

The Biblical Examiner

Seeking first the Kingdom of God and its Advancement

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Temptation

God's good and perfect gift,

James 1:13 "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: 14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."

Maybe you all have grasped what James meant by the above words, but they only made sense to me recently as I have studied through James. I found the meaning of the above encouraging enough to share in this issue of the Examiner.

Evidently, James heard a lot of what his half-brother preached. He has many similarities with Christ, e.g., Matthew 7:7 and James 1:5.

Contrary to modern fluffy and empty theology, James' concern is with the true Israel of God, the Kingdom of God, the Law of God, Christ's lordship and the necessity of true faith, along with true works of the Spirit.

As has been pointed out by many, James carefully traces speech to its origin in man's heart. (He deals with gossip in chapter 3.) James insists that speech reveals who we are and what we are, for "faith without works is dead", 2:20. (1 Cor. 15:34.) Practicing what he taught cost James his life.

James destroys the modern mental health myth, as he tells us that man's problem is his double mind, which makes him unstable in all his ways, 1:8. (2 Cor. 10:1-6, Eph. 6:12.) Modern "mental health professionals", or the medical-industrial complex, would never admit the problem could be spiritual and the control of the mind the answer. Nor do we really want to hear that God's answer might be right. Even the vast majority of Christian counselors have bought into the world's antichristian attitude toward mental health. They will

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recommend about anything except what is really needed — Godly "Thought Control".

James assumes without question or argument the Lordship of Jesus Christ. His Lordship is not open to question nor debate. Also, James, as did his brother Jude, assumes the complete unity with the Old Testament. The Lordship of Jesus Christ and the revealed Old Testament Scriptures are seen as a unit and assumed to be one throughout his letter. Accordingly, the works James talks about are works according to the law and commandments.

James addresses all Israel in the name of King Jesus. James, along with Paul, unites the new Israel of

God with the true ancient Israel of God, which was also by faith. Christ destroyed the wall of partition between the Old and New nation of Israel, and they were united as one in Christ. National Israel of old was completely erased from world history in A.D. 70. (Eph. 2:14.) Yet there are those, even Christians, who believe that old Israel still exists--Christ Himself is the true Israel of God. (Isa. 49:3.)

I have read through the Bible a good number of times, and have seriously studied it for many thousands of hours. But this is the first time I have understood vv. 13 and 14. The following may be old news to you, but I found it to be a blessing worth sharing. We will skip down through chapter 1 to v. 12,

V. 12, "Blessed is the man..." James pronounces a beatitude, or a blessings on all who retain their integrity in the midst of temptations and trials:

Job 2:3 "And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause. 9 Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou

still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die. 10 But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips."

Job's wife told him to lay aside his integrity (uprightness, or undivided trust and confidence in the Lord), "curse God and die." Job's answer, you speak as a foolish woman". And "In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly." (V. 22.)

James 1:12 gives a beatitude, or blessing for retaining our integrity in the midst of temptation. In 5:11, James uses the endurance of Job as an example of retaining integrity in the midst of the most trying circumstances Satan could bring about short of death: "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."

Job retains his Godly integrity regardless of Satan's best efforts to break him.

The promised reward for enduring trials and temptations is the "crown of life." God's gift to those who endure is fullness of joy here and eternal life now and forever. Psalms 16:11. (Was Job joyfully thinking of life here and eternal life hereafter on the ash pile while he endured great temptation to "curse God and die"?)

As my wife and I read through the book of Job, we were reminded of Job's many tremendous statements of his faith in his Redeemer. We cannot get this close, and not preach the gospel from Job.

Remember, he is speaking in the time frame of Abraham, a few hundred years after the flood. He speaks of events that would not take place for another 2,000 years. He speaks as though those events had taken place just a short time previously. We speak of the same events though history tells us they took place 2,000 years ago.

Job 19:23 "Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! 24 That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! 25 For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: 26 And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: 27 Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."

It was clearly revealed to Job that through faith in the coming Redeemer, his physical body would be resurrected, and he would literally see God with his own eyes. Job was sitting on the ash pile (in the

most horrible circumstances Satan himself could bring about), scraping his sores when he spoke of his undying confidence: He certainly was not double-minded. His sustaining hope in the midst of his terrible circumstances was the same hope we have, i.e., "in my flesh I shall see God."

Hebrews 6:17 "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: 18 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, he might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: 19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;"

The gospel of Christ could not be plainer than what Job preached while in the clutches of Satan, saying, "I know that my redeemer liveth..."

Furthermore, it was over 500 years before Moses that Job said,

Job 23:8 "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: 9 On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him: 10 But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. 11 My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and not declined. 12 Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food. 13 ¶ But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. 14 For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him. 15 Therefore am I troubled at his presence: when I consider, I am afraid of him. 16 For God maketh my heart soft, and the Almighty troubleth me: 17 Because I was not cut off before the darkness, neither hath he covered the darkness from my face."

Did not Peter quote Job, "when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (and he did), when Peter said that "the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 1:7.)

Over 1500 years before Peter and James, Job made it clear that God is the One Who ordains our steps—the refining fire of adversity in our lives. The clearly stated purpose of the refining fires of adversity is to the praise, honour and glory of Jesus Christ, and our well being in Him.

It seems that David also knew the book of Job, for

many of his psalms say the same things Job said a thousand years previously.

In 1:12, James speaks a beatitude. The beatitudes of the Bible are not intended to be comforting thoughts. Rather, the beatitudes are promises from God of the results of certain stands and actions on our part. A beatitude is thus an assurance of God's faithfulness to those who maintain their Christian "integrity" in their hour of temptation and tribulation.

Again, Job is an example of James' beatitude or benediction:

Job 42:12 "So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses."

Job had been the richest man of the East. Then in one day, his riches and his dearly loved children took wings and departed. (Pro. 23:5.) Nevertheless, Job retained his integrity, and did not charge God foolishly. "Blessed is the man that endureth...". Job endured, and God's blessings were abundantly bestowed upon Job, as God doubled his possessions and family.

◇ PSALMS ONE

"1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. 2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

James does not promise material prosperity, but he does promise God's blessings. Our greatest blessing is the "crown of life", as well as seeing our children walking in the ways of the Lord.

We now come to vv. 13 & 14 where James gives the contrast or difference between trials or testings of our faith, and the temptation to sin. Temptation is the urge to stray from the narrow road, and take the appealing broad road to destruction: that is, commit sin as defined in James (2:9, 11) and John (1 John 3:4).

V. 13, God sends the temptations and trials our way for a purpose, as we saw above in v. 12 & 1 Peter 1:7.

God has given man freedom to do good or evil, and man is to use that freedom for good in order to inherit the blessings of God. But the sinful nature and lusts use that freedom for sin, which brings the judgment of God.

V. 14, "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." James told us in v. 12 that those temptations and trials are meant to promote holiness in us to the glory of God. But the sin

nature, evidenced in our own lusts, influences us to do evil rather than good.

We are assured many times over that the New Birth gives a New Nature, yet the Old Nature is a powerful foe. Sinlessness is an attribute of the Son of God, for He came into this world without that sin nature, so He could pay the price of the sins of His people, and to free them from the power of sin. ("For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." 1 John 3:8.) So in our God-given freedom, we choose sin, making us responsible for our own sins.

James makes no reference to the devil, making it clear that there is no moral ground for blaming the devil. "The devil did not make me do it." Whatever part other persons or even the devil might play, we ourselves are responsible for our own sins. We can blame no one but ourselves, not God, man nor devil. The sin of Adam and Eve was not only to succumb to temptation, but also to reject responsibility, and blame God, the devil, and others.

V. 15 speaks of desire, which leads to conception, which leads to the birth of sin, and then sin brings forth or gives birth to death. Sin and death are the normal direction of the old man, but we have the new nature, created in righteousness and holiness. (Eph. 4:24, Rom. 6:19.)

James continues with vv. 16-18 by telling us that temptations and trials are only for the good of the Elect; their purpose is to promote holiness in us and for the glory to God, not to lead us into sin.

With the words, do not err, we are warned against blaming God for our sin.

James tells us that God's gift to us is always good and perfect. God is the father of lights, not of darkness, and with Him there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. All other things change and are variable, but not so God. He is the unchanging and changeless One who is always the same yesterday, and today, and for ever (Mal. 3:6, Heb. 13:8).

V. 12, trials and temptations are meant to promote holiness, to bring God's blessings upon us and to bring us more into the likeness of Christ. James identifies those trials and temptations as good and perfect gifts from above because with them come His blessings and His victorious grace so we can obtain those blessings. (1 Cor. 10:13.)

God is the author of all good things in men, and men are the authors of those things which are evil.

Finally, v. 18 “of his own will” reminds us of Divine Providence in the lives of the Elect: Job 23:14 “For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him.”

James again reminds us of the law by mentioning the firstfruits. The first of the harvest belonged to God, and were to be dedicated to Him for His use. His people in Christ are likened to those firstfruits of the harvest. That is, God begat us to new life in Christ. He brought us forth, or created us, that, like the firstfruits, we should be dedicated and consecrated to His service.

This consecration to His service comes through the maturity of enduring temptation through the power of the risen Christ, v. 12.

1 Corinthians 15:20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. 23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

James gives us the origin and birth of sin, and sin starts with lust for unholy things, and the final result is death. Then he takes us to the origin and birth into new life. Of his own will... The new birth starts in mind of a Sovereign, Electing God. Then through the word of truth, the new birth takes place, with the final result of life in Christ.

The authors of both James and Hebrews call for a decision between the Old Israel with its rites and rituals of the physical Temple of the past, and the New Israel of God, the Elect. The Temple offered no indwelling Spirit of God to make a new creation in Christ. The new Israel of God make a new man in Christ; a man who can see God's hand in everything, and see His purpose in all things, and that purpose is always good and perfect, and for the well-being of His own people.

The historical crisis in the first century church as confronted in Hebrews and in James is presented as a moral crisis. The choice is between being double-minded and unstable, or strong and single-minded in allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ (1:1; 2:1). This is ever the choice, from James' day to our own.

Acts 9:5, “it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.”

“Pricks” ... commonly means an ox-goad, a sharp piece of iron stuck into the end of a stick, with which the ox is urged on. These goads, among the Hebrews, were made very large. ...The expression, “to kick against the prick,” or the goad, is derived from the action of a stubborn and unyielding ox, kicking against the goad. And as the ox would injure no one by it but himself — as he would gain nothing — it comes to denote an obstinate and refractory

disposition and course of conduct, opposing motives to good conduct; resisting the authority of Him who has a right to command; and opposing the leadings of Providence, to the injury of him who makes the resistance. It denotes rebellion against lawful authority, and thus getting into greater difficulty by attempting to oppose the commands to duty. This is the condition of every sinner.

If men wish to be happy, they should cheerfully submit to the authority of God. They should not rebel against the dealings of Providence. They should not murmur against their Creator. They should not resist the claims of their consciences. By all this they would only injure themselves. No man can resist God, or his own conscience, and be happy. And nothing is more difficult than for a man to pursue a course of pleasure and sin against the admonitions of God and the reproofs of his own conscience. Men evince this temper in the following ways:

1. By violating plain laws of God.
2. By attempting to resist his claims.
3. By refusing to do what their conscience requires.
4. By grieving the Holy Spirit, by attempting to free themselves from serious impressions and alarms. They will return with redoubled frequency and power.
5. By pursuing a course of vice and wickedness against what they know to be right.
6. By refusing to submit to the dealings of Providence, And
7. in any way by opposing God, and refusing to submit to his authority, and to do what is right.

(Barnes' Notes)

◇ CONCLUSION:

How many Christians have fallen into the pit of despair because of their circumstances? How many of us have allowed the temptations that were meant for our good to draw us into sin, and then we blame God for our failure?

James teaches us that everything that comes our way is God's good and perfect plan for our lives, and they are meant to bring honor and glory to His Dear Son, and to bring His blessings upon His Elect, v. 12.

Job 23:14 “For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him.”

James 5:11 “Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.”

[My studies in Jude and James will be posted as soon as I have time at biblicalexaminer.org, in commentaries. I am in James 4 now.]

Is It “Anti-Faith” To Prepare For The Coming Economic Collapse?

By Michael Syder, 7/5/13

Does being a prepper show a lack of faith in God? Should good Christians reject prepping altogether? Yesterday, someone actually accused me of being “anti-faith” because I am encouraging people to prepare for the coming economic collapse. This person believes that if I had faith, then I would make “no provision” for what is ahead and simply trust “in God’s providence alone”. So is that person right? Is it really “anti-faith” to prepare for the coming economic collapse? I spent quite a bit of time thinking about these questions today.

Those that visit my site on a regular basis know that I am a Christian and I am very open about that fact. I am someone that places a very high value on faith. The Scriptures tell us to “trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding”. Without God, none of us has any hope. In fact, without God I would probably be dead by now.

But faith is not about sitting on your couch and waiting for God to do everything for you. Rather, faith is about taking action on what God has directed you to do.

What I don’t understand is why any of these Christians that are 100% against prepping continue to go to work. If we are to make “no provision” for ourselves and simply trust “in God’s providence alone”, then why do they need to earn a paycheck? Why can’t they just sit home and wait for God to fill up their bank accounts?

Yes, God can do mind blowing supernatural things that require absolutely no participation on our part. I know, because it has happened to me. But the vast majority of the time, God works with us. He requires us to take steps of faith and obedience, and in the process He leads us, He guides us, He blesses us and He opens doors for us.

The story of Noah is a perfect example of this. He was perhaps the very first “prepper”. God could have kept Noah and his family safe from the flood by transporting them to some sort of very comfortable “heavenly waiting area” and brought them back when everything was dry, but He didn’t do that. Instead, God warned Noah about what was coming and ordered him to build a boat.

So did Noah just sit back and wait for God to do everything for Him? No, he exercised his faith by taking action. He believed the warning and he built a giant boat. In Hebrews 11:7, Noah is commended for his radical faith which produced radical action...

By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that is in keeping with faith.

Faith almost always involves action. God wants to see if we are going to believe Him and do what He has instructed us to do.

And the amount of faith that Noah exhibited was staggering. The boat that he and his family built was approximately the size of a World War II aircraft carrier. It took a very, very long time to build that boat and collect all of the food and supplies for his family and for all of the animals.

And surely Noah must have gotten very tired of all of the mocking as he warned everyone else about what was coming for decades.

But in the end, Noah’s prepping paid off. He and his family were saved, and everyone else drowned.

Unfortunately, there are lots of Christians out there today that are 100% against preparing for what is ahead,

even though they will admit that an economic collapse is coming.

The individual that accused me of being “anti-faith” is an example of this. The following is an excerpt from the message that this person wrote to me...

“Now, although I agree with you about the things you write about the corruption of the financial system, and that there will be a collapse, yet I do not agree with you in promoting people to be self-sufficient contrary to the Lord’s teaching. If you truly have God then no provision needs to be made at all for yourself, just trust in God’s providence alone.”

This individual agrees that a collapse is coming, but insists that we should do absolutely nothing to prepare for it.

◇ IS THAT REALLY WHAT GOD WOULD HAVE US DO?

In Genesis 41, God revealed to Joseph that there would be seven good years followed by seven lean years. So did Joseph party for seven years and “trust in God’s providence alone” for the lean years?

No, Joseph engaged in an “emergency food storage project” unlike anything that the world had ever seen up until that point. By heeding God’s warning and taking action, he ended up saving the nation of Egypt and his entire family.

Some people believe that preparing for hard times means that you are “fearful”, but I don’t see it that way

WHEN THY JUDGMENTS ARE IN THE EARTH,
THE INHABITANTS OF THE WORLD WILL
LEARN RIGHTEOUSNESS. ISA. 26:9

at all.

Rather, I believe that there is hope in understanding what is happening and that there is hope in getting prepared.

The people that stick their heads in the sand right now are going to get blindsided by what is coming. Many of them will totally give in to despair when they realize that they have lost everything.

I think that we would all benefit greatly by taking advantage of the wisdom found in Proverbs 6:6-11...

Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise! It has no commander, no overseer or ruler, yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest.

How long will you lie there, you sluggard? When will you get up from your sleep? A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest? and poverty will come on you like a thief and scarcity like an armed man.

You don't prepare when the storm hits. Rather, you prepare while the storm is still off in the distance.

Throughout the Scriptures, those that "prepare" are commended.

For example, just check out the following parable of Jesus that we find in Matthew 25...

"At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. The wise ones, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep.

"At midnight the cry rang out: 'Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!'

"Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. 8 The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.'

"No,' they replied, 'there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.'

"But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut.

"Later the others also came. 'Lord, Lord,' they said, 'open the door for us!'

"But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I don't know you.'

"Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.

Do we want to be like the wise virgins or the foolish virgins?

Yes, we never want to become obsessed with material things. We need to keep our priorities in order and focus

on the things that are really important.

But that doesn't mean that we can all just sit on our couches, eat chips, and wait for God to do everything for us.

In my opinion, we have been (and are being, ed.) warned about the coming economic collapse in a multitude of different ways. At this point, what is coming should be glaringly obvious to anyone with half a brain.

On my site, I have shared thousands upon thousands of facts and statistics that show that a horrific economic collapse is coming. If you are new to all of this, the following are just a couple of articles that can get you started...

- "40 Statistics About The Fall Of The U.S. Economy That Are Almost Too Crazy To Believe" (<http://theeconomiccollapseblog.com/archives/40-statistics-about-the-fall-of-the-u-s-economy-that-are-almost-too-crazy-to-believe>)

- "Show This To Anyone That Believes That Things Are Getting Better In America" (<http://theeconomiccollapseblog.com/archives/show-this-to-anyone-that-believes-that-things-are-getting-better-in-america>)

I am trying to do my best to warn people about what is coming from my little spot on the wall. In the Scriptures, those that are aware that a threat is coming are responsible for warning others about it. The following is a short excerpt from Ezekiel 33...

Son of man, speak to your people and say to them: 'When I bring the sword against a land, and the people of the land choose one of their men and make him their watchman, and he sees the sword coming against the land and blows the trumpet to warn the people, then if anyone hears the trumpet but does not heed the warning and the sword comes and takes their life, their blood will be on their own head. Since they heard the sound of the trumpet but did not heed the warning, their blood will be on their own head. If they had heeded the warning, they would have saved themselves. But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet to warn the people and the sword comes and takes someone's life, that person's life will be taken because of their sin, but I will hold the watchman accountable for their blood.'"

Are you a watchman on the wall?

Are you blowing your trumpet?

That is one of the reasons why I work so hard on my

articles. I hope that people will use them as a tool to help warn others about what is coming.

My goal is never to create fear. Rather, my goal is to wake people up and give them hope.

Yes, very, very painful economic times are coming.

Those that heed the warnings and diligently prepare will have a good chance of weathering the coming storm.

I honestly don't know what those that have made absolutely no preparations are going to do.

<http://theeconomiccollapseblog.com/archives/is-it-really-anti-faith-to-prepare-for-the-coming-economic-collapse>

Defining the Sin of Gossip

By Thomas Williamson

It appears that one of the besetting sins of our Christian society is the sin of gossip. On a regular basis, church members, and sometimes pastors too, are intimidated and humiliated by accusations of having gossiped about someone.

It occurred to me that a useful study would be to define the sin of gossip, so that we as Christians would have the guidance that we need in order to avoid committing this horrid, despicable sin.

My first step in seeking a scriptural definition of "gossip" was to look up the word in Strong's Concordance, so that I could see how the word is used and defined in the Bible. To my surprise, I found that "gossip" is not found in Strong's Concordance, and therefore the word does not appear anywhere in the King James Version of the Bible.

This was not going to be as easy as I thought it would be.

How is it that we make such an issue of the sin of gossip, when there appears to be no mention of that sin in the Bible? Could it be that gossip is not really all that great a sin at all?

◇ COMMIT GOSSIP, GO TO JAIL?

An example of the emphasis on suppressing gossip in the churches is found in a confidentiality agreement that is to be signed by all paid and volunteer workers at Elevation Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, a megachurch pastored by Steve Furtick.

The agreement states, "Whereas, the Scriptures forbid the spreading of gossip, slander and the betraying of confidences (Exodus 23:1, Leviticus 19:16, Proverbs 6:19, 11:13, 16:28, 20:19, Romans 1:30, 1 Corinthians 6:10, 2 Corinthians 12:20 and Titus 2:3)...."

Many of these verses forbid slander, false accusations

and "railing," leaving open the question of whether the passing on of truthful information should be considered "gossip" or forbidden to Christians.

The Elevation Church agreement asks volunteer workers to "acknowledge that my breach of any of the restrictive covenants in this Agreement will result in irreparable damage to the Church. Therefore, in the event of any breach or threatened breach by me, I agree that the Church shall be entitled from a court of competent jurisdiction enjoining me from committing any violation or threatened violation of this Agreement."

What does this mean? Does it mean that a volunteer worker who reveals truthful knowledge of sexual molestation, financial dishonesty or other misdeeds on the part of church leadership is guilty of "gossip" and can be hit with legal penalties?

A commentary on this agreement by the FBC Jax Watchdogs blog states, "This document is basically saying that if the church believes you are disclosing information that THEY think is harmful to the church, that YOU agree to have a judge issue an injunction - which really is a temporary restraining order to stop you from doing what they perceive to be harmful to them. And it is not just that you HAVE disclosed information harmful to them, but if they BELIEVE YOU WILL IN THE FUTURE.

"For example, if you are found to criticize the church publicly, say on the blog or Facebook . . . for any reason you deem worthy of criticism - Furtick and friends may then believe you will disclose other 'confidential information' such as salaries or budgets or future plans of the church. They may also assume that you will use your contacts at the church to spread your 'gossip.' Then they will go to the judge and show the judge that you agreed to have the restraining order issued against you to silence you against further spread of 'confidential information.'

"Notice the agreement . . . includes the 'but is not limited to' phrase - so basically confidential information would mean any non-publicly available information they think would be harmful. This could be information at a business meeting, a personal conversation you have with another member or pastor, etc.

"If you contest this restraining order because you don't want to have a judge order you to be silent, then you will have to hire a lawyer and go to a hearing in a court to argue your side.

"If you lose and the restraining order is issued and you don't comply with the judge's restraining order as a matter of conscience, you may be held in contempt of court and arrested and imprisoned."

The possibility of a church member being jailed

for “gossip” is theoretical and perhaps remote, since it may be hard to find any court anywhere that would enforce this type of agreement. I am not aware of any case law with regard to loose-tongued church members being jailed. Recently a church in Beaverton, Oregon sued a former member and blogger, for accusing the church of abusive practices and child molestation, but the church’s lawsuit was quickly thrown out of court.

◇ GOSSIP IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Now that we have seen the alarming possibilities for negative sanctions against those who commit the sin of gossip, let us attempt to seek out scriptural insight on that subject.

The closest equivalent to “gossip” that I could find in our English Bible is “talebearer,” which appears 6 times in the Old Testament: “Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people,” Leviticus 19:16; “A talebearer revealeth secrets, but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter,” Proverbs 11:13; “The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go-down into the innermost parts of the belly,” Proverbs 18:8; “He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets,” Proverbs 20:19; “Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth,” Proverbs 26:20; and “The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly, Proverbs 26:22, a repeat of Proverbs 18:8.

Two Hebrew words are translated “talebearer:” *nirgan*, “a slanderer or whisperer” per Strong’s, and *rakiyl*, “scandal-monger, slander, carry tales.”

Based on the etymology of the Hebrew words, the word “talebearer” in the Old Testament appears to carry the idea of spreading false information about someone, and does not necessarily refer to truthful testimony about someone’s faults. Based on its usage and context, the “talebearer” is a person who is motivated by desire to stir up strife and hard feelings, and/or who reveals things that were confided to him as secrets.

Does the Old Testament concept of “talebearer” forbid repeating adverse information about someone, on a need-to-know basis? In my opinion, it does not. The Old Testament is full of commands for those who know something bad about someone to repeat what they know.

The Old Testament law required two witnesses for conviction of serious sins, Deuteronomy 17:6-7. Presumably those who testified against wrongdoers were not to be condemned as “talebearers.”

Deuteronomy 13:6-8 orders those who become aware

of religious apostasy to testify to what they know: “If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods . . . Thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him, neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him.”

This is just one of many examples in the Old Testament where those who are aware of wrongdoing are commanded to make known what they know. Without such testimony, the justice system of ancient Israel could not function, nor could today’s justice system work, if witnesses to crime refused to tell what they saw. Presumably such testimony does not come under the condemnation of “talebearing” or “gossip.”

Deuteronomy 19:18 calls for judges to make “diligent inquisition” in cases of controversy that are brought to court. This presupposes that those who have knowledge about the case will speak up.

Exodus 22:10 specifies how to deal with the case of a farm animal that is “hurt, or driven away, no man seeing it.” The assumption here is that any man who “sees” the animal being stolen will speak up about it. That is not “talebearing.”

How should we apply this principle in modern times? If someone applies for membership in our church, and we have knowledge that that person has unresolved problems with immorality or dishonesty that have not been repented of, or a reputation for causing trouble or strife in other churches, is it “gossip” for us to speak up and advise the pastor and congregation of those problems? In my opinion, that would not be “gossip.”

◇ GOSSIP IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

In the New Testament, we find the Apostle Paul listening to, and acting upon, unfavorable reports about church members in Corinth, that might be regarded as “gossip.” In 1 Corinthians 1:11, Paul says, ‘For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.’ Were Chloe and her family guilty of “gossip,” and was Paul guilty of “listening to gossip?”

If Chloe and her family had been members of Elevation Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, they conceivably could have been jailed for revealing “confidential information” that caused “irreparable damage” to the church.

Paul complains in 1 Corinthians 5:1 that “it is

reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife." Should Paul have taken a "hear no evil" attitude and refused to listen to the "gossip" about a good brother in Corinth?

In 1 Corinthians 11:18 Paul comments further on the rumors he had heard about the Corinthians: "For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it." How dare Paul give credence to mere rumors and "gossip" for which he did not have any first-hand information? Paul publicly accused the Corinthians of practicing greed and drunkenness at the Lord's Supper - who authorized him to reveal this damaging "confidential information" about the church?

In 1 Timothy 5:19-20, Paul calls for those who have adverse information, or "dirt," on an elder, to come forward and tell what they know: "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear." Didn't Paul understand that when there are scandals among the church leadership, these things need to be swept under the rug and hushed up "for the good of the ministry?" Apparently Paul did not see it that way.

The closest approach I could find in the New Testament to the concept of "gossip" was in 1 Timothy 5:13, where Paul condemns young widows who "learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not."

The word "tattlers" appears only here in the New Testament. The Greek word is *phluaros*, "a garrulous person, prater," per Strongs. Per Vines, it means "to babble, to prate against." The word would appear to refer to talking about someone with malevolent intent, but this reference does not forbid passing on truthful information about someone's misdeeds, which is something that Paul in the same chapter states that we should do, at least under certain circumstances. (Paul warns against financial support of widows who are unworthy, but how would we know who was unworthy if no one was willing to speak up and tell what they know, for fear of being accused of gossip?)

Matthew Poole's commentary on this verse states, "and to be tattling idly and impertinently, and that not only of their own, but others' concerns, 'and busybodies,' interesting themselves in the matters of other persons and families; 'speaking things which they

ought not,' and in the multitude of words, folly never being wanting, they are prone to speak things which they ought not: from whence we may observe, that nothing more becometh Christians than a gravity and composedness of behaviour and speech, a government of their tongues, and considering beforehand well what they speak."

Matthew Henry comments: "It is seldom that those who are idle are idle only, they learn to be tattlers and busybodies, and to make mischief among neighbours, and sow discord among brethren." The idea behind Paul's condemnation of "tattlers" appears to be that we can be guilty of causing strife or trying to control and bully others, by saying inappropriate things, which in some cases may involve the unnecessary spreading of truthful information about people.

However, this does not constitute a blanket prohibition on all spreading and repeating of truthful and adverse information about people. Was Paul "gossiping" when he warned about Hymenaeus and Alexander in 1 Timothy 1:20, when he criticized Alexander the coppersmith in 1 Timothy 4:14, when he condemned Demas for forsaking him due to his love of this present world, 1 Timothy 4:10?

Was Paul gossiping when he warned about "grievous wolves" in the church, Acts 20:29-30, when he publicly exposed Peter's hypocritical practices in Galatians 2:14, when he warned against "dogs" and evil workers in Philippians 3:2, when he warned against "fools" and ministers of Satan in 2 Corinthians 11:15-20?

"Whisperers" and "whisperings" are criticized in Romans 1:29 and 2 Corinthians 12:20.

The Greek word here is *psithuristes* "a secret calumniator" per Strong's, and referring to "secret slander" per Vines. This reference does not appear to forbid the revealing of truthful information on a need-to-know basis.

Why the Big Emphasis on Stifling "Gossip" in the Churches?

There are times when it is appropriate to pass on adverse information about false brethren, about pastors who have abused their authority or have been guilty of immorality and dishonesty, about churches that are preaching false doctrine. Such exposure of false doctrine and practice is not "gossip," as long as it is truthful.

We need to use good judgment before we reveal adverse information about anyone. There is no need to spread it about that a Christian stole some money 30

years ago, before he was saved, having since repented of that sin and made restitution. But is it “gossip” to reveal that a prospective church member stole money 2 weeks ago and has not made it right or paid the money back? There are some times when inconvenient truths about an individual, or a religious institution, need to be revealed, and that is not necessarily “gossip” or a sin.

All too often, the accusation of “gossip” is used to intimidate and silence those who have knowledge of, and try to sound the alarm against, apostasy and false doctrine, as well as against immorality, abusive leadership and dishonest practices in doctrinally sound churches.

As Christians, we must take a stand against those who bear false witness against their neighbor (Exodus 20:16), who sow discord among the brethren (Proverbs 6:19), accusers of the brethren (Revelation 12:10), railers (1 Corinthians 5:11), perjured persons (1 Timothy 1:10) and slanderers (1 Timothy 3:11).

However, there are times when it is necessary to reveal unsavory truths, and such actions are not necessarily condemned as “gossip” or as any type of sin in the Bible. Before revealing truthful information about anyone, we need to consider whether such divulging of information is helpful or harmful, whether it is really necessary, and what are our motives for revealing such things. The Lord knows our motives and will judge the secret intents of our hearts in a future day of judgment.

Nothing presented in this article is intended to encourage the unnecessary spreading of information that is truthful and yet damaging about believers or churches. As a general rule, based on the Golden Rule, such information should not be spread about.

We should be practitioners of the love that covers a multitude of sins, 1 Peter 4:8, and imitators of the God who does not remember our sins against us, Psalm 79:8.

We should present our spouses and families, our churches and pastors, our religious institutions, and our employers, especially Christian employers, in a positive light, forbearing to dwell on the negative aspects and failings that all of us are guilty of.

However, as we have seen, there are certain situations where it becomes a painful and unpleasant necessity to speak the truth concerning religious leaders and institutions that are abusing their power and influence, taking advantage of believers or leading them into heresy or immorality. Those on whom such a duty falls should not be bullied or intimidated with charges of “gossip.”

Until recently, it was common among some Christian counselors to advise victims of sexual molestation in church or family settings to not report such criminal acts to the police. This policy has changed, in light of state laws requiring such reporting, as well as lurid scandals about church leaders accused of covering up such offenses.

Unless we want people to wonder just what we have to hide, we need to avoid all appearance of trying to intimidate or muzzle those who are witnesses to unchristian behavior in the churches. “At the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established,” Deuteronomy 19:15.

Personal

It seems as though the last month has been spent pretty much on the road.

We met Bettie’s oldest daughter, who lives in Kenya with their 10 children, in Southern Alabama to help her clean out a storage box. That was a week’s trip.

The exciting event since the last mailing was another “deer encounter”. It was our third one. The first one did no damage as she jumped over the car and only dragged a rear foot over the car. Then maybe 3 years ago, a deer hit us in the side of our car: \$6,000 damage, so she totaled the car. Our present car is the replacement for that car, and this time, we hit the deer. \$4000 damage, but did not total the car. (facebook.com/ovid.need) Two observations: If you are on foot, deer flee from you. But in a moving vehicle, they race to see if they can pass in front of the vehicle. Second, the first car only had a little less than 200,000 miles (the clutch had to be replaced, and we were test driving it). This car has a little more miles on it: 205,000 miles. 200,000 seems to be the magic number for us. I wonder what 300,000 will bring.

We went back to the Linden church for the third and last funeral I had promised to do before we left. It was for a wonderful lady who was a charter member of that church started in 1936. I went back almost exactly 30 years after the date I went to the church in 1983. And thus ended my ministry in Linden.

The weather here has been unusually cool, with the lows in the upper 40s and lower 50s, with plenty of rain. The cold weather plants in our garden are doing great, but the tomatoes are not very well at all. Down at lower elevations they have been harvesting beans for some weeks now. Ours are just now starting to produce, and the Purple Hulls are doing very well. It looks like we will need to go to an auction to get some tomatoes.

My brother, Richard, who is 14 months younger, and his wife, Darlene, have returned to the states after about 40 years as missionaries in Brazil. He is a radio technician who kept the radios maintained on airplanes. He stopped by on my 72^{ed} birthday. It was so good to see them.

Some unusual opportunities have presented themselves in our local area. Our small local radio station has sort of a talk show for several hours a day. The “host” is a Baptist pastor whose church is in the other end of another county, and he is quite upset with the Christian indifference about “politics”, which allows the wicked to “rule”. He has asked me if we could do something to encourage Christians to get involved. I hope to be able to get with him about the Christian indifference. It will be an interesting time, I am sure. I also have an opportunity to ride patrol with the new sheriff, as we can work a good time between us. He is a truly committed Christian who faithfully attends a Baptist church on the other side of Moorefield from us. I greatly enjoy the time with him, and it gives us opportunity to share Scripture knowledge, as well as to get to know him. He is a blessing for our small county, as he works to change the local perception of a do-nothing sherrif’s department.

Check facebook.com/hardycountyinformed for our latest endeavor.

You know you are in WV when you read this in the Obituaries:

“Dick was a hunter too. He once shot three wild turkeys with one bullet. Really. He said he could have shot three more, but then everyone would have heard three shots instead of one, and no one would believe his 3-turkey bonanza. This is one of the few times in his life he ever sought recognition of his many amazing deeds.” He owned many hundreds of acres across this Bean Settlement mountain ridge. When he died, he left everything.

Global Warming update.

July 29, 2013, we were thankful for global warming. It was 50°. If it were not for global warming, we would no doubt have had to turn on the heat, and it is far too early for that. It is cold for this time of the year.

This was the headline on Climate Depot, 7/30/13

“1,122 Record Cold Temps in the U.S. in one week”

July in the USA ends on a frigid note as record cold outpaces warmth nearly 10 to 1

71% Of The US Below Normal Temperature in 2013

South America in massive deep freeze

<http://www.climatedepot.com/2013/07/30/1122-record-cold-temps-in-the-u-s-in-one-week/>

<http://www.climatedepot.com/2013/07/30/1122-record-cold-temps-in-the-u-s-in-one-week/>

Unprecedented July Cold – Arctic Sees Shortest Summer On Record

<http://iceagenow.info/2013/08/unprecedented-july-cold-arctic-sees-shortest-summer-record/>

CO2 Nears 400 ppm – Relax! It’s Not Global Warming “End Times” – Climate Depot Special Report: Renowned Climatologist: ‘You can go outside and spit and have the same effect as doubling carbon dioxide’

<http://www.climatedepot.com/2013/05/14/co2-nears-400-ppm-relax-its-not-global-warming-end-times-but-only-a-big-yawn-climate-depot-special-report/>

Fossil fuel – There were two articles in the news last week:

* “Saudi Prince: Fracking is threat to Kingdom”

<http://news.sky.com/story/1121610/saudi-prince-fracking-is-threat-to-kingdom>

And

* “Alwaleed warns of US shale danger to Saudi”.

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/1b6753ce-f86f-11e2-92f0-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2aWWVYXJ1>.

Not counting Alaska, the US has more oil than all the middle-east combined and we could be a net exporter if Washington would allow the oil to be developed by private enterprise. Without Washington’s interference, there would be an abundance of high paying jobs and low cost energy.

July 8, 2013

Who is Responsible

As my wife and I returned from my hospital appointment in Martinsburg WV, we were listening to Market Place on NPR.

For some time now, there has been what is called “Moral Monday” protests in North Carolina. The state is out of money, and must cut back on welfare, and other state financed social programs. Even pastors have joined the protest, saying that the State is unjust in not taking more from “haves” and giving it to the “have nots”. These pastors claim that Christ gave the responsibility to the state to care for the poor. They really should read the Word of God, which gives that responsibility to the church, as one NC legislator pointed out.

The Lord himself said that the poor will always be with us. And as the churches have abandoned their

responsibility, the state has taken over the place of the church. The interview included two people. One was a “poor” person, a non-church going woman with two children. When she applied to the state for help, she was told the state had no money, and she needed to seek help from her church. She complained that she did not go to church, so she had no church help. The other was a disabled man who attended church, and his church was helping him. They interviewed two pastors. One was a Pentecostal Holiness who said it was the church’s responsibility to care for the needy. Sadly, the other was a Baptist who said that it was the state’s responsibility to care for the needy. The Pentecostal had more Christianity than did the Baptist who believed that it was the state’s responsibility to take from the “haves” and give it to the “have nots”.

The announcer pointed out that NC was 80% professed Christians.

The Moral Monday dilemma is over whose responsibility it is to help the needy, as both sides quote scripture. To our shame, the Baptist pastor saw the state as god, as he looked to and expected it to fulfill the church’s responsibility.

Of course, no one mentioned if a man should not work, he should not eat, which is God’s cure for slothfulness.

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=190756394>

Letter

Dear Mr. Need

Thank you so much for sending the books. I grew up in the Identity movement, and I would like to see others delivered from its errors. Keep writing, my brother.

In Christ,

Michael Seewald, Hot springs AR

The New American

Another warning

... While Baron (who has a law degree, and is now delivering food for a local delicatessen) is now pursuing entrepreneurial endeavors and thus no longer pounds the pavement for work as some might, his story is not unique. As the Center for College Affordability and Productivity (CCAP) tells us in “From Wall Street to Wal-Mart: Why College Graduates Are Not Getting Good Jobs,”

Colleges and universities are turning out graduates faster than America’s labor markets are creating jobs

that traditionally have been reserved for those with degrees. More than one-third of current working graduates are in jobs that do not require a degree, and the proportion appears to be rising rapidly. Many of them are better described as “underemployed” rather than “gainfully employed.” Indeed, 60 percent of the increased college graduate population between 1992 and 2008 ended up in these lower skill jobs, raising real questions about the desirability of pushing to increase the proportion of Americans attending and graduating from four year colleges and universities. This, along with other evidence on the negative relationship between government higher education spending and economic growth, suggests we may have significantly “over invested” public funds in colleges and universities.

◇ TICKET TO THE GOOD LIFE?

Clearly, a college degree is no longer the surefire ticket to a high-paying job it once was thought to be, and there are many reasons for this. The listing economy is an obvious one, but then there is the law of supply and demand. That is to say, college degrees are far more common than a couple of generations ago and thus don’t hold the cachet they once did. Note here that people in the job market don’t simply compete against some theoretical standard for education, but also against each other. And if, for argument’s sake, 70 percent of people had high-school diplomas and 30 percent college degrees years ago but now 70 percent have college degrees and 30 percent a higher one (this is just a simplified example), the 70 percent is still in the exact same position on paper relative to its competition. So just as they say 60 is the new 40, we have to ask: Is a college degree the new high-school diploma?

This is especially relevant since it has been said that today’s college degree is the educational equivalent of only a 1947 high-school diploma, (and much less than the 8th grade in the early 1900s, ed.) although with studies evidencing the ignorance of college graduates, rating it even that highly is questionable. The point is, however, that employers can no longer view a college degree as a guarantor of basic knowledge. As Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa write in their 2011 book *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses*:

“Growing numbers of students are sent to college at increasingly higher costs, but for a large proportion of them the gains in critical thinking, complex reasoning, and written communication are either exceedingly small or empirically nonexistent. At least 45 percent of students in our sample [of the study they conducted] did not

demonstrate any statistically significant improvement in Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) performance during the first two years of college. (Further study has indicated that 36 percent of students did not show any significant improvement over four years.) While these students may have developed subject-specific skills that were not tested for by the CLA, in terms of general analytical competencies assessed, large numbers of U.S. college students can be accurately described as academically adrift. They might graduate, but they are failing to develop the higher-order cognitive skills that it is widely assumed college students should master.

[We have a friend who hopes to graduate this year with a teacher's degree in history. I asked him if he was being taught any history in college, and he said no. All he was being taught is how to teach. Ed.]

"This explains why a master's degree is now sometimes required where an undergraduate degree once sufficed: In a dumbed-down system where today's college equals yesterday's high school, graduate school is the new college. The result? Americans are paying far more — and attending school far longer — for no better than the same education. ...

"Yet what is witnessed in schools today? To varying degrees they have become babysitting centers, where accountability is lacking and teachers spend a high percentage of their time trying to maintain order and cajole students into listening, leaving instructional time greatly reduced. And how does this relate to college? First, the early-years permissiveness carries over into higher education, with college professors also lacking authority and students having become accustomed to laxity. And this "As the twig is bent, so grows the tree" phenomenon also has another consequence: Just as with language, people learn discipline best when young. If they don't develop good study habits and a work ethic during their formative years, we shouldn't be surprised when they're malformed in college. [Properly home educated children learn discipline, how to read, study and work, so they excel in any area they choose, particularly in college. Ed.]

"Worse still, much of this already narrow instructional window is today devoted to politically correct indoctrination. As the Young America's Foundation pointed out in "The Dirty Dozen: America's Most Bizarre and Politically Correct College Courses" (12/9/2006), academia has descended into course offerings such as "The Phallus," "Queer Musicology," "Border Crossings, Borderlands: Transnational Feminist Perspectives on Immigration," "Whiteness: The Other

Side of Racism," "Native American Feminisms," "Sex Change City: Theorizing History in Genderqueer San Francisco," and "Lesbian Pulp Fiction," just to name a handful. So maybe Johnny can't read, but he's fine with that. He knows that language is a white male homophobic social construct, anyway. (By the way, some of the bizarre courses are offered at Ivy League schools — all for just \$55,000 a year.) ...

"Consider the skilled trades. Okay, they don't sound as cool as video-game developer, but the pay and benefits are quite good; becoming qualified in them doesn't require four years extra schooling and a large investment of money; and, quite significantly, skilled tradesmen are in demand. As Reuters also reports, "According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, by 2014 the U.S. will need 29 percent more HVACR [Heating, Ventilating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration] and 21 percent more plumbing technicians, a total of more than 100,000 skilled workers in the job pool. Among the 500,000 plumbers in the United States alone, the demand is expected to grow 10 percent by 2016, [sic] however, due to an aging generation of skilled professionals, more than a third of all plumbers — or approximately 167,000 workers — will be exiting the workforce." Moreover, note that the aforementioned trades-targeted apprenticeship programs available are widespread and offer paid on-the-job training, so you can be compensated as you become qualified for a guaranteed job, as opposed to paying a college for what may be pipe-dream promises. And while the skilled trades don't seem romantic, they don't offer the romance of poverty, either. Don't forget the old joke about the attorney who, after receiving a \$200 bill for 25 minutes plumbing work and complaining that he was a famous trial lawyer and didn't make that much, was told by the plumber, "Neither did I when I was a lawyer." ..."

<http://www.thenewamerican.com/culture/education/item/16051-diploma-disaster>

The skilled trades offer well over \$50,000 and probably closer to \$100,000 a year, and the skilled man has job security. And as mentioned above, the student can earn a good living as he learns the trade through one of many apprenticeship programs. The sky is the limit for a young man who is dependable, works hard and can use his hands as well as his head. Remember, colleges are in business to make money, and with few exceptions, money takes precedence over genuine education. So why waste the money?

Macon, Ga. newspaper.

'Back when we wuz Negroes'

By Charles E. Richardson Posted on Sun, Jul. 31, 2011 in the Macon Telegraph, Macon, GA.

There was a time until the early 1960s when the terms to describe those of African decent, like me -- African-American or Black or Afro-American -- were almost unheard of. I remember a distinct conversation with a friend discussing descriptive terms for ourselves in 1963 or '64. The term "black" was just coming into vogue and he didn't like it one bit. "Call me a Negro," he said, "but don't call me black." Now, the word "Negro" (publications used a lower case "n") has almost become a pejorative, so I was a little surprised when my pastor, the Rev. Willie Reid, used it during Thursday's revival. "Back when we were Negroes," he said, and listed several things that were different about black life in America back then. That got me to thinking. Back when we wuz Negroes in the 1950s, "only 9 percent of black families with children were headed by a single parent," according to "The Black Family: 40 Years of Lies" by Kay Hymowitz. "Black children had a 52 percent chance of living with both their biological parents until age 17. In 1959, "only 2 percent of black children were reared in households in which the mother never married." But now that we're African-Americans, according to Hymowitz, those odds of living with both parents had "dwindled to a mere 6 percent" by the mid-1980s. And check this, in Bibb County, more than 70 percent of the births in the African-American community are to single mothers.

Back when we wuz Negroes and still fighting in many parts of the country for the right to vote, we couldn't wait for the polls to open. We knew our friends, family and acquaintances had died getting us the ballot. Dogs and fire hoses were used to keep us away and still we came. But now that we're African-Americans, in a city of 47,000 registered -- predominately black voters -- more than 30,000 didn't show up at the polls July 19. Back when we wuz Negroes, we had names like Joshua, Aaron, Paul, Esther, Melba, Cynthia and Ida. Now that we are African Americans, our names are bastardized versions of alcohol from Chivas to Tequila to C(S)hardonney. And chances the names have an unusual spelling.

Back when we wuz Negroes, according to the Trust For America's Health's "F as in Fat," report, "only four states had diabetes rates above 6 percent. ... The hypertension rates in 37 states about 20 years ago

were more than 20 percent." Now that we're African-Americans, that report shows, "every state has a hypertension rate of more than 20 percent, with nine more than 30 percent. Forty-three states have diabetes rates of more than 7 percent, and 32 have rates above 8 percent. Adult obesity rates for blacks topped 40 percent in 15 states, 35 percent in 35 states and 30 percent in 42 states and Washington, D. C.

Back when we wuz Negroes, the one-room church was the community center that everyone used. Now that we're African-Americans, our churches have lavish -- compared to back-in-the-day churches -- community centers that usually sit empty because the last thing the new church wants to do is invite the community in.

Back when we wuz Negroes, we didn't have to be convinced that education was the key that opened the lock of success, but now that we're African-Americans, more than 50 percent of our children fail to graduate high school. In Bibb County last year, the system had a dropout rate of 53.4 percent. Back when we wuz Negroes, the last thing a young woman wanted to look like was a harlot and a young man a thug, but now that we're African-Americans, many of our young girls dress like hootchie mamas and our young boys imitate penitentiary custom and wear their pants below the butt line. If I could reverse all of the above by trading the term "African-American" for "Negro," now tell me what do you think I'd do?

Charles E. Richardson is The Telegraph's editorial page editor

Did you see?

Russian Forces to Provide "Security" At US Events
FEMA signs deal with Russian Emergency Situations Ministry to "exchange experts"

Paul Joseph Watson, Infowars.com, July 1, 2013

As part of a deal signed last week in Washington DC between the Russian Emergency Situations Ministry and FEMA, Russian officials will provide "security at mass events" in the United States, a scenario that won't sit well with Americans wary of foreign assets operating on US soil. ...

Obama Requests 15,000 Russian Troops for "Upcoming" Disaster.

EU Times, 6/27/13.

<http://www.eutimes.net/2013/06/obama-requests-15000-russian-troops-for-upcoming-disaster/>

On the above page is a map of the US broken up into 10 regions. Back in the '80s, there was a TV series, "Amerika". There were assumptions at that time that the series depicted Russia's plan for America. In that

series, America was divided into the ten zones as shown on the map above. It ended with the Capital Building being blown up.

Foreign Boots on American Soil: Russia To Share Military “Security Experts” With United States During Mass Disaster Incidents and Emergencies

“... A press release posted on The Ministry of the Russian Federation for Civil Defense and Emergencies reports that the United States and Russia will now cooperate in disaster response operations that will include the exchange of ‘experts’ during ‘joint rescue operations,’ a term that has been broadly defined under the new agreement ...”

http://www.shtfplan.com/headline-news/foreign-boots-on-american-soil-russia-to-share-military-security-experts-with-united-states-during-mass-disaster-incidents-and-emergencies_06292013

Consider these disturbing facts:

Russia Anti-Gay Bill: Russia Passes Radical Family Values Bill While President Announces Divorce On TV

<http://www.policymic.com/articles/48411/russia-anti-gay-bill-russia-passes-radical-family-values-bill-while-president-announces-divorce-on-tv>

Russia bans gay “propaganda”

Russia’s lower house of parliament, the Duma has passed a new bill that outlaws activism by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) individuals and their supporters.

The new legislation bans the “propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations”, which refers to homosexual relations. ...

<http://www.euronews.com/2013/06/14/russia-bans-gay-propaganda/>

A Short and amazing observation.

Putin says leaders should unite to end anti-Christian persecution

DALLAS, August 2, 2013 – Vladimir Putin said last week that he observes “with alarm” that “in many of the world’s regions, especially in the Middle East and in North Africa, inter-confessional tensions are mounting, and the rights of religious minorities are infringed, including Christians and Orthodox Christians.” ...

<http://communities.washingtontimes.com/neighborhood/high-tide-and-turn/2013/aug/2/putin-world-leaders-should-unite-end-anti-christia/#ixzz2bUyZnE00>

Though Putin is anti-religious, he realizes that if Russia will return to its once powerful self, it must honor and protect the families, including encouraging child bearing, and forbidding sodomy and abortion. It must also honor its Christian roots from when Prince

Valadimir in 988 A.D. officially adopted Christianity. All the areas Putin is trying to act positive in are the very things the West is acting negatively in, as it sinks into the sunset of its once great power.

Consider: God destroyed Sodom as well as the Canaanites for sodomy. All of society is built around the family, and God will protect the family. America is at war against the family, and even condemned Russia for its anti-sodomite stand. Which do we think is more important to God, the family or a system of government?

◇ **MORE?**

Main Core: A List Of Millions Of Americans That Will Be Subject To Detention During Martial Law

<http://www.prisonplanet.com/main-core-a-list-of-millions-of-americans-that-will-be-subject-to-detention-during-martial-law.html>

Financial Insider: “We are Moving into the last stages before an all out collapse”

Mac Slavo, 6/7/13

With the United States having reached unprecedented levels of debt and no end in sight, Europe close to widespread destabilization, and Japan now having lost control of their bond market, it should be quite apparent that there is no turning back.

Governments around the world are doing everything in their power to maintain the perception that all is well. Despite their best efforts, however, the coming catastrophe cannot be stopped.

http://www.shtfplan.com/headline-news/financial-insider-we-are-moving-into-the-last-stages-before-an-all-out-collapse_06072013

Barksdale, below. I was on a church staff for 7 years a few miles from Barksdale. Our house was right in the flight path, and the KC135 tankers were NOISY, when loaded. We had several men from Barksdale in our church. I used to hold Saturday Night Bible study for those who were “on call”, and could not leave the base for a week. Check this out.

Strange Planes Landing At US Air Force Bases

Written by: B.K. Hyland Current Events July 8, 2013

There have been multiple civilian sightings of strange planes landing at American Air Force bases, all carrying UN troops and/or having UN markings (or none). My husband, a Vietnam vet, has been back and forth to Overton-Brooks VA Medical Hospital

three times a week this month. Barksdale Air Force Base, one of the most secure Strategic Air Command (SAC) bases in the nation, has had unusual C-130s or C-136s fly into Barksdale AFB and land at all hours. The interstate runs in front of the side and front of the base and is clearly visible with no restraints. (Barksdale is where President George W. Bush landed on 9/11, it is such a safe, secure, and well-guarded installation.) These flights have been reported by other citizens and several of the military men who work inside the base have reported that the UN troops are given US military clothing and name tags. When our servicemen question this, the soldiers are told they did NOT see what they just saw. Base operations refused to confirm or deny or discuss these sightings.

Lately, rumors and reports regarding the presence of foreign troops in the US working with our armed forces have been hitting public awareness. Originally government sources denied these reports, but now official reports are confirming what eye witnesses had been reporting. (www.SaveAmericaFoundation.com) Russia herself confirms that the Obama administration has requested 15,000 Russian troops to train with FEMA in the event of a SHTF scenario, particularly in the Washington D.C., Maryland, and Virginia area.

The question is why? It appears that foreign troops are working with US troops, practicing on urban warfare, civil unrest, and civil disturbance scenarios. In Colorado, rumors of Russian troops practicing to deal with terrorist raids and martial law scenarios have been proven correct by our own US armed forces. Peterson AFB in Colorado is another base being used. ...

<http://www.offthegridnews.com/2013/07/08/breaking-strange-planes-landing-at-us-air-force-bases/>

* Shortages Are Going to Drive People Out of Their Minds: "That's When the Riots Will Start"

http://www.shtfplan.com/headline-news/shortages-are-going-to-drive-people-out-of-their-minds-thats-when-the-riots-will-start_08082013

Subject: What the press predicted 1920

H.L. Mencken (born 1880 ? died 1956) was a journalist, satirist, critic, and Democrat. He wrote this editorial while working for the Baltimore Evening Sun, which appeared in the July 26, 1920, edition:

As democracy is perfected, the office of the President represents, more and more closely, the inner soul of the people. On some great and glorious day, the plain folks of the land will reach their heart's desire at last and the

White House will be occupied by a downright fool and complete narcissistic moron.

H.L. Mencken, The Baltimore Evening Sun, July 26, 1920 (Copied)

Sincerity

Joshua 24:1

24:1 Shechem--

1.) God first promised Canaan to Abram here and Abram erected an altar (first in the land of Canaan to God), Gen. 12:6.

2.) Jacob built an altar here, Gen. 33:20.

3.) Jacob called on his family to sanctify themselves (his household) here and put away their idols, Gen. 35:1-4.

4.) Joshua led a covenant establishing ceremony here, Joshua 8:30-35.

5.) Joshua reestablishes the covenant here now, 24:2.

6.) This is also where Jacob bought land, pitched his tent when he was supposed to be on his way back to Bethel. Here his daughter got in trouble and his sons killed a city of people, Gen. 33:18-34:29. Just because someplace was safe for me to be in God's will, someone else could be completely out of God's will there.

Conclusion: It doesn't matter how good a place might be. It doesn't matter how much others might have prospered here. It doesn't matter how good it might look or even how much we might prosper there. It doesn't matter how much others might have served God in the place. If a person stops there when he should be going to Bethel there will be problems. Back to Bethel, back to where we should be with the Lord. The devil sells us a lie that we can survive just going half way to where we should be. If we are to be in Bethel we will pay the price in Shechem, no matter how good this place might look and how bad Bethel might look.

24:14. Joshua calls upon them to serve God with sincerity and in truth, putting away their false gods, I Cor. 5:8.

1.) We need to hold our life up to the SON to look for impurities, like you might hold honey up to the sun.

2.) Be willing to have personal life looked at.

3.) Sincere Christian examines the Bible for guidance, I Pet. 2:1.

4.) Sincere Christian demonstrates his love by faithful stewardship.

5.) The sincere Christian possessed a personal life that can be followed by others, II Cor. 1:11.

6.) A sincere Christian is honest and obedient to the word of God.

7.) A sincere Christian possesses a love that is not self-centered, Eph. 6:24.

8.) A sincere Christian has a clear pure thought life, II Pet. 3:1.

a.) Could we stand to hold our thought life up to the SON as honey?

9.) A sincere Christian serves God with a clear conscience, Phil. 1:13.

Is our life open, transparent, before others? They are watching; do they see some WAX floating or mixed in with the honey?

A well worn Example: Marble Statues of Rome. Wax was used to cover false. Hot sun would melt it out.

v. 15. How about our priorities. We need to examine them and emphasize the best.

The choice is ours. Which God are we going to serve?

v. 15. but for me--- This book shows that an average man (Joshua) dedicated to God can be mightily used of God. Are we going to serve the world's gods or the Lord God of Israel?

Notice Joshua did not have a supernatural calling like Moses. He was just an obedient, humble servant of Moses. Faithful in doing his best for the Lord in whatever he did. Just a man who followed God with sincerity.

v. 17. Joshua says, "Make a choice, v. 15. The people very emotionally say, "God forbid that we should forsake the Lord," (sounds great).

Now they give the reasons they want to serve God.

- 1.) Brought us up out of Egypt.
- 2.) Set us free from bondage.
- 3.) Did great signs that we could see.
- 4.) Provided our needs in time of poverty.
- 5.) Protected us from our enemies.
- 6.) V. 18. Gave us victory over our enemies.

"--therefore will we also serve the Lord--" Key word THEREFORE. This is sad. "We will serve God for what he can and has done for us. What is in it for me?"

When a people serve God for what he can do for them, then when they get prosperous they will quit serving him, which is the history of Israel His people from here until they are carried away. Zedekiah in II Ki. 25, about 1,000 years later.

This was still the attitude when Christ came. Man wanted to make him a king because of the free meals and the prospect of freedom from the oppressor, Rome.

"I'll make him a king in my life if he will do these things for me."

These six things are good. We can rejoice in them and thank God through the Lord Jesus Christ for them, but this is not the reason to serve Him. The reason we serve God is because he is God. We follow (believe) the Bible not because it works but because it is the word of God.

Paul served God and didn't have a one of these things going for him. He was in prison.

Peter served God and he didn't have a one of these things going for him. He was cuffed between two guards in prison.

The list is endless. Look at your OT prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, etc. They served Him and didn't have a one of these things. especially Daniel. He was carried as a prisoner of war and he served God.

◇ **WE ARE TO SERVE GOD BECAUSE HE IS GOD.**

Vv. 17-18, is the natural man talking and 99.9% of the time when "we the people" speak it is the natural man speaking.

This is philosophy today. We will serve God because we need these things. But when we no longer need these things, we quit serving him.

Note: The devil has provided a false prosperity called credit. This credit has been mistaken as prosperity and the people no longer serve God, but now serve the banker, lender, Prov. 22:7.

Americans today have less than they did in the 30's because then what they had was theirs. Today it isn't. It belongs to the lender and he allows us to use it.

Man served God for what he could get. Someone else moved in who made a better deal (\$15,000 at 4%). The deal has gone sour as it always does as man serves another master (\$15,000 at 4% is now \$90,000 at 14%). Why, because man chose who could give him the best deal here and now, became the servant of whom he chose and now is in hard bondage.

24:18 We must serve God because he is God, whether we are in bondage (jail), never see a great sign, starve to death, or the enemy throws us in prison. We must purpose in our heart not to defile ourselves no matter what. Young people, if you decide to serve God with your life because of vv. 1-6, you will be a failure and greatly disappointed, a better offer will come along and you will be gone. Serve Him because He is God.

The people made a deal with God. The devil offered a more appealing deal to the flesh. The people took the compromise offer that looked and tasted good. They

were turning away from God by v. 33 of this chapter.

Emotional response, vv. 16-18, won't last. If we decide to serve whoever offers the best deal, the devil will always come up with the most appealing. We must decide to serve the Lord because he is the Lord, owns our very being and deserves our best regardless of what we might get in return. We might get burned in the fiery furnace, but that isn't our responsibility. Our only responsibility is to serve HIM because he is worthy.

They made the choice of whom they felt could offer the most and they turned before the water got cold. V. 33, the priests already owned land which they were not to do.

◇ NOTICE FURTHER IN JOSHUA'S INSTRUCTIONS.

V. 19. You can't serve God because he demands 100% and if you don't he will turn on you, hurt you and consume you. V. 21. "No, we will serve the Lord 100%. No problem or worry. We will serve Him 100%. He won't have to turn us over to our enemies for the destruction of the flesh, I Cor. 5, we are safe." V. 22. Joshua says, "Are you sure? You are witness against yourselves, if you keep insisting you are going to serve him 100%."

The people, "Yes, we are sure. We are witness. We are willing. We will serve him 100%." Why? Because of vv. 17, 18.

V. 23. A very amazing verse to me. Notice what Joshua says, "Then put away the strange gods you have now." "Then turn your heart to God now." Why can't you come to church, why do you watch the dirty soaps day and night? Why don't you tithe? Why do you have the garbage in your home, books, ladies magazines, etc.

Here the people were telling Joshua how much they loved the Lord. How they were willing to serve him 100%. How they were willing to lay all on the line for Him. How they weren't afraid of the results if they didn't give Him 100%. Why can't you, etc.?

Why did they promise Joshua the moon? I think they honestly believed they were doing right and they were on an emotional high, where they would promise anything and God still held them accountable for this promise.

They made all these promises of how the Lord had been, was and always would be #1 in their lives. How much they loved God for all he had done for them and they still had.

- 1.) The rock music (c & w) in their houses.
- 2.) Dirty HBO, &c.
- 3.) Allowing filthy programs in their TV.

4.) Dirty books.

5.) Dirty nasty habits. Nicotene, alcohol, drugs.

6.) Immorality, sensual clothing--weather warns up, and clothes come off. Some care less about the weather, and the clothes come off to show a lot of skin.

7.) Witchcraft, ungodly attitudes.

8.) Compromising of all kinds.

They still had the gall to tell Joshua they loved God with all their heart and he was number one in their life. Joshua knew better and so did the Lord. Joshua tried to warn them and they couldn't believe he was talking to them, the good church members (members of the congregation), who were faithful to all the meetings that Joshua called.

Joshua said here is what will happen. The people said that's okay because we are serving God 100%. Joshua called them liars, and told them to get the false gods out and turn their hearts to the Lord.

v. 24. The people passed right over it and never batted an eye and they paid the price. Follow this through the book of Judges. They were under continual bondage until David 500 or so years later. The next record we have of any kind of sanctification, cleaning out the garbage is I Sam. 16:5. God's people served the heathens.

Dhimmitude

The word "Dhimmitude" is found in the new health care bill; so what does it mean? Thought this was interesting and worth passing on.

Obama used it in the health care bill. Now isn't this interesting? It is also included in the health care law.

Dhimmitude -- I had never heard the word until now. I typed it into Google and started reading. Pretty interesting. It's on page 107 of the healthcare bill. I looked this up on Google and yep, it exists.. It is a REAL word.

Dhimmitude is the Muslim system of controlling non-Muslim populations conquered through jihad (Holy War). Specifically, it is the TAXING of non-Muslims in exchange for tolerating their presence AND as a coercive means of converting conquered remnants to Islam.

ObamaCare allows the establishment of Dhimmitude and Sharia Muslim diktat in the United States. Muslims are specifically exempted from the government mandate to purchase insurance, and also from the penalty tax for being uninsured. Islam considers insurance to be "gambling", "risk-taking", and "usury" and is thus

banned. Muslims are specifically granted exemption based on this.

How convenient. So I, as a Christian, will have crippling IRS liens placed against all of my assets, including real estate, cattle, and even accounts receivable, and will face hard prison time because I refuse to buy insurance or pay the penalty tax. Meanwhile, Louis Farrakhan will have no such penalty and will have 100% of his health insurance needs paid for by the de facto government insurance. Non-Muslims will be paying a tax to subsidize Muslims.

◇ **THIS IS DHIMMITUDE.**

I recommend sending this on to your contacts. American citizens need to know about it --

snopes.com : Health Insurance Exemptions Apr 13, 2010 ...

Dhimmitude is the Muslim system of controlling non-muslim populations ...

The ObamaCare bill is the establishment of Dhimmitude and Sharia

Why Christians avoid politics and how they can embrace it with integrity

(Copied)

Chapter 3 of

“The Political Animal”

By Dr Jeff Myers.

If you think politics isn't dirty, you've never seen a political campaign. The pious platitudes and the “my opponent is the devil incarnate” rhetoric are enough to make any rational person say, “Please go away. Don't go away mad, just go away.”

Nasty accusations and dirty tricks have been part of political campaigning nearly from the beginning of our nation. In its opposition to Abraham Lincoln, for example, the Albany Atlas and Argus claimed that he was “the ugliest man in the Union.” The September 1864 Harper Weekly attempted to catalogue all of the names Lincoln had been called publicly during the campaign. Its list included: filthy-story-teller, despot, liar, thief, braggart, buffoon, usurper, monster, Ignoramus Abe, Old Scoundrel, perjurer, robber, swindler, tyrant, end, butcher, land pirate, and this corker—a long, lean, lank, lantern-jawed, high cheek-boned, spavined, rail-splitting stallion.(1)

Of course, Lincoln handled the accusations with characteristic dry wit. In his 1858 run for the Senate, Stephen Douglas accused him of being two-faced, to

which Lincoln replied, “I leave it to my audience. If I had another face, do you think I'd wear this one?”(2)

The truth is that it would be abnormal not to find this kind of political name-calling abhorrent. It seems like an adolescent charade carried out for the basest of purposes—sort of like professional wrestling with suits.

Campaign chicanery, aside, however, the implications of what happens in the political realm are deadly serious. To paraphrase H.L. Menken, the folks involved may be clowns, but they're armed and can wreak a lot of havoc.

In the interest of historical understanding, we should recognize that Christians have marked out five distinct positions when it comes to involvement or non-involvement in politics. In lesson three of Political Animal we'll review each of these stances and see if we can arrive at a perspective of political involvement that is Christ-honoring and filled with integrity.

◇ **1. “CHRISTIANS SHOULDN'T BE INVOLVED.”**

Beginning with the publication of Origin of Species by Charles Darwin in 1865, Christians began to feel uncomfortably marginalized by the intellectual forces surrounding them. Science was on the way up, and it seemed incompatible with Biblical truth. Many Christians felt that to be public about their faith was to risk being portrayed as ignorant buffoons.

In response, some Christian leaders tried to make peace by insisting that religion and intellect are different domains that answer different questions, and therefore are not a threat to one another. Henry Ward Beecher, the famous 19th century preacher (and brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of Uncle Tom's Cabin) said, “While we are taught by the scientists in truths that belong to the sensual nature, while we are taught by the economists of things that belong to the social nature, we need the Christian ministry to teach us those things which are invisible.”(3)

Though Beecher was a respected abolitionist and celebrity populizer of Christianity, his solution solves one problem too many: to say that Christianity deals only with the invisible is to say that its products are intangible and thus, to the mind concerned with propositional truth, dispensable. Today we would call this an example of the “secular/ sacred divide”—the notion that there is no relationship between the spiritual and the physical.

In the political realm, those who would rather that Christians not be involved have seized on this secular/sacred divide with gusto. “Keep -religion out of politics,” they intone. It seems to have never occurred

to them that there's no such thing as neutrality. The very idea that religion is irrelevant is itself a religious notion. Calls to exclude Christians from the political process are usually cynical ploys designed to supplant Christianity with other, non-Christian religions. Keep that in mind next time someone says, "Christians shouldn't be involved in politics."

◇ 2. "SOCIETY ISN'T WORTH REDEEMING."

Dwight L. Moody once said, "I look upon this world as a wrecked vessel. God has given me a lifeboat and said to me, 'Moody, save all you can.'"(4) Though Moody performed many good works and invested in education and relief for the poor, his theology limited his investment in the world to those activities that could directly support a platform for evangelism.

To be fair, Moody's sentiment may have been a reaction to the "social gospel," the idea that the improvement of society should trump the call to salvation. And there were many bad things happening in the world that gave the impression that the whole of the human race was hurtling toward self-destruction. What is the role of the church in such a society? Joel Carpenter summarized the view of fundamentalist leaders like Moody:

What were the prospects for the "true church," then, in these times of decline and apostasy? Fundamentalists believed that God would continue to use His "faithful remnant" to witness to the truth and gather out of the world a "people for His Name" (Acts 15:14). Until Jesus came for them at the rapture, Bible-believing Christians were to win the lost, heed the signs of the times, keep themselves pure from error, and expose and condemn false religion.(5)

Unfortunately, many churches prided themselves on this anti-culture perspective. Life was hard and church was a place to go to find temporary relief by reminding oneself of the heavenly delights awaiting the faithful. In such churches, Albert E. Brumley's "I'll Fly Away" was a popular tune: "Just a few more weary days and then, I'll fly away; to a land where joy shall never end."

While the argument "Christians shouldn't be involved in politics" solves one problem too many, the "Society isn't worth redeeming" perspective solves one problem too few. It assumes that what happens on this earth is ultimately unimportant to God, a theology which cannot be sustained Scripturally.

◇ 3. "POLITICAL STRUCTURES CAN'T CHANGE THE HUMAN HEART."

When Shane Claiborne walks on stage, what the audience sees is a skinny white guy with dreadlocks

adorned in nerdy glasses and clothing several sizes too big. What they hear, though, is a hard-hitting social justice message delivered with winsomeness and humor. Young evangelicals flock to his presentations, clamoring for Claiborne's vision of a simple Christianity that is free from the complexities of modern life.

What Claiborne's hearers don't seem to realize is that Claiborne is a neo-Anabaptist separatist who thinks Christians should stay out of politics. "Jesus taught that his followers should not attempt to 'run the world,'" he says.(6) Of course, the argument is a straw man. Christians who take their citizenship seriously should not be accused of trying to "run the world;" they should be applauded for recognizing that God's sovereignty extends to everything, including the often-sleazy world of politics.

Still Claiborne's message does have at least one positive effect: it sensitizes people to the way that politics—like anything else—can become an idol if we turn to it instead of Christ as a means of salvation. But just because something is important doesn't mean that we worship it. Police don't change the human heart, but we still think law enforcement is important. Food doesn't change our spiritual condition, but we still think of its importance at least three times a day. Education can't put us on the path to heaven, but we still think it's better than ignorance.

We shouldn't expect politics to be something more than it is. It can't bring heaven on earth, but it can help bring heavenly values to bear on earthly problems. It can't generate a utopian society, but it can elevate good and punish evil. It can't abolish poverty, but it can make the creation of prosperity more likely. As Thomas Aquinas said, "Grace does not destroy nature, but completes it."(7)

◇ 4. "CHRISTIANITY IS ONLY ABOUT THE CHURCH."

A fourth perspective on Christianity and politics, Two-Kingdoms Theology, hails from a small group of reformed theologians who teach that Martin Luther's ideas about the two kingdoms—the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of man—actually represent the kingdom of the church and the kingdom of the world. The Bible, they say, is only relevant to the life of the church, not to political decision-making.

One of the advocates of two-kingdom theology, Michael Horton, phrases it in a straightforward fashion: "The central message of Christianity is not a worldview, a way of life, or a program for personal and societal change; it is a gospel."(8) Of course, there's

a big debate about whether these theologians have properly interpreted what Martin Luther actually meant by the two kingdoms and whether it's a good idea even if they have. But that point aside, Horton's argument is a false choice. By its very nature the Gospel brings about personal and societal change. The fact is, people will always make decisions based on some system of ethics. If this system isn't Biblically informed, it will be informed by something else.

To two-kingdoms advocates, this "something else" is the natural law—we should act politically as we naturally know to do as created beings. But this ignites a whole other debate: is the natural law really that clear? And if it is that clear, can we assume that broken people, in a fallen world, can understand it and act upon it?

◇ 5. "CHRISTIANS SHOULD BE INVOLVED, AND THEY SHOULD TRY TO TAKE OVER."

Of course, some Christians don't run away from politics—they run toward it. Their enthusiasm is admirable, but it is all too easy for Christianity to become an appendage of one of the political parties, serving the party's interests instead of God's.

Those on the Christian right believe that America has been hijacked by liberals of ill intent and think that their job is "to reclaim America for Christ, whatever the cost." The Christian left, on the other hand, sees taxation and government spending as the best way to fulfill Biblical commands. They see a spiritual dimension in government programs and are not above attempting to shame those who disagree as unspiritual, even mean-spirited and un-Christian. Those on the Christian left, while claiming to be "not left, not right, but deeper" nevertheless castigate their opponents as "right-wing zealots" and "bullies" who are "intolerant," "vicious," "militaristic;" and "bloviating." •

Dr. Jeff Myers is the president of Summit Ministries (summit.org). The Political Animal video training course with study guide is available at www.summit-courses.org.

1. Quoted in Kathleen Hall Jamieson, *Dirty Politics* (New York: Oxford, 1992), p. 43.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
3. As quoted in George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 21.
4. Edward L. Queen, Stephen R. Prothero, and Gardiner H. Shattuck (eds.), *Encyclopedia of American Religious History*, Vol. I (New York: Facts on File, 2009), p. 844.
5. Joel Carpenter, *Revive Us Again* (New York: Oxford, 1997), p. 111.
6. James Davison Hunter, *To Change the World* (New York: Oxford, 2010), p. 160.
7. As quoted in Thomas Gilby, *St. Thomas Aquinas Philosophical*

Texts (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2003), p. 320.

8. Michael Horton, *Christless Christianity: The Alternative Gospel of the American Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), p. 105.

Samaritan Ministries Newsletter

Wheat Belly

By Dr. William Davis

William Davis, M.D., Wheat Belly: Lose the Wheat, Lose the Weight, & Find your Path Back to Health (New York: Rodale Press, 2011. 292 pages with bibliography and index. \$10.25 to \$20 from www.abebooks.com.

Sensitivity to gluten and gliadin found in wheat is not an academic interest with me. In 2008 I was utterly wretched. Every time I ate my stomach rebelled with heartburn and acid reflux, I was bloated, had diarrhea, stomach pain, mental fog, depression, joint pain, itching scalp, and skin rashes. I wasn't worth the bullet to put me out of my misery.

Frantic for relief, in May Susan and I spent nearly a week of testing at Dr. Jonathan Wright's Tahoma Clinic in Seattle. After a lifetime of eating anything I wanted, perfect digestion and elimination, at age 61 he diagnosed me with gluten/gliadin sensitivity. In loose terms, I was allergic to wheat. Left untreated, the sensitivity can progress into celiac disease, inflammatory bowel disease, Crohn's disease, and worse.

The treatment? Stop eating wheat. That simple. Symptoms vanish speedily, and stay vanished as long as you stay away from wheat. Eat wheat and all the symptoms instantly re-appear. Want to know if wheat is causing your problem? Stop eating it for four weeks.

"Wait a minute, Moneychanger! I don't buy that. For 6,500 years humans have been eating wheat, nay, mostly surviving on it. "Bread" and "food" are synonyms. After hundreds of generations have been eating the stuff, how could wheat suddenly cause this reaction?"

◇ IT AIN'T THE SAME WHEAT

As Dr. Davis explains in this book, it ain't the same wheat. After more than 50 years of crossbreeding and genetic manipulation, today's wheat is not your Granny's wheat.

"Wheat strains have been hybridized, crossbred, and introgressed to make the wheat plant resistant to environmental conditions, such as drought or pathogens, or fungi. But most of all, genetic changes have been induced to increase yield per acre . . . more than tenfold greater than farms of a century ago. Such enormous strides in yield have required drastic changes in genetic code, including reducing the proud 'amber waves of

grain' of yesteryear to the rigid, eighteen-inch-tall high-production 'dwarf' wheat of today." (p. 14)

"Modern commercial wheat production has been intent on delivering features such as increased yield, decreased production costs, and large-scale production of a consistent commodity. All the while, virtually no questions have been asked about whether these features are compatible with human health. . . . Small changes in wheat protein structure can spell the difference between a devastating immune response to wheat protein versus no immune response at all." (p. 18).

"The peculiar oversight in the flurry of breeding activity, such as that conducted at International Maize & Wheat Improvement Center (IMWIC) [under geneticist Norman Borlaug], was that, despite dramatic changes in the genetic makeup of wheat and other crops, no animal or human safety testing was conducted on the new genetic strains that we created. . . . [They] were released into the food supply without human safety concerns being part of the equation."

"[I]t was assumed that variations in gluten content and structure, modifications of other enzymes and proteins, qualities that confer susceptibility or resistance to various plant diseases, would all make their way to humans without consequence. . . . Analyses of proteins expressed by a wheat hybrid compared to its two parent strains have demonstrated that, while approximately 95% of the proteins expressed in the offspring are the same, 5% are unique, found in neither parent. Wheat gluten proteins, in particular, undergo considerable change with hybridization. . . . When compared to century-old strains of wheat, modern strains of *Triticum aestivum* express a higher quantity of genes for gluten proteins that are associated with celiac disease." (Pp. 25-26).

"[T]he alterations of wheat that could potentially result in undesirable effects on humans are not due to gene insertion or deletion [genetic modification], but are due to the hybridization experiments that pre-date genetic modification. As a result, over the past 50 years, thousands of new strains have made it to the human commercial food supply without a single effort at safety testing." (p. 29)

◇ **HOW WHEAT WORKS: THE PROTEINS GLUTEN & GLIADIN**

What you know as bread can't be made from the most ancient strains of wheat, because they lack the gluten. Gluten is the protein that gives dough that sticky, doughy texture. That's why you can't make bread from

rice, corn, or any other grain flour: no gluten. Also, gluten is essential to bread rising in leavening.

Wheat is about 70% carbohydrates, 10-15% indigestible fiber, and 10 – 15% protein. Of that 15%, gluten contributes 80% of wheat protein. (p 32, 38)

"Gluten" embraces two protein families, the gliadins and the glutenins. The gliadin protein group triggers the strongest immune response in celiac disease. (p 38)

"Gluten from one wheat strain can be quite different in structure from that of another strain . . . Hybridization efforts of the past 50 years have generated numerous additional changes in gluten-coding genes in *Triticum aestivum*, most of them purposeful modifications of the D genome that confer baking and aesthetic characteristics on flour." (p. 39)

Gluten and gliadin can provoke several immune responses. In celiac disease the small intestine becomes inflamed causing abdominal cramps and diarrhea. Gluten and gliadin are also implicated as culprits in irritable bowel disease, Crohn's disease, and ulcerative colitis.

Other wheat proteins besides the glutes can provoke allergic or anaphylactic reactions. (p 40)

◇ **THE CARBOHYDRATES**

"Wheat starches are the complex carbohydrates that are the darlings of dieticians. 'Complex' means that the carbohydrates in wheat are composed of polymers (repeating chains) of the simple sugar, glucose [the simplest sugar, C₆H₁₂O₆], unlike simple carbohydrates such as sucrose [table sugar] which are one- or two-unit sugar structures. (Sucrose is a two-sugar molecule, glucose + fructose.) Conventional wisdom, such as that from your dietician or the USDA, says that we should all reduce our consumption of simple carbohydrates in the form of candy and soft drinks & increase our consumption of complex carbohydrates.

"Of the complex carbohydrate in wheat, 75% is the chain of branching glucose units, amylopectin, and 25% is the linear chain of glucose units, amylose. In the human gastrointestinal tract, both . . . are digested by the salivary and stomach enzyme amylase. Amylopectin is efficiently digested by amylase to glucose, while amylose is much less efficiently digested, some of it [reaching] the colon undigested. Thus the complex carbohydrate amylopectin is rapidly converted to glucose and absorbed into the bloodstream and, because it is most efficiently digested, is mainly responsible for wheat's blood-sugar-increasing effect." (p. 32).

The human body digests amylopectin so efficiently,

in fact, that it increases blood sugar more than eating a Mars bar or a Snickers – or eating table sugar!

The glycemic index (GI) measures effects of carbohydrates on blood sugar compared to the simplest sugar, glucose. Using glucose's blood sugar effect as 100, whole grain bread has a GI of 72, white bread 69, Shredded Wheat cereal 67, and table sugar (sucrose) 59. A Mars bar ranks 68 and a snickers 41, so ditch that balloon loaf and eat Snickers for breakfast! (p34).

◇ **WHERE DO THE CARBS GO?**

All right, the carbohydrates in wheat raise blood sugar more than almost any other carbohydrate. What happens then?

* Higher blood sugar stimulates the body to produce the hormone insulin

* Insulin allows glucose to enter body cells, converting glucose to fat

* Two hours after the sugar high, the body experiences a sugar low.

That explains the roller-coaster high/low of fullness and craving that eating wheat products induces, not to mention the “mental fog, fatigue, and shakiness” of the low blood sugar bottoms. (p. 36)

The carbs don't stop there. Over time this cycle deposits more and more fat, building a “wheat belly.” Oh, and don't forget the insulin resistance that results when your body is exposed to more and more blood sugar, which can lead to Type II diabetes.

If only it stopped there, but it doesn't. Increased belly fat produces more of the female hormone estrogen, both in men and women. Oh, and it triggers more inflammatory responses, like heart disease and cancer. (p. 36). There's more still.

◇ **WHEAT ADDICTION**

For some people wheat is addictive, and for a reason. When wheat is digested it breaks down into “exorphins,” polypeptides which resemble morphine-like compounds in their action on the brain. And yes, they can cross the blood brain barrier. (p. 49). Of all the grains, only wheat produces exorphins.

“So this is your brain on wheat: Digestion yields morphine-like compounds that bind to the brain's opiate receptors. It induces a form of reward, mild euphoria. When the effect is blocked or no exorphin-yielding foods are consumed, some people experience a distinctly unpleasant withdrawal.” (p. 50). So your friend is not kidding when he says he's addicted to honey buns. And of course, that addiction makes him eat more, and makes him fatter and fatter. Wheat

stimulates appetite.

This effect seems confirmed by withdrawing wheat from schizophrenic patients. They showed significant and measurable improvement. Add back the wheat to their diet and the symptoms return (p. 46-47). Removing wheat also improves children with autism, and wheat may contribute to Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

◇ **MORE FUN WITH WHEAT**

The fun with wheat never stops. Dr. Davis points out that the intestinal symptoms of celiac disease may not always be present. “[T]he celiac sufferer might have neurological impairment, such as loss of balance and dementia, yet be spared the characteristic cramping, diarrhea, and weight loss. Lack of telltale intestinal symptoms also means that the correct diagnosis is rarely made. Rather than calling it celiac disease without the intestinal expression of the condition, it would be more accurate to speak about immune-mediated gluten intolerance.” (p. 84)

Following are conditions associated with immune mediated gluten intolerance:

* “Dermatitis herpetiformis -- ... [A] itchy, bumpy rash that usually occurs over the elbows, knees or back.

* “Liver disease – [F]rom mild abnormalities on liver tests to chronic active hepatitis to primary biliary cirrhosis to biliary cancer.

* “Autoimmune diseases – Diseases associated with immune attacks against various organs, known as autoimmune diseases, are more common in people with celiac. [They] are more likely to develop rheumatoid arthritis, Hashimoto's thyroiditis, connective tissue diseases such as lupus, asthma, inflammatory bowel diseases such as ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease, as well as other inflammatory and immune disorders. ... [I]ncidence is 68-fold compared to non-celiacs.”

* “Insulin dependent diabetes – Children with insulin-dependent type 1 diabetes have an unusually high likelihood for having positive antibody markers for celiac disease, with up to a 20-fold greater risk for developing it. It is not clear whether wheat gluten is the cause of diabetes, but investigators have speculated that a subgroup of type 1 diabetics develop the disease triggered by gluten exposure.

* “Neurological impairment -- ...[T]here is a curiously high incidence (50%) of celiac markers among people who develop otherwise unexplained loss of balance and coordination (ataxia) or loss of feeling and muscle control in the legs (peripheral neuropathy).

There is even a frightening condition called gluten encephalopathy, characterized by brain impairment with headaches, ataxia, and dementia, eventually fatal.

* “Nutritional deficiencies – Iron-deficiency anemia is unusually common among celiac sufferers, affecting up to 69%. Deficiencies of vitamin B12, folic acid, zinc, and fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E, and K are also common.” (p. 87, 88) Combine this with digestive efficiency’s normal age-related decline and you have a recipe for extraordinary vitamin deficiencies.

WHEAT & ARTHRITIS & MORE

“Ever notice how people with a wheat belly almost invariably also have arthritis of one or more joints?” “That same inflammation that issues from the visceral fat of the wheat belly and results in diabetes, heart disease, and cancer also yields inflammation of joints. . . . The risk of arthritis is therefore even greater for someone with visceral fat of the wheat belly variety, as evidenced by the threefold greater likelihood of knee and hip replacements in people with larger waist circumferences.” (pp. 123, & 124.)

The list of wheat-induced or exacerbated afflictions stretches on and on. It contributes to aging through a byproduct of high blood sugar (glycation, p. 134) and affects skin health (p. 176 ff.) What probably speeds the causes of heart disease (p. 146 ff.) Wheat contributes to nervous system problems (p. 166 ff.)

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO YOU?

It has been a long time since I’ve read a book and underlined sentence after sentence -- Wheat Belly is one of those. There’s some repetition, but that’s inevitable in a teaching book. Still, Dr. Davis and his editors have written with admirable clarity, making a difficult subject easy for a layman to grasp. Nor does he overlook one of the worst aspects of the wheat tragedy: mainstream dieticians and the USDA strongly advocate consuming wheat, so official dogma drives people into eating the very poison plaguing them.

Certainly I wouldn’t contend that every word in this book is Gospel truth, but I believe everyone ought to read it, and not just my little summary. Maybe wheat is not the only culprit in the modern epidemic of autoimmune diseases, heart disease, diabetes, and other painful afflictions, but from my own case I know it can frightfully, suddenly, and agonizingly affect your health.

But don’t take my word for it. Avoid all wheat containing foods for four weeks (that’s a job because wheat appears in most processed foods). Go gluten

free. If your symptoms improve, wheat is the culprit.

Whoops, I forgot the other benefit of giving up wheat: weight loss, significant, speedy and permanent.

Is that English muffin really worth the price you might be paying?

A Moneychanger Book Review. Used by permission.

Editor’s note: The US wheat being forced upon us today is vastly different from the wheat of 75 years ago, which is why it is not allowed in many foreign nations, such as Kenya.

Fools Ignore Facts

“U.S DHS has told banks-in writing-it may inspect safe deposit boxes without warrant and seize any gold, silver, guns or other valuables it finds inside those boxes!” [1/30/11]

<http://dinarvets.com/forums/index.php?/topic/52464-do-not-use-safety-deposit-boxes/#ixzz2bqyoDwwV>

“Won’t happen here!”

“Gold Confiscation Begins? Report of 2 Dozen Gold Krugerrands Stolen From Safety Deposit Box by CIA” [2/26/13]

<http://www.silverdoctors.com/gold-confiscation-begins-report-of-2-dozen-gold-krugerrands-stolen-from-safety-deposit-box-by-cia/>

Free Books

◇ IDENTIFYING IDENTITY’S GENTILE CORRUPTION BY PASTOR OVID NEED

The Identity Movement, along with Kinism and all other racist philosophies, is as dangerous as Ovid Need says it is in this helpful book. Brother Need has done a great service to the church by exposing and refuting the false teaching of the Identity Movement. His book clearly distinguishes Reformed covenant theology from the Identity Movement’s understanding of the covenant; and, in so doing, defends the Reformed faith from any charge of racism. Hopefully, this book will impress adherents to this false teaching that he refutes, that they have no home in the Reformed faith and Reformed churches unless they repent. The book is plainly written and full of vital exposition. I recommend that people who are troubled by the Identity Movement read it and give it to their friends.

Dr. Joe Morecraft III

◇ GOD HAS A WONDERFUL PLAN FOR YOUR LIFE—THE MYTH OF THE MODERN MESSAGE, BY RAY COMFORT.

*Why do 9 out of 10 children raised in Christian homes leave the Church?

*Why do many professed Christians show little or no evidence for their faith?

*Why do 80-90% of those making decisions for Christ fall away from the faith?

Copies of each or both sent upon request.

All articles by Bro Need unless otherwise noted. Use with credit.