

The Sovereign Grace Messenger

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

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Psalm 103:19

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REVERENCE BEGINS IN THE PLACE OF WORSHIP¹

Peter Masters

NO ONE would deny that reverence is due to Almighty God by right. But how can He be properly acknowledged and worshipped if the worshipper has replaced Him with a god of his own making — a much smaller god? Today many evangelical Christians have remodelled God, turning Him into a being only a bit higher than themselves. He is no longer the infinite, almighty, holy God, Who sees and searches every heart. He is merely a chum or pal sharing our smallness and triviality, and enjoying our entertainment-based culture. He is no longer to be feared; no longer to be given reverence.

With this new god, Moses would not need to remove the shoes from His feet, nor the apostle John fall at His feet as dead. This revised god does not mind how we worship him, and so we need have no inhibitions or qualms about anything we do in his presence. But to change God is to deny Him and to insult Him. So where is reverence today?

Where is the God of Elijah? Where is Old Testament Jehovah? Where is the mighty God so respectfully addressed in the recorded prayers of the New Testament? Amazingly, this glorious God is not wanted, even by many who believe His Word and seek His salvation. Reverence has become distasteful. It has been relegated to the debris of a cast-off former culture. ‘Give us a God,’ we now cry, ‘on our level.’

This chapter is about the necessity of reverence for God and how it brings great benefits and blessings to worshippers. *Hebrews 12.28-29* provides a specially challenging verse for the present day:

‘Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire.’

‘Reverence’ here literally means — with downcast eyes or great humility. ‘Fear’ means caution, or the reverence of holy fear.



From a contemporary “worship”? service

The Lord Jesus Himself, when living out for us a life of perfect righteousness, maintained the deepest reverence toward the Father, the Bible telling us that His prayers were heard because He ‘feared,’ using the same Greek term for caution or reverence (*Hebrews 5.7*). The term ‘fear,’ indicating reverential fear, appears often in the New Testament. Cornelius of Caesarea, visited by Peter, was acknowledged by all to be one who ‘feared’ God. His reverence for God was conspicuous. When preaching at Antioch in Pisidia, Paul appealed twice to those that ‘feared’ God, using the same reverential fear term. They would be the people who truly received the Word. ‘Fear

God!’ wrote Peter, using the same term (*1 Peter 2.17*). ‘Fear God!’ said the angel of the preaching of the everlasting Gospel in *Revelation*, using the same term, indicating that the ultimate objective of the Gospel is to bring men and women not just to salvation, but to reverence (*Revelation 14.7*).

The victorious people of God sang, ‘Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name?’ using the same reverential fear term (*Revelation 15.4*). And the voice from the throne of God commanded, ‘Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great’ (*Revelation 19.5*).

In the parable of the wicked husbandmen, the Lord spoke of a householder who let out his property. But when he sent servants to receive the produce, they were beaten and killed and stoned. Finally the householder sent his son saying, ‘They will reverence my son.’ Reverence, respect and deference is exactly what is due to the eternal Son of God, the Lord of glory. Its expression is to be seen first and foremost in worship, and if it is not there, it will not be seen in other areas of the Christian life either. Reverence-deficient worship soon leads to Christians who are shallow in commitment, seriousness, depth and even holiness. Reverence in worship is paramount for believers, and must be firmly maintained.

Another very valuable passage about reverence is *1 Timothy 4.7-9*, where Paul says to Timothy:

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¹Excerpt from the book, *Worship in the Melting Pot*, by Dr. Peter Masters. Now also available on Kindle.



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'Exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things.'

To show the pivotal importance of these words Paul attaches the comment — 'This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation.' He is talking about the necessity of reverence toward God. We may think that the key word in these verses — *godliness* — refers in a general way to righteous character. Paul's exhortation then would mean — exercise yourself in sanctified living. This, of course, would be a correct thing to do, but the word *godliness* does not mean that. It is a highly special word with a very distinctive meaning. The Greek is *eusebeia*, meaning 'well-devout'. It refers to our entire attitude toward God. It is far more specific than righteousness, and as this is so important we shall briefly prove the point by glancing at other passages where the word is used.

In *1 Timothy 6.11* we see a very interesting construction: 'But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, GODLINESS, faith, love, patience, meekness.' Here godliness sits among other specific qualities. Like them, it is distinctive. It is obviously not a general term for Christian living as it takes its place in a list of very particular virtues. The term is used in the same way in the famous 'list' of *2 Peter 1.5-7* — 'And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience GODLINESS; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.' Godliness again sits as a specific virtue alongside others.

The Greek word in question appears in classical literature where philosophers used it to mean *an appropriate attitude toward the gods*. This is the sense in the epistles, where the word means — right demeanour before God, that is, reverence and respect. It is all about the fear of God, humility before God, and deference toward God.

The root of all our problems today as evangelical Christians is the collapse of such reverence. With the new style of worship, all carefulness in God's presence and all deep respect for Him has gone, and yet this is the ultimate purpose of salvation — to revere and obey Him. Paul therefore says, 'Exercise yourself unto reverence.' Other spiritual graces cannot flourish without this foundation.

Many believers exclaim — 'Oh, but I want to have joy and happiness and the filling of the Spirit. I want a thrilling sense of God and of glory.' Such a desire is fine, but it can only come with reverence. God must always be to us a great God, to Whom we come with reverence and submission. It is only when we truly hold God in respect that the Holy Spirit gives genuine Christian joy. If we dislike reverence, seeing it as a gloomy alternative to Christian joy, we will only achieve a sham, worked-up, shallow, emotional substitute. All the charismatic meetings in the world, with their noise, rhythm and sensationalism, cannot work up *real* Christian joy, because they do not have a foundation of reverence, fear and awe.

The prime movers of new-style worship, with its love of entertainment-style music and its utter shallowness, show the same indifference to reverence in their style of teaching. Paul, in giving Timothy his exhortation about godliness, says — 'Refuse profane and old wives' fables.' These fables had much in common with the way-out teaching approach of modern charismatic worship. They were myths based on Scripture. The teachers of fables would take Old Testament characters and embellish them, fabricating events and messages wildly beyond anything alluded to in the text. They appealed cleverly to popular taste, their stories gripping the minds of the people. The storyteller is always easy to listen to.

No doubt many of these fable-teachers possessed immense charm, and no doubt their stories were memorable. It was a fascinating, entertaining way of teaching. However, in commanding Timothy to refuse them, Paul uses an interesting word.

He calls these fables *profane* — a word which indicates the opposite of reverence and respect. The Greek word for *profane* literally refers to a 'threshold walker', or someone who is free and easy and does whatever he likes. He has no reserve, no sense of caution, no fear or respect for the premises. The fable-teachers had no reverence and respect for the sacred text. They just made things up and passed them off as Bible teaching. The largest charismatic denomination in the world today invents a new spiritual duty almost every few months. New anointings (all at a price) tumble out as the preachers concoct and invent gimmick after gimmick, always, of course, finding a text to pin them on. Like the fable-teachers of old they have no reverence or respect for either God or the sacred text. They do not seem to realise that there is a God in Heaven Who will hold them responsible for all their wrestings and distortions of His Word. There is no fear in them. 'Refuse their profane, freewheeling fables,' Paul would say, 'because such people are not governed by reverence, respect, carefulness or conscientiousness with regard to Scripture.'

It was teachers of just this character in recent times who were the first to launch away from traditional worship, substituting entertainment, lightness, showmanship, gimmicks and games. The showbiz style of worship has been the product of profane teaching. Reverence was jettisoned, and inane superficiality and emotional abandonment brought in.

How can some of these modern worship leaders behave as they do, when they run jauntily on to the platform like television celebrities showing off their personalities, and behaving in an entirely flippant and irreverent manner in the presence of the holy, all powerful, wonderful God? Reverence knows how to honour divine dignity, but for them it is burdensome and restrictive.

As it happens, reverence is a door to much blessing in this present life, as well as in eternity, as Paul says in *1 Timothy 4.7-8*. So, he exhorts, 'exercise thyself . . . unto godliness.' The word *godliness*, as we have shown, refers to reverence and respect for God. The Greek word translated 'exercise' is literally *gymnasticise*. So Paul says — gymnasticise yourself to practise reverence.

There is no doubt that reverence is instinctual for new-born Christians. When

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we are converted, our new nature is impregnated with great reverence for God. But we can allow this to run down, and even lose it. Therefore, says Paul, it must be exercised. We know that exercise in the physical realm does not make muscles. It will certainly develop them, and it should preserve them, but it does not make them in the first place. Similarly, reverence comes with the new nature, but exercise is necessary to strengthen and maintain it.

Some years ago a medical practitioner friend was telling me about his church, and how it was adopting new charismatic songs, choruses, hand clapping, swaying, tongues, and producing considerable noise in services. This doctor had a good grasp of reformed truth, and I asked him what his feelings were. He replied that he was quite ambivalent, and did not mind what went on. Whether worship was conducted the old way or the new he felt it was all worship. It did not upset or offend him that reverence had fallen. His instinct for reverence had virtually disappeared.

The apostle Paul, incidentally, does not scorn bodily exercise when he says, ‘For bodily exercise profiteth little.’ Some

believe he means — for a little time. However, the statement may equally be translated — ‘For bodily exercise profits *to a little*.’ Paul’s statement acknowledges that exercise achieves something. The apostle experienced considerable bodily exercise himself, walking great distances. Even in later years he would have walked us off our feet, as the saying goes. Also, when he found himself in a place where there was no support, he laboured as a tentmaker. In those days there were no industrial sewing machines, and workers had to put thongs and threads through heavy textiles and canvases by hand. We should never think of Paul as a present-day academic.

Paul was well aware of the athletic activities of his day. It was clear to him that the benefit of training was, first, effective only for a time, and secondly, was limited to preparing an athlete for his special event. The heavily trained wrestler did not necessarily make a fast runner. Moving into the moral realm, an athlete’s physical training would not help him control his temper, or any other sin-tendency. Physical exercise worked only in a limited area.

The apostle’s argument is that the exercise of reverence has a much broader benefit, because it deepens and strengthens every aspect of Christian life and service, and prepares for eternity. ‘For bodily exercise profiteth [*to a*] little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.’

Reverence is stated to be immensely significant and beneficial in the Christian life, but it must begin with worship. If worship is stripped of reverence, then reverence will be stunted in all other aspects of Christian living. What begins in worship, spreads into the whole Christian life. If worship is more like a performance, with showing off, imitation of the world, sensation-seeking, much noise, and everything for my pleasure, then reverence will not be found in any other department of life. How cruel it is, then, for churches to abandon reverent worship! The members will be seriously hurt and disadvantaged for their personal spiritual lives.

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Supplemental to last article

Is Traditional Worship Too Cerebral?

One well-known writer critiquing modern worship rightly charged its promoters with ‘dumbing down’ worship. The promoters claim that traditional worship is too cerebral, and its defenders are held captive by matters of ‘taste’. Theologian John Frame says the trouble with defenders of traditional worship is that they are musical and theological snobs. But it is not snobbery to be alarmed at the new worship. John Frame tells us he is delighted with choruses and other short, repetitive songs simply because there are very few thoughts in them. For him this is a virtue. He takes a verse from a hymn of Wesley and pronounces it inferior to a conspicuously vapid chorus as a means of efficient communication. His problem with Wesley and Watts and every other traditional hymn writer is that they say far too much. No one, apparently, can grasp all their thoughts, for they are too numerous and too sophisticated. Millions of believers over the centuries have (in Frame’s opinion) been left behind by over-complex worship.

“If we bring short choruses with oft-repeated lines and shallow sentiments into adult worship, we severely strain the Lord’s demand for meaningful understanding of profound and glorious truths.”

Frame attempts some curious interpretations of Scripture to justify his denigration of great hymns. He looks at Job, noting the fine speeches he prepared to hurl at God when the opportunity arose. But when Job heard God’s voice, he put his hand over his mouth, and choked out the simplest words. Says Frame — that is the right way. That is the difference between traditional worship and new

worship. *Traditional* is like Job’s fine speeches, and *contemporary worship* is evidently what Job should have done all along. It all proves that the fewest words and the strongest feelings are best. Moses and Isaiah are also brought into the argument by John Frame. They fell silent before the Lord, and said very little. This fact apparently supports the shortage of meaningful words in contemporary Christian worship. Such arguments will strike most readers as being irrelevant and even absurd, but we have not yet seen an advocate of new worship who can offer anything more credible. They simply cannot find scriptural support for the downgrading of words.

Writers like John Frame say repeatedly that we must be biblical in these matters, but they never refer to the Lord’s own hymnbook — the *Psalms* — in deciding what hymns should be like. It is a fact that the ‘mathematics’ of the *Psalms* are quite closely represented in most traditional evangelical hymnbooks. The complexity factor is similar, the ratio of praise to

petition is strikingly close, and the same range of topics is accommodated. This is surprising, as it is unlikely that all editors sought a conscious correlation. It surely indicates the natural psalm-like balance of traditional reformed worship. However, the song books of the new worship scene in no way reflect the balance of the *Psalms*. New worship songs almost cry out against the balance and structure of the *Psalms*. It is worth noting, for example, that the modern chorus has no equivalent in the *Psalms*... We value choruses for children, but should they be found in adult worship, when the Lord never inspired any? Are our traditional hymns too complex? When God compiled a hymnbook for an agricultural people (who were probably 95% illiterate), He gave them not a book of choruses, but the book of *Psalms*. (We are not, of course,

objecting to choruses that appear as refrains at the end of hymn verses, but to the substituting of hymns with choruses.)

There is a world of difference between ‘traditional’ worship and new worship at this point. If we bring short choruses with oft-repeated lines and shallow sentiments into adult worship, we severely strain the Lord’s demand for meaningful understanding of profound and glorious truths.

From the Psalter all the way down to the Reformation, and through subsequent centuries, great hymns (contrary to what is claimed by new worship promoters) have been clearly understood and appreciated by the Lord’s people. Indeed, hymns have lifted up Christians not only spiritually but

even intellectually. The Bible first, and godly hymns second, have taught the great truths of the Word, liberating generations from ignorance and naivety, and articulating intelligent praise. Today, the new worship is pulling believers down to an intellectual and spiritual level lower than ever before in church history.

Our point throughout this chapter is that the only vehicle of worship is intelligible thoughts and words. Contemporary or new worship discards this central fact, minimizing the role of the mind and emphasizing the artificial stimulation of feelings.

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Editorial: From Admiration to Emulation

Ron Staley

It is a fact undeniably evident from earliest childhood that we are imitators. Children learn to imitate parents, to imitate playmates, and as they grow, to tend to imitate those they in some way admire. Our parents and grandparents warned us to carefully select our friends because, as the common saying goes, “Birds of a feather flock together.” We come to learn theologically that by nature we were of the same “feather.” Nevertheless we were warned, be careful who you come to admire. Admiration leads to emulation!

But the aforementioned is not only a law of nature but a law operating even in the realm of Christendom. I remember from Arminian days listening to different preachers and listening to similar types of delivery, the same kind of voice inflections, the same phrases and the same methods of appeal. The big name preachers were being copied, because they were viewed as successful. But I don’t think this is something limited to Arminianism.

We have to be very careful, lest in rejecting the methods employed by some who hold the one true “*Gospel of the grace of God*,” and the same doctrinal position as we, not to end up condemning our own brethren. And I think some have been wrongly accused of judgmentalism simply because they have pointed out the unbiblical methods used by the popular new Calvinistic preachers. This does not mean that there is no rejoicing in that “*Christ is preached*.”

We also have to be so careful about whom we follow. We are off Biblical ground if we deny that there are godly examples to be imitated. There are “*old paths*” in which our spiritual fathers walked, and we are told that is “*the good way*” and we are to walk in them. Timothy was exhorted to “*be thou an example of the believers*.” We are charged concerning those who were leaders of God’s people and have now entered glory, to remember them and “*follow their faith*.” The apostle Paul wrote under divine inspiration, “*Brethren, be followers together of me*.”

Like it or not, we are imitators. thus we have to be careful that we are, by the work of God’s Spirit, following those who follow Christ. The minister of Christ is not only to be a preacher but an “*example*.” He cannot expect those to whom he ministers to truly follow Christ unless he follows Christ in all areas of life. Ultimately, then, all of this is to result in the following of Christ—the setting forth of Christ in preaching and life as to draw only to Him, by Biblical preaching and example showing what it means to be a follower of the Son of God.

We were Gentiles who learned the ways of the heathen. When without Christ, when, by the wondrous grace of God, we are brought savingly to Christ we are then to “*Learn not the way of the heathen*.” The carnal delights that once gave us reality-escaping pleasures are to be replaced with true spiritual joy in the Lord. To bring the ways of the world into so-called “worship services” is to adulterate what should be, through “*reverence and godly fear*,” the highest of dignity and honor toward God who is holy.

To fix our eyes upon men who teach the right things but use the world’s laxity, bring the base musical forms developed in rebellion against God and authority, use that which appeals to the immodest “normality” of this culture, is a distinct spiritual danger. The Lord surely made known that there are those who speak the truth whose practice is of the world rather than of God’s kingdom. “*All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not after their works: for they say, and do not*” (Matthew 23:3) Be careful who you admire.

Accusers point to the defenders of the old, well established, public worship in reverence and Biblically based principles as bringing division. But is the division really brought about by those who expose the worldly methods of the moderns, or is it those who have departed from “*the old paths*” who are really causing the division? In this “politically correct” age when anything goes, must we let this departure from the old paths go without challenge?



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New Calvinism is a movement within evangelicalism that is orthodox, holding to the Historic, Calvinistic, Reformed, and yes Biblical position on soteriology. This position is better known as the Doctrines of Grace or The Five Points of Calvinism (tulip). Those who embrace these doctrines believe that before God created the world He unconditionally chose a people to salvation, and that Christ as their penal substitute paid the debt that they (the elect) owed to God's law and justice, thereby securing their eternal salvation, and at the Father's appointed time the Holy Spirit will call and regenerate the elect, enabling them to repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Emergent Church is a movement that I think is distinct from New Calvinism. They have a relativistic mindset that would categorically reject any notion of absolutes. They would say that the Bible means whatever you think it means, giving every individual the opportunity to interpret God's Word for himself. They would also deny some of the more critical doctrines that are set forth in Scripture such as: the inspiration and inerrancy of the Word of God; the fact that there is an actual, literal, eternal hell for those who die without Christ. They would reject the idea that God is a just and holy God that demands a payment for sin either at the hand of the sinner (in hell) or at the hand of a fit and suitable substitute. It is my conviction that the men who embrace the Emergent Church movement should not and cannot be considered as part of the evangelical church because they reject the fundamental doctrines of God's Word.

But this is not so for those in the New Calvinism movement. They do adhere to the cardinal doctrines of Scripture. They do

New Calvinism: Friend or Foe?

Warren Burrell

embrace the verbal and plenary inspiration of Scripture, and they do accept the doctrine of justification by faith alone, in Christ alone, and by grace alone. But while these things are true and commendable, there are some differences between the New and the so-called Old Calvinist. In doctrine they are one, but in worship style they are divided. In this article I want to mention what some of those differences are and offer some of my thoughts on each. As we go through these differences between the New and the Old Calvinists let us keep in mind the fact that there are shades of differences and variations in worship styles that exist within both camps. In other words, all Old Calvinists do not worship the same, nor do all New Calvinists worship the same. So, keep this in mind as you read this article.

HIGH DOCTRINE, A HIGH VIEW OF GOD, AND WORSHIP

Many that can be labeled as New Calvinist have leanings toward a more Charismatic style of worship. Worship (so they would say) that is more upbeat and suitable to today's church-goer. On the other hand, the so-called Old Calvinists would be those who would maintain a more traditional and conservative style of worship.

The doctrine of God's sovereignty in the salvation of His elect should have a profound effect upon the way we worship. These high doctrines demand the highest and the holiest worship that we (the redeemed) can render unto our God. When we consider this God who elects, calls, regenerates, redeems, justifies, adopts, and glorifies; there should be no room for trite, frivolous, superficial, and worldly worship. In other words, in our worship there should be symmetry and equality between our doctrine and decorum in worship. We should always strive to have our doctrine and our worship on an even plane, where together they have the same level of seriousness, solemnity, majesty, and depth! Serious doctrine demands serious worship. A majestic God demands majestic worship, and anything less than that would be "strange fire" to say the least.

Being African American I have struggled with this over the years. My temptation in the past has been to go back to the old, traditional style of worship that I grew up

with in the black church. I realize now that this temptation to go back was rooted in my doctrinal beliefs and my view of God; but the God that I have come to know and the doctrines that I have come to believe have revolutionized my whole concept of worship. As one of the Elders at Sovereign Grace Chapel (a predominantly black assembly) it has been my passion over the years to establish and maintain a conservative worship that exalts, extols, and magnifies the God of the Bible.

IN ITS WORSHIP, THE CHURCH MUST BE DISTINCT FROM THE WORLD

In their attempt to appeal to the younger generation and the un-churched, many New Calvinists are trying to look hip on Sunday mornings; while the Old Calvinists for the most part are still conservative in their Sunday morning attire. Now I am not a legalist, but for a preacher to get into the pulpit with jeans, undershirt, and tennis shoes is a bit too much for me.

A friend of mine told me about a church (Reformed Baptist) that was once very conservative in their style of worship, but recently they have added another Sunday morning service. The first service has the traditional, conservative style of worship, but the second service (according to his words) "is nothing but a free for all." In the second service anything goes: the band comes in, the young people come in, and the Pastor enters the pulpit with jeans, undershirt (hanging out), and tennis shoes. Now I don't know much, but I really don't think that this is what Paul had in mind when he said "I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some (ICor.9:22b)."

We are *in* the world, but we are not to be *of* the world. This should not only be true with reference to our lifestyles but it should be true of our worship as well. Many of our worship services have become nothing more than *sanctified rock concerts* with the high powered amplifiers, guitars, drums, and people dressed up like rock stars. The old excuse is that "we are trying to reach the young people." My response to that would be... God has never had a problem reaching the young or the old for that matter.

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Look beloveds, I know that clothes do not make the person and I am not in any way trying to suggest a 'one size fits all' religion, but the world is looking, and whether we want to accept it or not, the world has set a standard for the church and that standard is high. And here lies the real danger, the devil is always seeking ways to get the church to lower its standards. He cannot put the people of God in hell but he can make us look like we are going there. For the women, this is not a pants - dress issue, and for the men this is not a suit and tie issue, the issue is modest or decent apparel (First Timothy 2:9).

If you had an invitation to meet the President you would not go into the White House looking like a vagabond, no, you would fix yourself up. Well on Sunday mornings [when] we have the privilege of coming into the presence of the King of Kings, shall we not do the same? We have become too casual and too laid back in our worship, so much so that there are some churches that would even allow eating sandwiches and drinking coffee while the worship service is going on. This has nothing to do with legalism, but it has everything to do with respect.

CESSATION VS SENSATION

Some New Calvinists believe that all of the gifts are present in the church today (continuationists). They would say that tongues, healing, working of miracles, prophecy (foretelling) are still realities in today's church. The more historic Calvinists would say that some of the gifts were "temporary sign gifts" that ceased (cessationists) at the close of the apostolic age. These temporary gifts (the old Calvinist would say) were present, prevalent, and commonplace only during those revelatory eras in the Bible: during the time of Moses when the law was given, during the time of the prophets when prophecy was given, and during the time of Christ and His apostles, when the content of the New Testament was given.

These temporary sign gifts were given to Moses, the prophets, and to Christ and His apostles for the purpose of authenticating, validating, and verifying that their message and their ministries were of God. For example, in John 3:2 when Nicodemus came to our Lord by night and said "Rabbi we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." It was the miracles that Christ did that validated who He was and that His

message was from God (see also Acts 2:22). The miracles that were done in the revelatory eras were necessary because new information was being given and had to be verified by miraculous signs and wonders.

My question would be: why would we need those gifts today [now that] the revelatory eras are over? God has given to us His full and final revelation. There will be no more revelation given, the canon of Scripture is closed and we are told not to add to it nor take away from it. So, what would be the need for the sign gifts today? Furthermore, during those revelatory times, they raised the dead (II Kings 4:18-21, 32-37; John 11:43-44; Acts 9:36-42), something that none of us has seen or witnessed today.



Moreover, if the sign gifts were around today, they would be exercised by Christians everywhere around the world and not just in Charismatic and New Calvinist churches. The permanent gifts of teaching, exhortation, giving, and showing mercy etc., can be found everywhere that Christians are present, but the miraculous gifts are not found everywhere. Why? Well it is because the temporary gifts went out at the close of the revelatory, apostolic age. One last thought; if all of the gifts were around today don't you think that CNN, Fox, and MSNBC would be busy covering the story? If those news [networks] would have been around during the three revelatory eras previously mentioned their ratings would have been off the charts. Miracles during the time of Moses, the prophets, and the apostles were done in public and in private. They are not being reported today because they are just not around. They are no longer with us. There is no need for them today. So, let us not be enamored with the sensational and the miraculous!

PREACHING VS RAPPING

Many of the New Calvinists are joining hands with those who are said to be Christian rappers, who do what is called "holy hip-hop."

In Rom. 1:15 Paul told the church at Rome that he was "ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also." Rom. 10:14 says "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" I Cor. 1:18 says "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." In Col. 1:28 Paul says "Whom (a reference to Christ) we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ." In II Tim. 4:2 Paul told Timothy to "Preach the word."

As talented as some of these rappers are, the Bible has not changed. Sinners are saved and saints are sanctified through the Word of God preached and taught by gifted men.

I am a former musician (bass player) who studied at Towson State College and Peabody Conservatory of Music in Baltimore, Maryland. Before I was saved, music was my god. I had big dreams and lofty ambitions. When I was converted in 1976 the Lord Jesus Christ became my Lord and my Master. I wanted what He wanted even though some of what He wanted for my life was a bitter pill for me to swallow. He took the god of music out of my life and later put me into the ministry, a place where I never thought I would ever be. For nearly 34 years I have been preaching His Word.

Now I am not saying that everyone will experience the same thing that I did, but I am saying that the Word of God is to be preached, not rapped. Rapping brings a lot of baggage with it that the gospel does not need. Even though the words may be scriptural, the beat and the images that it brings to the mind are worldly.

To put it bluntly, *funk* has no place in the church. The church is called upon to be separate and distinct from the world and that would include its music. Funky, syncopated beats and rhythms tend to excite the flesh, the same flesh that Paul



2nd Corinthians: A Textbook for Ministers

Larry Dean

Larry Dean serves as pastor of Bridgetown Baptist Church of Nesbit, Mississippi. He is the Secretary of the Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship as well as Missions Editor for this publication.

He has been rejected and a system has replaced Him that is far more useful and predictable for the purposes of growing the systems of men in a way that men can control.

minister is to live and operate. Time and space here prevent me from dealing in an exhaustive way with all that Paul says but I will mention some of the most important issues briefly.

What is the problem? How have we come to this place? And, what is the remedy? For the past several years this writer has been studying and researching the issue of Awakenings and Revivals of the past, convinced that Real Revival is the only hope for Christianity in our time. I was privileged to happen upon the book, "The Year of Grace," which describes the Awakening that occurred in Northern Ireland in 1858/59. It is one of the best historical accounts (in my opinion) of any of the Awakenings that have occurred. One of the things that impressed me in my reading was the character and quality of the ministers who supervised this Awakening. The author of the book did not take particular notice of this issue since it was not unusual to him, but, reading it against the backdrop of the early 21st Century, I was overwhelmed by the great difference between those ministers and what passes for 'minister' in our day.

I. MINISTERIAL AND PERSONAL INTEGRITY

For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward. 2 Cor 1:12

Paul had a deliberate approach to dealing with people that was unsophisticated and honest. It was under this principle that he had already rejected the notion of Personality Cults in 1 Cor. 1:11-13. He saw them as in conflict with the principle that Christ receives all the glory. Paul knew what many ministers discover, that people can easily become more attached to them than they are to Christ and become willing to create divisions within Christ's church over their allegiances to men. One great difference between true and false ministers is that false ministers capitalize on this weakness (even of Christian people) whereas true ministers decry it, call it sin, and labor to convince people to steer clear of it.

Early on in my life as a (what shall I say?) 'preacher,' I realized that the men who were attempting to teach me and influence me were very different from those individuals that I encountered in Scripture. I began to study the subject of 'ministry' from my Bible and learned some life-changing principles. I was particularly impressed with the book of 2 Corinthians in which Paul was forced to defend himself, his ministry, his thought processes, and his methods to a people who seemed to want much the same things as modern 'Christians.' They were willing to be led into error by smooth-talking, demonized 'preachers' who castigated Paul and mocked him for the 'weak' way in which he preached and ministered. They went so far as to make fun of both his speech and his appearance. But in defending himself, he laid out in plain terms the principles by which a Christian

Paul went so far as to studiously and carefully limit both the subject matter as well as the manner of his discourses to keep people from holding him in admiration for his knowledge and speaking abilities, 1 Cor. 2:1-5. Remember that Paul was probably rabbinically trained, which amounted to more education than most Doctoral degrees in our day. The training probably also included training in public oratory since rabbis were the teachers of the synagogues and the rabbinical schools.

Paul's direct and confrontational manner also severely limited the tendency for men to hold him too highly in their carnal esteem. 2 Cor. 4:1,2 - Paul

There are many in our days who decry the sad state of the church. They see the decay in church life and the flawed methodologies that many are using to attempt to 'fix' it. They see the wrongful use of entertainment as a draw both to 'reach' people and then to keep them once 'reached.' Church leaders are casting about in all directions for 'some new thing' that will effectively 'grow' their churches. Yet the power of the church to see real change or produce genuine Christianity in the lives of their members continues to decline. The net result in the Western world is that spirituality and morality are diminishing at alarming speed.

The biblical model has been abandoned and it has been abandoned so completely and so intensely that no one really seems to remember what it is. Maybe the problem is one that the Lord described through Jeremiah. *Be astonished O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the LORD. For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.* Jer 2:12-13

We have a hideously broken system of 'ministry' and 'worship' that has been created by religious pragmatists who have come to see the 'fountain of living waters' as insufficient for their needs. After all, the Living God cannot be made to enhance and enable the ambitions of men for 'ever larger, ever greater' religious systems. He cannot be induced to produce predictable results so that yearly reports reflect the right kinds of percentages. He cannot be forced to dance to the tunes of men. So,

would not consider any compromise nor adulteration of the Word of God. Where God spoke, he spoke and he spoke in complete and total honesty, refusing 'craftiness' (skillful re-wording of the message so as not to offend the hearers). He relied upon the plain and simple, straightforward proclamation of the Truth, presenting it in a clear fashion to the consciences of men. If some did not believe, it was because they were lost and blinded by Satan, not because Paul did not speak with skill, sophistication, and appeal to the lost heart, 2 Cor. 4:3,4.

Of course, we live in a day when that which Paul would have labeled as 'craftiness' is vigorously defended even by many who would claim allegiance to the Doctrines of Grace. It is institutionalized among us and studied as an art form. Many, I am convinced, actually believe that the results of clear, simple and honest declaration of truth are unsatisfactory to them and that the only way to achieve acceptable results is to use skillfully designed oratory to appeal to their audiences, speech designed to manipulate the emotions and impress the egos rather than convince the skeptical mind.

Paul had no doctrine that he refused to preach. He never said 'I can't preach that because it will kill church growth.' In Acts 20:17-21, to the Ephesian elders on what was possibly his last address to them, he declared that he 'kept back nothing' and plainly declared the necessity both of repentance and faith. Of course, it is in the letter to the Ephesians that he clearly laid out in ch. 1 the issues of Sovereignty and it is here that we also read of his serious admonitions concerning repentance from sin unto holiness in chapters 4-6.

If one listens carefully to most modern ministers he will notice that there is a careful avoidance of confrontation with their audiences concerning sin. If sin is mentioned, it is almost always in a 'safe' way, criticizing those who are not in the audience and are not likely to be. When declaring Sovereignty, there is almost an apology, accompanied by an effort to soften the message as to not offend Arminian tastes.

Paul declared Truth, plain and simple, letting 'the chips fall where they may.' He

never apologized for his message nor 'trimmed' it for the hearers.

Throughout his writings Paul manifested a great reluctance concerning any personal boasting, 11:16-12:13. Even though Paul obviously suffered and accomplished more than most of his contemporaries, even legitimate apostles, it was only when he felt his back was to the wall and he was forced to mention his own labors and sufferings that he actually did so. Even then he resisted and felt himself a fool for mentioning those things.

One would scarcely recognize any similarity between Paul and many moderns who seem unable to resist touting their own accomplishments so as to sell their next book or video. Salesmanship and self-promotion seem to be necessary attributes for the modern minister who desires to be seen as 'successful.'

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Paul was willing to (and sometimes did) support himself rather than require the churches to whom he ministered to do so. He had an interesting take on the subject. He did not refuse to take gifts from the churches but he absolutely refused to demand money for his services. On one occasion he simply relied upon gifts received from other churches (2 Cor. 11:8) and, more than once, he went to work himself to take care of his needs and those who traveled with him (1 Cor. 4:12, 2 Thess. 3:8). On the one hand he taught that *“the laborer is worthy of his hire,”* (1 Cor. 9:5-12, 1 Tim. 5:17,18), and, on the other, refused to allow money to become any issue whatsoever in his ministry.

One can scarcely find anything of this spirit in Evangelical Christianity in our day. We are bombarded by 'ministries' seeking to sell us books, videos, religious materials, promotional items, 'doo-dads' and trinkets. Speakers often demand guaranteed speaking fees, and conferences purported to be interested in 'ministering' to people charge sometimes prohibitive (at least for poor preachers like this one) fees for attendance on top of the expense of travel and lodging.

Let me make a radical suggestion. If you charge money to do a thing it is a business and not a 'ministry.' On the flip side if you are called to a 'ministry,' in the biblical (Pauline) sense, you will pay your own way to do it. I know that this is a radical assertion to make in today's climate, but I challenge you to find any 'minister' in scripture who required others to pay money in order to hear him speak or to read one of his books. *Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved. But be it so, I did not burden you: nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile. Did I make a gain of you by any of them whom I sent unto you?* 2 Cor 12:14-17

Let me say before I leave this topic that there is nothing wrong with having a business, even a business that sells Christian items, but please keep the distinction in mind between 'business' and 'ministry.' Christian ministry must follow the example of Paul.

II. THE NEW COVENANT MODEL. Chapter 3

New Testament ministry is just that, ministry of the New Covenant in Jesus Christ. This may sound like one of those 'no-brainer' concepts to some but I would ask the reader to carefully read and consider the things said in 2 Cor. 3 concerning this matter, particularly the names that Paul ascribes to the Old Covenant as symbolized in the stone tablets of Moses. The reason that I mention this issue is that it seems to me that many, especially of the 'Calvinistic' persuasion, would have a really difficult time using these terms concerning the Old Covenant and remaining consistent with their theology concerning the covenants. Notice them with me: 'the letter' (that kills), 'the ministry of death,' 'the ministry of condemnation,' 'that

which is done away,' 'that which is abolished,' and 'the veil.'

My purpose in mentioning this issue is not to convince you of any particular approach to the subject but to remind you that the ministry of the New Testament (Covenant) must take Paul's approach to the Old and be able to say (without equivocation) the same things that he said.

There is a very clear distinction made in the NT between the covenants. They are not "one covenant with two administrations," but are two distinct and separate covenants, one a covenant of works and one of grace, one that is temporal and one that is eternal, one that concerns "Jerusalem which now is," and one that concerns "Jerusalem which is above," one symbolized by Hagar and Ishmael and one which is pictured in Sarah and Isaac. New Testament ministry is the ministry of the New Covenant in Christ.

III. THE WILLINGNESS TO SUFFER IN REAL WAYS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE GOSPEL Chapter 4:4-7

I was raised in a Baptist minister's home and have had a sort of an 'insider's look' at preachers and their lives from the time I was a child. I lost count a long time ago of the stories of preachers who got themselves or their churches in trouble and then left when the difficulties started. At the same time, some of the most encouraging and precious stories I know are of those men who have continued to labor in difficult places under difficult circumstances, paying the price with their own sufferings.

I know of several who have labored faithfully under debilitating physical circumstance and illnesses who have refused to take the 'easy road' and ease their burden by leaving the ministry. I know of others whose people have abandoned them or cast them out who bore the pain and continued to labor faithfully in the gospel. To me, these are the heroes of the faith. These are the ones from whom I have learned what it means to 'minister the gospel' and do so faithfully. These are the men who truly labor in the pattern and model of the apostle Paul.

And, let me not fail to mention the faithful missionaries who are bearing the burden in difficult places for the sake of the gospel, those whose lives are in danger every day

from fanatical pagans, those whose health (and that of their families) is constantly assaulted by diseases, and who simply live, day by day, with the hardships of third-world environments.

These truly live out the words of Paul. *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.* 2 Cor 4:8-11; see also, 6:1-10.

IV. A CALL FOR REAL SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD AND GENUINE REPENTANCE AS FUNDAMENTAL TO THE MESSAGE Chapter 6:14-7:1, 9-11.

Paul had no hesitation in making clear the fact that he was calling for a real separation from the world on the part of professing Christians. Righteousness and unrighteousness have no ground for fellowship according to Paul. By this principle alone the church, her worship services, and her functions in the world cannot be crafted so as to appeal to the 'unrighteous.' Separation was inseparably linked, in the mind of Paul, with sonship. *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.* 2 Cor 6:17-18

The issue of being received by God, according to Paul, was tied beyond question to a real and genuine disconnect from this world's system of morals, values and spirituality. For him, faith and repentance were conjoined twins, the life of one totally dependent upon the life of the other. *Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.* Acts 20:21

Paul was so committed to the concept of repentance that he was perfectly willing to see genuine and agonizing sorrow produced in people as a result of his condemnation of sin in their lives. In 7:9, he stated that he "rejoiced" that they "sorrowed to repentance." They were "made sorry after a

godly manner," and, thus were undamaged by the experience.

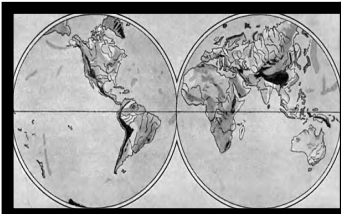
This, of course, flies in the face of the accepted principles of modern evangelical 'Christianity' which is absolutely obsessed with making sure that everyone has a 'positive experience' when they come to church. Theology has been moved out of the preaching hour and the preaching itself has been shortened in many places to make room for the 'worship' time which is completely geared toward producing happy feelings in all, even the adulterer, the liar, and the abuser who attends.

Yet our example, the one who is the (supposed) teacher of all New Testament preachers, consistently condemned sin and called for repentance in the lives of those who called themselves Christian. I remind you also of the rebuking notes dictated by Christ to the seven churches of Asia by the hand of John. Christian ministry is, and always has been, focused on repentance and faith as vitally connected elements of the saving experience as well as the ongoing life experience of believers.

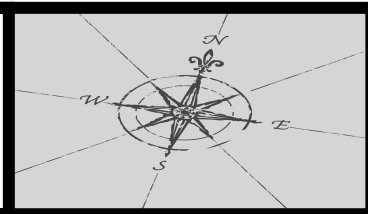
Available space constrains me to close. If I had the opportunity, I would have reminded you of Paul's pattern of calling believers to live their lives in view of the Great Judgment, 5:10-20, the great care that he took when dealing with the raising of funds for needy causes, chs. 8,9, the willingness to exercise biblical discipline both personally and in his role as minister of the gospel, as well as his willingness to 'call out' false preachers instead of treating them as professional equals with 'different opinions,' 11:12-15.

A careful reading of 2 Corinthians will demonstrate to the honest reader a model of Christian ministry that served the church well for 19 ½ centuries but has become almost totally lost in our world. Many affirm the need for Revival and Awakening in our churches and communities as well as in our country. One might suggest, on the basis of the principles we just discussed, that before that Awakening can occur, a Revival of some sort must occur in the ministry. Can we honestly believe that God is going to take a group of men who live and work in total contradiction to the principles laid out by Paul and make them the handlers of a General Awakening? I cannot imagine how.





World Missions



Missionary Journal

David Rasmussen

We bring greetings from Trevor and Teresa Johnson and Paul and Trish Snider, whom we recently visited in Indonesia, where they are seeking to bring the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to a remote tribal people in the interior of Papua Province on the island of New Guinea.

Alison and I arrived in Papua on February 6 to learn more about a future teaching ministry. We had been told about a great need for teachers in Bible and doctrinal foundations, to help future Papuan ministers of the Gospel to become solidly grounded in the Word of God. We met local church leaders and students and teachers at the Bible college and seminary located in Sentani, near the provincial capital of Jayapura. We were deeply impressed with the need, as well as encouraged that I might be able to help these brethren.

On February 11 we left Sentani on a Mission Aviation Fellowship plane to meet Trevor and Teresa in the village where they serve, located in the jungle lowlands. We were accompanied by Kevin, our World Team Papua Field Director, and his wife Allyson, who serve in another lowland village.



Our amphibious plane landed in the river about a kilometer from the village. A large number of people had come out to greet us. There is no way to avoid getting your feet wet or hiking under the tropical sun, but there were many friendly hands to carry our bags and to help us up the river bank and over some

tricky places on the pathway. We walked through a corner of the little settlement, with small houses on stilts, made of narrow poles and wooden slats, with thatched roofs, lining a central footpath.

The next day was Sunday. Trevor preached, partly in Indonesian and partly in the local language. Several times a week Trevor meets with a group of young men from the village to study the Scriptures and learn the language from them.

On Sunday afternoon, Allyson (Kevin's wife) and Perrin, whose husband Jimi serves as an elder in the church, taught the children. After the meeting I was asked if I would teach on Monday afternoon. The lessons had been working through Genesis. On Trevor's advice I decided to speak about God's promise to make Abraham's children like the stars in the sky and the sands on the shore.

On Monday when we gathered there were not only children and teenagers, but also a number of adults present. Some were themselves preachers, though some were, as Trevor explained, less

grounded in the Word than he would have liked. At least one person in the congregation was a notorious criminal. I went ahead with my lesson as planned, and Trevor translated. I explained that God is fulfilling that promise by calling people from every part of the world to salvation through faith in Jesus, and that we who believe are one family in Him.

As the meeting closed, an elderly man led in prayer. I learned that his name is Bimber, that he is from the highlands, and that all his life he has been preaching the Gospel to the lowland peoples. Trevor interpreted: "He is saying, 'Lord, please give this man good health and long life that he may return to help us. Thank You for these men who have come here to find their family.'"



We ended up staying an extra two days in Danowage, a result of the float plane needing unexpected repairs. Finally on Saturday we flew to the highland town of Wamena, where we met more remarkable people. One was Sue, a veteran missionary nurse who is also working on the completion of a Bible translation project that has taken most of her life. Sue was one of the most optimistic and joyful people we met, but she began to weep as she talked about the spiritual needs of the people she loves and pleaded with us to come back to Papua.

Our trip concluded with two days in Bandung, far from Papua in West Java. There Paul and Trisha, who are in language study, introduced us to life in Indonesia's third largest city, and to some of the people they are sharing their faith with during their time before they join Trevor and Teresa in Papua.



David Rasmussen served as a pastor for 26 years. He and his wife Alison have been appointed by World Team, and are being sent out by Abounding Grace Church, a Reformed Baptist church in Visalia, California.

The Rasmussens hope to serve in Papua, Indonesia, where David expects to teach future church leaders in a Bible college setting. He can be reached at David.Rasmussen@worldteam.org. More information about World Team Papua can be found at worldteampapua.org



Reports and updates from missions and missionaries begins next page

The Philippines

Barry Carpenter

If the Lord will allow, I will be returning to the Philippines in late May or early June. I am currently awaiting some paper work to clear the Philippine government and will be able to finalize the trip when it clears. In May 2011 I was able to host a pastor's conference in Cagayan De Oro, Philippines where we supplied a pastor's library to 10 attendees (*Matthew Henry Commentary, Strong's Concordance, and John MacArthur Study Bible*). This year I will be traveling to Maasin City, South Leyte to preach, Cagayan De Oro for a pastor's conference and Bukidnon to encourage the pastors there. I have also been asked to speak to a group of pastors near Baclayon, Philippines, but I have had to decline that request.

At this visit I will also lay the foundation for the Bible Institute. I am praying that we will be able to offer scholarships to 10 students to begin the Master of Divinity Program. Classes will begin in June. I currently have 3 of the lessons completed and hope to have 6 done before June. It was originally planned to have 10 lessons completed but those who volunteered to help have not been able to do so and so I carry the burden alone. Currently I have **History of the Church 1 & 2** completed (lectures, exam, reading assignments, etc). I am working on reading assignments for **Christian Apologetics** (John Frame). I have lecture notes for **Systematic Theology 1 & 2** (I am still listening to lectures for part 3 and then will need to find reading assignments). Please see the new website for more details.

Please pray for me as I prepare to return to the Philippines in May. In addition to praying for the Lord to meet the needs and grant safe travel, please also pray that the Lord will multiply the efforts of lesson development and that the Bible Institute will equip pastors and church planters to bring more glory to God in the Philippines.

(Contact info: Revival or Ruin Ministries, Dr. Barry G. Carpenter, 605 Marlin St. NW, Russellville, AL 35653 www.revivalorruin.com, email: barrycarpenter@gmail.com)

Indonesia

Paul Snider

Recent News:

We have been in Bandung, Indonesia for 5 months as of this week. Trish and I are now in Unit 4 of Bahasa Indonesia. Our evaluation for Unit 3 of the language went well. We are praising God for the wisdom and ability that He is giving us to learn this language. Lane and Marianne are learning words and picking up the language. Lord willing, we will be in Bandung until November, and then transition to Papua.

Within the last two months the Lord has given us the opportunity to help several people with medical issues. One lady we know, her son needed dental surgery. She was in tears because her son was in so much pain and they did not have the means to get him treated. He is 10 years old and still had his baby teeth, so we were able to show the love of Christ by helping her family with this.

Pray for the people we are building relationships with and pray for these villages that the Gospel will speed forth and God will grant repentance.

Our children are adjusting well. Please pray that God will open their eyes to their sin and they will come to know the beauty of Christ. We want them to see the joys of service through us. Pray for me as a husband and father that I will lead my family in the Lord.

Paul and Family



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Papua, Indonesia

Trevor Johnson

We are healthy. The Lord has given us a mix of blessings and trials these 2 months interior. Here's a few snippets:

-Had a party of locals very mad at a visitor from downriver to the extent that they angrily came and yelled at him and told him he had to pay with his blood (for a supposed injustice he had done earlier this year). I invited all into my home and fed them and talked with them to soothe tensions. They sneaked out with some of Noah's home-school materials.

-I found out one guy here is married [to] both a mother and her daughter. I am not sure now whether to refer to the kid as his child or his grandchild.

-There is a pregnant woman downriver that is threatening to leave her baby to die in the jungle if we don't agree to adopt it (mothers here still deliver squatting over a hole and sometimes leave their babies to die). Perin has paid used clothes and some rice to make the mother commit to bring her upriver upon birth. We are not sure if this is a trick to gain goodstuffs or if the mother truly has intentions to kill the baby. Jimmy and Perin (the two Dani Christians that work closest with me here) are newly married and want children but are probably infertile and so are willing to adopt this child.

-We just had another scabies outbreak here.

-Language learning is slow, we are often exhausted and feel like passing out by 9 pm at night and my dissertation for my doctorate still remains not even a chapter complete due to busyness here.

-Pieter, who threatened both me and Jimmy last year, reports that God spoke to him in a dream and reminded him that everytime he grew mad at and threatened us that God made him sicker and sicker but everytime he repented God healed him (we were harboring an 11-year

old girl in our home briefly a while ago because Pieter was trying to carry off and forcibly wed her) . Pieter has TB. He stated that he now believes in Jesus and no longer will ever seek to get his way by violence now, but we will see.

A big praise is this update from a few days ago:

"Privileged today to teach a group of tribal locals (for the first time) the story of God calling Abraham to take his son Isaac and sacrifice him as a test of faith. They heard about Abraham's long, long wait for the promised son, Sarah's laughter, the 3-day journey to the mountain, the further climb up, the son's question, "We've brought everything else - but where is the sacrifice?" and then the scene of Isaac on the altar and Abraham with knife raised. The people understood and were IN the story and at that moment several shook their head and one said very loudly, "Aduh, jangan bunuh dia!" (Aw, don't kill him!") Another asked, "But God said that Abraham's children will be so many, and now God says kill him? That's his only son - how can this be?"

I myself felt as if I was experiencing the story for the first time and I am once again astonished at the God who makes big promises, arranges affairs to make those promises seem even more impossible, and then delights to fulfill them all. Thank God that He Himself provided the sacrifice and on the mount of the Lord it was provided - even His only Son."

Also, the story of Sodom seemed to strike one local clan here powerfully 2 days ago because they have a belief that the world will end by shaking and fire and rocks from heaven, sort of like what happened to Sodom and what Peter says will occur.

OUR PLAN FOR APRIL:

-We just spent 2 months interior here.

Next week we go out to Sentani for resupply. The plans then will be for me and Jimmy and Yulianus to continue tract ministry and pass out another 2,000 tracts or more in the cities, take local Bible school students with us to teach them personal evangelism while we do this (to avoid religion being merely a Sunday-morning-inside-the-church-ritual).

Then Jimmy Weyato and I will go to several highland regions, first Timika and then Ilu to talk to key church leaders. Then go through the Toli area that is still fighting in order to pass out tracts calling people to repentance.

Then Yuli and I will meet all the assembled Mamberamo leaders for a 3-day seminar, our themes will be true faith versus false profession and discipling one's children.

Then at the end of April we travel to Merauke on the south coast for a meeting of evangelists.

So....it will be a very busy April.



oct31st1517@hotmail.com

Ireland

Miles McKee

The work in Ireland continues with daily challenges. We, however, take comfort in the knowledge that our Lord has a people here who will be called out under the sound of the gospel. A remarkable thing has happened recently. Revelation TV from London, England, have begun recording a number of programs with me. Their broadcast is seen all over Ireland and the UK and indeed Europe. So far, they have put no muzzle on my mouth and to date they have given me complete liberty to preach and tell of Christ crucified. The wonderful thing is that I made no approach to Revelation TV about appearing on their broadcast. Although they are not known as a sovereign grace channel they wanted to hear from someone who has a different approach to things and thus I was approached.



Please keep the work in Ireland in your prayers.

Gospel Blessings

Miles

miles@thegracechurch.ie

Mexico

Andres Galaviz

Andres and Rhonda are planning to be visiting churches in the U.S. beginning the second week of July this year. Kyle White, elder at Community Baptist Church of Elmendorff, TX, is coordinating the travel arrangements.

He included the following note: "Brother Andres is not comfortable preaching in English. He would prefer a good translator. His wife is very capable. If that is a problem for your church, then he can seek to address the church, but will have limitations. Please let me know your preference when you communicate with me. Please keep in mind that they will need accommodations when they are not traveling from one location to another. So, if you have them on Sunday, it may be necessary to house them for an additional day or so before they head out to their next stop on Wednesday, or whenever the next stop may be scheduled. I greatly appreciate your support and interest in this missionary family. They have served the Lord faithfully for many years. I believe you will find them a blessing to your church. If you have any questions please feel free to call (210-723-6568) or write me and I will answer to the best of my ability."

www.cbcweb.net

"World Missions" continued page 17



Amy Underwood is a member of Sovereign Grace Baptist Church in Springfield, Missouri. She is a mother of seven and has home schooled for over fifteen years.

Leading Children Down the Path of Reverential Worship

Amy Underwood

lines, humanist John Dunphy stated, “The battle for humankind’s future must be waged and won in the public school classroom by teachers who correctly perceive their role as the proselytizers of a new faith: a religion of humanity that recognizes and respects the spark of what theologians call divinity in every human being.” “Utilizing a classroom instead of a pulpit to convey humanist values in whatever subject they teach, regardless of the educational level – preschool day care or large state university.” Make no mistake. Religion is still being taught in schools – the religion of an evolutionary-based humanism.

In *How Should we Then Live? The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture*, well-known theologian and philosopher Francis Schaeffer wrote on the persistent intentions and the devastating results of such a godless ideology. He wrote, “In our era, sociologically, man destroyed the base which gave him the possibility of freedoms without chaos. Humanists have been determined to beat to death the knowledge of God and the knowledge that God has not been silent, but has spoken in the Bible and through Christ, and they have been determined to do this even though the death of values has come with the death of that knowledge.”

R.C. Sproul also wrote on humanism in an article called ‘Augustine and Pelagius.’ He said, “Humanism, in all its subtle forms, recapitulates the unvarnished Pelagianism against which Augustine struggled. The seminal thought of Pelagius survives today not as a trace or tangential influence but is pervasive in the modern church. Indeed, the modern church is held captive by it.”

Paul speaks about the ancient “humanists” in Romans 1:22, 25: “*Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools ... and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator...*” In verses 26-32 the Lord’s wrath is manifested indirectly with abandonment, and the immorality that always followed the loosing of restraints is identical with our decadent and god-hating culture that we see today. Lastly, when

Paul speaks of the “humanists” of the last days in II Timothy 3:2, 4-5 he says they would be “*lovers of their own selves..., lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; ...from such turn away.*”

What are we to conclude from all this? In *Children at Risk*, James Dobson and Gary L. Bauer sum it up well when they say, “Nothing short of a great Civil War of Values rages today throughout North America....Two sides with vastly differing and incompatible worldviews are locked in a bitter conflict that permeates every level of society....Someday soon, a winner [in the battle for our children’s hearts and minds] will emerge and the loser will fade from memory. For now, the outcome is very much in doubt.”

This battle that we face with humanism is only one example of the countless many enemies that seek to spread their blasphemous gospel, but presently it seems to be the most formidable foe in our land. Believers of this evil philosophy have worked tirelessly for years to tear down every essential foundation that the Lord has clearly laid down in His Word. In many ways they have successfully infiltrated government, law, media, entertainment, schools, homes, and churches. This thriving pagan religion has bred not only rampant immorality, but an ever-growing sentiment of unbelief, disrespect, irreverence, and an even militant hatred for Our Lord and Savior and His church. This environment makes it especially difficult for today’s young impressionable minds to not be influenced heavily, especially when they are all too often the target of indoctrination. Children will either grow up in this world learning to worship Our Creator, or learning to worship some part of His creation, including himself. For this reason, Christian parents must do all they can to wage spiritual warfare on all enemy forces at hand and strive to live and impart a life of honoring, serving, and reverently worshiping the Lord. Now that we have done a little reconnaissance work, it is now time to look for a plan of strategy by utilizing our greatest weapon, God’s Word.

“The next century can be and should be the humanistic century.” * “As nontheists, we begin with humans not God, nature not deity.” * “No deity will save us; we must save ourselves. Promises of immortal salvation or fear of eternal damnation are both illusory and harmful.”

These blasphemous and chilling quotes are from the Humanist Manifesto II written and signed in 1973 by many humanist leaders in education, science, and government. This document serves as a type of confession of faith. With Darwinist evolution as the foundation, it essentially teaches that we are evolving into a period of enlightenment and aspiring to reach a state of earthly utopia where there will exist a world unity of peace, equal rights for all, and no suffering from poverty or hunger. (Sounds like John Lennon’s song ‘Imagine,’ doesn’t it?) To successfully progress in this direction, all forms of old “superstitious” religion (including Christianity) which only divide people and cause war and suffering must be eliminated. So then it becomes the mandatory responsibility of those already-enlightened individuals to save the world and spread this salvation gospel of humanism into every realm of our culture and throughout the world. Over the years, they have been quite successful.

One of the many visionaries of this false gospel focused his attention on the young impressionable minds in the educational system. The late humanist John Dewey (1859-1952), who was known as the father of modern or progressive education, is quoted in David Breese’s book *Seven Men Who Rule the World from the Grave*, as saying, “Schools do have a role – and an important one – in *production* of social change” (emphasis his). Along the same

Teach your children about God's holiness

Leviticus 11:44a: *For I am the Lord your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy...*

Luke 1:49: *For He that is mighty hath done to me great things: and holy is His name.*

Matthew 6:9: *After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.*

Revelation 4:8: *And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*

In contrast to "big bang" cosmology and Darwinist evolution that we are constantly bombarded with today, we must embolden our children with scriptures that teach foundational truths. It is imperative that they know and understand that God is the Creator of heaven and earth, and all manner of life. He is omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent. He is the one and only Sovereign King of kings and Lord of lords. God declares Himself to be holy, therefore we must seek to understand what holy is, and then diligently teach our children. Without this vital understanding, they cannot truly grasp the concept of the depravity of man. Without this humbling understanding, they will not seek to know and obey God's word, and cannot approach Him reverently.

Teach your children to fear God

Hebrews 12:28-29: *Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire.*

Matthew 10:28: *And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*

Isaiah 6:1, 5: *In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple...Then said I, Woe is me! For I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.*

Revelation 1:12a, 17a: *And I turned to see the voice that spake with me...And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead.*

We have lived in a culture that has elevated man for so long, that even in the Christian culture today, the fear of God is a very unpopular idea. Many approach God in a very casual way, as if He were down on our human level. However, Scripture abundantly teaches that since God is holy we are to serve Him with reverence and godly fear. Therefore, we must ardently strive to raise our children in the fear and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4). A most essential lesson could be learned by studying about the similar response of every person that actually stood in the presence of God. For example, Isaiah's reaction was sheer terror as he witnessed the Lord's glory in the heavenly temple because this vision made him painfully aware of his sinful heart. Notice that he says, "*Woe is me! For I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips...*" (Isaiah 6:5). And of course we know that what proceeds from the lips comes from the heart (Math.12:34). Through lessons like this one, we can pray that the Lord would open the eyes and hearts of our children just as he did with Isaiah so they too might feel the shame and sorrow of their own sinful nature. It is then and only then, that they will realize their need of a savior. And with this realization we come to the most beautiful and glorious lesson of all – the gospel.



Show your children the gospel message through a living example

Ephesians 5: 21-33 *Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as*

Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it: That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing: but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh: but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

...*"Christ is dear to you in bonds of marriage union, and you are dear to him; see he grasps both of your hands with both his own, saying, "My sister, my spouse." [So. 4:12] Notice the two sacred holdfasts by which your Lord gets such a double hold of you that he neither can nor will ever let you go. Do you say in your heart this morning, "My brother, my husband?" Try to be near to him in nature,---to be like your brother, a son of God; and to be near to him in fellowship---to have near and dear communion with your husband, that you may know him and have fellowship with him, being conformable to his death." --- C. H. Spurgeon*

Many humanists are fighting fiercely to redefine traditional marriage and making sure that children are taught early that homosexual marriages are normal and to be accepted as such. Actually, there is no such thing as so called traditional marriage, for it implies that it is just an old tradition of men. But scripture clearly teaches that the marriage covenant has always been, and will always be, an amazing picture of the union that we as believers share with Christ. Upon His return, we, as Christ's bride will join the Bridegroom in the marriage feast (Math. 22:1-14). Therefore, as Christian parents, we bear a very heavy responsibility as God's representatives to our children to fear, love, and obey God first, and then we are to continually display a genuine gospel message of grace through the way we submit, love, forgive, and sacrifice for each other in our marriage as their first living picture of the beautiful gospel message.

Then, this living testimony that we present to our children will continue to evidence itself in all other areas of our lives. For example, parents, do we show our children that we truly love His word by the way we meditate on scripture with them day and night (Psalm 119:97)? Or is it just another book that sits on the shelf collecting dust? Do we cry out to our Lord daily with our children in fervent prayer with humbling confessions and heartfelt love for the sole purpose of glorifying God (Dan.Ch.9)? Or are our prayers vain repetitions? Is corporate worship such a joy and a vital part of our spiritual growth that we attend church with our children every time the doors are open? Or is worship just an empty ritualistic habit? And do we go out of our way to encourage, strengthen, and comfort those in our church (Heb. 10:24-25) as well as friends, neighbors and loved

ones? As our children see that we truly love the Lord with all our heart, soul, and mind, and our neighbor as ourselves, then it should give us hope that our witness to them will bring the gospel message of forgiveness, redemption, and love alive in their own hearts. And the purpose of the gospel is always to bring glory and honor and praise to our Lord.

In conclusion, the humanists' dream of a utopia will indeed come to pass. However, it will not be the new age that they envision, and sadly because of unbelief it will not be for them. Pray with me that the Lord would guard our hearts and minds so that we and our children will never answer to their call to come and worship the blasphemous god of self-love. However, they will join us in bowing down to the King of kings and Lord of lords while we all confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Then

in this new age there will be a great wedding with our Bridegroom, but they, along with all other unbelievers, will not have on the necessary wedding garment – the purity of Christ. Therefore, they will be cast out into the lake of fire, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Until that glorious wedding day, we must all redeem the time because the days are evil. We must be passionate about leading every unbeliever, especially our children to the only path that leads to the genuine gospel of Jesus Christ. It is only this gospel that will lead them to a true heartfelt and reverential worship – a worship that will be for all eternity where we will join the angelic song of Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.



(continued from page 7) tells us to “*make no provision for*” in Romans 13:14. The music that our churches need is music that draws our hearts and our minds to the Triune Godhead: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Hymns like; *How Sweet and Awful; Majestic Sweetness; I Stand Amazed in The Presence; Jesus Shall Reign; May The Mind of Christ My Savior; How Firm a Foundation; All Creatures of Our God and King*. Beloveds, we cannot improve upon these old hymns. This is soul music at its best. We are told in John 4:24 to “*worship God in spirit and in truth.*” The word *spirit* refers subjectively to the whole heart (the inner man) and the word *truth* refers objectively, to the Word of God. Since the flesh has no place in corporate worship the elders of the church should see to it that there is nothing in the worship service that would appeal to the flesh.

I have been in churches that are no different than the night clubs that I use to play in. So I would say to my brothers who want to rap; preach instead! That is what we are mandated in Scripture to do. Rapping has a lot of peripheral baggage that will pollute and take away from the message of Christ crucified, buried, and risen. Paul in First Corinthians 2:4 says “*And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.*” In the public square the philosophers in Paul’s day drew attention to themselves with their human wisdom, but Paul never wanted any attention drawn to himself

when he preached the gospel, so he did not use *enticing (persuasive) words of man’s wisdom*. In First Corinthians 1:17 he says that he was sent “*to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.*” Apart from the Holy Ghost the gospel does not need any help, it just needs to be preached!

QUALITY VS QUANTITY

“*Seeker friendly*” churches are in danger of drawing the wrong crowds for the wrong reasons. I would rather have an assembly of four or five genuine born again believers than to have a mega-church that is filled with devils. Our Lord never told us to be “*seeker friendly,*” but He did tell us that we were to be “*salt*” and “*light*” in the world. In the NT He would oftentimes test those that followed Him, not so He could find out whether they were genuine or not, but so that they would see whether they were genuine.

Beloveds, let us not play “*the numbers game*” by using methods that are contrary to Scripture. All of the above: light and trite worship mixed with heavy doctrine, the sensational gifts (so-called), the thump and bump music, and the rapping the gospel instead of preaching the gospel, will certainly give us the quantity that we are looking for, but not the quality.

CLOSING REMARKS

In closing, I would like to return to the question asked in the title of this article, are the New Calvinists, friend or foe? Well I must say that they are my friends

theologically. I do praise God for their zeal and their efforts in seeking to restore the biblical doctrines of God’s sovereignty in salvation, doctrines that have been overshadowed for years by Arminian heresies such as, *the free will of man*. But with reference to their style of worship, the New Calvinist has some serious soul searching and cleansing to do.

In our churches we must worship our God with the highest respect and with the highest quality of worship that we can give Him. The Charismatics are not worshipping the same God that we Calvinists are; therefore, we must let them worship theirs and we worship ours. So, let us lift up our style of worship to where our doctrine and our worship are on the same level!

We must also get back to “*the glory of God*” as being our main motive for our worship. May we rid ourselves of the worldly “*numbers game*” mentality because, God will save all of His people in His own time and not one of them will perish (John 6:37; 10:28, 29). We therefore, should never be guilty of cheapening our worship and our methods in trying to help Him out.

When we get our act together with reference to our worship, then and only then can the New and the Old Calvinist (so-called) come together in true fellowship with one another. Until then there will always be this family feud. I trust that those in both camps will read this article and will consider what has been said. And may the God of peace be with us all, *Amen!*



("World Missions")

Nicaragua

James Fryer

Grace to you! Thank you much if you have been keeping us in your ongoing prayers. God has been very good to us. As some of you know, I was doing some of the footwork to help the preparations of the first international conference that was made up of leaders of our missions seminary model (representing Miami International Seminary). My part was small in light of all that was done, but I was trying to help a handful of national leaders to get ready for the conference, and to be able to continue the work of the local study program in Nicaragua through the first quarter of 2012.

The conference went well, though I was unable to attend, as my family and I are now in the U.S. on a furlough until the end of April when we will return back to Nicaragua. In this letter, I want to share that the leaders in Nicaragua that we have been blessed to work with are moving forward and taking responsibility for the MINTS study centers that have begun, and are advancing the work (in our absence). This will be a test if and when God calls us to a new ministry one day. Our deepest prayer is that the Nicaraguan leaders will rejoice in carrying on the work to benefit their own churches, raising up the next generation of theologically trained pastors, and church leaders.

Thank you for praying for the ongoing work in Nicaragua, and I ask you to expand your prayer ministry to include the 30 plus MINTS Study centers that are blossoming throughout Central America. This work truly has a wonderful potential for the bearing of much fruit by the grace of almighty God.

Prayer needs: 1) That we can get the ministry training [James new role as a U.S. Army Reserve Chaplain], health checkups, home school work completed, and stay physically healthy while we are in the U.S., and travel back to Nicaragua at the end of April. 2) For the Nicaraguan pastors/leaders that are taking initiative in leading the local study programs benefiting many [particularly Pastor Emilio, Pastor Manuel, Brother Francisco, Pastor Dionisio and Elder Carlos and others.]

If you want to send a gift, to help with the ongoing support of this ministry, We are with Missionary Ventures International (they'll send a tax receipt back to you): Missionary Ventures International P.O. Box 593550 Orlando, FL 32859-3550

Thailand

Wayne Camp

(Bro. Camp is home from this trip to Thailand. Illness has prevented him from giving us an update, but this is excerpted from his publication 'The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator.' Jan. 2012 – ed.)

It is with a great deal of joy that I write this report. We went to the first church that was started in this Thailand work (Pa Sak #1) for services on January 1, 2012. When the gong was sounded for the beginning of services people began to pour into the house of worship. When more than I had ever seen at this church were in the building I looked up and more were still coming in. They filled up every chair with the exception of two or three on the platform. People then began to sit on the platform in front of the pulpit. When that was full they began to sit down on the floor in the middle aisle. They filled it up about halfway to the back sitting four abreast. When the congregation was counted there were 175 people present. It was a joy to preach to this large congregation. There were 14 additions to the church – nine adults and five older teenagers. I should point out that it is not uncommon here for people to unite with a church on the first Sunday of the year if they decide to do it. There was great joy among the people in the services. This church is already taking special

offerings every Sunday to enlarge their building and quite a number of people dropped offerings in that special box. It is certainly good to see the churches taking more responsibility for the building programs. For a long time they always looked to churches in the U.S.A to fund such things.

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The Entertainment Culture of the World is Being Incorporated into Church Services,

and sometimes with the stage production of a theatrical event. Do the Scriptures give any guideline or show how far we should go in using the culture of the world to attract attendees? These methods were once confined to those who are “liberal” or “neo-orthodox” in theology but have made inroads into some professed sovereign grace ministries. For this reason we believe the following interview will be of special interest to the readers of this publication. Dr. Gary Crampton and Tom Henry were given five identical questions pertaining to this subject as well as answering questions on certain Biblical passages. - Editor



Dr. Gary Crampton is a pastor at Reformed Baptist Church of Richmond, Virginia. He is also a writer and has authored or co-authored many books pertaining to what is commonly called the Reformed Faith.¹



Tom Henry is assistant pastor of Bible Baptist Church of St. Louis, Missouri. He is a much used conference speaker, involved in youth camp work, and has served as Chairman of the Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship.

Q. Is the introduction of the world’s culture with its bodily impacting rock music, entertainment style “worship service” and extremely casual dress an acceptable thing when the message is generally sound? Does the end justify the means, since it is attracting large numbers of young people?

A. (Dr. Crampton) The issue involved in the new style of worship has to do with a departure from the Biblical pattern of the “regulative principle of worship” as taught in churches of the Reformed persuasion. The Lutheran Church and other Protestant groups hold to a pattern of worship which differs with the Reformed view. These other groups maintain that any element of worship is permissible if the Bible does not forbid it. The Reformed view maintains that it is only what God has prescribed (either explicitly or implicitly) in His Word that is permissible.

The *Westminster Confession of Faith* (21:1) teaches that the primary obligation of man, as God’s image bearer, is to worship and serve Him as Creator and Sustainer:

The light of nature shows that there is a God, who has Lordship and sovereignty over all; is good, and does good unto all; and is therefore to be feared, loved, praised, called upon, trusted in, and served with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the might.

Since the church is duty-bound to worship and serve God, then it is also duty-bound to worship and serve Him as He Himself directs us in His Word. Said another way, apart from Biblical revelation man could not know how to worship and serve God as He requires.

The Bible is very clear that the church has a duty to worship and serve God. Public, corporate worship is a Biblical mandate which is stressed in both the Old and New Testaments. Under the Old

Covenant, Israelites gathered on various “holy days” for public worship in the tabernacle and temple (Exodus 23:14-17). They also held services within their synagogues and/or house churches (Psalm 74:8; Leviticus 23:3). The New Testament stresses the importance of worship in such passages as Acts 2:42; 20:7-12; and Hebrews 10:24-25. Under the New Covenant worship is to take place on the Lord’s Day (Revelation 1:10), i.e., the first day of the week (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2). And according to the *Westminster Confession* (21:5), on the Lord’s Day, along with prayer, the “ordinary religious worship of God,” is restricted to:

The reading of the Scriptures with godly fear; the sound preaching, and conscionable hearing of the Word, in obedience unto God, with understanding, faith, and reverence; singing of psalms with grace in the heart; as also the due administration and worthy receiving of the sacraments instituted by Christ.

As noted, in contradistinction to other Protestant groups, Reformed churches have insisted on following the “regulative principle of worship.” That is, in public worship services on the Lord’s Day, God is only to be worshipped in a manner which He has commanded in His Word (Deuteronomy 12:1-11, 32; John 4:24; Hebrews 8:5). That which God commands is proper and necessary in the worship services; that which He has not commanded is forbidden. The *Westminster Confession* (21:1) says it this way:

The acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by Himself, and so limited by His own revealed will, that He may not be worshipped according to any imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation, or any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scripture.

¹What Calvin Says, Study Guide to the Westminster Confession of Faith, The Scripturalism of Gordon H. Clark, and By Scripture Alone, published by The Trinity Foundation. What the Puritans Taught and Meet Jonathan Edwards were published by Soli Deo Gloria. A Conversation with Jonathan Edwards was published by Reformation Heritage Books. He Shall Glorify Me and Paul: The Apostle of Creedal Theology, Interpreting Edwards: An Overview and Analysis of John H. Gerstner’s The Rational Biblical Theology of Jonathan Edwards, both published by Whitefield Publishing. He co-authored Calvinism, Hyper-Calvinism, and Arminianism with Kenneth Gary Talbot, published by Apologetics Group. From Paedo Baptism to Credobaptism was published by Reformed Baptist Academic Press.

This “regulative principle” is taught in Scripture in a number of passages. In John 4:24, for example, Christ teaches that worship is to be guided by His Spirit in accordance with His truth. Paul confirms this in Colossians 3:16, where he says that genuine worship must be according to “the Word of Christ...with grace in your hearts.” Then in Leviticus 10:1-3 we read of God’s judgment on those who sought to worship Him in accordance with their own imaginations and devices. The God of Scripture is very serious about the way He is to be worshipped.

In the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* (Q. 50-51) we are told that the second of the Ten Commandments teaches the regulative principle. This commandment, says the *Catechism*, “requires the receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances as God has appointed in His Word...[and it] forbids the worshipping of God by images, or any other way not appointed in His Word.”

This writer would contend that “the introduction of the world’s culture with its bodily impacting rock music [and] entertainment style ‘worship service’” is a violation of this commandment. It deviates from the regulative principle adopted by the Reformed churches. Does the end justify the means, then, since it is attracting large numbers of young people? In the words of the Apostle Paul, “may it never be” (*me genoito*).

A. (Tom Henry) Sound doctrine and conservative worship style have historically gone hand in hand. The reason for this should be obvious. That message which most exalts and magnifies the Sovereign Majesty and absolute holiness of the true and living God, when received into the heart, always produces a genuine reverential fear in those who so embrace it. By *sound doctrine* we are speaking of Calvinistic theology, i.e. the Doctrines of Grace, the theology of the Reformers and the Puritans. Speaking of the Puritans, they show us that the deeper the understanding of God’s truth, the more humble, holy and reverent the student of it. It is, after all, *the truth* that sanctifies. It was their deep and abiding love for the truth that shaped their lives and inspired their devout worship. This same can be said of all who, blessed of the Holy Spirit, *have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine that was delivered them*.

This raises a serious question. How can those blessed truths, which the Puritans held, which produced in them such humility and holy reverence, not have the same basic effect on others who profess to believe the same holy doctrines, particularly respecting the manner of worship? Rather than the creation of a wider separation from the world, its culture, its music and its dress, there appears to be the adoption of these things into Christian worship. It is not that the Lord has not made clear that He will only be worshipped with our *first fruits*.

Why would Christians think it appropriate to offer to the Lord the recycled left-overs from their former days when they were in the service of their old master? They presume to worship God, using the same bodily impacting rock music, and attired in the same extremely casual dress that pertains to the world, the flesh and the Devil. How can this not be an offense to the Most High God?

A better question might be why are such things being promoted by church leaders and teachers, many of whom are brilliant preachers

of the Doctrines of Grace? It is apparently done in order to attract larger numbers of young people, but not only young people. A good many of my generation – *the sixties generation* – still love their rock music, and will seek out a church where they can *let their hair down* so to speak. They may agree with its *sound message*, but it is not the doctrine that is drawing them.

So, does the end justify the means? That is a good question for a number of reasons. What is the end that is strived for? Biblical Christianity, as affirmed by every sound confession of faith, says that the chief end of all being is the Glory of God. But, what is the *end* in this case? It might be argued that the end is to attract more people by giving them something that appeals to the carnal nature, which means the real end, then, must be to please men. This makes the underlying philosophy of entertainment style worship to be humanism. Humanism says the chief end of all being is the happiness of man. Anything that has for its primary focus man’s enjoyment and happiness rather than God’s glory is based not in Christian teaching, but humanistic philosophy. No, the end does not justify the means, when the true end of the Christian faith is undermined in the process.

Someone will say, “Well, God does not look on these external things, but on the heart, and none can judge the heart but God Himself.” This of course is true, but external things often reveal what is in the heart. And what’s more, the attitude in which we do what we do reflects the condition of our hearts. If our motive is not right, what we do can never be right. Now, our clothes do not recommend us to God, neither do they keep us from Him. However, the attitude of heart in which we wear what we wear is of some consequence. The old expression “Sunday best” doubtless was intended to mean the clothes folks wore to church. Back when all Christians (excepting Seventh Day Adventists) believed that Sunday was the Lord’s Day, they saved the best they had in their closet to wear to church on Sunday. This was and is done in honor to God, and as a show of respect for His house. That honor and respect is rapidly disappearing, and I, for one, do not see it as a good thing. I see it as one more indication that this generation that has become so casual in everything else also has a very cavalier attitude about the sacred assembly and things holy.

Many times it seems that traditional forms of worship are abandoned, and a new style of worship is taken up just to prove that the old traditions are not binding on this new generation. So we see churches divided. Church marquees will advertise the “*traditional service*” and the “*contemporary services*” held at different times. How more contrary to New Testament teaching can a thing be? The church is to be one and united. It seems to me that the “new age” philosophy has found its way into the Church. I mentioned *the sixties generation*, my generation, I am ashamed to say. It decided that it did not have to abide by the rules that were handed down by our fathers from generation to generation. After all, we are as intelligent as those who framed our constitution, etc. So it decided to cast off the restraint, and liberate itself morally, politically, socially, and culturally from generations of the past. We can see the results of such arrogant stupidity. Sadly, that is not the worst of it. The same *new age* spirit of self-sufficiency and moral superiority is seeking to change the identity of the Church. It wants to hold the theology of the Reformers and the Puritans, but at the same time cast off the reverential fear and holy character, and humble self denial that their theology produced in them. *Brethren, these things ought not so to be*.

Q. What did the Apostle Paul mean contextually by the desire that some be saved “by all means” (1 Cor. 9:22)?

A. (Tom Henry) It is important, first of all, to understand what the Apostle did not mean when he said, “*I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.*” From clear teachings of Scripture, even statements from Paul’s own pen, we can rule out what some would wrest his words to mean. When he says “*by all means*” he is not therein implying that there can be any other effectual means than the Gospel itself in the salvation of sinners, whoever they may be. He is not suggesting that there can be another Gospel, nor does he allow that the one true Gospel will lend itself to additions or alterations in order that it might *save some*. To put any such idea to rest, we need only to look to Paul’s letter to the churches of Galatia. (Gal. 1: 6-9; 3: 1-3) Neither does the expression “*by all means*” suggest that there are other effective methods than the communication of the Gospel by which alone men are saved. (I Cor. 1:21; Rom. 10: 14-17) No soul has even been saved apart from hearing and understanding the Gospel.

Now, let us try and determine contextually how it was that *by all means* Paul endeavored to save some. Paul’s was a varied life and ministry. He was a Jew by birth, yet he was the Apostle to the Gentiles. Himself a scholar, he was well able to deal with rabbis and philosophers, yet he delighted to minister the Gospel to the rudest barbarians.

In this passage (Vs. 20-22), Paul mentions three instances of his ministerial pliancy and adaptability. **First**, to the Jews he was a Jew. He openly honored the divine law given to Moses, and in certain circumstances even after his conversion, observed the ceremonies of the nation. This he could do in all good conscience, and without violating his Christian profession. Since the ceremonial law died with Christ, (Eph. 2: 15,16; Col. 2:14ff) Christians were not obliged to the performance of it; but it pleased God for a time to indulge the Jews in the observance of those rites until they could fully see their liberty with which Christ had made them free. Paul used this allowance to good advantage in reaching the Jews. To those that were under the law, he became as one under the law. This he did not because there was any merit in it, but so that he might gain the Jews, i.e. bring them to faith in Christ. (Examples: Acts 16:3; 21: 23-26)

Second, to those without the law, outside of its pale and regimen, he becomes as one with them. “*Without the law*” refers not to the moral law. The Jews were given a judicial law to guide them in matters of civil justice; and also a ceremonial law to guide them in matters of worship until Christ should come. So the term *anomie* here is not referring to a condition like unto those who live without regard to the laws of God or men. Paul never became an *antinomian* in order to win transgressors of the law. Paul’s differences with Gentiles [were] not due to his Jewishness. The wall of partition (the ceremonial law) had been removed. When he stood in the midst of the Areopagus (Acts 17: 22ff) he was aware of their *devotions*. He acknowledged how *very religious* they were. He even acknowledges that in a certain but very deficient and depraved sense, they were *God-fearing*. He perceived that they were *hos deisidainmonesteros*. (From *deido*, to fear, and *diamon*, deity) He would soon expose what their great error was, and declare to them the one true and living God. He achieved his purpose in that some of those idolaters were converted to Christ. As a means to reach them he spoke not to them as Jew to Gentile, but as creature to fellow creature; as one who knew the true God to

those who still worshipped in ignorance, May we be so wise as he, so that we might bring vain searchers out of their ignorance and to the true and living God.

Third, to the weak, Paul became as weak. In the preceding chapter, he had shown his consideration and condescension in refraining from eating meat that had been offered to idols. He was aware that those who objected did so because of a weak conscience; nevertheless for sake of their weakness, he became as weak, and did not eat. He practiced what he preached. He walked charitably and followed after the things which make for peace. (Rom. 14: 15, 19)

The aim which the Apostle set before him was one which justified the use of the means which he described. He did what he did for sake of the Gospel and the saving of souls. If he refused maintenance, which was his right to receive, it was so that he might more effectively preach the Gospel. (Vs. 14-19) Though he was *free*, yet he made himself a *slave* for sake of those whose salvation he sought. Thus, he made himself all things to all men that he might be the means of their salvation.

A. (Dr. Crampton) When the Apostle Paul speaks of desiring that some be saved “by all means,” he is saying that he would use all lawful (i.e., Biblically based) means to “gain some” for Christ. He is not referring to any compromise of the truth of God’s Word. As stated by Matthew Henry: Paul “would not sin against God to save the soul of his neighbor, but he would cheerfully and readily deny himself. The rights of God he could not give up, but he might resign his own [rights], and very often did so for the good of others.”

Q. Why did the Apostle Paul reject the oratorical methods of Greek philosophy and culture to attract the Corinthians to the gospel message? (1 Corinthians 2:1-5)

A. (Dr. Crampton) Paul was not opposed to “oratorical” skills in speaking (e.g., we read in Acts 18:24 that Paul’s fellow minister Apollos was a very gifted speaker). What Paul opposed was compromising the teaching of the Word of God to attract persons with the Gospel message. The Apostle’s message was only and always grounded in the truth of God’s infallible revelation. He wanted the Corinthians to have their faith founded, not on oratorical skilled sermons, but on the message of the cross work of Jesus Christ as taught in Holy Scripture. When he gathered the elders from Ephesus Paul told them that he was “*innocent of the blood of all men for I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God*” (Acts 20:26-27). When he “*reasoned with them [the Jews]*” of Thessalonica he did so “*from the Scriptures*” (Acts 17:2). Wherever Greek philosophy and culture would differ from the teachings of the Word of God, Paul would reject them outright.

A. (Tom Henry) In these verses (I Cor. 2; 1-5) Paul continues his defense of his mode of preaching. Although men of all stripes counted the preaching of the cross to be *offensive* and *foolish* (Ch. 1:23), God had purposed to save men, not by the methods of human wisdom, but by the preaching of the Gospel. Therefore, Paul is here showing that he was acting upon the principles which he had set forth in the first chapter (Ch. 1: 26-28). When Paul came to Corinth from Athens, he came not as an orator nor as a philosopher, but simply as a *witness*. (Ch. 2: 1, 2) He had no confidence in himself, but relied exclusively on the *demonstration*

of the Spirit and power for his success. (Vs. 3, 4) The true basis of saving faith is not *reason*, but the *testimony of God*. (Vs. 1, 5)

Although what Paul preached was not *the wisdom of men*, it was indeed the *wisdom of God*. As such, it was not discoverable by human reason. (Vs. 6-9) The revealer of this divine wisdom is the Holy Spirit, because He alone knows the *secret things* of God. (Vs. 10-12) He, therefore, in the communication of this knowledge which is derived by the Holy Spirit, used words taught by the Spirit. (Vs. 13) Even still, the knowledge that was communicated was not received by the natural man, because the things of the Spirit can be discerned only by the spiritual. (Vs. 14-16)

Paul's preaching was, therefore, not according to man's wisdom, nor was it done in self-confidence. He refused all means that might have appealed to the flesh, or that could be gratifying to his own flesh. It was not that he could not have waxed eloquent, or dazzled the Corinthians with his knowledge. He rather determined not to employ such flesh-pleasing methods. Like Daniel in Babylon, he *purposed in his heart* that he would not be compromised for sake of being accepted. Neither would he try to dress up the plain Gospel message in order to make it acceptable to men.

Chapter two begins, "And I," i.e. "accordingly I...came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom." What he here says is predicated on what he had been saying in the preceding chapter. In accordance with the clearly revealed purpose of God to reject the wisdom of the world, and to make the plain preaching of the cross the means of bringing to nothing human wisdom in the saving of sinners, Paul came to Corinth with this stated mind-set. "Excellency of speech or of wisdom." Since *speech* (logos) and *wisdom* (sophia) are distinguished, the former likely refers to his *manner*, and the latter to the *matter* of his preaching. It was neither as a rhetorician or a philosopher that he appeared among them. He is not merely saying that he refrained from high sounding rhetoric in preaching the Gospel. He is saying that what he declared was not the *wisdom of men*, but the *testimony of God*. Notice, by staying with the only true foundation for faith, those to whom faith came by the Holy Spirit found it to be *the power and wisdom of God*. (Ch. 1: 23, 24)

Paul's one theme was "Jesus Christ and Him crucified." His only design in coming to Corinth was to preach Christ; and Christ not as a *teacher*, or an *example*, or a *perfect man*. All of that would have been mere philosophy. He preached Christ *crucified*, i.e. dying for sinners, as a propitiation for sin. "Jesus Christ" refers to His *person*; and "Him crucified" refers to His *work*. This constitutes the sum of the Gospel.

The emphasis here should not be on the *simplicity* or the *narrowness* of his message. It should rather be on the contrast between *man's wisdom*, which exalts rhetoric and philosophy, and *God's wisdom*, as revealed in the *preaching of the cross*, which man's wisdom calls *foolishness*.

The Apostle came not among them with an attitude of self-sufficiency and self-reliance. "I was with you in weakness and in fear, and in much trembling." (Vs. 3) The weakness of which he was speaking was not *bodily* weakness, although he did speak of it elsewhere. (II Cor. 10:10; Gal. 4:4) The whole context shows that he refers to a state of mind. It was not in the consciousness of strength and self-confidence that he was with them, but as oppressed with a sense of weakness and insufficiency. He saw his

work as far above any powers he possessed in himself. He well knew that something more than human genius and intellectual powers and powers of persuasion is necessary for success in the ministry of the Gospel. Much of what is thought to be successful today is the result of nothing more than man's ability to persuade the intellect, and motivate and move people emotionally. There is no "*demonstration of the Spirit and of power*," nor is it required, though He is often credited with what is done. In Paul's case his *speech* (general communications) and his *preaching* (public discoursing) were not with *oratorical persuasion* and *high argument*, but with the powerful demonstration of the Spirit. Human devices can never produce this essential element.

Paul could have persuasively argued the case for the superiority of Christianity over the heathen religion. He could have shown its divine origin by proof of prophecy and miracles. He could have shown historical proof of Christianity. This is all good, but *rational persuasion* is not saving faith. The only preaching that can produce true faith is that which clearly sets forth the person and work of Jesus Christ. May we never abandon the preaching "Jesus Christ and Him crucified" for sake of making Christianity *acceptable* to men.

Q. Are those called the "New Calvinists" employing practices fundamentally different from the Biblical pattern? If so, what dangers could this pose for the future?

A. (Tom Henry) I must confess up front that in addressing this question about the practices of the "New Calvinists" I cannot speak from the standpoint of up-close and personal observation. However, from what I have learned from many reliable sources, including those who call themselves *New Calvinists*, I would have to say that their style of worship does not fit the biblical mold. Unless one can imagine that in the apostolic church's there was a mixing of the world's sensation-stirring, flesh-pleasing forms of entertainment with the holy solemnities of divine worship, he must conclude that their worship practice is fundamentally different from the biblical pattern, i.e. that which we find in the New Testament. By *biblical pattern*, we are not suggesting that it is specified anywhere in the New Testament exactly how their assemblies were ordered and conducted. This allows for a certain degree of liberty, for which we are glad. Yet, taking the New Testament teachings over-all, we learn a great deal about what their assemblies involved. They came together for the breaking of bread; for the ministry of the Word; for the singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; for prayer and supplication in the Spirit. We know that in their gatherings the preeminence was given to the preaching of the Word. Knowing from what and to what these believers had been called, and knowing what was required of them upon their profession, one can hardly believe that what was forbidden them in daily life was encouraged and practiced in the assembly. Consider how many times our Lord, and those He chose to be the penmen of the New Testament, reminded Christians of their holy calling, and that the things of their old life were passed away. They were no longer to walk in the follies and harmful vanities of their former existence, for the reason that *they had not so learned Christ*. (Eph. 4:20) They now had new hearts with new desires. They were new creatures with new pursuits. Can we imagine, therefore, that their gatherings would include elements of their past life of sin? Many were saved out of heathen religions, and in many cases knew from experience the kind of sway that certain sensation-stirring music could have over them.

Believers are no longer in the flesh, but in the Spirit. When we were dead in sin we had our existence in the lusts of our flesh, but now being quickened together with Christ, our affection is set on things above, and we must proceed to mortify the deeds of the flesh. We are to walk honestly as in the day, and *make not provision for our flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof*. This commandment alone ought to be enough to disallow the use of flesh-gratifying music in the assembly. Yet, even among those who believe in Sovereign Grace, there is the unseemly mixture of Calvinistic Doctrine with emotionally charged “worship,” motivated by high decibel, rhythmic music – thunderous music with “Christian hip-hop” and “Christian rap” lyrics.

Regardless of the lyrics, the music itself, according to the testimony of converted rock artists, is written and arranged to set mood, stir emotions, break down natural resistances, create sensual feelings, etc. According to the biblical pattern, it is **truth itself** that inspires and directs believers in true worship. We worship God **“in spirit and in truth.”** (John 4: 25) True worship, therefore is not physical or fleshly, but rather, spiritual and hearty. It is not according to our whims, but rather, in truth.

Are the “New Calvinists” really new? I remember how stunned I was a number of years ago when reportedly great numbers of Pentecostals and Charismatics were coming to embrace Calvinistic theology. Shocked as I was, I was also thrilled over what I was hearing. However, I soon came to realize that while many of them were embracing the Doctrines of Grace (intellectually at least), their practices and style of worship, in most cases, had remained pretty much the same as before -- loud, lively, highly emotional, physically moving, sensational, etc. Having had many discussions with friends and relatives who are of the Pentecostal persuasion, I had come to realize that *experience* rather than *truth* seems to carry the most weight. When you add in the fact that they believe in special and extra-biblical revelation through various supernatural media, clearly you have a problem. Needless to say, if we have no completed, established revelation of divine truth, which is our unchanging standard for **faith** and **practice**; if experience trumps revealed truth; if we, as it were, *fly by the seat of our pants*; if experience has no authority to which it answers but itself, then true biblical worship is easily lost in the fog. This is a dangerous road to travel. When people decide that they can worship God however they please, we have to wonder what will next *please* them. They have the *bands* and the *music*, and in some cases, the psychedelic lights and visual effects; perhaps someone will decide to enhance his enjoyment with the use of drugs. It may be only a matter of time.

We must ever worship God in **spirit** and **truth**. What is it to worship *God in spirit and in truth*? When Jesus spoke these words to the woman at the well, to worship “in spirit” was set in contrast to the fleshly rites and imposing ceremonies of Judaism. To worship “in truth” stood opposed to the superstitions and idolatrous delusions of the heathen. To worship God “in spirit and in truth,” therefore, stands opposed to a carnal worship, which is external and spectacular. It excludes all worshipping God with the senses. As A. W. Pink wrote, *“To worship in spirit and in truth bars out all soulical worship. The soul is the seat of the emotions, and very much of the so-called worship of the present day is only soulical.”* He continues, *“True worship is the adoration of a redeemed people occupied with God Himself.”* One reason we love the blessed God-exalting Doctrines of Grace is that they turn our focus away from ourselves and toward God alone. When these truths are embraced

not with the head merely, but with the heart, our worship will no longer be **experience oriented** and therefore **self-centered**, but rather **truth oriented** and therefore **God-centered**.

(Dr. Crampton) In the opinion of this writer, yes they are (see above under the Biblical view of worship). The “New Calvinists” have many good things to say. They proclaim many of the truths of the Reformed faith. For this they are to be applauded. The problem is where they go astray from such truths, “employing practices fundamentally different from the Biblical pattern.” Any deviation from the Biblical pattern, wherein the influence of the world is allowed to take precedence over the Word of God is without warrant. Paul warns the elders from Ephesus that *“from among yourselves men will up, speaking perverse things”* (Acts 20:30). To avoid such deviations the Bible must be recognized as foundational in every area of life. The all sufficiency of Scripture thoroughly equips us for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17). The Bible has a systematic monopoly on the truth.

Q. Does incorporating the world’s base culture violate the Scriptural command to be separate from the world? And if so how?

A. (Dr. Crampton) The short answer to this question is “yes,” incorporating the world’s base culture does violate the teachings of the Bible regarding being “separate from the world.” But to expand on this, Christians live in the world, and they are surrounded by a worldly culture. This is not sinful. As Paul says in 1 Corinthians 5, we are under necessity to associate with many immoral people in this world. The issue is one of letting the milieu of an ungodly culture invade the church with its teachings. This must be avoided at all costs. Martin Luther properly stated that we are called on to be “in” the world, but we are not to be “of” the world. In Revelation 2-3 we see that the problem with the “seven” churches addressed by Jesus Christ (with the exceptions of the churches at Smyrna and Philadelphia) is that they had allowed the cultural dictates of the world to permeate the church, rather than the teaching of Biblical principles by the church to permeate the world. A little leaven can leaven the whole loaf (1 Corinthians 5:6; Galatians 5:9). We are told in Matthew 16:18 that *“the gates of Hades shall not prevail”* against the church of Jesus Christ. And in the Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20 we read that *“all authority in heaven and earth”* has been given to the resurrected Christ. The church, therefore, is to *“make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I [Christ] have commanded you; and lo I [Christ] will be with you always, even to the end of the age.”* Such a commission disallows any compromise with Biblical principles. The church has its marching orders from her King. She must carry out her commission in accordance with His Word.

A. (Tom Henry) Concerning the *pure religion and undefiled before God*, i.e. the true Christian faith, God has categorically rejected any contributions from the world and its culture. In the very presentation of the Gospel to sinners Paul disallowed himself the use of such words as the skill of rhetoricians would suggest, neither did he use such as his own mind, uninfluenced by the Holy Spirit of God, suggested. The words used were taught by the Holy Ghost. (I Cor. 2: 12, 13) He and his faith were despised by the world because it neither adopted nor catered to its wisdom and culture. This is clearly seen in many places, but it is a point made most emphatically in the first two chapters of I Corinthians.

He then, in his second letter to the Corinthians, commands, “*Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing.*” (II Cor. 6:17) Since this command is prefaced with “Wherefore,” we can learn the *wherefore* of the command to be separate by considering what goes before, namely: “*What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hat Christ with Belial? And what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the Temple of God with idols?*” (II Cor. 6: 14-16) What point is the Apostle making by these rhetorical questions if it is not that there can be no yoking together of these two opposite cultures – one being that of the Church, and the other of the world?

John says, “*All that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life.*” (I John 2:16) This, he says, is *not of the Father, but is of the world.* To those who will forsake the world God says, “*I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters.*” (II Cor. 6: 17,18) To try and blend the base culture of this age with our Christian religion is clearly a betrayal of the Christian profession, for *if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* Jesus prayed for those whom the Father had given Him out of the world, saying, “*they are not of the world even as I am not of the world.*” He prayed for His own that they might be *kept from the evil one.* (John 17: 14,15) *The evil one* is the *prince of this world*, whose course we walked in time past, fulfilling the desire of our flesh and of our minds when we were *by nature children of wrath.* But, we have now been quickened together with Christ. (Eph. 2: 1-5) Our affection is now to be set on things above. (Eph. 2:6; Col. 3: 1-3) It seems that it ought to be the goal of every believer in Christ *not to be conformed to this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds.* This is an absolute necessity, since *to be carnally minded is death.* (Rom. 8:6)

God has ever insisted that His people be a separated people, lest they imbibe the base culture of the heathens. When they do not maintain their separation, the consequences can be severe. The first record we have in Scripture of such a violation is in Genesis Chapter 6. The sons of God married the daughters of men. God’s seed and the devil’s seed were yoked together in marriage. This intermarrying became epidemic. As is ever the case, the world’s culture became dominant and prevailed. The good were dragged down by the bad. The evil became so wide spread and intense that God in judgment destroyed the world with a flood. Let not Christians marry unbelievers thinking they will reform them. More often than not the scenario plays out just the opposite.

When God called Abraham, of whose seed He would raise up a nation of people for Himself, he demanded that he come out of Ur

of the Chaldees, and separate himself from his former life of idolatry and from that heathen culture. When the Lord had multiplied Abraham’s seed in Egypt, He called Moses to lead them. Moses had to make a conscious choice to separate himself from the culture of Egypt. Even though it meant turning his back on nobility and riches, he chose instead the reproach of Christ, and the afflictions of God’s people. (Heb. 11: 24-26)

Having brought His people out of Egypt, the Lord hedged them in by giving to them a set of laws by which they would be sanctified unto Himself, and kept separate from the world. He even gave them strict dietary laws, the keeping of which made it virtually impossible to socialize with the heathen about them, thus guarding them against adopting their cultural habits. That nation sets forth in type the Church of Jesus Christ. To the Church He says “*Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people.*” (I Pet. 1:9) Christ gave Himself for us that He might *redeem us...and purify unto Himself a peculiar people,* i.e. a people for Himself and only for Himself, which He will not share with another. (Tit. 2:14)

In Deuteronomy 22, verse 9-11, God had stated clearly His rules of separation. “*Thou shall not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds: lest the fruit of thy seed which thou has sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard be defiled. Thou shalt not plough with an ox and an ass together. Thou shalt not wear divers sorts as of woolen and linen together.*” The mixed seed speaks of mixed teachings. The mixing of the ox and ass speaks of mixed service and worship. The mixing of wool and linen speaks of mixed conduct and all matters external.

The message of Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy is that God is a Holy God, and demands a holy and separated people. By forbidding the intermingling of seeds, and animals, and garments, God teaches us the great eternal truth of sanctification. “*No man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*” (Matt. 6: 24)

The infusion of the world’s base culture into the Church is a master stroke of the enemy. In the protoevangelium of Genesis 3:15 we see the conflict of the ages, between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. We must not be ignorant of Satan’s devices. (II Cor. 2:11) His “devices” are his “stratagems.” His overt attacks are not so threatening to the church as his stealth infiltrations. If Satan can introduce the world’s base culture into the Church, whether it be by rock music or inappropriate dress, or any other of its characteristic features, his diabolical strategy will have served him well. But, I am convinced that the Church will not be well served in the process.



The Mission Quilt Ministry began under the leadership of Trevor Johnson 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.

Available Quilts may be viewed on the web:

www.flickr.com/photos/mission_quilt

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

Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship



Sovereign Grace Bible Conference June 19-21, 2012 Calvary Baptist Church, Pine Bluff, Arkansas Warner Worthan, Pastor

For information on speakers, scheduling, lodging and directions, contact Pastor Worthan at 870 395-1153.

www.calvarybaptistpinebluff.com

Annual Meeting of the Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship Tuesday, September 11, 2012

This Year's Host Church: Bridgetown Baptist Church, Nesbit, Mississippi Larry Dean, pastor

Pastor Larry Dean and Bridgetown Baptist Church invite you to attend this 11th anniversary meeting of the SGBF. The Fellowship was officially formed on September 11, 2001. The stated purpose of the SGBF is:

“To establish and maintain a Fellowship of Baptist pastors and churches which believe that salvation rests ultimately in the sovereign grace of God; to provide a medium for fellowship and mutual encouragement so that such pastors and churches may be edified in love and grace; to cooperate together in the carrying out of the Great Commission in those areas that cannot well be accomplished alone, namely world missions, church planting, and the education of aspiring, God-called ministers; and to assist one another in the maintenance and promotion of sound biblical doctrine and practice in ways deemed necessary and right in the honest light of Holy Scripture.”

The annual meeting is to be held in conjunction with a Bible Conference with services to be held both in the morning and in the evening. The SGBF business meeting will be held in the afternoon, following a noon meal at the church building.

More information will become available, as to lodging, meals, service times, etc. Contact Pastor Larry Dean for particulars.

**Phone: (662) 449-6000, email: larrywdean@aol.com
www.bridgetownbaptist.org**

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:

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