faith in God. Noah did not leave Ur out of faith in God. Moses taught and practiced the 10 Commandments out of faith in God. The kingdom of God is not “of works [of the Mosaic Law],” but rather “of faith and works” many times begins when people think that Paul was referring to “good works” when he wrote the chart to the right to compare Paul’s view (as illustrated above) with the view of the Judaizers.

Every time in the Bible that we are told to put faith in or believe in something, we are told to put that faith in a *Person*, not in *what that Person did*. Do you catch the difference? We are always told to believe on *Him*; never to believe on *what He did*. Check your Bible if you doubt that statement. It's revolutionary!

The 1/3 Jesus

Here is what happens if you believe on *what* Jesus did, rather than on *Him* as a person. You end up separating His offices and worshipping a 1/3 Jesus. Jesus was the Messiah, the Anointed One of God. That anointing made Him to be Prophet, Priest, and King.

If someone "trusts only in the finished work of Christ on the cross for his salvation," he ends up accepting Jesus as High Priest—a 1/3 Jesus—to the exclusion of Prophet and King. Some people have even coined the term "saving faith," which is not found in the Bible. While that term may not be wrong if used rightly, it is often used in the context of accepting Jesus' work as High Priest, but not including Jesus' work as Prophet (who proclaimed God's new law) and King (who started a new kingdom when He came).

Can we divide Jesus up? Can we be saved if we trust in what He did, rather than who He was? Can we accept some parts of His life, but not the whole? Can we say, "I accept Jesus as my personal Savior (Priest)," and then not accept Him as our Prophet and King?

No! We cannot say, "I will drink His blood, but not eat His flesh." John 6:53 Furthermore, we need to consider Hebrews 5:9:

And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.

Jesus became the Author of Salvation unto all that obey Him. All who disobey Him are without salvation. Jesus will certainly not be your High Priest if you do not submit to His kingship and His rules and do what He says.

Back to Ephesians 2:8

We have established that we must trust in the Man Christ Jesus—the whole Jesus—to access grace. That should be sufficient when we think of defining faith, but unfortunately the idea of faith has been hijacked in another area, commonly called "faith alone." The idea is perpetuated that true faith is tainted if it is mixed with any works that a man might do. And, supposedly, only the faith which has no strings attached to any sort of human works will open the door so grace can forgive us. Is this so?

James asks one of those "ouch" questions. In his typical straightforwardness, he asks, "Can faith save?" James 2:14 Can raw, naked faith, stripped of any works, save a man?

"Absolutely! That is the only kind of faith that can save!" says the modern Evangelical.

"No!" says James.

Raw, naked faith, stripped of all works, is dead. However, we don't take raw, naked faith and add some random works to it either. If the faith we have isn't producing good works, we should throw that faith away and get a faith that works. The solution is neither "faith without works" nor "faith and works." The solution is "faith which worketh by love." Galatians 5:6

Does faith save?

Notice also that Ephesians 2:8 does *not* say that faith saves us. It says "through faith." Faith is simply a means to an end. The preposition "through" is the Greek preposition "dia," which we will recognize in English words such as *diameter* (measurement by means of going *through* the middle), *diagnosis* (a conclusion achieved by looking through knowledge we have gathered), and other words with *dia-* as a prefix. Greek *dia* has the idea of what one must *go through* to get to arrive elsewhere—the channel used to get somewhere.

Faith in and of itself has not power to save us. Faith is simply the *channel through which one goes to find grace, God's power working in man*. What happens if you stop in the channel, and trust in the channel to get you to the other end? Well, just take a trip to England and visit the Channel Tunnel between England and France. Enter a few steps into the Channel and stop there. Then trust the Channel to take you to France. The Channel Tunnel is a means to get to France, but it in and by itself has not power to get you there.

Thus it goes for those who somehow think that faith in and of itself will save a man. "Through (by means of) faith" we are saved, by grace. Grace does the actual liberating; faith is simply the channel through which grace—God's power—can flow.

Works

"God doesn't look at our performance."

"Your works have nothing to do with your salvation."

"I could shoot you dead, brother, and still go to heaven if I died right afterward."



“Salvation has nothing to do with obedience.”

Yes, I have heard all of the above statements. Such erroneous ideas stem from a hijacking of the phrase, “not of works.”

We have seen that grace is the propelling force which liberates us from sin. We have seen that faith is the access channel to this power. Now Paul tells us something about the origins of it all. He does this by the use of another preposition, “of.” The Greek form is another recognizable prefix, “ex.” We might say, “ex-President,” or “ex-race car driver,” or “ex-Mormon.” All of these indicate the origin of a person—where he came from—but tell us nothing about where he currently is, nor where he will go. “Not *of* works” tells us that this whole thing of salvation does not originate from works.

The question is, what kind of “works” does Paul refer to? The works of God’s hand? Dead works? Works of the law? Works of love? Good works?

The confusion is understandable. The immediate context of Ephesians 2:8 really doesn’t offer any clear answer. But when we look at the context in which Paul uses the same phrase, in Romans and Galatians, we can determine that he is referring to “works of the law.” (See Romans 9:32 and Galatians 3:2,5 for examples.) The context of Romans and Galatians is that of the Judaizers, who declared in another place that “it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.” Acts 15:5

Why some Jews were confused

The confusion of the Jewish believers is understandable. For centuries it had been pounded into their psyche that one had to keep the Law of Moses, with all its ceremonies and rituals, to have a relationship with God. And that was so.

Except they forgot one very important fact . . .

The foundation of a relationship with God is faith, trusting in God through what He has said. The Jews, or

at least some of them, forgot that underneath the structure of the Mosaic Law was the foundation of faith. And in his letters to various churches, Paul has to repeatedly remind the Jewish believers that, although the Mosaic Law was a valid structure *for a certain people in a certain time frame*, the foundation (faith) under that structure extended both before and after the Mosaic Law.

Paul used Abraham as a way to get the Jewish believers to understand the foundation of faith. He starts out by asking them a simple question (not directly, but by inference): Was Abraham a righteous man?

Of course, not a Jew in the whole world would deny that Abraham was righteous! Then Paul moves to his next question: How did Abraham become a righteous man?

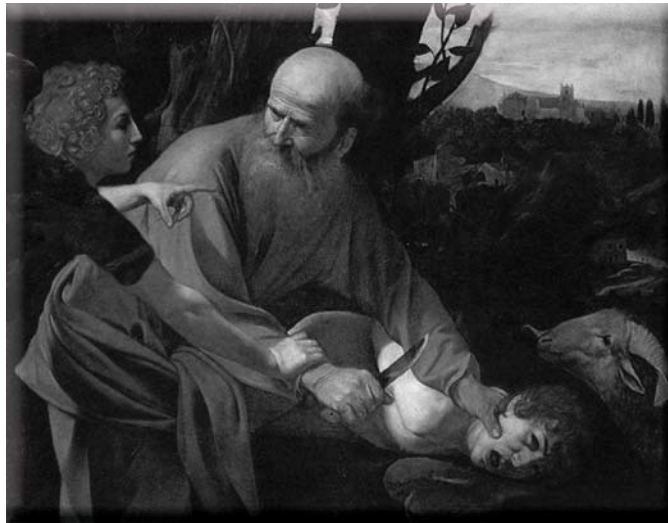
At this point, the Jews probably began to see his point. Abraham lived several centuries before Moses, so obviously Abraham didn’t become a righteous man by doing the Mosaic ceremonies and sacrifices. But perhaps Abraham became righteous by getting circumcised?

No. Paul points out that Abraham was righteous *before* he was even circumcised, which the Jews would have probably agreed with upon thinking about the matter. So just how did Abraham become a righteous man?

Simple. Abraham took what God said and swallowed it hook, line, and sinker. If God said it, Abraham threw his whole life on it *and acted upon it*. And that is called “faith.” And when God saw that faith, He marked it down on Abraham’s account that Abraham had acted righteously.

One foundation; four structures

In Noah’s day, the making of the ark was done on the foundation of faith in what God had said. And Noah was a righteous man for taking what God had said and acting upon those words. In Abraham’s day, faith meant pulling up the tent stakes and moving out of Ur, not knowing where he would end up. In Moses’ day, faith meant living by the precepts of the Mosaic Law. In our day, faith means acting on what Jesus has said and taught.



**If God said it, Abraham acted upon it.
That is called “faith.”**

Thus we see four different constructions built upon the same foundation of faith in God. Paul didn't destroy Moses' Law by preaching faith; in fact he validated the Mosaic Law as a genuine expression of faith ... *in its proper time and place*. Paul explained that a better structure—the kingdom of God—was now being built on that same foundation of faith that extended from Adam into the future. Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Christians all build on the same foundation: faith. But each of the four had different structures to build on that one foundation.



If one could earn a baptism of the Holy Ghost by his having kept the Sabbath, new moons, and dietary laws so perfectly, he could boast that he earned it.

The problem with the Judaizers was their thinking that the Mosaic Law was the foundation, and Christ's teaching should then be built on top of that Law with all its Sabbaths, new moons, and dietary laws. Paul then explained in Romans and Galatians that Christianity is not "ex" (originated from) works of the Law, but "ex" (originated from) faith in God.

In another of those "ouch" questions, Paul asked the Galatians:

This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Galatians 3:2

Quite bluntly, Paul asks them how they got their baptism of the Holy Ghost. Did you get a baptism of the Spirit because you kept the Sabbath so perfectly for seven times in a row, or the new moon ritual for 10 times, or because for one whole year you kept all the dietary regulations so perfectly?

Of course not! They knew that they had been baptized with the Holy Ghost in the moment in which they had made Jesus to be the Prophet, Priest, and King of their life! Paul then reminded them that the Law of Moses was a valid structure for time past, but now the kingdom of God was to be built upon the foundation of faith in God.

Ephesians 2:9 again

Paul is reminding the Ephesians of the source—the origin—for the grace that delivered them from sin. Did that grace come from keeping the Mosaic Law? No! If one

could earn a baptism of the Holy Ghost by his having kept the Sabbath, new moons, and dietary laws so perfectly, he could boast that he earned it. But the grace of the Holy Spirit is a gift from God, given to those who receive Jesus as the Prophet, Priest, and King of their entire being.

But wait, there's more ...

We have looked at the four words that have had their meaning hijacked. But that is not the end of the story. Ephesians 2:8-9 really isn't the end of Paul's thought. Verse 10 continues with:

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Continuing the thought that Christians didn't become holy and righteous by their own strength, Paul calls the believers "God's poem." Yes, "workmanship" is a translation for the Greek word *poiema*! **He** made us, not we ourselves. And what did He remake us for?

So that we should walk in good works! Producing good works is an ordinance of God!

The fallout

So what is the fallout of this quadruple hijacking of Ephesians 2:8-10? We see it daily all around us. Men and women are told that they can be "saved" if they will put their trust in one act that Jesus did while on earth. They can accept a 1/3 Jesus, which then becomes another Jesus than the one the Bible reveals to us.

We see it daily in "gospel" tracts of the "fake \$20 bill" type. First, you make a person feel guilty for disobeying the 10 Commandments. Next, you quickly throw out the "grace" of a hijacked version of Ephesians 2:8-10 as a way to relieve that guilty conscience. "Presto!"—you have another "convert."

But sadly, too often not a word has been said about the Messiah also being Prophet and King; about the necessity of taking up the cross daily and following that King in His kingdom ethics—actually *doing* them here and now. The gospel that Jesus preached in His sermon on the mount is totally neglected, and replaced with a hijacked version of Ephesians 2:8-10.

I am reminded of the words of the Anabaptist Hans Denck, who during the Protestant Reformation days asked the Reformers some of those "ouch" questions:

Producing good works is an ordinance of God!

You [the Reformers] say that the Lamb of God has taken away the sins of the world (John 1:29). How is it then that your sins are not gone?² ...

Do you wish to have Christ the Son of the living God for a King (John 6:15); yet He should not rule over you (Luke 19:29ff)? ...

You dishonor the Son if you avoid and ridicule His way, which He Himself has walked unto life, and on which He desires to lead us too.³

So goes the fallout from a hijacked version of what it means to be “saved by grace through faith.” Yes, some who may pick up and read a typical “get’em feeling guilty and then quick get’em saved by trusting in the finished work of Christ on the cross” tract will actually come through to a genuine new birth. But more people have probably been deceived by that theology than have burst through into the kingdom of God by a total renovation of the Holy Ghost.

And then we have the altar calls ... “Raise your hand and say this prayer with me if you want to be saved. ‘Dear Jesus, I have sinned and I accept your free gift of salvation that you purchased on the cross. Thank you, Jesus, for dying for me.’”

Again, there have been some real mighty conversions by people saying such a prayer, because the heart was in a true state of contrition, and the speaker of those words also let Christ be the King and Prophet of his life in that moment and started following Jesus from there on out. However, for the other 95%,⁴ they walk out of the church building after saying

2 Meaning, their sins were not taken out of their lives; they had no freedom from sin. It is a known fact that the morals of Germany were worse after the Protestant Reformation than before.

3 Hans Denck, *Selected writings of Hans Denck* (Pickwick Press, 1976), 91–92.

4 I, of course, do not know the actual percentage of people that do get converted by saying the “sinner’s prayer.” I am probably being very charitable to say that even 5% of those

that prayer without their sins having been taken away from them.

It’s called inoculation. Inoculation happens when something is injected into a plant or animal to keep it from contracting a disease. But in this case, a hijacked version of Ephesians 2:8-10 is used to inoculate a person from contracting the “disease” of a Jesus-following, obedient-to-the-King, separated, sin-killing, good-works-producing, radical Christianity.

In summary

It sometimes amazes me how some folks seem intent on making sure that good works and Christianity are shown to be eternally allergic to each other. Not so! Beginning with faith as a channel to access grace, the believer is liberated from the power of sin by grace, so that he may glorify God thereafter with a life of abundant good works. God delights in good works! Hebrews 13:16

Yet, Ephesians 2:8-10 has suffered a quadruple hijack to make it appear that salvation consists only of a pardon for sins, made possible to a person if he/she will trust in what Jesus did on the cross. Good works mixed in with faith in Jesus’ work on the cross will jeopardize the believer’s purity,

and perhaps even cause the person to totally miss being saved by grace, because faith mixed with works is not “faith alone” ...

What a hijack! ~



A hijacked version of Ephesians 2:8-10 is used to inoculate a person from contracting the “disease” of a Jesus-following, obedient-to-the-King, separated, sin-killing, good-works-producing, radical Christianity.



saying the “sinner’s prayer” actually do get born into the kingdom of God while saying it.



That they may teach the young women ...

My Soul, Be On Thy Guard

Marcia Zimmerman

By God's design, we are mothers ... with specifically assigned tasks to fulfill. These responsibilities require careful attention and surrendered hearts, both of which can only happen when we are awake and keenly aware of our surroundings.

My soul, be on thy guard ...

Let us not walk into the trap of loving pleasures more than loving God (2 Ti. 3:4-6). So many thousands of pleasures call for our attention. In this technological age, social networking presents a real pleasure trap that often involves more time and attention than we had first planned upon. Are we able to be the wife, mother, and daughter we have been created to be if we are on Facebook or Google+ many minutes of the day?

Shopping can be a pleasure trap for women. Living in a country where it is easy to be thing-hungry and to fall into the pit of excessive spending should raise constant caution in our hearts. Money is not ours to throw around as we please (even if we do not have enough money to do this, we can still have this attitude, when we wish we could buy whatever we want to whenever we feel like it).

When we need a break from our children and consistently use it on shopping, we need a serious heart examination. Why do we need a break from our children? Do we love children? Or are we just "pro-life"? Do we see these little ones as bothersome interruptions to our plans for today, or do we see them as living souls who have been sent to us from God for showing the way to eternal life by our words and deeds? Do we truly have a vision for multigenerational faithfulness in our families? If we do, then we will value our time with our children as an honor from the Lord to help another generation to know the reality of why we are here and what to do about it.

How do we spend our "spare" time? Do we waste it frivolously on immersing ourselves in "Christian" romance novels or self-help books filled with a mixture of

lies and truth that will cloud our judgment and fill us with unrealistic notions for relationships, and dissatisfaction with the husbands we have married? Satan wants to set a trap for us. Oh, let us not walk into it! There is character training to be done, virtuous womanhood to teach to our daughters thru serving the family and others, and husbands to help in family life and whatever other ministry the Lord has him involved in. What a waste for us to walk into the pleasure trap!

Ten thousand foes arise ...

The snare of gossip lies at our door. Think not that it isn't gossip for us to share with uninvolved persons the details of wrongs committed against us and the way it affects us ... the anger and the pain we must go through to forgive that person. Sharing these kinds of things in all their "gory" details to uninvolved persons opens the door for Satan to walk into our homes, dear sisters. Nor does it honor God by true, Christlike forgiveness which seeks Him first and does not reveal sins of others to more than the necessary persons. There is a way to testify of God's saving power without gossiping. Let us seek the Lord on how to do that, for He has promised that those who seek Him with all their hearts shall find Him.

My soul be on thy guard ...

The casual, me-centered philosophies of men today are infiltrating the churches at an alarming rate. Let us be careful that we don't blame our personal problems on father, mother, sibling, or friends of yesterday's past who may have failed us. Let us seek the Lord and walk in the simplicity which is in Christ ... which says that our basic need is salvation from sin and a new life in Him. In Him old things are passed away, including the old habits that must die, the past painful experiences that do not need to plague us year after year with sinful habits and bitterness.

Ten thousand foes arise ...

Watch out for the trap of feminism. This one creeps up on us in very unsuspecting moments. Let us place great importance on being biblical wives ... truly reverencing our husbands and making our life about helping him, instead of seeing life as ours to fill with our own personal interests and goals.

My husband is a farmer. Not being of farmer “material” in my personal desire, I have to quite often yield my will to become flexible with the odd schedules during seedtime and harvest, or the manure hauling on a beautiful sunny day when I wanted to hang up the laundry outdoors. But God’s design is for me to be Lamar’s helper and so, practically speaking, this means sometimes being sanctified thru farming—serving tailgate suppers with a smile, or being thankful that I have indoor laundry drying options. My husband is also a leader in our small congregation. This means that I can help him by keeping the home quiet and clean on Saturday when he is studying for a sermon he plans to share at church the next day. Or by having guests over as part of working out God’s design for our family to be hospitable. Or by typing up some notes for him. Or by reviewing the family calendar with him before he goes to men’s meeting so that he is knowledgeable on how to plan activities involving the church family. All this requires me to be a manager of my time, health, and spiritual life so that I am prayed up, rested up, eating for health, and have a well-ordered household in order to help my husband who is the head of our home.

My soul be on thy guard ...

Let us stand with faithful women in glorifying our Father in heaven through biblical womanhood.

Ten thousand foes arise ...

Satan sets a snare for us to “receive” Jesus as our personal Savior, but not to have Him as Lord of our lives.

Is He Lord of our lives? Does He have first place in **everything**? (Col. 1:18) Does He have first place:

- In the words that we speak during tense moments?
- On those occasions where we do not agree with our husband on an issue?
- In the way we spend our days, the time God has given us to use for Him?

- In the way we practice (or don’t practice) hospitality?
- In the thoughts that we think towards those who have wrongfully treated us in life?
- In our attitudes when the plans we made for today fall to pieces by the intrusion of other circumstances?

My soul, be on thy guard ...

The enemy wants me to claim autonomy, independence from the lordship of Christ, the “freedom” to live my life as I think is best for me.

Oh, watch and fight and pray,
The battle ne’er give o’er.
Renew it boldly every day,
And help divine implore.
Ne’er think the vic’try won,
Nor lay thine armor down,
Thy arduous work will not be done
‘Til thou obtain thy crown.
Fight on, my soul ‘til death
Shall bring thee to thy God;
He’ll take thee at thy parting breath
To His divine abode.

God has provided for us all things that pertain to life and godliness. He has given us power in the Holy Spirit to be an example of the believers in word and in deed. He has given us His holy Word to show us what He expects from us and to encourage us to believe Him when He says He has all the tools for us to accomplish His design for us. May our lives be poured out in sacrifice to Him who is our Supreme Example to follow.

Daughters, you too can apply these things to your lives. You have been placed in a family to have a safe environment in which to learn of Jesus. Use this time to be wise and to learn of your parents and other godly examples how to be a woman of God. Value what God values and shun what He hates. Love to honor Him by being under your father’s headship and learning willingly from your mother. May He bless you as you grow up in Him, with roots going deep into the soil of His Word.

Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

(1 Th. 5:6)

But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

(1 Pe. 4:7) ~





Installing a Kingdom Filter

Based on a message preached by Mose Stoltzfus

I came across a phrase in the book *Charting a Course for Youth*, by Bro. Gary Miller, that served as the inspiration for this message. This book is about helping youth get a good start in life. A certain phrase jumped out of his book at me: installing a kingdom filter.

He starts by giving the story of how he had an affinity to airplanes ever since he was a little boy. He grew up in California, later moved to Washington, and now lives in Idaho. As a little boy he would press his nose to the window whenever he would get close to an airport, looking for planes. It was just something in him from little up to love airplanes. Even as a little boy he had a desire to fly. When he learned to read, he would read about airplanes, and when he had a chance, he would try to talk to pilots. And like many boys, he dreamed of the day in which he could fly himself. He said:

I imagined the thrill of taking friends on rides and being the envy of my peers. The day finally arrived when I had enough money to begin flying lessons. Eventually I received my flying lessons. Flying was as exciting as I imagined! You could take off from one location and in just a few minutes could land somewhere that would have taken much longer to drive to. Life was great! I had longed for and finally selected something from my canal of options.¹

As time went on, as he was basking in his personal enjoyment of flying, he began to hear a small, inner voice. He said this voice began to challenge the use of his resources. To get to the airport of the local town where he

¹ Note that the quotes here and following from Gary's book may not be verbatim due to this article being adapted from a spoken message.

lived, he had to drive through a low-income area. And as he drove past, he began to wonder: was flying really where the Lord wanted him to use his resources? Gary then says:

Of course I tried to rationalize my flying. I thought, "If these folks would just manage their money better, and hold down a steady job like I do, they wouldn't be in this mess."

It is something we all try to do sometimes; I know I have done so. And there *is* an aspect of truth in people not holding down a job, etc. However, Gary continued:

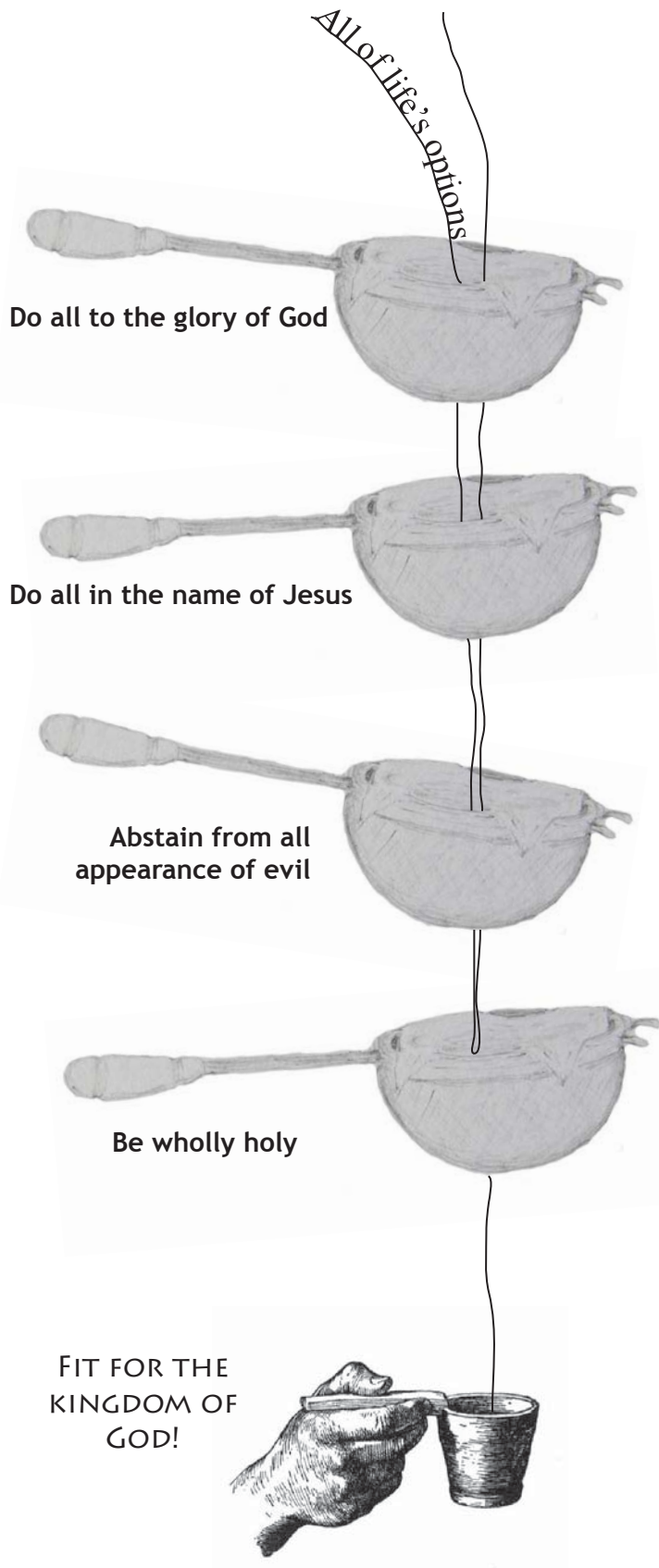
In spite of my arguing, the Lord continued to prod. Finally, I knew something had to go. I was going to have to choose between my love of flying and my love of the kingdom. I wish I could say this was my last battle with my use of resources in the kingdom. But it wasn't. The battle continues. More than 25 years later, the sound of a small airplane flying overhead pulls at something in me, and I am reminded that the battle is not over yet.

Gary has a message for us in that paragraph! The first part of the message is "The Kingdom Call." He realized that as he was spending his life doing what *he* loved to do. I want to say here that there may well be valid uses for flying airplanes in the kingdom of God. I do not doubt that. But to become a good pilot and get into the professional realm, one has to spend many, many hours and very much money to accomplish that. Professional pilots also usually need to spend a lot of time away from home and the family. I know that has been a great source of trouble for many who have gone down the road of becoming a professional pilot.

On the other hand, there are a few men who have become missionary pilots and used their training for the kingdom. I am thinking of the mission in western Ontario where some of my friends have learned to fly, and they have taken the gospel to the Indian reservations way up north in Canada. In such cases, I cannot say that it was wrong for a young man to learn to fly an airplane.

But Gary views the whole thing from a perspective that we need to hear: it was a waste of his resources for a personal pleasure. He looked at the whole thing and decided 25 years ago that he would give it up for the kingdom of God. Even so, he is human enough to still feel the tug in his heart when he hears a small airplane fly overhead.

I have to say, he made a wise decision!



Installing a kingdom filter

This phrase, which Gary uses in his book, came home to me on a recent return flight from Bolivia. Because of some problems on the way down, I was gratuitously given an upgrade to first class on the return flight. I normally fly in the cabin, but since it was given to me, I used the opportunity.

I got into an interesting conversation with a man sitting beside me who worked as a repairman on natural gas compressors. He told of some of his experiences, including a time when he flew north of Japan into Russia, and then took a helicopter offshore to a drilling rig. His job there was to install a compressor which the company had failed to coat well enough to stop the corrosion from the salt water. The Russians on the rig could not speak English, and he could not speak much Russian. But they managed to let him know that they were very unhappy with the situation. He tried to explain that the company would make it right ... but they ended up holding him there against his will for days. They did not trust him, and so they gave him some food and a television to watch until they could be assured everything would be okay.

When the new parts finally arrived, he was released. But the whole experience—as can be imagined—caused him to do some reflecting. He told me, “I have four teenage daughters. I told them to do what they *liked*. I took this job because of the money, not because I like it. **Don’t do what I did!**” He had let big money guide his decision.

In my own life, I remember working for Tyson Foods as a young man. I had fairly well mastered the cooling/air-conditioning trade. I would get a weekly paper from the cooling industry, advertising new products ... and high-paying jobs overseas. I so remember sitting at my job looking at those jobs in Saudi Arabia and other places with wages two or three times what mine was. I remember the tug in my heart for that.

But I had a kingdom filter in my life. This filter could be called “a commitment to Jesus Christ and a local congregation, and to my Christian wife.” When I looked at going halfway around the world and earning that big money, I realized the negative side. My “kingdom filter” allowed me to look at those ads and never answer them. I always said, “No!”

Looking back now as an older man, I am thrilled that that filter was in my life, and that I was able to not yield to the call of that money and jeopardize my soul. For that reason I want to lay out my concerns, especially to the young men once they have mastered a profession. As I sat beside that man on the airplane, listening to his regrets, I was so grateful for not having succumbed to the lure of

a bigger wage. That kingdom filter was a real blessing in my life. For Gary Miller, the kingdom filter would not allow him to fly an airplane, and for me it would not allow me to go after a higher wage in conditions that would draw me away from Christian fellowship and my family.

What says the Bible?

Various Scriptures came to my mind that supported the whole concept of a kingdom filter. Now we know that the Bible directly addresses many issues and situations in life, and we love to talk about those things. But in addition to that, we recognize that there are a whole lot more specifics that are *not* mentioned explicitly. For this reason it becomes imperative that we have kingdom filters installed in our lives to help us come to some practical applications.

Children of the kingdom

We are indeed—if we are born again—a member of the kingdom of God. In the New Testament, various phrases are used: “kingdom of God,” “kingdom of heaven,” “into His kingdom,” etc. We should make sure, and rejoice greatly, that we are a child of the kingdom, a part of the kingdom of God on earth.

We are not only here to have a goal of reaching heaven; we are also here to live out the kingdom of God on earth. I appreciate so much how Bro. Dean Taylor has touched upon this concept in his recent teachings here on Anabaptist history. As well, Bro. John D. Martin has been an inspiration to me through the years, as he teaches a lot about the kingdom of God: God wants us to be members of His kingdom on earth, in the here and now. We are to live out the life of Christ—a literal following of His teachings—right in the area where we live, right here and right now.

Pressing in

Luke 16:16 tells us that “The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.” Matthew 11:12 gives a similar instruction: “And from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.” This can be boiled down to the idea that someone who has the opportunity to enter the kingdom of God should do so with all their might before the opportunity passes away. They should grab it, rush into it, and not spare any energies to make sure they enter in. The word violent, as used here, does not refer to violence as we normally use it today, but

to a very energetic movement. It would be the opposite of lethargic.

In Matthew 21:32 we read: “For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.” Sadly, many of the Jews did not press into the kingdom and rejected Jesus, even though they saw the “sinners” repenting and also the miracles that Jesus did. Mark 1:14-15 then informs us, “Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.” Here was the announcement of the kingdom into which we were to be born.

Later, in Acts 8:12 we find, “But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.” Here we see the Samaritans becoming a part of the kingdom of God through faith and repentance. Then Paul informs us in Romans 14:17 that “the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” I rejoice in the fact that God has called me into His kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost!

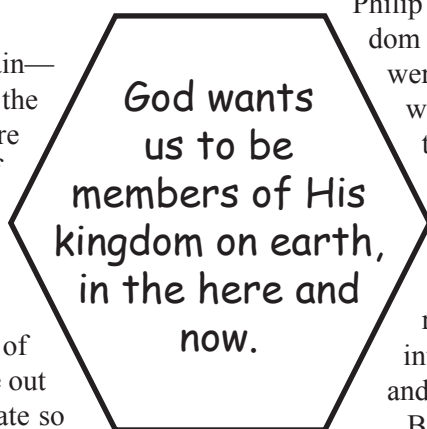
Back to Gary’s book ... He has written the following:

Think about your own life. Do you have competing interests and desires? Do you have a competition, a fight, going on in your heart and life as to what God’s kingdom is calling you to? What is compatible with God’s kingdom, and what are selfish desires in your life?

This is a war that has gone on in the heart of every believer in Christ. Young girls look at the question of whether they want to be a mother and wife, or—as goes on in modern Christianity—do they want to seek a career and “make something” of their life? The conflict rages! It happened in my life when I had to choose between going abroad and making a large salary or staying with my family and local church. The kingdom filter did not allow me to choose the big salary.

Gary continues, saying:

Have you installed a kingdom filter to help you screen out opposing options? If you are really serious about living for the kingdom of Jesus Christ, you will need



to screen your options and you will need to develop some personal discipline to do this.

Various filters

The oil filter on a car needs to get changed occasionally, since the air filter does not do a 100% job of keeping out the grit and grime that can harm a car's moving parts. As well, the combustion of the fuel leaves carbon in the engine that the oil filter needs to remove. The close tolerances of the fast moving parts will not tolerate dirt and grime, so an air filter and an oil filter are necessary to keep the engine from getting ruined from the things that are entering it.

We also have filters on our furnaces at home, to keep the dust from circulating through the house by the forced air spreading the heat through the house. Yet, a little still gets through and dusting is necessary. We also have water filters that take out minerals and impurities in the water.

We also need filters on our spiritual lives, to screen out those things that are harmful or just a waste of time. We will not look at all of them, but as we look at Scripture and consider what is best for the kingdom of God to prosper in our lives, we know that there are a lot of things that need to be run through a filter to see whether it would benefit or harm us. Installing a kingdom filter is so important!

Whatever you do ...

“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Co. 10:31). This is the “glory of God filter.” We could rename it to the “compatible with God's kingdom filter,” the “fits the Christian life filter,” or the “not harmful to your soul, spirit, nor body filter.” Imagine a filter fine enough that it filters out even what you eat or drink when you open the refrigerator or sit down at the table! God is so interested in us—and we in Him—that we run everything through the “glory of God filter” before we partake of it.

Now, if our eating and drinking is important enough to need a “glory of God filter,” what could there be that is *not* important enough to need a filter? Not very much is more important in our physical life than our eating and drinking. Thus 1 Corinthians 10:31 ends up being a general filter for every aspect of our lives—doing all for the glory of God.

Is there anything that lies outside of “whatsoever”? Any schemes, desires, ambitions? Anything you want to see accomplished in your life? Everything about your life is supposed to be run through that filter, so that at the end of life you and I will have no regrets or deathbed confessions, nor have to say—after we have four teenage daughters—“I missed it; I went after money instead of what is important.”

Have you ever considered what this world would be like if 1 Corinthians 10:31 were followed? Even just one county, like Lancaster County, if professing Christians allowed this filter to cleanse their lives? What if we would

cut out all those things that cannot be done to the glory of God? You know, one cannot buy a sports car and rip around on the roads with it to the glory of God. One cannot dress immodestly or flashily to the glory of God. One cannot serve the god of sports, nor listen to ungodly music to the glory of God. If all these things were to be purged out by a kingdom filter of professing Christians here in Lancaster County alone, imagine

what a world we would live in!

Whatever you say ...

We read in Colossians 3:17, “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.” Instead of eating and drinking, Paul this time includes whatever we may say or do. That is all-inclusive! How can you make it more inclusive? One of the challenges I have had in my Christian life has been with this thought: whatever you do, can you thank the Lord Jesus Christ for it? Can you stop and pray before doing what you are about to do, “Lord Jesus! I just thank you for this thing ...” Can you imagine praying that way before committing some great sensual pleasure? Can you pray, “Lord, thank you for the chance to go to the movies tonight! I hope it is an exciting one!”

In spite of the apparent contradiction—believe it or not—people actually do those sort of things. But we should feel ashamed of it and think, “What a waste of time! Why don't I do something worthwhile, to the glory of God?” I don't know about you, but as a young man I thought about all these things, and counted the cost. And the use of kingdom filters has guided me in life.



One cannot rip around in a sports car to the glory of God.

My encouragement to the young men is this: whatever you do, do it with your might, with the strength and passion of your young age when you have vigor. Do it heartily, as unto the Lord! When you have a valid goal, you can then work overtime or stay up late to get some good deed accomplished, knowing that the extra money you earned will just be moved on to a good cause ... and you can do it with a free conscience!

I work in the food industry, and my conscience is free in that since people need to eat. If you would ask me to work building pool tables, like my brother-in-law used to before he got convictions otherwise ... I couldn't do that. I would not want to spend my life on such a vanity! Thus, when we run the subject of occupation through the filters of "glory of God" and "in the name of Jesus," many occupations will simply get filtered out.

In 1 Peter 4:11 we read, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." If you can sing, then open your mouth and do it for the glory of Jesus Christ. If you can preach, then do so for His glory. If you can be a good janitor, then do it for the glory of God. Throw your life into it! Choose good things and do them heartily, even such "little things" like giving a cup of cold water to someone in the name of a disciple.

Wholly holy

Next we will look at 1 Thessalonians 5:22-23: "Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." I think of abstaining from all appearance of evil in the sense of not eating in a bar, even if you are in there just eating a hamburger. It doesn't have a good appearance. People seeing us in places of ill repute—unless we are there to witness to the people—is not glorifying to Jesus Christ.

Another filter is that of being wholly holy. Is what we are about to do or say a holy thing? When we think of being sanctified wholly, again we see an all-inclusiveness about it. What escapes the all-inclusiveness of the word "wholly"?

Getting practical

Marriage

One of the first areas I think of when pondering all these filters is that of choosing a life companion. The Bible clearly tells us to not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. The problem I see in the Evangelical world is that the standard is set way too low. While they may not choose a total unbeliever, we see Catholics marrying Protestants, or a Protestant marries a Mormon, or a Mormon marries a Catholic ... and then they run into this great problem of where to take their children to church. One should choose his companion with the thought in mind that there should be a compatibility of not only general doctrinal agreement, but with a compatible view of practical outworkings.

Even in my immature Christian days, only being a Christian for a few years, I thank God that I had already put some filters in my life in the area of choosing a companion. I knew that I wanted to marry someone who would mother children, not be a show girl or a fashion model.

The Bible doesn't give real specific examples in all areas, but we are a practical people

who need to be able to let these filters work in our lives. For example, I have always said, "I choose the church first, and the job second." I try to get a job where the church is; not get a job and then look for a church. This has been a filter in my life. I always try to find a church that I can be a part of, then I figure I can get a job wherever that church is. If I cannot find a job in that first church, then I find another similar congregation and look for the job. But one can run into real problems if the job comes before the church.

Belief system filter

I want to address something here. I hear that in our churches some of the young people are weary of hearing the word "Anabaptist." I think of this especially in the context of Bro. Dean Taylor's four-part series on Anabaptist history that he is giving here. One may ask, "What is he doing, just lifting up a historical group and making that a model that we all have to follow exactly?" Well, I think Dean made it plain that he was not lifting up one certain group, but rather the belief system that undergirded the



I would not want to spend my life on such a vanity as building pool tables!

Anabaptist movement, a belief system that went all the way back to the Book of Acts. We therefore shouldn't get offended at the term "Anabaptist." One could just as well say, "Bible-practicing Christian" or something synonymous. Thus, when we say "Anabaptist," we are referring to a belief system that takes the teachings of Jesus and puts them to practice; a belief system that is uniquely different from what we see in the Protestant/Evangelical world.

"Anabaptist"—or Bible-practicing—Christianity is a literal, Jesus-obeying, practical way of Christianity that most of Evangelicalism does not believe in today. So we often use the term "Anabaptist" to explain this belief system. But don't be offended by that term. I hear of young people throwing it out and saying, "I don't want to be Anabaptist. I don't want anything to do with it."

Okay, we have to ask, but what *are* you going to be? One has to say something about how he looks at Christianity, and when it comes time to find a life companion, having a compatible belief system is imperative. If you want to be a "Bible-practicing" Christian, you do *not* want to marry someone who has another view of Christianity. If you want to take Christ's command literally where He says "Love your enemies," you do *not* want to marry someone who explains it away and encourages your children to be patriotic.

One of the filters in my life has been this "Anabaptist" or "Bible-practicing" belief system that filters out the Calvinistic, or the Charismatic, or the Mosaic-Law-keeping, or other belief systems that are hitting the church of Jesus Christ on all sides. This filter of a "Bible-practicing" belief system has been a protection to me all through my life. Anything that is contrary to the idea of obeying the teachings of Jesus gets automatically filtered out.

Wherever you may go ...

Where do we allow ourselves to spend an evening, a day, a vacation, or a free week? Over the years, I have seen many of God's people take time to go visit God's creation. They marvel over it, perhaps go to some mountainous area or some area different than where they live.

I believe this to be a legitimate manner to get away and spend some time relaxing and meditating.

But there are so many other options out there that are not good: Disneyland, fairs, theme parks, beaches, etc. They beckon to people to come and have a joy ride. But these things have always hit my kingdom filter. If I can find a lonely spot of beach to watch the waves come crashing ashore, it is wonderful. But a public beach? Go to a place where nakedness reigns? These types of places always hit the filter and get taken out of the options, even though we do not have a Bible verse that specifically says, "Thou shalt not visit beaches with nudity."

And that is the whole point, as Gary writes in his book: to install a kingdom filter that will stop you 1000 times from bringing into your life the things that the surrounding culture offers and revels in. The kingdom of God is counterculture to the cultures of this world. I think of these young fellows that spend their hard-earned money on vanity: they go down the road with their \$30,000 motorcycles all chromed out. I see a diesel truck with a trailer loaded with snowmobiles or mud bikes, headed for the mountains on a Friday night to go mudding. Ripping around, wasting gas, making a lot of noise ... trying to get a thrill out of life. That stuff will never make it through a kingdom filter.

In closing

A lot could be said in various aspects of life ... the books we read, the clothes we wear, the way we spend God's money, etc. A kingdom filter will clean out a lot of wasteful, sensual living in areas that the Bible doesn't specifically mention.

Young man—my burden is to the young men in particular—my exhortation to you is to install a kingdom filter in your life! Let all your decisions run through it: life companion, occupation, your food and drink, books you read, clothes you wear, music you listen to, car you drive. Keep that worldly grit from coming into the bearings of life, causing you to prematurely lose out and fall by the wayside. ~

Have you tried this?

Many people go through their Christian experience with the mind-set of not allowing anything in their life that the Bible specifically calls evil. If the Bible does not specifically treat a topic, they consider it "okay."

Try this: Spend the next week of your life only allowing into your life what the Bible expressly calls us to do.

Don't worry ... you will not run out of things to do! Blessing, giving, sharing, praying, and spreading the gospel of the kingdom will fill your days. And, you will be freed from the nagging question, "Should I really do this or that, since the Bible doesn't specifically address this issue? If we only put into our lives what the Bible tells us to, life will suddenly become a lot simpler. Try it!



I Must Pray in Secret!

Author Unknown

That I must pray is a moral axiom; it is self-evident, it needs no proof. It is as much the instinct of my nature as it is the command of heaven. Prayer is my communion with God. It is my language of worship, as a man; of dependence, as a creature; of submission, as a subject; of confession, as a sinner; of thankfulness, as the recipient of mercies; of supplication, as a needy being. As a Christian, I find it “my vital breath, my native air.” Without it I cannot live. I *must* pray; for if I do not, I shall spiritually suffocate.

But not only must I pray—pray in the family, in the social circle, in the walks of business, winging my thoughts in aspirations to the heaven—but I must also pray *in secret*. Some place I must have that I can call “my closet”—some place where I can go away by myself, and shut out the world, and be alone with my God. Some place, it must be, where, like Isaac in the field, and Peter on the housetop, and Daniel in his chamber, and the blessed Savior on the mountain, I may “pray to my Father which is in secret.” I must have a time for this duty, and stated time; for if I have not, it will never become a habit; and if not a habit, I shall be apt to neglect it, and it will not become woven with my spiritual existence, as a part of my soul’s life, nor will it have that power of association, that current and glow of feeling, without which duty is never delightful. Often, too, must I attend to this duty—often improve the delightful privilege of private converse with heaven.

Daniel, even when prime minister of a kingdom, was three times a day found in his closet. He did not pray too much in secret. I had better pray more, rather than less. Like them, like all eminent saints, often must I be found in my closet, with serious reflection, with self-examina-

tion, with the Bible open before me, in solemn, and fervent, and wrestling communion with God. Yes, I must often pray in secret.

I must pray in secret, for God commands it. “Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret.” Mt. 6:6 This is God’s command, and I may not, I dare not, disobey it. “He seeth in secret,” and if in secret I do not pray to Him, He will be grieved and angry with me; while, if I do, He, as He has promised, “will reward me openly.”

I must pray in secret, for of all communion with heaven, that which is secret is the sweetest. The dearest converse of earthly friends is that which is most private, that which most shrinks from the gaze, the almost profaning gaze of others. Much enjoyment may bosom friends find in the general mingling of the social circle; but the highest of the social joys would be at an end, if there were no subsequent and private hour, when they could sit down together and talk over the incidents of that circle, and everything that was of most and dearest interest to themselves.

And so it is with the Christian. Public communion with God he may richly prize and enjoy. But sweetest of all is his communion with Him in secret; when in the sacred retirement of the closet, with no earthly eye upon him he can pour out his soul in solitude to his Maker. From the very instinct of his nature, of all prayer, that which is secret is dearest to him. Prayer, in every form, is his joy, his strength; but *secret* prayer is a luxury to his soul.

I must pray in secret, for as an individual I have secret and peculiar necessities. My temptations are peculiar, and to Him I would go for peculiar strength. I have secret trials and sorrow which the world may never know, and yet to God I can pour them forth, know that He will never reveal them; knowing that He will sympathize with them all; that in all He will cheer, aid, and direct me. If a parent, I can pray for a child; if a friend, for a friend; if a minister, for each of my people according to their peculiar case. In public, joining as I there do with others, I can only say, “our Father”—can only ask for general blessings. But, blessed be God, in secret I can say, “O *my* Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me”; let this temptation be removed, this blessing be granted, this evil habit be broken, this trial which rends my heart be taken away. In this, let the way of public duty be made plain; in this grace let me grow; let this enemy be forgiven; let this friend be blessed. In such a particular prayer, I find my nearest approach to my Savior, the clearest views of self, the almost vivid light of God’s countenance, the deepest sense of personal obligation, the mightiest strength, whether to resolve, or to do, or to suffer.

I must pray in secret, for if I do not, I shall not grow in grace. Of all the means of spiritual growth, none do I find more efficient or blessed than this. In secret communion with God, I feel as if He were personally with me; and this gives strength and vividness to every obligation. Distinctly confessing my sin—then, if ever, I avoid it. Asking for distinct blessings—then, if ever, do I earnestly strive for their attainment. The thought that I have been with God—this, I find, has an abiding effect on the life. After this, truth is more impressed, temptation has less power, the world less influence. Coming with David from the closet, with David I am able to say, “My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed.” Mine is that “calm and heavenly frame” which elevates above the world, and fills with the Spirit of Jesus, and girds for every holy effort. Coming from the closet—then, if ever, am I firm in duty, cheered under sorrow, strengthened against sin. And so with every child of God. Never was there one who loved his closet, who lived much in it, that was not a spiritual, a growing Christian.

I must pray in secret, for if I sin by neglecting my closet, I shall soon be left to other sins. Declension, inconsistency, formality, and backsliding, all begin in the closet, in the neglect of secret prayer, “Away from God’s presence,” He will “take His Holy Spirit from us.” Going away from Him, neglecting communion with Him, He will leave us. And left of Him, spiritual darkness, if not spiritual death, will be upon us. Neglect the closet, and next the family altar will be neglected, and then the circle of social prayer, and then the Bible, and then, perhaps, the sanctuary, and all the means of grace. Neglect the closet, and you know not where or how far you may wander; you know not when, if ever, you will return. Neglect the closet, and soon you will abandon it; abandon it, and soon you will be left of God to dark, if not to damning sin—perhaps to endless ruin.

I must, then, must pray in secret; stately, frequently, earnestly. God enjoys it. My highest enjoyment and my individual and peculiar necessities demand it. I must do it, that I may grow in grace—may not decline in spirituality—may not wander from God. To pray in secret!

It is a solemn duty, a glorious and blessed privilege, thus to hold converse with the Most High; as a child with a father, as a friend with a friend, thus to commune with Him, and breathe His spirit, and receive His impress, His image, upon my heart. May I ever prize—may I ever improve it. By divine grace, I will. God’s grace, God’s Spirit assisting me, I will pray in secret. Daily and faithfully will I do it, till from prayer on earth, I am raised to praise in heaven. ~

Continued from page 9 - Calculating

Violin Principle	Great violin music does not come from a great violin, but from a great violinist.
Kingdom Service Principle	Great service for God’s kingdom does not come from great servants, but from a great God.

Dear fellow kingdom servants, take courage and calculate your kingdom service potential using the faithful servant’s equation. Then, evaluate your service using God’s measuring stick. In this way, you will join the ranks of a long line of kingdom servants who dared to be willing instruments of the King of kings! ~

The author is currently investing his “Kingdom Service Potential” in Southeast Asia as an ambassador for his King.

Continued from page 15 - Letters

120 times, and then a supposedly “gospel” presentation doesn’t even mention it at all! Instead, the blood atonement—apart from the kingdom message—is presented as “the gospel.” At best, that is a distortion; at worst a total perversion and “another gospel.” (Think of supposedly selling someone a whole engine, but they only get the starter! Most courts of law would call that “false advertisement”!)

That is why we make warning statements about men like E. M. Bounds, who missed the kingdom message of nonresistance. (And yes, he did have some good things to say. But what he *didn’t* say is more important.) Worse yet are men like Billy Sunday, one of America’s foremost Evangelical preachers. He went so far as to say that he would shoot conscientious objectors if he had his way. As well, he said, “The man who breaks all the rules but at last dies fighting in the trenches is better than you God-forsaken mutts who won’t enlist.” This was from the man who had over 1 million Americans respond to his altar calls.

Billy Sunday did not preach the gospel of the kingdom. One cannot claim to preach the gospel of the kingdom when he wishes he could shoot the people who practice it and gives more hope to those who disobey it! And if Billy Sunday did not preach the gospel of the kingdom, he preached *another gospel*.

It’s that serious!

God help us all to preach the gospel of the kingdom: both with our lips and with our lives. ~

GOD'S PEOPLE KEEP SINGING

Thy Courts, O Lord

Sylvan Ressler

Sylvan Ressler

1. Thy courts, O Lord, a hal - lowed place, Where - in to sing Thy praise,
2. An - cient of days, our source of life, Be - gin - ning and the End,
3. We come in - to Thy pre - sence, Lord, With cheer - ful hearts to bring

And ren - der forth in wor - ship strong A thou - sand voi - ces raise.
And at Thy throne, O King of Heav'n, Cause hearts to bow and bend.
All of our gifts and all our praise That from our lips may spring.

Thy truths are bread for hun - gry souls; Thy wa - ters quench our thirst,
You rule and reign in maj - es - ty, Man moves at Thy com - mand.
Our dwell - ing place shall al - ways be A - round Thy glo - rious throne,

And by Thy mer - cies and Thy grace, Our wound - ed spir - its nursed.
Thou lift - est up the fal - len ones, By Thy out - stretch - ed hand.
Oh, nev - er - more from Thee to wan - der, Nev - er - more to roam.

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About the song ...

Sylvan and Nancy Ressler live near Leola, PA, where they have attended Nickel Mines Mennonite Church for the last 33 years. Their four children have blessed them with 17 grandchildren. The song on the opposite page was written with a deep burden to see that the hymn is not replaced with the lighter “gospel song” when the church gathers to worship God. With this burden in mind, Sylvan wrote several hymns, as well as a multi-page description of the difference between *worship* and *praise and honor*. The following paragraphs are adapted from that description.

Read carefully this practical illustration that will describe to a “T” the difference between *worship* and *honor and glorifying*. If you can’t see the difference in this illustration, then I pity your spouse and the Lord!

Twenty-five years ago I attended some marriage counseling. I rehearsed to the counselor the good qualities that my wife had. His comeback to me was, “Do you tell *her*?”

That, brothers and sisters, is exactly what I am trying to point out. Does your spouse hear you extol her virtues to others, and yet never hears you tell *her*? It is *honoring* to her to hear you praise her for her qualities to others, but if you never tell her to her face, you have missed the mark. If you are faithful in doing that to her, then why don’t you want to do that to God, the Holy Spirit, and Jesus when we come together to meet the Godhead?

We have spent our daily lives and Sunday morning services telling each other what Christ means to us, and not once do we take the time to tell *Him*! That is why I think God and Christ are so disappointed in us, because we can share and tell others what they have done for us, but fail to corporately look up and tell *Them*.

We go through the motions of “having church,” but I have not been in a service where the Godhead has received their due. I have been in a service at a large, modern contemporary church where they have what they call “worship time.” With decibels at an obscene level and drums and instruments blaring away—with a four-person “Worship Team” and some kind of song that was geared toward God—I was wondering why we don’t have the vision to hold a worship service that is done in a way that is befitting our way of life and practice and to our Lord? I am always left to wonder if God is more pleased with getting that racket with a contemporary hymn than not getting anything from us. At least they called it worship, but I couldn’t really tell from all the noise.

In summary, *worship* is when we *tell the Godhead* how glorious they are. *Praise and honor* is when we *tell each other* how glorious the Godhead is. Both have their place, but true *worship* is missing in our corporate gatherings. Let’s *worship* when we gather! ~

1st Quarter 2012 Financial Report

Thank you for your support!



01/01/12 Beginning Balance	\$7,471.38
Receipts	
Tape Ministry Donations	\$24,732.04
Remnant Subscription Donations	\$12,753.26
<i>Total Receipts</i>	<i>\$37,485.30</i>
Disbursements	
UPS & Postage	\$2,773.82
Tapes, Albums, CD's & Labels	\$4,521.79
Equipment & Software Purchases	\$422.22
Equipment Maintenance & Repairs	\$215.00
Mailing & Office Supplies	\$164.12
Rent	\$2,250.00
Telephone	\$692.04
Website Development & Maintenance	\$479.82
Building Improvements	\$0.00
Miscellaneous	\$72.58
Payroll Expense	\$12,310.89
Books & Catalogs	\$937.00
Remnant Publishing & Mailing	\$14,304.90
<i>Total Disbursements</i>	<i>\$39,144.18</i>
03/31/12 Ending Balance	\$5,812.50
Difference	-\$1,658.88


The Heartbeat of

The Remnant

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A brass flask with a decorative border containing a religious text. The flask is tilted and set against a dark, textured wooden background. The text is engraved in a serif font within a decorative, leafy border.

A reply to those who say we drink
something from a small flask,
know what the devil himself does not
let it be called a flask. But the drink
in it is nothing but a contrite, crushed,
and sad heart, pounded by the
mortar of the cross. The grapes in it
grew in God's vineyard and were
pressed under the press of tribulation.
From such a flask Christ drank on the
cross. And, as a flask is narrow at the
top but wide at the bottom, thus is
also the way of salvation: once a man
has overcome all agony and tribulation
the flask gets wide and he receives
God's comfort and consolation.

—Leonard Schiemer, circa 1527