

The Sovereign Grace Messenger

A Publication of the Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship

**"The Lord Hath Prepared His Throne In The Heavens;
And His Kingdom Ruleth Over All."**

Psalm 103:19

Issue 28

Winter 2011

THE SIN OF WORLD-CONFORMITY

Pastor Holmes Moore

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."
1 John 2:15

"And be not conformed to this world "
Romans 12:2a

I suppose there has never lived a generation of Christian people who more needed the admonition of our texts as this present generation. Oh, I know, sin is not new, and world-conformity has not just made its debut in the twenty-first century. Yet it is most troubling to the serious believer to observe so many professing Christians, regular church-goers, yes, and even some who are church leaders, embroiled in that which can only be described as conformity to this world. Admittedly, I have not been able, for physical reasons, to visit any churches but our own in very recent years, but still I see church marquees, read billboards, and scan church advertisements; and honestly, what I see is often disturbing! Let us examine the texts before us by asking a series of questions.

What is 'the world' here referred to?

To begin with, as most readers will know, there are various words that Scripture uses that are translated "world." Sometimes, the word used might refer to the *world of mankind*, such as we find it in John 3:16 (*"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son," etc.*). In our texts, God is not commanding us *not to do* what he has *already done* in sending Christ into the world. Nor is He telling us in 1 John 2:15 that we can't be lovers of mankind. God loves mankind generally, and so do His people.

Sometimes the word "world" refers to the *physical earth and all that God has made* (John 1:10). The ancient Greeks loved order, and when they observed it in what God had made, they called it "*the world*," which basically means "an orderly arrangement." Are we required *not to love and marvel* at what our God has created? Surely the believer might, as one of the early astronomers did exclaim upon viewing with a primitive telescope the starry sky, "O my God, I am thinking Thy thoughts after Thee!"

*"Our highest love is
to be reserved for
God and then our
neighbor...It
certainly is not, as
it were, to be
wasted on this
present evil world!"*

-Holmes Moore

Then there is "the world" consisting of the *order* that Satan has established as "*the*

god of this world" to dominate unregenerate mankind and to promote his kingdom of darkness and unrighteousness over against the Kingdom of God. It is *this world*, ruled now by Satan and his myriads of evil spirits, that the Christian is commanded *not to love*!

What is it "to love" this world?

As with all languages, the Koine Greek in which our New Testament was written has different words to express various shades of meaning for the same action or thought. It is generally conceded by language experts that the ancient Greek is better able to express the exact concept desired by the writer than any other of the tongues of mankind. So it is with this word "to love." Greek has a higher, intermediate, and lower word to express the idea of *love*.

The lower of these words refers to the lusts and passions of the flesh. It is "to love" in the sensual sense of the word. The intermediate word for *love* indicates that love which, though genuine enough in its way, is a common, ordinary, emotional feeling. We all know how our feelings shift and change, and thus this kind of love is most vacillating! In our text, the higher word is used, as it is in the Great Commandment: "*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.*" Our highest love is to be reserved for God and then our



Holmes Moore is pastor of Bible Baptist Church (www.oldgospel.com), St. Louis, Missouri. He was instrumental in the formation of the Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship and served as its first Chairman.

the New Testament, though it was very popular in other Greek writings of that day.

What does it mean, practically, *not* to love the world?

In the first place, it means that we as Christians *are not to have the same mindset as this world!* Our text, which expresses the will and word of God, commands us not to love this world, or the evil things in the world. In this sense, we are as Christians to be most unworldly! As we are not to set our highest values on this sinful passing world ruled by Satan and his cohorts, we must of necessity have a different mindset! Our motive and object for living must be quite different than that of the worldling. It is not that we don't pursue many things that those who are of this world also pursue. For instance, we all ought to seek a good education, and a profitable way to earn a living. Most Christians will seek a suitable mate for life and the raising of a family. We are to seek to be good citizens, good neighbors, good friends, and truly good people. Yet in all this, and above all these things, we seek to honor God and to bring glory to His Name! Thus our mindset, our purpose for living, is not that of this world or this present age! We are rather controlled and motivated by another principle, and that to "*Seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.*" It calls us, saying: "*set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth.*" (Colossians 3:1-2)

It also means that we, as Christians, are not to be conformed to this world! The Apostle Paul puts it this very way when he commands, "*Be not conformed to this world*" (Romans 12:2a). Here the words "*this world*" are literally "*this age*"! Clearly, this age is not to be the pattern by which our lives are molded! Christ Himself, the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, is to be our pattern within which we draw the lines of our lives in this epoch of human history! He is to be our pattern, our bench-mark in every area of our spiritual life, and every other facet of our earthly existence. Surely this call of God needs to be heard and heeded by all professing Christians and our church leaders in this twenty-first century.

Some twenty-five years ago, my wife and I traveled to California for a needed and doctor-ordered rest. We had not been there since a preaching tour of mine had taken us there in the early seventies. We were due

for quite a shock! On the first Lord's Day, we attended a church which was advertised as a "Bible-believing church." As we drove onto the parking lot, we noticed many of the cars had surfboards tied on top. When we entered the rather large congregation, we could not but observe that most of the people were dressed as if they were ready for the beach. Nevertheless, we sat through their morning service. It was quite a theatrical spectacle! The lights would go out, and in the darkness, a rising stage would be hit by spot-lights to manifest each presentation, whether the choir, soloists, or finally the speaker of the day. There were no hymn books; rather, the words to the songs sung (we didn't know or recognize any of them.) were displayed on screens at the front of the auditorium. When we finally left, we felt that we had been to a show, not a worship service! To say the least, we had never been to a church like that back in good old Mid-America! But that was a quarter of a century ago—I'm told now that such a service is not that rare even in the Mid-West!

What is the effect of loving this world?

Our text answers this question in a crystal clear fashion: "*If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*" It seems that such a stark and dread result as this would cause every single one who names the name of Christ to sit up and take notice! God here minces no words! If a person, irrespective of his claim, indulges the love of this world, the love of God our Father does not dwell in him! God's true love will not coexist with the love of this world!

All that is "*in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.*" All this is antithetical to God and the Christian life! Therefore, this has to be a matter of either/or—it cannot be both/and! God is eternal, and so are those who love Him! This world is, even now, passing away while we behold it! The child of God is one who does God's will, rather than obeying the dictates of this world system; and that one abides forever!

May each one who reads these words have true understanding of what God says and intends in His Word. If this becomes reality in any heart, that life will become different, for it will be changed by the very love of God!



neighbor. It essentially means to place highest value on someone or something. It certainly is not, as it were, to be wasted on this present evil world! Our husband or wife is to be loved with this type of love, as are our children, our family, and our Christian friends. This love involves the highest powers of the human soul!

We get a picture of how the intermediate love differs from that higher love in the interchange between Christ and Peter as recorded in the Gospel of John 21:15-17. "*So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?* [Here Jesus uses the higher word for love.] *He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee.* [Peter uses the **intermediate word** for love, meaning a warm, emotional love!] *He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.* *He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?* [Again, Jesus uses the higher word for love.] *He saith unto Him, Yea Lord; thou knowest that I love thee.* [Again, Peter uses the lower word for love!] *He saith unto him, Feed My sheep.* *He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?* [Finally, Jesus accommodates Peter and uses his lower word for love!] *Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, lovest thou me? And he said unto Him, Lord, thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee.* [Peter still hangs in with his lower word for love! He can't find it in himself to rise higher at this time!] "*Jesus saith unto him, Feed My sheep.*"

The third and lowest word for "love" in the Greek tongue, which references sensual love, is sadly the type of love most popular in our modern world! This word rather equates with lust! It is a word not used in

Inside This Issue:

The Sin of World-Conformity Holmes Moore	1
Sacred or Profane Worship? Peter Masters	4
Creation No Accident Charles D. Alexander	7
World Missions: Soteriological Pitfalls Trevor Johnson	12
Missions Updates	14
The Two Minds James Smith	19
Made To Differ Cristy Carr	21

All articles reflect the opinions of the author, submitter or editor. The views of the Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship are not being officially represented herein.

Comments or suggestions may be made to the editor. Contact information:

The Sovereign Grace Messenger
Pastor Ron Staley, editor
5452 Spotslee Circle
Mechanicsville, VA 23111

Phone: (804) 321-2110
Email: ronstaley1@verizon.net

Inquiries regarding missions or missions articles should be addressed to the missions editor.

Contact information:

Missions Editor, SGM
Pastor Larry Dean
2779 Malone Rd. N.
Nesbit, MS 38651

Phone: (662) 429-3813
Email: larrywdean@aol.com

FUNDING OF *THE SOVEREIGN GRACE MESSENGER*

The *Sovereign Grace Messenger* is funded completely by contribution. It is our desire to distribute it to as many people as possible, with the fervent hope that it will be spiritually enriching to all who receive it. We make no subscription charge for the Messenger and there are no paid advertisements. We only ask that its contents be read. No one receives any monetary benefit from its publication. All who labor toward its publishing and all who write articles printed in it do so without any compensation, so that no individual involved benefits personally from it. The formatting is done completely by those involved in its editing, so as to keep the costs to a minimum. The only costs involved are those of its printing, and whatever mailing supplies and postage are necessary.

It is our desire to publish *The Sovereign Grace Messenger* three times yearly. This depends upon sufficient funds being received by contribution to the Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship (SGBF) general fund and those specially designated for the Messenger.

We thank those churches and individuals who give to the support of this endeavor. Our God has enabled this work to proceed by providing the laborers, writers, and contributors who support it.

If God so enables and you feel led to give to this outreach, please send all contributions to:

SGBF
c/o New Hope Baptist Church
5452 Spotslee Circle
Mechanicsville, VA 23111

Checks may be made payable to "Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship", or simply "SGBF". All contributions are tax deductible.

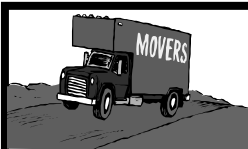
Contact Information for the Current Officers of the SGBF

Chairman: Tom Henry, assistant pastor, Bible Baptist Church
3150 Sutton Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63143.
Phone: (314) 645-4248 Email: Bbcinstl@aol.com

Vice-Chairman: Jon Cardwell, pastor of Sovereign Grace Baptist Church
5440 Alabama Highway 202, Anniston, AL 36201
Phone: (256) 689-1283 Email: sgbcanniston@gmail.com

Secretary: Larry Dean, pastor of Bridgetown Baptist Church
2779 Malone Rd. N., Nesbit, MS 38651.
Phone: (662) 429-3813 Email: larrywdean@aol.com

Treasurer: Ron Staley, pastor of New Hope Baptist Church
5452 Spotslee Circle, Mechanicsville, VA 23111
Phone: (804) 321-2110 Email: ronstaley1@verizon.net



Moving?

We have to pay full cost for returned mail. So please do remember to give us your change of address.



Dr. Peter Masters has been the minister of the Metropolitan Tabernacle (Spurgeon's) in Central London since 1970. Some of the author's other books include *Psalms and Hymns of Reformed Worship*, *Do We Have a Policy? For Church Health and Growth*, *Only One Baptism of the Holy Spirit*, *Steps for Guidance*, *The Charismatic Phenomenon*, *The Healing Epidemic*, and *Biblical Strategies for Witness*.

The third major departure from biblical principles of worship is the modern refusal to accept the great gulf between sacred and profane, so that the entertainment forms of the world are imported into the church for the praise of God. This writer, until recently, used the term 'worldly-idiom worship' to describe this, but it lacked precision. People would naturally ask, 'What exactly is worldliness?' Is a musical style (or instrument) unsuitable for worship simply because the world uses it? No, but it is unsuitable for spiritual use if it is used by the world to promote an anti-God, anti-moral agenda.

The word *profane* focuses the issue more clearly. To be *profane* is to treat sacred and biblical things with irreverence or disregard, so as to violate and pollute them. Is classical music worldly or profane? Not in the main. It may be beautiful music, not identified with or promoting an anti-God, anti-moral message or culture. Are old-fashioned folk songs profane? Not usually. Many were innocently sung for generations in the primary schools of a more moral age. (Please note that this last comment is about *old* folk songs, not the new genre.)

Is the modern entertainment scene profane? Most definitely, because it is the most powerful and determined anti-God, anti-moral, anti-authority culture for centuries. It is profane because it treats moral and sacred things with utmost

Worship in the Melting Pot: Sacred or Profane Worship?

(Third in a series of three articles. See note at end of article.)

By Peter Masters

irreverence and disregard. It actively and militantly decries biblical morality, substituting the opposite. It blatantly and vigorously promotes an alternative society, including the worship of self and of lust as normal, reasonable and acceptable, and that is its undisputed standing in the mind of the public.

For this reason the new worship movement is immensely wrong, and sins against God when it borrows and employs all the distinctive components of today's popular entertainment culture. Modern worship is a total artistic identification with that culture, contrary to the exhortation of *1 John 2.15-16*:

'Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.'

Modern worship equally abuses the parallel warning of *James 4.4*:

'Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.'

The Lord calls for submission to His standards, and He will resist, not bless, those who set themselves above His Word. This is clear from *James 4.6*, where, immediately following the prohibition of friendship with the world, the warning to offenders is given – *'God resisteth the proud.'*

The need to distinguish between sacred and secular, or between sacred and profane, or spiritual and worldly has always been a ruling principle for Christians. The 'culture' of the house of God must certainly be joyful, yet at the same time honour the reverent ethos of biblical worship. Until the 1960s most evangelicals believed that the church and the world represented opposing standards

and lifestyles and tastes, and so most of the world's popular jollities were treated with great suspicion. Spiritual worship was never to be confused or mixed with, or even tainted by, the debased end of the popular entertainment spectrum, because one belonged to the realm of sacred things, and the other to the realm of secular and profane things. All were convinced that Almighty God would be offended, and believed that lost sinners could not be called out of the world by a church that had adopted its lifestyle and entertainment values. It was known by virtually every serious Christian that to employ in worship something that was obviously associated with (or had arisen from) an alternative culture of free sex, godlessness, drugs, and emotional orgies would be worse than inappropriate – it would be sinful.

Christians of the recent past saw that two different worlds and kingdoms stood in stark contrast to one another, the churches being the upholders of God's sovereignty, and holiness. They represented the Holy and the High. They therefore disclaimed the help of a fleshly world and its idiom, relying instead on the power of God, and so they had spiritual power in their worship, not the carnal 'power' of entertainment-emotionalism. As if to test the convictions of believers the hippie and worldly-Christian movements came into being, and initially, most conservative evangelicals were appalled. Quickly, the new trends were picked up by numerous leaders of youth groups, shallow churches, and also by some international evangelists who had come to put earthly appeal before the standards of the Lord.

There are many today who have forgotten that the father of the faithful, Abraham, was called to come out of the culture of a pagan world, and live life in an altogether distinctive way for the Lord. Also, the children of Israel in the wilderness were severely judged for wanting to go back to the foodstuffs of Egypt, even though these were not intrinsically sinful, because God had provided something special for them. The Lord was teaching His church to be a

distinctive people. Under the law of Moses the people were taught in many ways to distinguish between holy and unholy, and between clean and unclean, even though it meant the forbidding of things not inherently evil, in order to drill into them the law of distinction and separation. Christians have traditionally believed (as Paul said) that these things *‘were written for our learning’*.

“Spiritual worship was never to be confused or mixed with, or even tainted by, the debased end of the popular entertainment spectrum, because one belonged to the realm of sacred things, and the other to the realm of secular and profane things.”

Almost countless examples occur throughout the Old Testament of divine anger at any form of blending with the culture of the nations around for worship. In Nehemiah’s time, a foolish and corrupt high priest gave Tobiah the Ammonite a chamber *in the Temple*. Nehemiah *‘cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber’* and thoroughly cleansed the whole area. The same cleansing is needed today in the temple of Christian worship. God’s reproof to Israel (*Ezekiel 22.26*) applies particularly to this hour:

‘Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my

sabbaths, and I am profaned among them.’ Some glorious words at the end of Zechariah’s prophecy speak figuratively of the worship of the New Testament church, and how even the bridles of the horses will bear the words, *‘HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD’*, and the cooking pots in the house shall be as sacred as the bowls before the altar. Nothing profane will invade. Whether we consult the Old or the New Testament, purity and separation are demanded in worship. There must be a marked distinction between sacred and secular. Wherever this world’s culture distinctively serves and represents fleshly living, it is to be rejected by believers. Historic, mainstream evangelicalism has always taken this very seriously. The founders and builders of virtually all evangelical churches existing before 1960 held tenaciously to the distinction between spiritual and worldly, and those ministers and evangelists, with their elders and people, would be universally appalled at what is happening today in the places they brought to birth. Were they wrong? Were they biblically misinformed? Were they fools, or in pathetic bondage to mere tradition?

New worship advocates repeatedly wheel out the absurd claim that today’s ‘traditional’ hymn tunes were once controversial novelties which gradually gained acceptance. New-style worship tunes, they say, will soon be an accepted part of the landscape. In other words, defenders of traditional hymns are making a foolish and petty fuss. It is also claimed that very many ‘traditional’ hymn tunes were originally tavern or music-hall songs. This claim is intended to obscure the fact that Christians in the past distinguished very carefully between sacred and profane. Are these claims, which we hear so often, true? The answer must be expressed bluntly, because misinformation is so dangerous with such an important subject. These claims are historical nonsense. Those who repeat them have trusted some ignorant or mischievous source which was unworthy of their respect. We would like to trace these claims to their origin, but it seems impossible. What matters is that they are entirely incorrect. They are much-retailed myths.

The jibe is heard, for example, that Luther used tavern songs and dance tunes for his hymns. His music, it is said, was heavily influenced by the secular entertainment of the time, and new-style worship is no worse. Did Luther borrow from the secular

world around him? The charge is not true. Throughout church history great care has been taken with the use of music. Luther loved music and wanted the people to sing. He introduced congregational hymn singing in his day and he wanted hymns to have fine tunes. Before the Reformation, the Church of Rome had no congregational singing at all. The people just listened. They listened to such things as Gregorian chants, along with other items performed by monks and special choirs.

Luther was a composer himself, and also an adapter of other works. We read in Robert Harrell’s work, *Martin Luther: His Music, His Message*, that Luther wrote thirty-seven chorales, fifteen of which he composed himself, and thirteen being derived from existing Catholic church music. Four were taken from German religious folk songs. Only one out of the thirty-seven came from a secular folk song. This hardly justifies the idea that Luther helped himself to secular sources. In the case of the one item drawn from a secular folk song, it is argued that the secular world had stolen that melody from the church, and Luther merely reclaimed it (having adapted and sanitised it).

Promoters of new worship love to quote Luther as saying, ‘Why should the devil have all the good tunes?’ What they do not tell their hearers is that Luther was talking about Catholic church music, not tavern songs. He was not interested in stealing from the world around him. If, rarely, a secular melody was used, it was very greatly changed, and what else would we expect from the Reformer who wrote –

‘Take special care to shun perverted minds who prostitute this lovely gift of nature and of art with their erotic rantings. And be quite assured that none but the devil goads them on to defy their very nature . . . They purloin the gift of God and use it to worship the foe of God.’

Luther clearly believed that music was to be identified with its source and users. It was the world of those days that stole from the church to obtain a melody line for a bawdy bar song, but not the other way round. Clearly, as we have noted, it would not be a violation of the distinction between sacred and profane for the church to borrow from relatively innocent spheres of secular music, such as the older genre of folk melody. But hymn tunes have never (before now) been drawn from, or fashioned by, any musical idiom associated

with aggressive opposition to God's authority and biblical morality. Luther boldly asserted that he had never used a bar song or a dance tune. People charge him with a 'crime' of which he would have been appalled. We repeat, it is a charge not substantiated by history.

In his book, *England Before and After Wesley*, J. W. Bready tells us that in the Great Awakening of the eighteenth century :

'The popular hymns and choruses contained no trace of ranting jingo or syncopated clamour: they bore no kinship to the uproar and fury of modern jazz, or to the insipidity of crooning. On the contrary, this new hymnody . . . was expressed in music at once lyrical, dignified, soulful and sweet.'

Does evangelical worship reinvent itself every few decades by adopting new hymn and musical forms, controversial at first, but soon becoming the *status quo*? Yes, answer the glib advocates of new worship. But let any reader just visit the second-hand bookshop in town, and pick out old hymnbooks. There may be eighteenth-century books there. As you take them up and examine them, you may be surprised to see how many of the hymns are familiar to you. These form the backbone of conservative hymnbooks to this day. If you are familiar with the names of hymn tunes (often printed above the hymns) you will see that most of these are still the majority tunes in modern books. It is remarkable how stable the worship scene has been over very many years. This is because the church of Christ has long had its very own culture of hymns and hymn tunes, formed to suit reverent, intelligent, heartfelt praise, and kept well apart from the world of profanity.

It is true that several new 'streams' of emphasis have appeared from time to time

in traditional hymnody – such as the affecting, subjective hymns of the late-nineteenth-century American writers. But these have practically always held the line in steering a wide birth from profane, worldly music. They have added to, but never betrayed, the principles behind evangelical hymns. It is immensely sad to see this long-maintained testimony, based firmly on biblical principle, now torn to shreds by slick and dishonest 'historical revisionism'. The claims and jibes of modern-worship promoters are wrong and even scandalous. It is a terrible shame to see good people being misled by them.

A significant statement appeared in a Christian magazine article about new worship. Thinking of 'Willow Creek', a mega-church in the USA noted for its contemporary worship, the writer said – 'Only a generation that loved Woodstock could love Willow Creek.' The worship leaders and performing artistes of Willow Creek would have been very pleased to read this, for this was exactly what they set out to achieve. Their worship was designed to close the gap between the church and the world to make the one more acceptable to the other. But according to James, to make the church resemble the world is to make it the enemy of God.

For the third time, we will ask our simple test question – why would a church wish to increase its customary, traditional - instrumentation and change its style of worship? What is the aim? What will be achieved? What can guitars plus percussion accomplish? And what will be added by the inclusion of trumpet, trombone, drums, saxophone and xylophone (now so common)? The answer may come back along these lines: 'This will commend us to the present generation, drawing them in and showing them that Christianity is not fusty, but right for them, and telling them that they have nothing to fear from us.' Such a reply will show that

the biblical separation of the church from the world is no longer understood and honoured. Both may now unite, and so eliminate the offence of the Cross. We have asked the same simple test question about the elaboration of instruments and change of musical style three times to show that the answers typically given today betray the slide into aesthetic, then ecstatic, then profane policies of worship.

The three deviations described in the preceding pages contradict crucial principles recovered in the blaze of New Testament light that shone so brightly at the time of the Reformation. Worship is to be offered in spirit and in truth, and not by works of skill or artistry. Worship is to be directed from the understanding, our joy being a response to things we sincerely appreciate, not a joy artificially generated and fuelled by 'physical' means. Worship is to be kept distinct from decadent and godless worldly culture. These principles must never be dismissed or surrendered. How we worship is not an accident of history – it is the application of principles. It is not a matter of culture or generation, but a matter of obeying and pleasing God the Father, to Whom worship is directed, God the Son in Whose name it is offered, and God the Holy Spirit, Who empowers it and translates it into the 'language' of Heaven. Are we clear about the great principles of worship? Are we teaching them, applying them, proving them? These things are essential if glory and honour is to be brought to the Lord, and the people of God truly sanctified and blessed.

This extract comes from *Worship in the Melting Pot, 3 Broken Principles*, by Peter Masters. Published in 2002 by Wakeman Trust, ISBN 978 1 870855 33 4

See issues 26 and 27 for the first two articles.

© Peter Masters 2002. Used by permission.



The devil himself often poses as an "angel of light," and sometimes his wolfish agents disguise themselves in "sheep's clothing" (Matthew 7:15). Be most careful in seeing to it that what draws you toward and makes you desire the companionship of Christian friends is their love and likeness to Christ and not their love and likeness to you. Shun as you would a deadly plague those who are not awed by the fear of God, i.e., a trembling lest they offend Him. Let not the devil persuade you that you are too well established in the faith to be injured by intimacy with worldly "Christians" (?). "Be not deceived, evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Corinthians 15:33). Rather "follow righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (2 Timothy 2:22). "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Corinthians 15:33).

The Greek word here for "communications" properly means "a bringing together, companionships." And evil companionships "corrupt." All evil is contagious and association with evildoers, whether they be "church members" or open infidels, has a defiling and debasing effect upon the true child of God. Mark well how the Holy Spirit has prefaced His warning: "be not deceived." Evidently there is a real danger of God's people imagining that they can play with fire without getting burned. Not so: God has not promised to protect us when we fly in the face of his danger signals. - **Arthur W. Pink**



1904-1991

Charles D. Alexander was a pastor in Great Britain from 1954-1977. His ministry became widespread through his prolific writings and conference work in both England and the United States. He was a personal friend of the editor of this publication.

PREFATORY NOTE:

The present crisis in human thought rises largely from the almost universal departure from the divinely inspired Holy Scriptures. The following address—given during the summer of 1965 in the Y.M.C.A., Inverness—is an attempt to restore the balance and direct attention once more to the only Book known to mankind which gives true and satisfying light on the origin, present state and future destiny of Creation—and in particular of Man, the high water mark of Creation and the key to its meaning and purpose.

MAN is no accident or sport of natural, inanimate forces pressing upwards from the womb of nothingness. He is the crowning point of Creation, unique, unexampled, without counterpart in the whole of the vast universe, and the destiny of the entire universe is hinged upon his fate.

Those scientists who have been more distinguished for their journalism than their scientific exactitude, have received a rude shock from the recent “Mariner” space probe of the planet Mars, where, if anywhere in the solar system, they wishfully hoped to find some form of intelligent life comparable with man. What they have discovered is a waste howling wilderness of a planet, pock-marked with craters (like the surface of the moon) the marks of the planet’s colossal bombardment by giant meteoric projectiles against which the thin atmosphere of Mars affords no protection. The Bible assures us that the purpose of Creation is worked out nowhere else but on our own planet; it is here that the great drama of God’s life is

unfolded, that moral law is tested, the righteousness of God vindicated, and eternal wisdom unrolled in the majestic acts of Redemption and Incarnation.

He who denies this is a fool; he who ignores it is doomed to wander everlastingly in a labyrinth of doubt and perplexity. All knowledge must lead to God, and is perfected in the Eternal Word without which man is without a chart, without a guide, and without light. The present state of materialistic science is a fearful commentary upon that fact. There can no longer be any hiding of the fact that the issue today is: Atheism or the Inspired Word. There is no middle ground.

THE BIBLE SOLVES THE RIDDLE OF MAN

The conflict now raging is no mere intellectual debate enlivening the classroom floor, a sort of “teach-in” held in the vast auditorium of world thought. It is much more serious than that. It is a symptom of something which is beyond science, and yet which is the key to the understanding of all science. It is a symptom of the fact that MAN IS A MORAL RUIN FUNDAMENTALLY AT WAR WITH HIS GOD, AND HIS PRIME NEED IS REDEMPTION. Here again the Bible is in advance of all human thought. In the Bible alone, the riddle of man’s existence is solved. The fundamental truth about man is that he is a sinful man, and no theorizing about his nature, origin or end can lead to any satisfactory result till this fact is accepted. In all conscience there is every reason today to accept it.

For the benefits which true science in all its branches has bestowed upon the human race, who would withhold gratitude? The power to explore the secrets of this vast and glorious universe, and the skill acquired in the use of that accumulated knowledge, have conferred untold blessings upon mankind, and brought glory to the great and Almighty Creator who has so endowed and equipped the human race with intelligence, skill, and resolution. He who sees not in Man the great, over-riding meaning and purpose of Creation, makes

himself a pathetic object indeed.

It is only when science turns from its true function and allows itself to be betrayed by theories and speculations which deny God and His Word of revelation, that it becomes the enemy and not the friend of Man. No apology is needed for a public and outspoken protest against these tendencies in some departments of modern scientific thought. It is more than time that the bankruptcy of materialistic science, in its total failure to give any credible account of the origin, purpose and end of existence, should be more widely appreciated than appears to be the case.

It is no longer a valid objection that only a scientist may criticize scientific theories. The rest of mankind have to live somehow in the same world as those whose manipulations of nature’s powers seem likely to make all living conditions impossible at no very distant date, and it is the duty of every rational man to examine the credentials of those theories and developments which are pressing so sorely against the sacred boundaries of his own personality.

NO POPERY OF SCIENCE

The thinking man is in no mood to accept a new Popery of science as against the old and discredited one of religion. It is always wrong morally for any oligarchy to claim an exclusive proprietary right to knowledge, and so to reduce the status of their fellow man to that of intellectual serfdom. After all, there is no end to that process except intellectual stagnation. The point is soon reached when one branch of science excommunicates a sister science as not being qualified for a final judgment on some subject on which it is reckoned not to possess the requisite specialist training. This happened not long ago when Sir Ambrose Fleming was brushed aside from the evolutionary controversy. He attempted to disprove the theories of Darwin and his successors, on the score that it could be demonstrated mathematically that the time required by the theory of development and natural selection, just was not available. Sir Ambrose was told, in effect, to confine

himself to wireless valves (of which he was the distinguished inventor) and not to meddle in things he knew nothing about.

The science of Jurisprudence is much more modest. In the region of its greatest triumphs—the Anglo-Saxon world—it has developed a jury system whereby twelve men (and women) drawn from all walks of common life, tradesmen, artisans, mechanics and clerks, are put together in the same box, and are expected to bring in a true verdict according to the evidence. Without any specialized knowledge of the law, they are reckoned by the greatest of lawyers to be fully equal to the task of separating truth from error. Indeed, a better verdict is often to be expected from the shrewd judgment of common men than from the closer reasoning of the expert.

There is a point where a man stands alone before his God, and is responsible for the final verdict. All science becomes one and indivisible before the great Creator who's Spirit breathes throughout universal nature, and whose laws it is the true function of scientific men to discover and interpret. Where science reverently dedicates itself to this noble task, it confers inestimable benefits upon the soul of man; but when it strays from its function and propounds theories which undermine faith, it places the welfare and the future of mankind in dire jeopardy—as is now happening before our eyes. A false theory of life in its nature and origin has undermined morality, denied the dignity of human life, and left the very idea of God as a flickering shadow on the outer rim of a meaningless universe.

This frightful consequence all men have a natural right indignantly to reject. There is another science which over-rides all the uncertain guesses of materialistic philosophers: the science of God, of conscience, divine truth, and the Divine Word. The true road to happiness (presumably the great end to which all philosophy and true science is aiming) has long ago been expressed in the sublime words of Israel's inspired king:

That man hath perfect blessedness
who walketh not astray
In counsel of ungodly men,
nor stands in sinner's way;
Nor sitteth in the scorner's chair,
but placeth his delight
Upon God's law, and meditates
on His law day and night.

(Based on Psalm 1)

Before all else, man is a spiritual being, made in the image of his Creator, and the laws of his own immortality transcend all other branches of knowledge as heaven is above earth. All guesses at the secret of his life which transgress the fact of man's divine origin, moral accountability, and indestructible existence as a spiritual being are not only self-evident fallacies but a dangerous subversion of man's moral nature.

THE TATTERED THEORY OF EVOLUTION

The Christian no longer has need to apologize for his acceptance of the opening chapters of Genesis as a true and sure guide to scientific origins. The embarrassment of those schools which reject the idea of a Divine creative act or series of acts, is self-evident. There is neither unanimity, stability, nor consistency in the various theories propounded. The "Big Bang" and the "Steady State" schools continue to propound their contrary doctrines. Fresh radio discoveries in the peripheries of the known universe impose fresh revisions. Nothing is stable. The theory of evolution is getting tattered and worn. There are so many exceptions. Fossils have an uncanny habit of turning up in living forms—like the coelacanth, which for a long time the evolutionist triumphantly flourished as a plausible link in the evolutionary chain, 30,000,000 years old—until it was fished up alive a few years ago off the coast of Madagascar, not a scale or a fin different in thirty million years—verdict: No Evolution.

The record of the evolutionist in the department of anthropology (the alleged pedigree of Man) is dubious in the extreme. The appalling fraud of "Piltdown Man," which deceived leading anthropologists for more than a generation, is still fresh in the memory. This ramshackle "Man" reconstructed by anthropologists from a few scraps of bones hardly enough to fill a child's lunch basket, leered at the public in museums and frightened children in their schoolbooks for many years until quite recently, it was acknowledged that the whole thing had been faked, probably by a gentleman of the name of Charles Dawson, in order fictitiously to provide the missing evidence vital to the construction of the evolutionary theory.

As late as 1949 the British Museum was

claiming that the Piltdown skull was 600,000 years old, and was the oldest human fossil yet found. "The First Englishman," trumpeted some of our leading anthropologists. Then fell the blow. In 1955 was published the British Museum's famous Last Word on the Piltdown business. In its Bulletin Geology, Vol. 2, No. 6, Sir Gavin de Beer, then Director of the Natural History Department of the British Museum, declared: "We are now in a position to give an account of the full extent of the Piltdown hoax." He asserted that the mandible was almost certainly that of an immature orangutan (confirming the statement of an observant scientist only a few years before, that "the lower jaw and canine tooth were those of an ape of about ten years of age"). Tests showed that the bone fragments had been deliberately treated and prepared to make them appear to be of remote origin, while even the associated flint implements alleged to have been found in the same gravel pit at Piltdown had been artificially iron-stained, and a bone implement had been shaped by a steel knife.

Douglas Dewar, Fellow of the Zoological Society of London, tabulated the percentages of fossils to their known living representatives, proving that the reason for the total lack of fossils of intermediate form required by the theory of evolution, was not the imperfection of the geological record, but rather that such forms never did exist.

Despite the great importance of these studies, the Zoological Society refused to publish them, no doubt because they aimed too damaging a blow at the Sacred Cow of evolution. This policy of suppression (carried out by the B.B.C. which refused to give listening time to men like Mr. Dewar) only confirmed what the late Professor Vialleton had said earlier: "For fifty years the textbooks have put into the foreground only that which is favourable to evolution, passing by in silence all that is not so or which is contrary to it."

To ask the Christian believer to put aside his Bible so as to make way for theories with so dubious a history, is contrary to reason and common sense.

HIGHROAD TO ATHEISM

The time has gone by when it is possible any longer to hold to the doctrine of evolution as a reasonable method by which God may be supposed to have made the

world, and thus to save the credit of revealed religion in a scientific age. Many of the earlier exponents of evolution enthusiastically maintained this position, but the full results are now known. Not the least of the causes of that climate of materialism, which now befogs the human mind and is debauching intellect and morals on a stupendous scale, is the doctrine that man is an accidental thrust of blind nature acting according to the supposed law of natural selection.

In short, evolution is now proved to be the highroad to atheism and, in its political form, to communism. Some of us would go much further and see in the mental processes of the last century and a half a gigantic and most sinister conspiracy against the soul of man—a conspiracy emerging from those satanic regions of the world unseen, which it is a major error of evolutionary science completely to ignore or to scorn.

We reject these materialistic doctrines which stem from the evolutionary argument, for the following reasons in brief:

- Evolution does not account for the most important fact of all—life itself.
- Living fossils (of which the coelacanth is only one of many), prove no evolution in 30,000,000 years.
- Its history is one of fraud and suppression.
- Its moral effects are now endangering the existence of man.
- It completely misrepresents the history and the nature of man.
- It can only be taught at the expense of the rejection of the Christian faith and the inspiration of the Bible.

We invite all men of earnest mind to consider the following facts which are not usually adduced in this controversy:

Man is a recent arrival on this planet. Had he been here the millions of years which evolution requires, he would long since have outlived the resources of the planet. His present rate of multiplication, so alarming to some of the statisticians, require that his first appearance on the earth was at no very distant date—within the last 6,000 years, in fact.

In proof thereof, let it be considered that there are no authentic records which carry man's history back longer than that. The so-called Egyptian "dynasties" are notoriously misleading, and are patently exaggerated. The Chinese chronology is much more reliable, and the Chinese arrived in the river valleys of their vast subcontinent well within historic time, as their present numbers confirm.

It is beyond dispute that most of the populated parts of the earth are of recent settlement. How many were in Britain when the Romans arrived? North America at the time of Columbus was inhabited by a few roving tribes of wild Indians (recent arrivals from Mongolian Asia) and vast herds of buffalo. It was a land of silent prairies, mighty rivers, and vast forests slumbering in cathedral-like calm. Nature reigned undisturbed.

In Central America, the Aztecs were slowly exterminating themselves after having supplanted a more civilized people. The degraded tribes of the Amazon today are the descendants of the wise and noble Incas, and reflect the true story of man—noble in origin, and always civilized at the beginning, and becoming degraded and savage in the process of his own degeneration.

Australia, even more than America, was a vast and silent wilderness, with a few families of Bushmen only to claim the inheritance of man, until the Dutch and the English explorers arrived—Australia, capable of accommodating the world's surplus population by hundreds of millions for generations to come.

WHICH WAY IS EVOLUTION?

The earliest authentic records which we have of man invariably find him civilized, and usually much superior to his more modern representatives. Stonehenge was built by engineers and astronomers of no mean order of intellect, antecedent to the Druids. The Zimbabwe ruins in Africa were left by a people vastly superior to the Bantu which hunted and speared their way through its jungle-wreathed remains. Always it is the same story—Easter Island, and Ponape in the Pacific, and the Mayan remains in the forests of Yucatan. Which way is evolution—up or down?

The modern Greek is scarcely the intellectual equal of the generations of Heraclitus, Homer, Socrates and Plato. The

Turk is a poor successor to the teeming multitudes which once inhabited the luscious coast and hinterland of Asia Minor in the days of Paul the Apostle. We repeat: Which way is evolution?

But what of the Stone Age men? Have a care! They exist today in Papua and elsewhere only a few miles from modern civilization. The existence of a Stone Age as one of the phases through which mankind as a unit once passed in his march upwards to civilization is one of the incredible fallacies of modern speculation. When our ancestors in Britain were supposed to be chipping their flints and wearing woad, Homer was writing his glorious epics, and Isaiah and Jeremiah were exerting their seraphic influence in Palestine. Where was the Stone Age then?

But what of the Cave Men? Did not mankind once live in caves before they had learned to build themselves houses, and did they not bludgeon their way through life with clubs and stone missiles?

This is the apparition of modern credulity. The only cavemen of whom we have any certain knowledge as to their habits and intellectual status, were artists of no mean ability, whose marvelous tracings on the walls of the French caves shame many of the frightful daubs now disfiguring the walls of our modern art galleries. Which way is evolution?

The humping long-haired creature whom modern illustrators love to depict in textbooks never, in fact, existed—unless he exists today in another sort of Cavern, in the screaming dens of the Liverpool Sound, where long-haired, wild-eyed youths excite the hysterical abandonment of young females fresh from our expensive educational establishments—and do it with jungle rhythms, tom-tom beatings and frightful ravings and gestures for which they are paid millions of pounds by a degenerate public. We ask again: Which way is evolution?

We have already referred to the replicas of "the first Englishman" set up in our museums and educational institutions—his humping, ape-like structure, his flat, empty cranium . . . and around him clattering the feet of his supposed descendants, unwittingly testifying, by their credulity and ignorance, to their own degeneracy, in their readiness to discard all inconvenient ideas of God and truth.

continued next page

We do not know if this ramshackle man has been dismantled, or whether he is being kept as a memorial to the stupidity and dishonesty of some modern anthropologists, but we do know that he is a monument to the fraudulent nature of the scientific theory which created him. We much prefer the Bible account of the origin of man, created in perfection, nobility, wisdom, and honour, in the image and likeness of the Most Wise and Most Holy Creator.

MAN THE KEY TO CREATION

Man is the only creature in visible Creation who has gone down in the scale of being. Mentally and physically, he is the phenomenon of Creation—the unique, the unparalleled miracle of nature, only to be accounted for as he is the special creation of God, embodying within himself the meaning and the ultimate purpose of this vast and glorious universe.

There are no other men. No space probe will ever find another race of men. Man has been placed alone on this earth as the unexampled and unique crown of all being. The universe has been designed in all its illimitable greatness to give exercise to the mind of man which is greater than his own environment. A creature, he, of two worlds—one of time, and the other of eternity. He is soul and body, created imperishable, destined for immortality, doomed to live in eternal happiness or in everlasting shame and contempt.

Man is greater than the natural creation because he will outlast it. His godlike origin is seen even beyond his present degradation through sin. Genius rises from the slums. Newton's parents were nonentities. Beethoven's mother was a poor consumptive, and his father a drunkard.

Man was, from the beginning, not a brute-like creature slowly and painfully arising from the primeval waste, but always a B.A., a B.Sc., a B. Eng., or a Ph.D. He can pass in one generation from savagery to the highest point of intellectual achievement. Sons of the Bushmen are graduating in Australian universities. The Red Indian goes straight from the wigwam to the campus, as the Kaffir and the Zulu from the kraal to the research bench. All that men need is opportunity. Otherwise there are no truly "backward" races.

It is in his own spiritual nature—the

highest part of him—that man is a failure. Immorality, vice, greed, avarice, dishonesty, do not spare even the greatest of men. Joad was guilty of a petty swindle (but, thank God, he survived to become a humble Christian). The Profumo affair showed how men of affluence, position and education can quickly descend to levels unutterably low and sad. Some of our modern philosophers are much married and divorced men. Gladstone knew thirteen prime ministers of Great Britain, and more than half of them were adulterers. Kings have lost their thrones because of weakness for wine and women. Popes have been the worst moral lepers of all. Erasmus was a genius without nobility or manliness. Adultery and unnatural vice stain the aristocracy more than the lower orders of society. Education and breeding are no bar against the foulest and most despicable in human nature. Cultured Germany stood aside while jack-booted brutes murdered 5,000,000 unwanted fellow-humans.

Even the Christian comes short of his holiest desires. We long to be, yet cannot attain. Like an imprisoned eagle, we dash our wings against the bars. Something must come into human nature. We need Another's strength, Another's strong right arm. The primary needs of human nature are **REGENERATION AND RESURRECTION**. No more significant thing has ever been said of man than this: *"Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."*

EVOLUTIONARY FAILURES

To our list of evolutionary failures, we add the following three crucial tests:

1. Evolution cannot account for the soul of man.

Reason, discovery, contrivance on the grand scale, reflection, will, self-consciousness, worship, poetry, music, literature, beauty harmony, art . . . faith, hope, love—let all these testify to the nature of man's soul, and elevate him far above and beyond all known creation. Souls do not evolve. They are the direct expression of the image of God. If the butterfly's wing, the peacock's tail, the spider's web, and the mysterious instinctive impulses which preserve and govern the animal creation—if these and ten thousand other things attest the finger of God in Creation, let man's nobler part,

CONSCIENCE, speak for his creation as the favourite of heaven and loudly acclaim his divine origin and destiny as the one being in whom all the wisdom and purpose of God meet. To know good and evil, and to have in the breast a monitor which speaks for God and truth and righteousness, is beyond science, and proclaims that man is a moral creation accountable at last before a Judgment Seat.

2. Evolution cannot account for the present condition of man.

That man is not only a sinner, but a dangerous criminal, a potential menace to the entire creation, is no longer doubted even by the atheist and the agnostic. H. G. Wells died in despair, for he could see no future for mankind. Great statesmen have, after two world wars, affirmed that the future is dark and foreboding. Only the Bible tells us the meaning of this disaster which has happened to man. Original disobedience has plunged him into present ruin. The spiritual nature of man can only live by communion with his God, but all history attests that there has been catastrophic interruption. There is none righteous, quotes the great apostle Paul. There is no one who understands or seeks after God. The entire race is adrift from its moorings and, with the controls off, our modern society is plunging headlong into vicious practices: violence and lawlessness are sweeping the face of the earth. Again we ask: Which way evolution?

3. Evolution cannot account for the fact of Christ.

There is no way of accounting for Christ except as the God-man. Here is One who was attested by prophecy uttered across the abyss of four thousand years. Man left his innocence behind in the Garden, but went out armed with a promise of the Coming Seed who would be man's deliverer. It was this promise which created the Hebrew nation, separated it from all the families of men, and sent it on its divine mission to preserve the pure knowledge of God in the world, to transmit the holy Law, and to enshrine the promise of redemption till the time of deliverance should come. The coming Redeemer was the subject of the prophetic songs of David, which delineated as in a master-portrait every significant feature of the life and mission of Christ as God-become-man. The sacrificial death by which Christ should effect the atonement was prefigured in Israel's ancient Temple ordinances, and minutely described in

Isaiah 53, as by an eye-witness at the actual crucifixion scene, though the royal prophet lived eight centuries before the event. Daniel fixed the era with the precision of a calendar, and all but named the very date when Christ would “*make an end of transgression and bring in everlasting righteousness.*” The very place of the Redeemer’s birth was fixed as Bethlehem-Ephratah (Micah 5: 2), while the price paid for His betrayal, and the final use of it, was told by Zechariah four centuries before (Zech. 11: 12-13).

Here, then, is the perfect man, the full flowering of humanity, and none should be surprised at the information that Christ is the intrusion of God in person into His own Creation for the deliverance of man. Why should it be thought a thing incredible that God who made man for Himself as the crowning point of His wisdom should also stoop low unto suffering and death in order to raise His moral Creation to the highest pinnacle of blessedness? Who but God could be qualified to take man’s place and make man’s cause His own? How make an atonement if One who was not both God

and Man should take the burden? Incarnation, Crucifixion, Resurrection, Exaltation are the four key words to the understanding of the mystery of Creation, and without these there is no understanding—all is chaos and meaningless. By this key all doors are opened wide.

The fact of Christ is beyond all evolution’s vapid theorizing. The Bible is far ahead of all science. It shows man’s need, above all else, for redemption. His need is not education but conversion. Man is defective in nothing but in his lost capacity for righteousness.

Again, the fact of Christ shows (what is an exclusive Bible doctrine in advance of all human philosophy and religious thought) that man’s nature is in a state of ruinous fall. The evil forces which surrounded Christ bear witness to the wickedness man has acquired. No man dare, except at peril to his everlasting welfare, ignore Christ. In the weakness and misery of his depravity, in all his sordid lapses, and in his unattained longings, he needs Christ.

THE WORLD MADE FOR CALVARY

The world was made for Calvary—not Calvary for the world. The key to the understanding of man’s long and painful history, as well as to the meaning of the Universe, is moral redemption. And in the most magnificent passage the world has ever read or ever will read on this fascinating subject of the meaning, end and purpose of Creation—a passage which establishes the full verbal inspiration of the Bible—Paul, with his pen dipped in the gold of eternity, writes:

“For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.” (Romans 8:19-21)

AMEN! EVEN SO COME LORD JESUS.
(Revelation 22: 20)



2011 SGBF ANNUAL MEETING

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

*We are incredibly grateful and most sincerely honored for the opportunity to host the next Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship at Sovereign Grace Baptist Church in Anniston, Alabama. Although the date of the meeting, **Tuesday, September 13, 2011**, is still some distance away, we pray that this little reminder will allow you to mark your iPads, Blackberries, PDAs, Palm Pilots, Electronic Organizers, DayTimers, or if you're like me, your desk or wall calendar.*

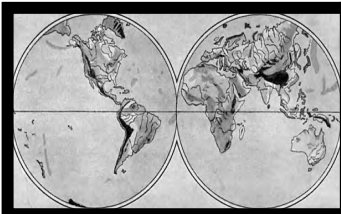
If you are coming in from a good distance, we are arranging special services surrounding our event so that early arrivals may enjoy the Scriptures presented by our special guest speakers for three evenings: September 11-12, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday. When the details are settled, we will send that information to the SGBF churches and friends of SGBF, as well as provide that information in the next Messenger.

Anniston is located just off Interstate 20, at nearly the halfway point between Atlanta and Birmingham (an hour drive on the interstate to either city). Sovereign Grace Baptist Church is located on the west end of Anniston, in the rural community of Wellborn. The city of Oxford is right next door and has several hotels, motels and restaurants that are not only a short driving distance to our church facility, but also conveniently close to the major stores and shopping centers along the interstate.

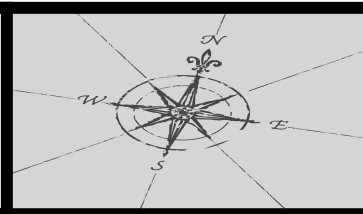
For our exact location, and for more information, you can go to our local web address, www.SovereignGraceAnniston.com. If the Lord should tarry, and if He so will, I look forward to seeing you at the next meeting.

Ever in Christ,

Pastor Jon Cardwell



World Missions



Sovereign Grace Baptists: Several Soteriological Pitfalls

T..... J.....

Among Baptists holding to sovereign grace there are in-house discussions and friendly disagreements about Sabbath/Lord's Day issues and the nature of the New Covenant at present. There is a variety of opinions about elders, Bible versions and there exists some variety of opinion concerning worship. Concerning secondary issues, charity and brotherly love can still be exercised even as we encourage deeper dialogue about those issues.

The reason for my writing, however, concerns several unhealthy pitfalls centering on the central doctrines of regeneration, justification and faith. In an effort to stress sovereign grace from a baptistic perspective, a minority have fallen into some unbiblical beliefs concerning these core doctrines.

Most of these soteriological errors bear the marks of Hyper-Calvinism. Sadly, the majority of hyper-Calvinists have not historically been Presbyterian or Reformed, but have largely been Baptists. In other words, Hyper-Calvinism, or Hardshellism, is mostly a Baptist error. Therefore, below I describe several of these pitfalls.

Eternal justification: As people discover that God foreordains all things whatsoever that comes to pass, many come to marvel that we, as children of God, are predestined from before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4,5). However, some who are zealous to stress God's eternal purposes forget that God's decreed things come to fruition in time. Enamored with the work of God from all eternity, some believe erroneously in "eternal justification" – asserting that God not only decrees to justify His Elect from all eternity but also actually does so, justifying the Elect before time began.

The truth, however, is this: God has decreed to justify His Elect from all eternity, and yet He does so in time. The Elect, too, were once, "*children of wrath even as others*" (Ephesians 2:1-3). God's children "*were once darkness, but now are light in the Lord*" (Ephesians 5:8, c.f., I Peter 2:9-10). God quickened us at a point in time and declared us "not guilty" at that point, imputing the righteousness of Christ to us whereas before we were unsaved, unjustified and guilty before a Righteous God.

This belief in Eternal Justification, or Justification from Eternity, is a dangerous soteriological error into which some Calvinistic Baptists have fallen. In a zeal to stress God's works from eternity, some ignore God's works in time. God's decrees are sure and are guaranteed to come to pass. However, the decreed things of God do not actually come to pass in time until its own specific pre-ordained temporal moment arrives.

Again, God has decreed to justify His Elect from all eternity, and yet He actually does so at a moment in time. We are predestined

eternally in order to be justified and saved in time. Beware of this first pitfall.

The denial of duty-faith: Another common error is misunderstanding the role of human response to the Gospel. Many rightly affirm that we can do nothing pleasing to God in the flesh. However, though natural ability lacks, sinful man still stands obliged to obey the Gospel and believe savingly in Jesus Christ. God everywhere in Scripture commands what man cannot supply, such that we may pray as Augustine, "Demand what You will, O Lord, and give what You demand."

Some Calvinistic Baptists deny this truth. Some have accused me of holding to "Duty-Faith" and others have called me a "Fullerite" and a "hypo-Calvinist" for vigorously stressing that God commands men everywhere to turn away from their evil ways and embrace the Gospel (Acts 17:30). We cannot peer into the eternal counsels of God and see clearly, but we can vigorously attempt all which God clearly and explicitly commands in His Word, praying all the while for God's enabling power in the performance of these same commands.

The deniers of duty-faith reason thusly: How can God command faith if natural man is unable to provide it? If faith is a gift, how can it also be a duty? If faith is a duty, then how is faith not a condition placed upon free grace?

Immediate regeneration: Closely related to the denial of "duty-faith," many Calvinistic Baptists have fallen into the severe error of "immediate regeneration" whereby God saves man without any means, to include the instrumentality of the Word of God and the instrumentality of faith.

The instrumentality of the Word of God

The truth is that God ordains that the Elect ordinarily should be saved through faith, upon the hearing of the Gospel. Infants and the mentally infirm constitute extraordinary cases, yet ordinarily the witness of Scripture states the following:

- "*Ye are already clean because of [or through] the word I have spoken to you.*" (John 15:3).
- "*Of His own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures.*" (James 1:18).
- "*...knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God. For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance.*" (1 Thess 1:4, 5).
- "*Having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the Word of God which lives and abides forever.*" (1 Peter 1:23,25).
- "*But you must continue in the things which you have learned and have been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*" (II Tim 3:14).

Many who deny the instrumentality of the Word are often admirers of John Gill, and yet not even Gill supports their claims of “immediate regeneration.” Gill affirms, on page 534 of his *Body of Divinity*, the instrumentality of the Word:

"Though after all it seems plain, that the ministry of the word is the vehicle in which the Spirit of God conveys himself and his grace into the hearts of men; which is done when the word comes not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost; and works effectually, and is the power of God unto salvation; then faith comes by hearing, and ministers are instruments by whom, at least, men are encouraged to believe: 'received ye the Spirit', says the apostle, 'by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith': Ga 3:2 that is, by the preaching of the law, or by the preaching of the gospel? by the latter, no doubt."

The same God who has ordained the ends of all things, has also ordained the means. God works through His Word. Chapter 14 of the Westminster Confession, as well as the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith, states that saving faith “is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts, and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the Word” and the Second Helvetic Confession quoting Romans 10:17 on this point asserts, “*Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God*” (16:2).

The instrumentality of Faith

Again, Chapter 14, “Of Saving Faith,” in both the Westminster and the 1689 Confessions of Faith, summarizes well the role of faith as an instrument through which God saves the Elect: “The grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts, and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the Word...”

The Belgic Confession (Article 2) explains further:

“Therefore we justly say with Paul, that we are justified by faith alone, or by faith without works. However, to speak more clearly, we do not mean that faith itself justifies us, for it is only an instrument with which we embrace Christ our Righteousness. But Jesus Christ, imputing to us all His merits, and so many holy works which He hath done for us and in our stead, is our Righteousness. And faith is an instrument that keeps us in communion with Him in all His benefits...”

Below is an explanation concerning the instrumentality of faith that I sent to one man who vigorously denied this truth, calling it a “works-righteousness.” Examine my explanation yourself to see if it accords with Scripture:

“The Elect are justified by or through faith (Rom. 1:17; 3:25, 28, 30; 5:1; Eph. 2:8; Gal. 2:16; 3:11, 24; Phil 3:9).

Faith is not the reason or ultimate grounds for the Elect’s justification. We are not saved *because* of our faith or on the *grounds* of our faith, as if we can produce a certain sufficient measure of this substance from within ourselves, which God would then honor and allow us into heaven. This would be to make faith into a meritorious act and our

work of producing enough faith of sufficient quality to be a work of righteousness able to commend us before God. This would be yet another form of works-righteousness. This may be part of your zeal in denying “duty-faith” – your legitimate desire to guard against any form of “works-righteousness.”

However, though we are not saved because of our faith, faith is the instrument through which God’s Elect are united to Christ. The expressions are thus—*dia pisteos*, *ek pisteos*, and *pistei*, which can all be translated as “by means of” or “through” faith.

Faith is the *instrument* which lays hold of Jesus. God, through free grace, enables a person to believe. It is a gift of grace, yet God does not believe for the man; the man must believe. Therefore, being an instrument and channel, faith does not come at some later time after a person is united to Christ, but a person is united to Christ by faith itself. Therefore, though it is proper to speak of a logical priority of regeneration over faith/conversion, God monergistically taking initiative to move the man, let us not mistake a logical priority with a chronological one; there is no perceptible chronological gap in time, nor are there any who are regenerate but who are yet to exercise saving faith. Everywhere we see faith we will see the new birth, and where we see the new birth we will see faith.

Again, *Ek pisteos* (“by”, “from”, or “out of” faith) describes faith as that which logically precedes a person’s justification. Faith is the gift of God, which is given to us so that we may cling to Christ, though it is never the efficient or ultimate cause of justification, the dative use of the noun *pistis* being used in an *instrumental* sense (see also Rom. 3:28).”

Likewise, not only faith but repentance as well, is an essential grace-gift that the Elect must possess for salvation. Though faith and repentance are not produced within ourselves by our own merits, we still must possess these gifts of grace, wrought by the work of Christ for His Elect on the Cross, for us to see heaven. The Westminster Confession of Faith guards us from error in regard to the necessity of repentance:

"Although repentance be not to be rested in as any satisfaction for sin, or any cause of the pardon thereof, which is the act of God's free grace in Christ; yet is it of such necessity to all sinners, that none may expect pardon without it." (The Westminster Confession of Faith, 15:1-3).

Thus, we see that an “instrument” is not the effective cause of a thing, and that God unites us to Christ by the instrumentality of faith upon the hearing of the Word. To believe these things is not “works-righteousness” but are truths defended both biblically and historically.

Placing regeneration chronologically prior to faith: Placing regeneration at some point in chronological time prior to faith is the 3rd sovereign grace soteriological pitfall.

continued next page

Perhaps this error is an understandable reaction to the prevalent error in many churches today. Many falsely believe that mankind summons up some measure of man-produced faith, which then commends them to God in such a way that God then grants them the new birth. Thus, our faith produced from within causes God to regenerate us in a synergistic cooperation. Thus, man's initiative is critical in salvation.

This common view is contrary to Scripture, which speak of a divine monergism, whereby God is the one who initiates the work as well as completes it (Philippians 1:6). Thus, the new birth, regeneration is the cause and not the effect of our faith. Thus, many sovereign grace theologians rightly defend the logical priority of regeneration over faith.

However, some have mistaken a logical priority with a chronological one. Instead of seeing regeneration/conversion as a "package deal" even as God takes the initiative, some have defended a scheme of salvation whereby regeneration occurs chronologically first and then faith comes later (in time).

The truth is this: There are no regenerated people walking around that lack faith. We should not expect to encounter faithless persons who nonetheless possess regenerate souls. God moves the wheel, yet all the spokes of the wheel turn at once. A logical priority does not necessitate a gap in chronological time. Some Primitive Baptists speak of regenerate people walking around that just need to know that they are already regenerate. However, if you are saved, you surely know it – now – through faith in Christ.

Conclusion

I love the doctrine of God's sovereignty. To know that all things work for God's glory and His People's good is a great comfort during times of trial. The knowledge that God has a People that He will unfailingly call to salvation motivates my missionary activities. God's eternal decrees and His works from eternity cause us to marvel, as does God's free grace in salvation apart from human contribution. However, in our zeal to defend these great doctrines, let us also remember the instrumentalities that God ordains and that God's eternal decrees are decreed to unfold in time. Let us beware of these pitfalls above.

Michael Pfleegor – Suriname, SA

This last year the Pfleegors, Michael and Erin, have committed themselves to world missions. They are in the early stages of preparing to serve. Here is an excerpt from the latest update that I have. – Ed.

"Dear Brothers & Sisters, Family & Friends,

"This has been a month of joys & sorrows. First, we are rejoicing & thanking God for the gift of another daughter, Lyla Elise. She was born September 16th, weighing 7lbs 15oz, and 20.5in long. The children love her, and want to hold her all the time. They are also very helpful to Erin, running to get whatever she needs to take care of the baby. Lyla is by far the easiest baby we've had. She usually only wakes once in the night to eat, and she doesn't cry much at all.

"We are also rejoicing that we received the official invitation to the field of Suriname from World Team. The missionaries there do want us to come and work with them to reach the Hindustani with the Gospel. This is a tremendous milestone. Now we have a goal in mind. There are others laboring there already, who can help us transition into the languages & culture. They can help us with all the practical things (e.g., finding a place Gwyneth, Parker & Jonah holding Lyla. to live). They know the cost of living, and so can help us figure out the needed support. Very soon, we expect to start gathering partners to support us in this ministry. Even this month, I'm traveling to let people know about this opportunity, and look for others willing to go with us. We do not have all of the gifts, but need others, like you, to work with us to make Christ known among the Hindustani."

Wayne Camp--Thailand

Bro. Camp is working with a Bible Training School in Thailand. He makes annual trips to teach in the school, preparing men for gospel ministry. – Ed.

"When you are teaching Bible school as we are here there are good days, there are better days, and then there are great days. Today was one of those great days. Today I was teaching in John, chapter 6. I was dealing with the disciples caught in a storm after dark. They were fearful. That fear was increased when they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming to them. In fact they cried out for fear because they thought he was a ghost for they had never seen a man walking on water. **Matthew 14:26, And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.**

"I reminded the students that in times of such stress and fear we need to remember the teaching of Romans 8:28. **Romans 8:28, And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.** I went on to relate the things that Joseph said to his brothers when they thought that he would kill them when they went down to Egypt to purchase grain during the famine. **Genesis 45:5, Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.** I also referred them to what Joseph said to his fearful brethren after his father was dead. Their thinking was that Joseph had not killed them earlier for the sake of their father. But, now that their father was dead Joseph would surely kill them. But Joseph said to them, **Genesis 50:19-20, And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.**

"I could see the interest was very high. It was time for lunch but some of the students had questions. Brother Brown spoke up and suggested that we tell them they could ask their questions after lunch because he was going to be teaching along the same line. After lunch Brother Brown started off with Acts 18:9-10. **Acts 18:9-10, Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.** Brother Paul was teaching them to not be afraid to preach the truth, especially the doctrine of election, which he was teaching, because some men hated the doctrine and would hate them for preaching the doctrine. He went on to show them that God is in complete control of all things and that even the wrath of man will praise Him or He will restrain it. **Psalms 76:10, Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.**

Daniel Parks – Frederiksted, Virgin Islands

“Dear Friends,

”Today marks the official end of the Atlantic hurricane season. The Lord was pleased to let no hurricanes pass directly over us. Hurricane Earl passed about a hundred miles to the north of us August 29, and Hurricane Otto passed farther north September 30. We were close enough to both storms to receive considerable winds and rains. But the effects from Hurricane Tomas November 7-11, which passed to the south of the Virgin Islands, were far more consequential. It passed very near to Saint Lucia (on which island my family resided 1985-89) and caused catastrophic damage and loss of about fourteen lives. Damages here were not as catastrophic. But they resulted in the President issuing the third presidential disaster declaration for the Virgin Islands in two months. (Three in one year is unprecedented.) To the best of my knowledge, no congregant here suffered any great loss. The official 2011 Atlantic hurricane season commences June 1.

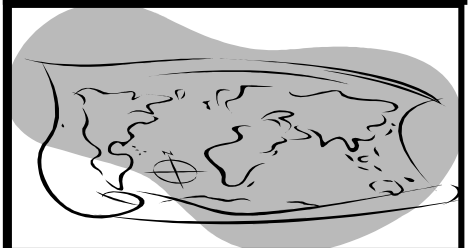
“Our television program We Preach Christ is broadcast for one-half hour every first and third Lord’s Day. During September we commenced a series of messages on The Gospel Preachers’ Duty, Theme, and Attitude. The text for this series is 2 Corinthians 4:5: “*For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake.*” The two messages in November presented the final two messages regarding the gospel preacher’s theme: “*We preach ... Jesus*” and “*We preach Christ Jesus the Lord.*” This series is to be completed in December, God willing.”

CARIBBEAN MISSION
PO Box 305 ~ Frederiksted, VI 00841
340.772-6198 ~ DanielEParks@aol.com

Victor and Bethany Maxson Africa

“Pray for us at this time for guidance and direction. We are currently in a transition and decision phase for our work. Together with my wife, I have evaluated our work and role in Malawi, and believe that our work there in Blantyre is done and that the Lord is leading us on to something else here in the States. The church here has agreed to give us three months to evaluate and confirm this decision and determine where the Lord would have us. We highly value your time before the throne for us!”

victorwmaxson@gmail.com



Prem Waghmare - India

We reported to you in the last Messenger that Prem had been falsely accused of wrong-doing in two separate automobile incidents. Insurance fraud is rampant in India with the accused being required to prove his innocence rather than the other way around. Prem recently shared the following:

“I have just returned from the court appearance for the May 2010 auto accident. I am so excited to share with you how the Lord is answering your prayers in delivering us from the lion’s mouth. One of the two injured witnesses was able to attend the court today and told the judge exactly what happened. He shared vividly how the driver (who died instantly) of their motorcycle was drunk and yet so adamant on driving himself and then how he collided into our parked vehicle causing the accident. We are so grateful to our great God who answers the prayers of His people. My attorney is quite relieved with today’s testimony and said this will greatly help us with the next hearing date on Nov 20, 2010.”

We have had no further updates on the ongoing situation but Prem has shared the ongoing opportunities for evangelistic work.

“During the week, the brethren and I are kept quite busy with preaching and teaching in several towns and villages. After the day’s preaching and having returned back to the base in Wad-Dhamna, it is not surprising to find a few visitors who have come to hear the Word of God. Also the Lord’s Day is celebrated here in worship and often in the breaking of bread (Acts 2:42) and when needed, after worship I drive the folks to nearby bus stops where they can get back to their homes and villages.”

Prayer requests are:

- 1) The upcoming court dates, especially November 19th (for the 2009 accusation) and November 20th for the May 2010 case that I mentioned above.
- 2) The believers who are under severe attacks from the enemy. In the past I mentioned a few sisters in Christ who are experiencing much suffering from their ungodly husbands.
- 3) The upcoming two days’ open-air meetings at Yeotmal (about 160kms south of us) where folks seem to be coming to the understanding of God’s sovereignty in salvation. During our last session we were flocked by many with questions pertaining to the eternal well-being of their souls.”

Premw1@yahoo.com
International Community Outreach, Inc.
C/O Sovereign Grace Church
P.O. Box 9424
Kansas City, Mo 64133-0224

Mt. Zion Bible Church - World-Wide Ministry

Mt. Zion operates the Chapel Library which publishes and distributes Sovereign Grace materials all over the world. – Ed.

Recently the leadership of this ministry has begun efforts toward a new work. It is the opinion of this editor that this is one of the most profound missionary endeavors that he has seen in a long time. Here is a short overview of their vision.

“Recently, we mailed to North American pastors regarding the new Ekklesia Seminary at Chapel Library. Ekklesia’s focus is free seminary training for three groups: overseas pastors, prison inmates, and members of North American congregations. Many churches have future leaders who will benefit from training in their local church setting, but while seminary tuition can be more than \$1000 per course, Ekklesia provides its distance training **free of charge**.”

The Seminary also affirms their commitment to Reformed Theology as well as Believer’s Baptism. They are requesting the consideration of like-minded churches and pastors for financial support as well as for volunteer mentors to assist them in the work of overseeing the study of the students.

In many places in the world there is only one trained pastor for every 20 churches. In other places the ratio is even greater. For many men laboring as pastors and teachers in third world countries the logistics and costs of formal training are prohibitive. Chapel Library is seeking to make training possible to men who would never receive it otherwise. Please prayerfully consider this work.

Address:
Chapel Library
2603 West Wright Street
Pensacola, Florida 32505-7950
www.mountzion.org
chapel@mountzion.org

Brian Ellis – Philippines

“Dear Friends,

“We would like to take this opportunity to greet you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thank you so much for your prayers and support of the work of Cubao Reformed Baptist Church here in the Philippines.

“Earlier in the year Brian was able to visit the USA for 3 weeks and particularly the ARBCA Assembly and so meet up with many friends there. The Lord willing he is hoping to visit the UK for 2 months this coming April and May. Necy will not be accompanying him on this trip as such visits are often very tiring. Brian is hoping to visit on this occasion churches in the north of England and Scotland, where he has not been now for about 4 years. Anyone in those particular areas who would like a visit please contact John Lovell our missionary secretary at Wattisham. (john.lovell@bt.com).

“At all our services we constantly have visitors. Recently we have been having 3 Iranians attending the English service regularly, as well as other visitors. We again would value your prayers as we seek to reach out into our area. One sad thing is that now just on the corner of our street they are opening a new bar and a massage parlour. Our end of Cubao is the “Red Light” district. May we at CRBC shine forth as a bright and shining light for the Lord Jesus Christ. May it please the Lord to save sinners here in Cubao and add them to His church.”

Grace Ministerial Academy (GMA): “We praise God for the opening of classes for the second semester on Nov. 9. Pastor Noel Espinosa preached the opening message. “Some new students enrolled. Please pray for their adjustment to be able to cope with the requirements of their studies. The Friday Bible Class, which is open to men and women of other churches, also commenced and there were more than 50 enrolled. They are currently studying the Epistle to the Hebrews with Pastor Espinosa as tutor. One surprising development is that students are coming from large prominent Pentecostal churches. They say that they crave for deeper teaching, which they find in the Academy. Praise the Lord! May they not be disappointed in their expectations, but may they be truly blessed.”

Brian & Necy Ellis
55, Miami St., Cubao,
1102 Quezon City,
Philippines.
e-mail: brian@cubaorbc.org

T..... and T..... J..... - Indonesia

T..... and T..... had the marvelous privilege of seeing their son, Noah, make a profession of faith in November. T..... also had the blessing of being able to baptize Noah.

The young man was able to give credible testimony of his faith to his parents and seems to demonstrate a sincere heart toward God.

“Starting 6 months ago, N...prayed almost every night so that he could believe, ‘I want to believe but I am not sure whether I do or not.’ So he continued to pray for true faith and true repentance. N..., ‘I don't know if I can go to heaven because I am not very good and I know I don't deserve heaven.’

“Starting a month ago, N... initiated many spiritual conversations with me and was very very happy to tell us that he was saved and wanted baptism. When playing alone he sings to himself (‘O, how I love Jesus...because he first loved me.’) and prays at non-set times and un-encouraged by us. He prays for sick kids here in the village and when he sees a naked kid or a particularly poor looking kid, he asks us to give the kid some of his own limited toys or clothes.

“N...possesses a sensitivity and a conviction for sin. ‘I cannot go to heaven by myself because I do bad things sometimes’... he knows that he cannot do enough good things to get to heaven, but he knows ‘Jesus paid for my sins and Jesus is perfect so I can go to heaven because of what Jesus did.’ There is also a desire to hear more about God and the Bible. His ears perk up and he requests us to read the Bible together. He likes to lie in bed with me and talk at night and asks many theological questions.

“He wanted to be a soldier earlier this year, but now since he has been saved he says that he desires to tell people about Jesus, ‘Daddy, you are old and will probably die sooner than me. But I am young and I might live a long time. This means that God can use me a lot longer. I want God to use me.’ He is praying for God to make him a missionary now.

“When talking about persecution, N... says, ‘It is better to die than to not tell people about Jesus. Daddy, if I tell people about Jesus and they kill me, then you don't have to worry because I will go to heaven.’ T..... teaches him daily and they pray together several times per day.”

Please continue to pray for T.....’s health. He continues to suffer from intestinal problems associated with the environment. Recently he and T..... have been given a new opportunity to minister. T..... writes:

“Y.....T....., a 5 year old orphan from Ujung Batu is now being cared for by J.... and P..... in my village. The Ujung Batu people thought he was a witch.

Two other children have died, probably due to malaria last month, and one of them (another 6 year old) explained how he saw Yamis in a dream that he had shortly before he died.

This, apparently, was proof enough for the majority of the villagers and even his older brother disowned him.

The Ujung Batu people were discussing how best to get rid of him (drown him or go downriver and leave him in another village). He was tied up and barely fed for two weeks when A....., a GIDI... evangelist, brought him back to Danowage.

Y.... is now living and being cared for in Danowage by J.... and P..... He and A..... are good little playmates now.”

Contact info removed for security reasons

Picture removed for security reasons

Picture removed for security reasons

P... S..... - Indonesia

“Missions is all about the Glory of God! As ambassadors for Christ we are given the privileged task to carry something that is more valuable than anything in the universe...namely, Christ! He is the Gospel! T.... and I want to be zealous for the Gospel and proclaiming it to an unreached people group, but more importantly we want to make much of a Mighty God, here and abroad. God is continually teaching us and showing us that missions is not about us, nor merely about the dead sinner or a people group, it's all about the glory of God (Gloria Dei), the praise and honor of God as Lord and King. And in the joy of glorifying our Lord comes the ability given by His Spirit to proclaim His Truth to a people that are bound and spiritually dead in sin, and that only Christ alone can free them from.”

“We have completed our cross-cultural training at CIT. We learned too much to share with you in one letter, but know that we are eager as ever and better equipped for long-term service. We finished up October and November in TEAMS class and SYIS class. We left the campus November 13th and L... and M..... did not want to leave. It was difficult to leave after living in community with other missionaries for three months.”

P... has an ambitious and trying schedule ahead of him, hoping to be able to depart for Indonesia in the summer of 2011. Pray for him, T.... and the kids as he seeks to balance preparation with his responsibilities as husband and father.

Contact info removed for security reasons

**Picture removed for
security reasons**

If you know of sound, Sovereign Grace missionaries who would like to be included in our reports, please have them email details of their ministries to: larrywdean@aol.com

Prayer and Contact Information for Other Missions

Dr. Bob Doom and Global Baptist Mission

Russian Bible Society, Director
PO Box 6068
Asheville, NC 28816
Phone: (800) 253-8896

Bill and Jennifer Hale in Cambodia

First Baptist Church
5304 East Parker Road
Parker, TX 75002

Website: www.thechurchofmercy.org

Paul Karstens in South Africa

paulrkarstens@gmail.com

Gifts channeled from the U.S. through:

Grace Baptist Church
510 Susquehanna Ave.
Milton, PA 17847

Gospel Light Foundation for the Blind, Inc.

3760 Village Main Street
Loganville, GA 30052
Email: ministries@glfb.org
Website: glfb.org

Danny Roten

Website: www.sherwoodbaptist.com/missions/roten/news.php

Email: dan@sherwoodbaptist.com

Pat Horner in India

Raleigh Springs Baptist Church
PO Box 34788
Bartlett, TN 38184

Email: gracemissionary@gracetoasia.com

Joel Saripalli in India

Evangelical Church of Fairport, 38 E. Church Street, Fairport, NY 14450

Field Address: Joel Saripalli, Plot 99, Road 2,
Mathuranagar Colony, Secunderabad—56, AP, India

Gifts: Joel Saripalli, 135 Cedar Lane, Dodson, LA 71422

Email: joelsaripalli@msn.com

Kyle White, in support of struggling churches in Siberia

Community Baptist Church
5697 Labus Rd. #1
Elmendorf, TX 78112

Email: cbelder@cbcweb.net
Phone: (210) 723-6568

The Two Minds

by James Smith, 1862

"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

~Romans 8:6

Nothing can well be more opposite than the state of the lost sinner and the state of the saint. The one is carnal and the other is spiritual. The one is the enemy of God, the other is His friend. The one loves to get to the greatest possible distance from God and the other cannot be too near to him. The one has toward him the feelings of a slave toward a hard and exacting master, but the other has all the feelings of a child toward a wise and loving father. Sin is the element of the one and holiness is the element of the other. And as the *state* is, so is the *result*; therefore the apostle says, *"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace"* (Romans 8:6). Notice,

What it is to be Carnally-Minded, and the Result.

The margin reads, "the minding of the flesh:" to be ruled, influenced, and guided by the flesh, or corrupt nature, indicates a state of death, and leads to eternal death. The *flesh* influences all the faculties of the man who is dead in sin.

The *understanding*, which is clear and acute in reference to carnal things, discerning their nature, value, and desirableness, is totally dark in reference to spiritual things. It discerns no beauty in them. It attaches no value to them. It awakens no desires after them. In natural things, all is life, zeal, and vigor; so that the Savior said, *"The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light."* In reference to spiritual things, Peter says, he *"is blind, and cannot see afar off."*

As the *flesh* influences the *understanding*, so also the *will*, which runs directly contrary to God's will. It chooses what God forbids, it prefers what God condemns. Darkness cannot be more opposite to light, enmity to love, or sin to holiness, than the will of man, as biased by the flesh, is to the will of God.

As the *flesh* influences the will, so also the *affections*, which hate what God approves, and love what God hates. The affections, as influenced by the flesh, are set upon things earthly and sensual. They never soar to the heavenly or divine; and instead of having God for their grand object they seldom, if ever, have respect to Him.

The carnal mind may *think* much but it never thinks rightly of God; the true God is not in all its thoughts. It may *reason* but it will be only of things earthly, or intellectual; and reason will be exalted above revelation. It may *devise*, *purpose*, and *plan*, but all will end in making provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lust thereof.

In reference to the selfish and the carnal, there will be a mind to work, but not in reference to the spiritual and divine. Whatever the mind is set upon will engage the thoughts, exercise the reason, set to work to produce, and open the mouth to boast of. As the king of Babylon gloried in his magnificent city and palace, saying, *"Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?"* so every carnally minded man has some *Babylon* which he has built, on which his heart is set, and in which his pride centers, and that is *his god*.

His *state* and *actions* are carnal. The flesh is prevalent. He is what Paul confessed himself and others to have been before conversion: *"For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another."* The flesh is *consulted* instead of God's will; it is *indulged* and pleased—in preference to God, and self-love, self-seeking, self-idolatry rules the man. The world is in the heart, and the heart is in the world, set upon its foibles, follies, and pursuits; and yet the apostle says, *"Love not the world, neither the things that in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."*

1 John 2:15-16.

To prevent this, Paul exhorts, *"And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some have coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."* 1 Timothy 6:8-10.

The **RESULT** of being carnally minded is that such are in a state of **death**. The seeds of natural death are in the body, and spiritual death spreads over the soul. Like the Ephesians of old, such are *"dead in trespasses and sins."* They may appear to be at ease and enjoy much pleasure but as Paul said of some women, so it is with them, *"She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth."*

This is the highway to *eternal* death, for *"every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."* This is the *second* death, which has power over all who die outside of Christ—eternal death, entitled *"the wrath to come."* So that the carnally minded, or those who habitually mind, savor, and fix the attention on the things of the flesh, or those things which feed, gratify, and please the flesh, are not only exposed to the sentence of *natural* death but are *spiritually* dead now and are doomed to suffer the bitter pains of *eternal* death forever!

What it is to be Spiritually-Minded, and its Consequence.

It is to *mind the things of the Spirit*, to have a **taste** for them, so as naturally to turn to them with appetite and pleasure. It includes a *knowledge of the existence, worth, and value of spiritual things*. Therefore Jesus said to the woman at Jacob's well, *"If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water."*

It includes faith in the great and glorious *promises* of the new covenant—faith that sees the promised blessings in the distance, is persuaded not only of the existence but the excellency of them, goes out after them, embracing them, and then renouncing everything for them. Thus did the patriarchs, as Paul testifies: *"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."*

It includes also esteem, and esteeming even the most painful things, as the result of a spiritual choice above the most pleasant which flow from gratifying the flesh. As Moses, of whom we read that he *"refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the*

continued next page

people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward."

This leads the soul to *seek* for spiritual things first and principally, as Jesus directed: "*Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*" Not merely to seek once, nor occasionally, but to render it the *great business of life*, making a work of it, as Christ exhorts: "*Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth to everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you.*"

If we, knowing the *value* of spiritual things, believe the *promises* made in God's word, *esteem* them above all natural and carnal enjoyments, *seek* them as of prime importance, and *labor* for them as for life and food, we are spiritually minded.

To be "*spiritually minded*" is also to mind the lessons of the Spirit as a **scholar**. It is the prerogative of the Spirit to lead us into all truth, and to take of the things of Christ and reveal them unto us. All our lessons are *placed* before us in God's holy Word; many of them are *illustrated* by divine providence, and they are unfolded and *applied* by the Holy Spirit. The spiritually minded *believe* in divine teaching, *expect* divine teaching, and *attend* to divine teaching. They yield to the influence of the Holy Spirit as a loving child to the influence of its parent. They are *led* by the Spirit, *molded* by the Spirit, and *transformed* into the likeness of Christ.

They exercise the *graces* of the Spirit, and become docile, teachable, and humble; yet they exercise confidence in God, hope toward God, and zeal for God. To them *Christ* is as the daily food, and they eat His flesh, and drink His precious blood—nor does the natural man feel his need of, or enjoy the food that perishes with the using as the spiritual man does Jesus Christ.

The result is **life**—a life of faith in Christ; a life of communion with God; a life that consists of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit; a life of present happiness, preparatory to a life of future glory. What a contrast to the state they were formerly in, which led Paul to ask, "*What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the*

gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Not only life, but **peace**—peace with God, or a perfect reconciliation to Him, and agreement with Him. This produces harmony: there is harmony within the soul, and between the soul and the Lord's people. This leads to *communion* both with God and His Church; out of which spring filial confidence, lively expectation, and holy joy. The state is well described by the experience of the primitive saints, who could say, "*Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*" And also in the devout prayer of the apostle for his brethren: "*Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.*"

Such have peace in opposition to agitation and perplexity; peace, in opposition to anxiety and foreboding; peace, in opposition to doubting and fear. They are not like the troubled sea, the figure that represents the agitated, restless, and tossing state of the wicked; but like the calm, smooth, unruffled lake. They are not like the *little bark*, driven by the winds and tossed; but like the *granite rock*, around which the winds may roar, against which the waves may dash and die, but it remains unmoved. Life and peace, what precious blessings! what priceless favors!

Believers, though in a *measure* spiritually minded, may yet at times suffer much from temptation, the evil suggestions of Satan, and the terrible conflict within. They may *fear* much when they take the eye off the Lord Jesus and, like Peter on the lake, may feel themselves to be sinking. They may *doubt* much, losing sight of the faithfulness of God to them, and the finished work of Christ for them. To a certain *extent*, they may mind the things of the Spirit and yet enjoy little life and peace. The reason is, they are not sufficiently weaned from the flesh, they are not living by simple faith in Christ alone. With them it is not only Christ, always Christ, and altogether Christ; for if it were, their peace would be like a river, and their life would be like that of the hale and healthy man.

Lost sinners may know much of the gospel *theoretically*, they may feel much under the preaching of the Word, they may do much for the cause of God, and yet may be

only *almost Christians*. Strangers to the life of God in the soul, their hearts are not set on spiritual things; and as they do not mind the things of the Spirit, they have not peace. Lost sinners, though they make a profession of religion, yet they habitually desire, pursue, and enjoy carnal things. They prefer the *present* to the future, the *visible* to the invisible, the *carnal* to the spiritual, the *temporal* to the eternal. They follow the inclinations and propensities that lead to condemnation and death. O, the folly of such conduct!

To such the words of Wisdom may be applied: "*he that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate, me love death.*" Such people are often found in a state of false security: "*A prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.*" The *present state* of such is sad, but their *final doom* will be dreadful! Being in the flesh, the motions of sins, which are by the law, will work in their members to bring forth fruit unto death; and of the *course* they pursue, and the *practices* in which they indulge, we must say, "*the end of those things is death.*"

How important, then, is the inquiry, *Are we carnally minded or spiritually minded?* Do we habitually mind the things of the flesh, or the things of the Spirit? What says our *prayer-closet*? Are we often closeted with God, praying unto our Father in secret? What says our *Bible*? Is it our daily companion? Do we esteem it more than our necessary food? Is it used as a light to our feet, and a lantern to our paths? What says the *sanctuary*? Do we frequent it, enjoy its hallowed services, and feel when in it as in our Father's house? What says our *business*? Is it with us a secondary matter? Do we make the seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness our first, our great, our grand concern?

Beloved, let us closely and thoroughly investigate the matter. Let us go right into it, nor rest until we prove to our own satisfaction, and to the satisfaction of all the Lord's people about us, that we are spiritually minded, and enjoy life and peace. A mistake on this point is fatal: let us not, then, think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think, let us not be too easily persuaded that our state is good; but let us set our hearts upon thorough sanctification, deep devotedness to God, and hearty, constant minding of the things of the Spirit.



Especially for the ladies:

What makes a Christian woman differ from the world?

Looks. I'm nearly sure of it. Christian women boast

less makeup, fewer

piercings and tattoos, longer skirts, milder perfume, a higher neckline, and more natural glow than their secular counterparts. And they let their hair go gray to boot.

Actually, no, wait—maybe I've got it all wrong. I think maybe the *real* difference lies more in the area of domestic accomplishment. A *Christian* woman is neat and organized. She charts out a life plan and sticks to it. She exercises every day and buys organic milk. She *just loves* company. She blogs, coupons, and home schools all ten of her children. She cooks three meals a day and makes her own laundry detergent...from scratch. She is a member of the tennis club, leads a girl scout troop, and hosts a women's Bible study every Tuesday afternoon.

Oh-oh-oh, STOP. Now I'm sure I've really got the answer: *virtue*. That's the key, ladies, to letting your light shine in this dark world. Read your Bible twice a day, pray through the bulletin prayer list, volunteer at the local crisis pregnancy center, teach Sunday school, carve room in your home and heart for your aging in-laws, smile, put others first, stay married, say grace, never miss church, donate to charity, save your virginity for your wedding night, don't get drunk, never *ever* use a four-letter-word, point your children down the straight and narrow, keep your gossip to a bare minimum, and avoid all R rated movies. Yessirree, that will *definitely* put you pretty much miles ahead of anyone else in your office, play group, or country club...and maybe even church, too.

Made to Differ

Cristy Carr

Are you shaking your head and thinking *I don't know where in the world the editor dug this girl up, but she's off her rocker!*? Well, you may be right...but at least this time, there's a method to my madness. Here's my point, over-exaggerated though it may be: I'm afraid that all too often we Christians try to distinguish ourselves from those around us using **the wrong criteria**.

Maybe it's just me, but when I first began thinking about how Christian women differ from the world, my mind went right to external distinctives. After all, that's what fits with my experiences. In my interactions with the secular community, I've discovered that I have a very different approach to marriage, family, recreation, politics, authority, etc. than most of my non-Christian peers. Sometimes it feels like I've had more than my share of aghast looks from people who cannot fathom chastity before (and during) marriage, the respect and submission I endeavor to give my husband, my commitment to our marriage's permanence and importance...not to mention where I spend my Sunday mornings, what I drink when I'm out with the girls, my word choices, my reading material, my idea of a fun weekend, my theories on child raising, and the list of movies I've (purposefully) never seen. Yes, in my experience, *these* are the things that set me apart from the world. These are the things that coworkers, neighbors, and friends notice and comment on. This is the difference between "us" (Christian women) and "them" (the world).

Can you relate? It's true that many of the behaviors I've discussed so far can be good

and appropriate and glorifying to God in the right context. We are commanded in Scripture to act differently than those around us who do not know and

love Jesus Christ. But I would argue that although these actions may make us stand out from our contemporaries, *they are not primarily what set us apart from our secular peers*.

Did you know that there is a word used in Scripture that literally means "set apart"? That word is "saint". What is it, exactly, that makes Christians saints? Is it our good works? Is it?! Well, just in case you don't already know the answer to that question, let's do a little Scriptural exploration.

"For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it"? (1 Corinthians 4:7)

The church at Corinth had some problems, and one of them was pride (they were "*puffed up for one against another*"—vs 6) in their own righteous achievements. Paul has to remind them (and us) that a Christian has no room to boast except in Christ, for any praiseworthy thing we see in ourselves is a gift from Him. If this is true within the church—that we are distinguished one from another only by the grace of God—how much more true for a Christian in relation to the lost! We differ from the world not because of anything in us, but because of what we have received from God [**1 Corinthians 6:9-11** specifically addresses the difference between 'saints' (vs 2) and 'unbelievers' (vs 6) and again places *all* the emphasis on God's work and *none* on our own merit]!

continued next page

What is this gift that God has given? What exactly have we received from His hand to make us differ one from another?

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:8-10)

For most of us, these very familiar verses teach a very familiar concept—so familiar, in fact, that we sometimes forget how important and precious it is: salvation by grace alone through faith alone. Both the salvation and the faith are gifts of a gracious God. It is this saving faith we’ve received from Him that sets us apart from the world, and we’re clearly taught here that He gives it to us not because of anything we do to deserve His favor, but simply because He has chosen to recreate us in Christ Jesus.

Is there then any room for our boasting? No. Our pride (and trust!) in our own accomplishments is excluded in our Savior. **Christ Jesus** (and Christ Jesus **alone**) sets us apart from the world, and all we can do is fall to our knees before Him in overwhelmed, mystified gratitude.

“The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are...I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.” (Luke 18:11-13)

As you and I meditate on these words of our Lord Jesus concerning the Pharisee and the publican, perhaps we can begin to understand the problem with living as if external distinctives are what really matter. When we do so, we’ve completely missed the point of the gospel. The key difference between “us” and “them”—what really

makes a Christian woman a Christian woman—is *not* our own personal holiness. It’s *not* the lives we live and the choices we make and the priorities we set and the activities we participate in that set us apart from the world. Let’s be honest with ourselves, ladies. Let’s not glory in our own righteousness. Let’s not give pride any room in our hearts. Let’s not leave the unbelieving world with the impression that we’re heaven bound merely because we’re such good people. Let’s not widen the gap between “us” and “them” because “they” do things “we” would *never* think to participate in. With the English Reformer John Bradford, let us always remember that it is exactly *there* (yes, right *there* where our coworkers, friends, neighbors, acquaintances, leaders, and family are) but for the grace of God go we. Oh, praise the Lord that He loves such sinners as us!

Finally, since we’ve established that it is first and foremost God’s mercy and grace in Christ that distinguishes us from the world (and not our own personal holiness), let’s return to some of those ‘external distinctives.’ Our lives as the people of Christ *should* set us apart from the world. We *should* look and act and talk differently. But now we know that this is not the **meat** of our Christian life—it is the **fruit** of being set apart by God’s wondrous gift.

With that in mind, here are just a few (and I really do mean few of many!) precious privileges that are unique to the children of God and should impact the way we live:

Our Model—Philippians 2:1-11

“He that saith he abideth in him [Christ] ought himself also so to walk even as he [Christ] walked” (1 John 2:6). In the Biblical record of Christ’s life on this earth, we have an example after which we can pattern our lives. We can ask in the most reverent sense “What would Jesus do?” And we can know that it is not our

own strength that enables us to follow in His footsteps, but we are made like Him only as He lives and works in us.

Our Weapons—Ephesians 6:10-18

Sin is a reality that we all face every single day. But God has not left His own defenseless against Satan’s attacks! Rather, He arms us with many weapons: the Holy Spirit, the Bible, prayer, faith, salvation, the gospel, obedience, and truth—just to name a few. If a soldier entered battle unarmed and defenseless, we would think him beyond stupid and we would expect his immediate death. Yet all too often we think we can face our daily battles without the aid of God’s strength or His armor! Every one of us is engaged in the war against sin, and we each know the struggles and temptations of our own particular battles. But we are not fighting alone! Christ is our Warrior, and He has already defeated our enemy. May He give us grace to abide in His protection and to take advantage of the means He provides to overcome sin.

Our Perspective—1 Corinthians 2:9-16

The world sees reality through the lens of physical sight, but we who are Christ’s are given new eyes and a new mind—the eyes and the mind of our Lord—with which we discern a new reality: the spiritual reality that is taught us by Christ’s Spirit. This opens up vast stores of comfort and hope for us in the nitty-gritty details of our lives. Are you a mother of small children feeling overwhelmed and insignificant? In God’s eyes, the unnoticed work you do each day is inestimably valuable (Proverbs 31:10, 27-31). Is your marriage a daily burden? You are so precious to your Heavenly Groom (1 Peter 3:1-6). Is your relationship with your parents seemingly broken beyond repair? The love of your Heavenly Father will never fail (Isaiah 49:15-16). Have your children forsaken the faith? Jesus wept over lost Jerusalem (Luke 19:41-42). Are you lonely? Jesus



Cristy Carr and her husband, Tim, are very active in the ministry of New Hope Baptist Church in Mechanicsville, Virginia. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Biology from Grove City College and teaches in a home school academy in Richmond, Virginia.

was betrayed and forsaken by all men, but He knew He was not alone (John 16:32). Are you struggling to forgive? Oh, meditate on the cost and depth of Christ's forgiveness of us (Ephesians 4:31-5:2). Is your own death looming uncomfortably near? Paul wishes that his were nearer (Philippians 1:21). Have you buried a parent, spouse, or a child? Christ can repay out of His own fullness all that He takes from us in this life (Romans 11:33; 1 Corinthians 2:9).

**Our Goal—Matthew 25:1-13;
Revelation 19:1-22:21**

Jesus once told of ten virgins waiting for their bridegroom. Remember that story? Only the women who were ready to meet their groom when he came were taken in with him to the marriage. The other women—the foolish virgins who were not prepared for his coming—were shut out of the great celebration.

Women of God, this is our goal: the

marriage feast of the Lamb. We want to be among the five wise virgins who are ready when the Bridegroom (Christ) comes, that we may enter with Him to the marriage. Any preparations we must make, any indignities we must suffer, any persecution or trial or discouragement or wait we must endure here in this life--no matter *what* it entails--is worth eternity with Christ. "*For I reckon,*" writes Paul, "*that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us*" (Romans 8:18). What a hope! What a future! What a goal. The Spirit and the bride say, Come (Rev 22:17), so let those who are athirst press on toward the prize of our Beloved Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:12-14), for blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev 19:9)!

I pray that this article encourages you in your sojourn toward heaven to remember by what grace you stand and to live in a way that proclaims to the world the one difference that really matters. Truly what

glorious and unsearchable riches belong to us in Christ Jesus (Psalm 45:13; Ephesians 3:8)! Maybe you already walk always in the light of the great and undeserved blessing of His love. Maybe your head knew the reality of these wonderful things, but your heart just needed a little reminder. Or maybe as you read of the marks of God's grace to unworthy sinners, you realized that perhaps you're not set apart from the world in this way. You may (or may not) have your act together, you may glory in all the good things you do in the name of God or Love or Reputation—but you've never learned to cry "*God, be merciful to me, a sinner.*" Oh, precious sister! You bear the image of the God who created you. Don't rest in your own good works, but surrender yourself to Christ! Don't be shut out of the eternal feast of His love, but believe that His death on the cross was for you, that He might bear the offense of even your best acts on Himself and reconcile you to God on the basis of His righteousness and His alone!



The Quilt Project began under the leadership of T..... J..... to help Indonesian women who lost the support of their Muslim families when they confessed faith in Christ. They make beautiful, high quality quilts (like the one shown here) that would normally sell at much higher prices in the U.S. Please consider supporting these converts by purchasing one of their fine hand-crafted pieces.

Information on quilt designs, sizes and pricing may be obtained by contacting Jeannie Henry in St. Louis, Missouri at (636) 677-6241 or emailing her at bbcinstl@aol.com. A new shipment was received in December, so please have a look at what is currently available!

This is a non-solicited and non-compensated announcement.

Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship



April 19-21, 2011

Spring Sovereign Grace Bible Conference

Bible Baptist Church, St. Louis, Missouri

Holmes Moore, pastor

Tom Henry, assistant pastor

Services

The conference begins Tuesday morning, April 19, 2011 and continues through Thursday evening, April 21, 2011. There will be two speakers in the morning sessions and two speakers in the evening sessions. Morning sessions begin at 10:00 AM and evening sessions begin at 7:00 PM.

Devotional and prayer at 9:00 A.M. each day of the Conference

Two meals a day, each day of the Conference, are provided by Bible Baptist Church for all who attend.

Dinner follows the morning sessions. Supper is served before the evening sessions at 5:30 PM.

For information on accommodations in the St. Louis area, contact the church office at: (314) 645-4248

Next Annual Meeting of the Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship

TIME: September 13, 2011

PLACE: Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, Anniston, Alabama

Pastor Jon Cardwell and the Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Anniston, Alabama extend a cordial invitation for all to attend the Annual Meeting and Bible Conference. Read the special invitation from Pastor Cardwell on page 11, and make your plans early to attend.

Check out the SGBF website: www.sovereigngracebaptistfellowship.org

If you are not on the mailing list and desire to receive *The Sovereign Grace Messenger*, add another recipient to the list, have a change of address, or would like your name removed, please send your name and address to:

The Sovereign Grace Messenger

c/o Ron Staley, editor
New Hope Baptist Church
5452 Spotslee Circle
Mechanicsville, VA 23111
(One copy per family please)

**You may phone or email your name
and address to:**

(804) 321-2110
ronstaley1@verizon.net

