

CURRENT

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POLLUTION

THE
CHRISTIAN'S
TEARS

THE CHRISTIAN
& POT

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**"I was glad when they said unto me,
Let us go into the house of the LORD" (Psalm 122:1)**

DELIGHTING IN THE ORDINARY FROM THE EDITOR

The past two years have seen church life in many places return to the basics. Speaking in broad terms, larger churches are usually hubs of activity, meetings, and programs. Many of these things were suspended and there was a maintenance, to some degree, of the essentials of public worship. Responses to this among congregations varied. For some, there was a fresh appreciation for the fundamentals of prayer, singing, and hearing the Word preached. For others, there was a frustration that the church was stagnating, even regressing.

What are we making of the presence of a thirst for excitement in church life? This thirst may be a truly spiritual desire for God to move in power. It may be a carnal impression that activity denotes spiritual life and growth. At all times it is good when the Lord's people can delight in the ordinary. By ordinary I'm borrowing from the language of the *Westminster Shorter Catechism*. Question 88 asks, "What are the outward means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption?" The catechism's answer is, "The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption are his ordinances, especially the word, sacraments and prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation." There is a repetitiveness in the patterns of church life. We do the same things every week. But repetition should not be despised.

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To do so would be akin to despising the rising of the sun every day. God has built routines into Creation, and we have a weekly Sabbath given to us by the gracious hand of God. On that day, which we are to call a delight (Isaiah 58:13), we gather for the exercise of the ordinary. We seek to engage in the ordinary in a spiritual, extraordinary way (John 4:24) but these activities are still regular and routine.

Ordinary is used by our catechizers in distinction to the extraordinary. God used signs and wonders to confirm His Word, but now salvation comes to us through the ordinary means of grace. The fact that God would use these means to save souls is incredible and mind-blowing. In that sense they are wonderful and beyond ordinary as we might use the word today. Yet we gather every Lord's Day for the ordinary, not for signs and wonders. We must endeavor to delight in the ordinary and not thirst for new things in a way that reveals a discontent for the ordinary.

Such a contented spirit does not preclude a burden for revival. We pray for revival, conscious that if a revival came it would produce great excitement in the church. A thirst for revival is good when it is driven by a burden for God's glory in the saving of sinners. But revivals are rare. They are rare in part because God has sovereignly ordained that they are rare. Of course we want to see God move and we pray for that. But we need to be careful not to despise the constant work of God in the ordinary.

A delight in the ordinary also does not preclude legitimate, fresh attempts to reach sinners. Paul could speak of his ministry as being "made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some" (1 Corinthians 9:22). Although we strive to reach the

unreached in ways within the bounds of scriptural principles, we ought not to see church life in terms of the next special event, meeting, or conference. These things may have a role and be helpful, but they must not convey an attitude that the regular use of the ordinary means is insufficient to accomplish the will of God.

As 2021 ended, I reflected on God's grace in using the ordinary. Children were being raised under the Word and saved by the power of God. The Lord's people faced manifold trials and even death with faith and victory. The Lord's people were kept from falling by the power of God. The ordinary means were used in God's hand to accomplish these things and more.

Rev. Stephen Pollock

.....
"FROM THE PAST"
..... **Louis Berkhof**

"[Reformed churches] deny that the means of grace can of themselves confer grace, as if they were endued with a magical power to produce holiness. God and God only is the efficient cause of salvation. And in the distribution and communication of His grace He is not absolutely bound to the divinely appointed means through which He ordinarily works, but uses them to serve His gracious purposes according to His own free will. But while they do not regard the means of grace as absolutely necessary and indispensable, they strongly oppose the idea that these means may be treated as purely accidental and indifferent and can be neglected with impunity. God has appointed them as the ordinary means through which He works His grace in the hearts of sinners, and their willful neglect can only result in spiritual loss."

THE CHRISTIAN'S TEARS

One old Puritan said, "God has given us eyes for two things, at least: one for to see and the other for to weep." The truth of the matter is, we need to be able to do both. How difficult life would be if we had no eyes to see. And how very difficult life would be if we had no eyes as outlets for the pain, sorrow, and grief of our souls! God has so made us that our tears begin to gush forth when we need to express grief and pain.

In the Word of God we find many references to tears. The last of them all is the great voice from heaven that tells the apostle John, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes" (Revelation 21:4). John had been exiled to the bleak and lonely island of Patmos by the Roman Emperor Domitian. The early church fathers tell us that in his old age John was forced to labor in the mines of Patmos. It must have been a great affliction for the apostle, but we never read any mention of him weeping until chapter 5 when he is shown a sealed book that no man can open. John says that he "wept much." When we come to chapter 21, John sees how everything is going to end. It must have thrilled his soul to hear the words, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

The Bible does not reveal very much about the heavenly state. When the saints see Glory, they will echo the words of the Queen of Sheba: "The half was not told me." As John watches the new Jerusalem descending from God out of heaven, he hears a great voice. The first thing the voice says is that Christ and His people will dwell together forever and ever, and He will be their God. And the very first thing that Christ will do is "wipe away all tears" from the eyes of His people. Clearly, Christ is very interested in our tears. **Our tears are of great concern to Him—they are very precious to Him.**

The picture being painted is that of a son who comes home from a long battle. He suffered many a wound and many a defeat. At times he felt he would never see home again, that he would die on the battlefield. But finally, he makes it home and, as he walks up to the door, his face is bathed in tears. There at the door stands his father with a big handkerchief ready to gently wipe away all the tears from

his son's eyes. Samuel Rutherford spoke the truth when he wrote, "Tears will follow us to heaven; unto the very entry of the door our face shall be wet."

Too often we doubt that Christ is deeply concerned with our tears. Why does He bring all the heartaches, disappointments, and fiery trials into our lives? Why doesn't God just make us happy all the time, or at least most of the time? We seem to take up the words of the disciples that night on that storm-tossed sea when they questioned whether the Lord cared for them. But we say, "Carest thou not that we weep?" Oh, if only we knew better the heart of Christ! If only we would cling to the truth that our tears are very precious to Him!

David understood that our tears are precious to God when he prayed, "Put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?" (Psalm 56:8) David is referring to a lachrymatory, or tear bottle, in which surviving relatives dropped their tears for their deceased loved ones. David wept many tears in the place of prayer and alludes to God catching his tears in His bottle. We can infer from this that Christ never lets our tears fall to the ground as if they were of no interest to Him. He catches them all and puts them into His bottle, never to forget them. We have shed many tears over the years. We shed tears over things we've forgotten all about. But God hasn't forgotten one tear!


Our tears are written in God's book. They are written in His book because they are part of His purpose. He determines the kind of tears we shall cry, how long they shall last, and what cause they shall serve. Our tears are also in God's book because they are part of His providence. All our tears are made to work for our good and His glory. If my spiritual life and useful-

ness to God at any given time will be increased more by my grief than my joy, then I would be unwise to wish those tears away.

Our Savior knows and remembers what it is like to have sorrow that leaves the face covered in tears! He wept with Mary and Martha at the grave of Lazarus. He wept over the city of Jerusalem. He wept with "strong cryings and tears" in Gethsemane. He understands what our tears are all about. And they move His hand! In 2 Kings 20 we read that Hezekiah was sick unto death. Isaiah told him to prepare to die. Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the Lord. He "wept sore" (2 Kings 20:3). Isaiah had scarcely left the king when God told him to go back and tell Hezekiah, "I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee" (2 Kings 20:5). No child of God should ever think that his tears are not precious to the Lord.

Think for a moment of the causes of our tears. Some tears flow from our sin. We must all confess that Peter's experience of bitterly weeping over personal sin and failure has often been our own. How often have we come to the Lord in tears and asked Him to forgive us for the misuse of our tongues, for our coldness of heart, for our prayerlessness, for our sin of not trusting Him, for our anger, our pride, and our lusts. Through our sin we lose touch with the Lord, grieve the Holy Spirit, and quench His work in our life. Our souls are weighed down with guilt and with guilt there is misery. Out of misery, tears flow and we weep time and again before the Lord. But He comes every time with His handkerchief, wiping away our tears and assuring us, "You are forgiven. Go and sin no more."

Other tears flow from our storms. We just don't like them and we don't want them. Our preference



At times the Lord will wipe away our tears in this life by removing the very thing that's causing the weeping. But most of all Christ dries our tears by bringing us into close communion with Himself. He reminds us:

"I'm still here. I'm still for you. I still love you."

would be for sunshine every day of our lives. But God knows what is best for us. He sends the clouds, the wind, the thunder, the lightning, and the waves. Our lives are tossed about, and we fear that we're going to sink. We come to that place mentioned by the Psalmist: "They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end" (Psalm 107:27). Sometimes it's the storm of bodily affliction or dark turns of providence. At other times the storms occur at home in the marriage or with the children. The believer is not exempt from storms arising at work or in the church. But our unbelieving cries of "Carest thou not?" should and can be turned into a cry of faith where we "cry unto the LORD in [our] trouble," with the assurance that "he bringeth [us] out of [our] distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still" (Psalm 107:28–29).

The best place to go with our tears is to Christ because He alone is the great tear-wiper! He has all kinds of ways to dry our tears. His handkerchief is quite unlike ours. He dries our tears by bringing us to that place where we are completely resigned to His will, whatever that will may be. Often the reason for our tears is our own

self-will. We don't like (or want) what God is doing and, like the children of Israel in the wilderness, we weep bitterly. But, by grace, we trust our wise and loving Savior and bow our wills to His will. It's then the tears stop flowing and we can be content with what He gives.

Christ enables us to look away from the secondary cause of our tears and to look at the great end He is going to accomplish through the very thing that is making us weep. The Lord is able to make us think with joy on the truth that all these things are going to work together for our good (Romans 8:28). We will be able then to look at the rod of correction as that divine instrument that brings forth the "peaceable fruits of righteousness."

At times the Lord will wipe away our tears in this life by removing the very thing that's causing the weeping. But most of all Christ dries our tears by bringing us into close communion with Himself. He reminds us: "I'm still here. I'm still for you. I still love you."

Christ Himself encourages us that, though tears flow now, a day is coming when God will use His handkerchief for the last time. "And God shall wipe away all tears from

their eyes." **He will wipe away all tears—not many or most.** He will wipe away all tears forever—not just for the time being. This truth is somewhat strange yet sure. It is strange in that we might think that being made perfect would only make tears more likely. Our regret for sin and missed opportunities and the thought of Christ suffering on Calvary because of our sins make Christians weep in this world. But that will not be true in the world to come. It is also a strange truth because we will have hearts that are perfectly tender, and yet we will not weep over lost loved ones who have been condemned to hell. Finally, it is strange that there won't be any tears of joy either. "All tears" means just that.

Yet this truth is sure. As strange and incomprehensible as it may seem, it is something that is as sure, as certain as the throne of God! The source of all sorrow will be forever removed. "The former things are passed away." Sin, sickness, and Satan will be no more. Christ, the source of our joy, remains forever. It is being forever in the presence of Christ that will ensure that our tears never return.

..... Rev. John Wagner
Former pastor of Columbia FPC, SC

PRESBYTERY REPORT



Rev. J. Boyle and
Mr R. Sosa

After a two-year gap there was great joy as several members of the presbytery gathered in Indianapolis for a week of prayer and presbytery meetings. With the joy was a sense of sadness at the absence of the brethren from Canada who couldn't travel due to Covid-related travel restrictions. They were able to join remotely via Zoom and for that we are thankful.

The seasons of preaching and prayer were marked by the Lord's presence. It was the general testimony that the preachers had known the Lord's direction and the messages dovetailed together. There was the fresh recognition that we must humbly rely on the Lord and thirst for His grace in our lives and churches. Naturally, there was much prayer offered for the vacant pulpits. At the same time, we gave thanks for the men studying in the seminary. There are seven students, five of whom are under the care of the presbytery.

One of the decisions made during the week was to accept Mr. Bobby Rowe under presbytery's care for ministerial training. Mr. Rowe is from Washington State, but has lived in Greenville, SC for several years.

Rev. Jason Boyle was able to attend the meetings and he undoubtedly rejoiced as Mr. Ramón Sosa (Dominican Republic) was licensed for the ministry under the Free Presbyterian Church of North America. When Rev. Boyle commenced the pioneer work in Mexico, he could not have anticipated the interest that the work stimulated among other men outside our denomination. One of the first to make contact was Mr. Sosa. After completing a course of study under Geneva Reformed Seminary, he has now been licensed. Along with his request for licensing came a request from the church he pastors to be constituted as a Free Presbyterian Church. These are exciting times for the Lord's work in the Dominican Republic and much wisdom is needed in every consideration of the Lord's will.

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (James 1:5)

As is reported on this page, the presbytery made another significant decision during its meetings. Rev. Reggie Kimbro was appointed to serve as President of Geneva Reformed Seminary until the end of this academic year. This is a vital role for the future of the denomination and Rev. Kimbro covets the prayers of the Lord's people.

..... Rev. Stephen Pollock
Clerk of Presbytery

SPRING 2022

Rev. Reggie Kimbro was appointed president of the Geneva Reformed Seminary (GRS) in Greenville, South Carolina, at the October meeting of the presidency of the Free Presbyterian Church of North America (FPCNA).

While in this new role, Mr. Kimbro will continue serving as pastor of Grace Free Presbyterian Church in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. He succeeds Dr. Mark Allison, who passed away in April, 2021.

A native of Winston-Salem, Mr. Kimbro received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Bible and Master of Arts degree in Theology from Bob Jones University. In 1987, he earned the Master of Divinity degree from the Whitefield College of the Bible through its satellite campus in Greenville. He also holds the Master of Theology degree from Wales Evangelical School of Theology.

Mr. Kimbro grew up in a Christian home and under the teaching ministry of a good Bible-believing church. Of his conversion he writes, "I believe I was converted at a very young age, but I was particularly challenged about the direction of my life and drawn closer to the Lord at the age of sixteen. After graduating from high school, I enrolled in BJU and majored in Bible. It was during my freshman year that I became more burdened about the condition of the church (both theologically and practically) and also sensed the Lord's call to the ministry. During that same season, I was invited to attend Faith Free Presbyterian Church in Greenville. I found there in the Christ-centered preaching of the Reformed faith the answers to my questions. I have often commented that I thank the Lord for bringing me into the doctrines of grace when He did and where He did."

Mr. Kimbro met his wife, Jan, while in college, and they married in August, 1983. Mrs. Kimbro grew up in a faithful minister's home and has provided much grace and experience in ministry-related life. The Kimbros have three married and seven grandchildren.

Our new president planted Grace Free Presbyterian Church in 1987 and says, "The Lord has blessed us with a faithful and happy congregation where we continue to serve, now to some second-generation members and their families."

Mr. Kimbro is no stranger to GRS having served as adjunct professor for almost twenty years. He has taught courses in Theology, English Bible, and Practical Theology. GRS continues to serve students both from within and without our denomination with adjunct and visiting professors. Mr. Kimbro plans to be on site each week and will maintain his teaching position on the adjunct faculty. He writes, "It is my strong desire that GRS continue its tradition of seeking to provide a full seminary offering built upon the Westminster Confessional Standards with strong emphases in Systematic Theology, Homiletics, and the practical out-workings of the gospel, all provided in a conservative and faithful, scriptural environment. It is our desire not only to equip men academically, and thus engage the mind, but also to equip and challenge them spiritually so that they may become faithful shepherds of the flock of God by not only preaching Christ but reflecting Christ in word and deed."

In addition to his duties as a minister and faculty member, Mr. Kimbro has held the offices of moderator, deputy moderator, and committee chairman in the FPCNA. He has authored two small theological books entitled *The Gospel According to Dispensationalism*, and *Not as a Thief: A Historic Premillennial Perspective on the Rapture*.

Dr. Ed Dunbar
(Member of
FPCNA Seminary
Committee)



Rev. Reggie Kimbro

THE CHRISTIAN AND POT

If you were to plot the use of cannabis in the United States, you would find a decrease in usage from the late 1970s through the early 1990s. Since then, there has been a steady increase. This correlates with the decriminalization of usage in some states and the full legalization in others. The impact of this change in the minds of some is to see cannabis/marijuana as harmless. It's hard to believe but some Christians are slow to express opposition to use. In the thinking of some, cannabis is an organic substance, part of God's creation and so can be happily enjoyed. They continue to observe that it is "safer" than alcohol and is beneficial to many. Furthermore, cannabis isn't expressly mentioned in the Bible, so it must come under the category of Christian liberty. To these people, to use or not to use is a matter for personal conscience.

Before considering such thinking there are some areas that need clarity. There are two important substances derived from cannabis plants. Cannabidiol (CBD) and tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), are natural compounds found in plants of the Cannabis genus. CBD can be purchased in various forms in many stores. It is promoted for its various health benefits. CBD products may not contain THC, which is the psychoactive compound in the various forms of marijuana. Are cannabis derivatives helpful in some medical conditions? Perhaps! Some people, with certain conditions may receive benefit from using CBD. If so, such usage would not be forbidden from scriptural principle. It is interesting, however, that some are suggesting that the maximum medical benefit is achieved when THC is also present in the product.

If we allow that there may be medical benefit, the believer will surely want to avoid any use of THC. THC is the psychoactive compound that produces the perceived en-

joyment in the recreational use of marijuana. People testify that using marijuana produces feelings of relaxation and euphoria. They may feel creative, more easily amused. Some report heightened sensitivity to light, color, sound, touch, taste, and smell; however, alongside these supposed benefits can come anxiety and confusion, along with cardiovascular and gastrointestinal side effects. How someone reacts will depend upon the dose and strain of the product; how it is consumed—smoked, vaped, ingested; age; gender and physiology. We need to question how harmless marijuana is especially with increasing amounts of THC in today's available products.

There are clearly physically harmful consequences for some people. Usage in young people with developing brains has been associated with psychosis and schizophrenia. Sleep disturbance has been reported in all ages. Smoking causes many of the same effects as smoking tobacco and we still await data about cancer causation. Add to this the impact of driving when stoned and you see the reason for strong concerns about the use of marijuana. We must not ignore the issue of dependency and addiction. The numbers reported vary. One in 10 or perhaps 1 in 6 users may suffer addiction with the risk higher in younger users. Beyond addiction many report dependence—an unwillingness to stop using due to feeling better when using and adverse symptoms when not using. As the Apostle Paul considers his liberty in Christ, he excludes anything that would control him in some addictive fashion. "I will not be brought under the power of any" (1 Corinthians 6:12).

What I believe to be most persuasive is a comparison of the effects of cannabis use with the biblical standard for Christian living. You will all be aware of the caricature of the stoned individual on a couch. For once a caricature accurately presents reality. The one stoned is less attentive, less alert, less dis-

cerning, and less self-controlled. Surely these consequences are the very opposite of what is expected of the believer. "They that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation" (1 Thessalonians 5:7b-8). **The believer is to exercise a life of continual self-control and sobriety.** The effects of marijuana are the opposite of a life of spiritual vigilance and vitality. As such, marijuana use opens the doors for the user to walk into rooms containing other harmful substances, immorality, and sluggishness to name but a few.

Life presents many challenges and in this stressful world many want to escape. Marijuana is the go-to escape drug. But to escape from this world's troubles in such a way is to escape into danger. The Christian perceives the danger and so resolves to live a life of vigilance.

"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:13).

Rev. Stephen Pollock

Minister of FPC Malvern, PA
and Editor of *Current*



Christian School in Liberia

We are continuing to pray and prepare for the establishment of a Christian school in Liberia. I am very thankful for the FPCNA Mission Board's approval and encouragement for the Pilot Project, and for the amazing support from all of our North American churches. This has been evident in the funds raised, as well as in the messages of encouragement and offers of help.

We were unable to start school in September 2021 as initially intended because the government could not confirm that they would be taking down our current rented structure. They have now confirmed it, and the landlord is presently building a new structure further back on the property with our additional five-year lease funds. This new structure will house the church, a single classroom, and the bookstore. **Our hope is to commence the school in September 2022.**

In many ways we can see the providence of God in this delay because Covid-19 brought additional uncertainty. For example, graduating seniors were still taking national exams throughout September 2021, and the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year was pushed back several times by the Ministry of Education.

When the decision was made to postpone the school opening until September 2022, the Ulster Mission Board asked me to do deputation work in Northern Ireland for a few months which had originally been on the calendar for the fall of 2022. Completing this before our school opens means that I will not have a prolonged period of absence for several years, God willing.

I have spent a lot of time over the past year in preparation for the Christian School Pilot Project. This has included preparing a report and school video for deputation. I've been able to make several visits to the Ministry of Education (both national and district offices) to build relationships, gather information, and start the process of obtaining an operational permit.

Along with curriculum development, Rev. DiCanio and I have been working on documents like our school's Statement of Faith, Philosophy Statement, and Handbooks. We have also been gathering and ordering materials as well as making decisions about the school logo, uniforms, and advertising options. Recently, I was excited to hear that two shipments of materials, which had been delayed for six months due to global Covid-related shipping delays, have now reached Liberia.

Please be in prayer for the school. One particular area of need is the provision and training of teachers. I have been planning and gathering resources for an intensive teacher training program. When I return to Liberia in early April, I will need to begin the hiring process.

In this whole venture, it is our desire to labor for the glory of God that Christ may be preeminent and young souls may come to Christ and grow in grace.

Miss Joanne Greer
Missionary, Liberia



.....THE SOLUTION TO POLLUTION.....

The Old Testament Law includes extensive instructions for the Jewish people regarding what is “unclean,” how one becomes “unclean” and how to become “clean” again. The ceremonial cleansing by washing with water prefigures spiritually being washed in the blood of the Lamb of God to be cleansed of sin. While the practices are ceremonial, teaching the necessity of spiritual cleanness for a proper relationship with a holy God, they also have hygienic benefits. Limiting contact with the “unclean” and the prescribed washings made ancient Jews among the cleanest of peoples.

Pollution is not a modern problem. While the palaces and wealthy homes in ancient cities may have been clean, the streets and the nearby areas were generally polluted with everything from rotting table scraps and animal carcasses to excrement of all natures. With the inhabitants seeking to remain “clean,” Jerusalem and other Jewish cities lacked such pollution.

The old walled city of Jerusalem had several gates. A small one near the Temple was called the Dung Gate (Nehemiah 3:13-14, 12:31). The refuse of the city and the waste of the Temple sacrifices were carted through this gate to a place in the valley of Kidron where it was burned (2 Kings 23: 4-7).

Hygienic practices were not only to be observed when they were convenient. Part of a Jewish soldier’s equipment was to be a wooden spade. When he needed to relieve himself, he was to go outside the camp, dig a hole, and bury his excrement (Deuteronomy 23:12).

Natural Pollutants

Pollution happens when there is so much of something in a place that it affects the natural workings of the environment. A neighbor’s sound system causes noise pollution if it bothers you. Potential solutions for this are simple. He

could adjust the volume or use earphones; you could use earplugs or move. Other pollution problems do not have as many evident solutions.

Today natural sewage, like that produced in ancient cities, is considered a biodegradable pollutant. Decomposer organisms, like bacteria and fungi, break down natural sewage into nutrients needed by other living things. An area would be polluted when it has so much biodegradable material that the decomposer organisms get significantly behind in their work. Generally the solution is to get the sewage to a place where the decomposers can do their work without adversely affecting an environment. That, essentially, is what modern sewage treatment plants do.

Sewage treatment is not a new concept. There is archeological evidence that as early as David’s reign, run-off and wastewater from Jerusalem was collected in ponds or settling basins. The sediment was used to fertilize fields and the water irrigated crops. Other Jewish cities had similar facilities.

Burning of natural biodegradable substances releases gasses and particles into the air. These are normal parts of the air and are dispersed by wind. While living downwind from Kidron’s waste dump may not have been pleasant or even healthy, most of the materials in the smoke were natural parts of the environment. Eventually the particulates fall (often attached to rain) and can be used by living things. For natural biodegradable substances, the solution to this pollution is some form of natural or assisted dilution. That is not the case with many man-made materials.

Modern Pollutants

Today we have an increasing abundance of materials that do not naturally decompose. For example, glass, aluminum, plastics, Styro-foam, and rubber are non-biode-

gradable substances. When no longer useful they often collect and thus pollute the environment.

Burning plastics, tires, and many man-made substances puts pollutants not found in any natural environment into the air. They will eventually fall somewhere. When small amounts of these substances are diluted in the atmosphere, the fallout may be unnoticeable. However, in time, massive amounts of these pollutants can build up and so pollute downwind environments that certain living things do not survive. For many non-biodegradable substances the solution to pollution is not dilution.

Today we also produce hazardous wastes: substances which harm living things that are exposed to them. While some hazardous wastes eventually deteriorate to non-hazardous substances, others do not. In the past, production of certain paints produced a stable hazardous waste which, even in tiny amounts, killed living things. To dispose of this type of waste, many producers placed them in containers and purchased remote sections of land on which to store the containers. In time the containers deteriorated, and the hazardous wastes leaked into the environment. Cleaning these “toxic waste sites” was a political, economic, and ecological nightmare. Nuclear power also produces hazardous wastes. Governments seem to do a better job of containing nuclear wastes, but they are still a significant problem.

Ancient Jews had no experience with non-biodegradable or hazardous wastes. The clean and unclean designations do not appear to apply to plastics that have served their purpose or to nuclear wastes. Seeking to modernize the Mosaic law, various Jewish rabbis have addressed the issue; however, they are adding their interpretations to the Law, a practice Christ condemns (Mark 7:1-23).

Some Christians assume that since

God did not directly tell us how to deal with these substances they must be “worldly” and should be banned, or at least avoided. Essentially, these people are taking the position that, since there is no natural way to deal with these pollutants, humans have crossed the line regarding what we may and may not do with the physical world. Is there such a line? That will be a topic in the next article of this series.

Science to the Rescue – Sort Of

Science does a pretty good job of eventually solving many physical problems. That, after all, is the God-ordained purpose of science. Problems with many variables often take time to solve—but eventually answers surface. Occasionally when more is learned, an apparent answer needs to be modified or completely discarded. This has often happened with pollution solutions, and has been the source of science receiving bad public relations. Another problem with acceptance of science-based suggestions is that they are usually more expensive and less convenient. More negative PR for science.

One method of solving a pollution problem is to produce less or none

of the pollutant. When the companies responsible for toxic waste sites were forced to spend vast amounts of money to clean them, methods of producing their product without the hazardous by-product were soon found. It often made the products more expensive, but it was cheaper than toxic waste cleanup.

Plastic is another matter. Much of it does not recycle well, and by design plastics are environmentally stable. Although we are encouraged to use less of it, plastic is so cheap and convenient that we have become addicted to its use. Scientists are working on solutions. There are a few possibilities on the somewhat distant horizon.

Another method of solving a pollution problem is to recycle. This has met with different degrees of success. Reusing glass containers works well. Aluminum collection and reprocessing may soon be cheaper than mining more aluminum—which will greatly foster its recycling.

To save trees, paper recycling became popular. Ecologically, however, it was costly. The collection and processing needed to convert waste paper into usable paper or

other products requires significant resources. Tree farms to produce paper proved more sound both ecologically and financially.

A Christian Response

Is God looking down from heaven, shaking His head, saying “If I had known they were going to go this far, I would have given them more detailed instructions”? No! He knows the end from the beginning. Nothing catches Him by surprise. He knew about these pollutants long before He closed the Scriptural canon. **The Bible contains what we need to know to live a life pleasing to Him.**

Does Scripture address the cutting back on production of non-biodegradable pollutants, the elimination of hazardous wastes, or recycling? Do not bother looking up these terms in a Bible concordance—they are not there. But just because the terms and the conditions they describe are of modern origin does not mean that principles that can be applied to them are not found in Scripture.

Just how “green” should a Christian be? Lord willing, that will be the topic of the final article in this series.

Mr. William Pinkston served as a science teacher at Bob Jones Academy for 50 years. He is a charter member of Faith Free Presbyterian Church of Greenville, SC.

youth camp

JULY 16-23, 2022

**Rock Mountain Bible Camp,
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**Contact any FPC minister or
info@faithfpc.org for details**



KEY VERSE:

“And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do” (Genesis 11:6).

SUMMARY

The history of God confounding the languages at the tower of Babel is vital to understand the division of peoples in the world. This chapter records God’s disruption of man’s rebellious plan to raise an edifice in defiance of God. The united efforts of men under Nimrod’s leadership were idolatrous and anti-God. By pooling their talents and resources, they sought to live without the true God. Their man-centred goal was rebellious to God’s command to subdue the earth. God, therefore, confounded their language throwing them into confusion. As a result of God’s judgment by a direct miracle upon the minds of the people they could only find fellowship and support with others of the same speech. This confounding of languages reduced their abilities and their resources forcing them to abandon their prideful attempt to build the tower of Babel. It also forced them to dwell apart leading them to form separate nations. From the genealogy found in verses 10–26 we learn that the scattering of the people took place about 100 years after Noah’s flood and that Abraham was born 292 years after the flood. All of the men listed in this genealogy were still alive when Abraham was born. This history provides a definite link between the date of the flood and God’s call to Abraham to leave Ur of the Chaldees to form a new and separate nation to worship and serve God.

OBSERVATIONS

The gift of language sets men apart from the animal world.

There is a vast difference between the chatter of animals and the human ability to communicate specific information and ideas clearly to one-another by words uttered from the lip. Evolutionists do not know how to explain the origin of man’s capability to communicate by speech. The Genesis record of man’s creation in God’s likeness answers this question for the Bible reader. God created man to enjoy the knowledge of God and communicate it by human language. God speaks to men through the Scriptures written in the very language of men. The whole gospel is based on God’s

Word, His written revelation. The apostle Paul stated that the gift of salvation comes to man’s heart and mind through God’s inspired Word, “So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17).

God’s confusing the language of the people was a definite judgment on their rebellion.

Man’s ability to communicate through one language was misused in a concerted effort to defy God. When the people migrated to the land of Shinar, they sought to establish a centre of human achievement. They chose a flat plain in the land of Shinar, they devised kiln-dried or sun-dried

brick that enabled them to build to greater heights. They planned a whole city with an impressive tower. By exercising political pressure to keep the people united they were as one people following their own imagination (11:6). This reference to man’s imagination reminds us of events prior to Noah’s flood, when “every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (6:5). Fallen man is incapable of guiding himself without the light of God’s Word. Left to his own thinking he will always depart from God.

The rebellious city was named Babel due to the confusion of languages. The record clearly

states that the name is derived from God's act of confounding the language of the people. "Therefore is the name of it called Babel..." (11:9). The name Babel is synonymous with Babylon, that city and religious system that reappears throughout the Bible in rebellion to God. The fact that the project at the first Babel was confounded and brought to a speedy end sets forth the doom of every body of people that defies God. At the end of the world "mystery Babylon" falls (Revelation 18:2).

The genealogy of the family line of Shem through to the birth of Abraham settles dates for a young earth. Just as Genesis 5 provides a timeline for the years between the creation of Adam and Noah's flood, so Genesis 11 provides a timeline between the date of Noah's flood and the birth of Abraham. By working from the year of the flood, and by adding

the year of each man's birth, with his father's age at the time of his birth, we arrive at 100 years after the flood as an approximate date when God sent confusion of languages at Babel (11:10-16). Remember that Peleg received his name as a result of the division of the earth, which we interpreted to be from the result of God confounding the languages (10:25).

By the same method, we arrive at 352 years from Noah's flood until Abraham's birth. That makes the year of Abraham's birth to be 2008 years after creation. To assist our memories, we may round this timeframe from Creation to Abraham to 2000 years. The history of the earth and the history of man is settled within these eleven chapters of God's inspired word. By all standards, the Genesis record reveals a young earth. As creationists, here we take our stand.

Genealogy of Genesis 11:10-26

NAME	FATHER'S AGE WHEN BORN	YEAR OF BIRTH AFTER THE FLOOD
Arphaxad		2
Salah	35	37
Eber	30	67
Peleg	34	101
Reu	30	131
Serug	32	163
Nahor	30	193
Terah	29	222
Abraham	130	352
		1656 The year of the flood after Creation
		2008 The year of Abraham's birth after Creation

We set the year of Abraham's birth by reconciling what is recorded in Acts 7:4 with Genesis 11:32. While Genesis 11:26, records that, "...Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran," it is likely that Abraham was listed first by order of importance, not the order of birth.

APPLICATION

In light of God's great gift of language, we must use this faculty of speech to study God's Word to worship Him in Spirit and in truth. **Making good use of the Word of God is vital to our faith and walk with God.** We must not misuse this gift of speech for we shall give account of every idle word. We should use every opportunity to evangelize through our words.

"Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man" (Colossians 4:6)

Rev. Ian Goligher
Retired Minister, formerly Cloverdale FPC, BC

SPRING 2022



GENESIS 11

TC TEEN CONNECTION

By Rev. Derrick Bowman

DISCERNMENT Part One

At the July 2021 Youth Camp, the theme was truth. Each minister preached about truth from John's gospel. God is true, and His word is true, but as fallen sinners, sometimes we have difficulty discerning what is true. Thankfully, the Bible gives us guidance to discern between truth and error. Consider the following verses and notice the words approve, prove, discern, and the contrast between good and evil:

Philippians 1:9-10, "And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent."

Paul prayed that the Philippian believers would abound in "judgment." That is one of the New Testament words for discernment. He prayed that they would be able to "approve things that are excellent." Sometimes your choices are not necessarily between good and evil, but between what is good and what is best. A discerning person will do what is best.

I Thessalonians 5:21-22, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil." By being discerning, you will be able to know what the good things are that you should "hold fast," and will know the evil things

that you should always avoid. (See Romans 12:9.)

"Walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord" (Ephesians 5:8b – 10). This verse teaches us that there are things that are acceptable to the Lord, and that means that there are obviously things that are NOT acceptable to the Lord. As a discerning young person, you will be able to figure out the difference between what is acceptable and what is not acceptable to the Lord by applying the truth of Scripture to every situation. (See Romans 12:2.)

Hebrews 5:14 teaches, "But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." This is a verse that I will deal with more extensively in a future article because it teaches us that discernment is a skill that can be learned. You can exercise it like a muscle.

One author defines discernment as "the skill of understanding and applying God's Word with the purpose of separating truth from error and right from wrong." Every day you are faced with these choices. You are bombarded with

news and information. Some of it is true, but some is false. When you go shopping, you need to discern if the clothing you want to buy is modest or not. You need discernment in choosing your friends and the people you hang out with. All these areas of life require biblical thinking and good spiritual discernment.

Let's explore the area of friendships as an example. Who are your closest friends, and what is their character? If your closest friends are the ones in your school or youth group that have a reputation for being rebellious and complaining about the rules, then you should think long and hard about the value you place in that friendship. Some teenagers are naive in thinking that they won't be pulled down by the bad influence of others. It's simply not true. You need to exercise discernment in the friendships that you develop.

The Bible teaches us that we should be kind and loving to everyone, but that does not mean that we should be friends with everyone. Sometimes it is necessary to avoid certain people who will not build you up and edify you spiritually. Balancing a desire to be a good testimony to them while avoiding being influenced by their bad behavior can be difficult.

I would remind you about the words in 1 Thessalonians 5:22, “Abstain from all appearance of evil.” When other people see you constantly hanging around the “bad crowd,” what are they supposed to assume about your character as well? Of course you can be light in the darkness, but practically speaking it seldom works out that way. Too often, their bad influence is too strong and you will be pulled down. In that case, it is best to simply avoid those

people and seek other godly young people who will build you up in the Lord.

There are so many other case studies that we could discuss here, but the point is clear. You need to learn discernment in every area of life. Just as Paul prayed for the Philippian believers, my prayer for you is that you would “abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment” and that you “may approve things that are excellent.”



Question: “Is it important for a teenager to tithe?”

Answer: The short answer is yes. Think about it this way: Whose money is it anyway? If you see it as your money that you earned by your own skill and power, then you don’t understand where money comes from. Deuteronomy 8:18 says, “But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth.” **You should consider yourself as a steward of the Lord’s money.** Tithing to your local church is part of being a good steward. Tithing is something that you should get in the habit of early in life. I remember as a boy my parents taught me to tithe 10%, save 10%, and live on the rest. That’s good advice, and it’s biblical advice too. In my opinion, 10% is not a rule. I think 10% is a good starting point, but I don’t think that you need to get out your calculator every time you get paid. Your tithe goes to your local church. An offering is different. An offering is money above your tithe that you would give to a missionary or other special church project. **Always remember that “God loveth a cheerful giver.”**

Question: “How can I know if I am spending too much time on social media?”

Answer: I think most people spend too much time on social media, so you probably are. To be more serious though, I think this question is more about your priorities than it is anything else. During a recent message, Pastor Reggie Kimbro asked, “What do you think about when you don’t have anything else to think about?” That’s a good question. **The Lord tells us to “seek ye first the kingdom of God.”** Paul tells us to “set your affection on things above.” If during every idle moment the first thing you turn to is your phone to check social media, that is a problem. This is not a teenager problem. Almost everyone I know has this problem. A practical solution might be to set specific boundaries for yourself. For example, after 9:00 p.m., just put your phone away. Make it a point to spend time with the people in your own home rather than your friends on the other side of the country. Social media can have its proper place, but it can also turn into an addiction. **Prayerfully consider what your priorities are.**

If you would like to submit a question, please email Rev. Derrick Bowman at dbowman@gracefreepres.org. If your question is selected, it will be presented anonymously.



BOOK REVIEW

STILL PROTESTING

Dr. D. G. Hart has written an excellent book concerning the importance of the Protestant Reformation and its continuing impact upon the church. His book ***Still Protesting: Why the Reformation Matters*** was motivated by a deep concern for souls influenced by some of the “young, restless, and reformed” that have apostatized into Roman Catholicism.

Briefly surveying the history of the Reformation, he focuses on the central question answered by the reformers, “How can a sinner be right with God?” Martin Luther discovered that justification by faith in Christ alone is the soul-saving issue for time and eternity. By relying on the atoning sacrifice of Christ and resting on His shed blood alone, the believing sinner is justified or declared “not guilty” at the judgment bar of God. Praise God for that wonderful era of church history which brought sin-laden Europe out of the Dark Ages and into the light of God’s Holy Word!

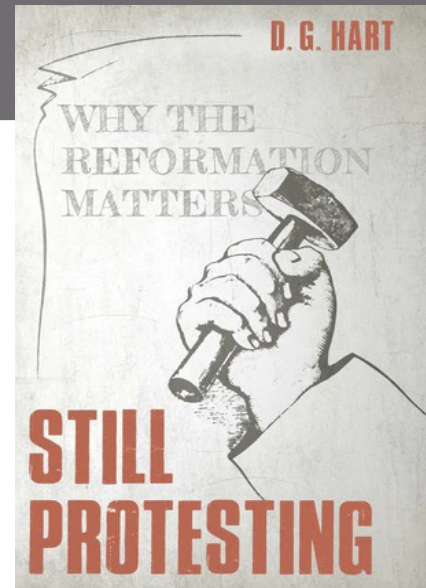
In recent years the Reformation with its blessing of spiritual emancipation has been largely forgotten. A spirit of strong delusion has come over the world. The evidence of this delusion is seen in the conversion to Rome by many young families and Reformed ministers. The most well-known among them is Dr. Scott Hahn. His first book, *Rome Sweet Home*, chronicles his family’s journey into apostasy. Roman Catholic leaders are delighted with the Hahn family and their book. Both are effective tools for leading protestants into “the synagogue of Satan.” While he was a seminary student, he simply asked, “Does the Bible teach anywhere that we must believe only what Scripture says?” It seems that none of his Reformed teachers could quote to him Isaiah 8:20. So Hahn readily accepted the

dogmas of the *Council of Trent*.

In *Still Protesting*, Dr. Hart surveys the three main reasons given by those leaving Reformed denominations to convert to Romanism. First, Rome is the oldest expression of Christianity, they say, because it is the church that Jesus built. Now any Sunday School child knows that Jesus never went to Rome. He ministered in Galilee, Samaria, and Judea. They say that Jesus built His church on Peter the first pope. However, in Matthew 16:18, Jesus literally pronounced Peter a “pebble or stone,” while referring to Himself saying, “Upon this rock (massive boulder) I will build my church.” Neither was Peter infallible, for five verses later Christ rebuked Peter calling him “Satan.” Neither was Peter celibate since he had a mother-in-law (Matthew 8:14).

Next, Catholicism is not divided like Protestantism; however, in 325 AD, the Council of Nicaea failed to bring together the empire-wide catholic church which was divided into Orthodox Christians or the followers of the heretical Bishop Arius. Again in 1054, the Latin-speaking Western Roman Church separated from the Greek-speaking Eastern Orthodox Church. Finally, beginning in 1309, a century-long split within Catholicism existed in two stages: the Babylonian Captivity with two opposing popes and the Great Western Schism with three rival popes. Those popes were sling-ing “Anathemas” or eternal damnations against each other and against any person that supported a rival pope.

Finally, they say, “Roman Catholicism has lovelier buildings in which to worship while Protestant worship buildings are plain and uninspiring.” Teens, twenties and thirty-somethings



have been particularly vulnerable when traveling to Europe or to large cities in the Americas that boast impressive Roman Catholic cathedrals. Their senses are awed by the splendid architecture, the lovely stained glass and the acoustics. They are overwhelmed with a desire to worship regularly in such inspiring places. While feelings are involved in true worship, they are not primary. Spiritual worship occurs when the Spirit of God uses Scripture to move the heart submissively to Almighty God. Roman Catholic places for worship are normally filled with graven images which are forbidden by God’s second commandment.

May the Lord enable Christians, young and old, to carefully examine the Scriptures, to study church history, to listen to godly counsel, and to obey God’s command that historically and prophetically applies to Roman Catholicism, “Come out of her My people” (Revelation 18:4).

***Still Protesting* is available from Reformation Heritage Books for \$14.**

Rev. Myron Mooney

Minister of Trinity FPC, Trinity AL

PROVERBS 31 WOMAN

Have you ever finished reading the virtuous woman portion of Proverbs 31 and felt rather overwhelmed by all her superwoman energy? While I've often felt that I could never measure up to her, a closer look reveals her underlying secret. Being amazed at all she accomplished, we almost miss the one thing needful found in verse 30. "Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain: **but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.**" Matthew Henry notes: "That which completes and crowns her character is that she fears the Lord...which is preferred far before beauty....The fear of God reigning in the heart is the beauty of the soul." That she fears the Lord shows her deep and abiding relationship with Him. Both reverent awe and trusting love for the Lord are involved in fearing Him. Scripture affirms that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge and wisdom; it is the fountain of life that delivers from death and is a refuge for the children of God. Such an excellent and precious woman seemed a rarity during the time of King Lemuel and his mother. Yet the virtuous woman, by fearing the Lord, loves Him with all of her heart, soul, mind, and strength and she loves others as she loves herself.

Continuing on in God's way day by day, she rests securely in God's love to her own soul. **She desires to know Him because she loves Him.** In knowing her God, she becomes strong to do the exploits (Daniel 11:32) cataloged in verses 10-31.

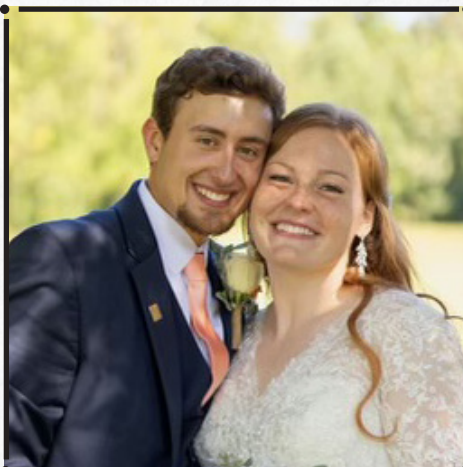
The virtuous woman's loving exploits parallels Paul's instruction to New Testament church women in Titus 2:3-5. She loves her husband, who is blessed indeed when he can fully entrust his heart and worldly goods to her safekeeping. With such a gracious, honorable, and well-intentioned wife supporting him, his wisdom is valued at the city gates (Proverbs 31:23). She loves her children and manages her home with diligence, resourcefulness, industriousness, and preparedness. Her love for others extends to the poor and needy in her community. Her entrepreneurial gifts are used wisely. She speaks with wisdom and kindness. She rejoices in an unknown future because her hope is steadfastly anchored deeply in the Refuge of her soul, the Lord Jesus Christ.

For Christian women reading Proverbs 31:10-31 today, the virtuous woman's life appears to be dauntingly perfect, irrelevant,

and idealistic compared to current womanhood. "Life is messy," we easily admit. I suppose, we could view Proverbs 31 more as a eulogy, a catalog of her many accomplishments over her lifetime, rather than the reality of everyday living. Notice that verses 10-31 are written about a precious, praiseworthy, and much-loved daughter (31:29). Abraham's wife, Sarah, lived a less than perfect life; however, the New Testament writes grace and faith over Sarah's life (Hebrews 11:11; 1 Peter 3:6).

What can we learn from a look at the Proverbs 31 woman? Let us remember that the Scriptures of truth were written for our learning that we through patience and comfort of them might have hope (Romans 15:2). Amid life viewed from cell phones, we need gentle reminders of the power of God's Word. Instead of being lulled by distraction, let us seize opportunities for focused attention to the reading and studying of the Word of God. Intentionally walking in the fear of the Lord with reverent awe and trusting love will grow a rare, praiseworthy beauty of soul in us that glorifies and honors the Lord.

Mrs. Barbara Mooney
Trinity FPC, Trinity AL



Wedding of Mr. Joshua Mooney
to Miss Bonnie Rowe



Birth of Franco
to Frank and Clarissa D'Addurno

DOGS!



Do you have a dog? Dogs (especially puppies) can be so much fun. Did you know that the Bible talks about dogs? There is a lesson we can learn from the Bible's mention of dogs.

Dogs are not like people. They don't have eternal souls. So although we can love our dogs and they can feel like part of our family, we should not value them like people. The Bible says that a righteous man regards the life of his beast (or pet)—so it pleases God for us to be kind to our animals. But it would be wrong for parents to love their dog as much as their children. Dogs are unworthy of that. Jesus used this truth to teach us something important.

One day while Jesus was traveling, a woman chased after him crying and calling to him, "Have mercy on me!" She had a daughter that she loved very much who had been tormented by a devil. She pleaded with Jesus to heal her daughter. At first Jesus ignored her. But she kept crying after Him. Jesus' disciples were irritated by her and asked the Lord

to tell her to go away. But Jesus answered her, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." The children of Israel were God's chosen people. They were to be His sheep and He was their Shepherd. But this woman was an outsider. She fell at Jesus' feet and worshiped Him crying, "Lord, help me!" Jesus looked on her and said "It's not meet [right] to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs."

At first this poor woman may have thought that Jesus was pushing her away because she wasn't one of the children of Israel. She wasn't one of the sheep. Jesus was calling her a dog. But the woman knew that Jesus loved sinners. She knew that He was kind and gentle to all who would come to Him. She believed Him when He said, "**Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out!**" She remembered that those who come to Christ must believe that He rewards those who call upon Him and she knew it would dishonor Him to doubt his mercy. So she continued seeking, bowed, and said "Truth Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which

fall from their master's table." She agreed with Jesus that she was as unworthy as a dog, but she used the example of the dog to tell Jesus that He was her master and that she believed in His power and goodness so much that just a crumb from His table would satisfy her. Jesus smiled at her faith. He said she could have what she asked for, and her daughter was healed that very same hour. He had tested her to see if she understood and believed in His goodness in spite of her unworthiness. She believed!

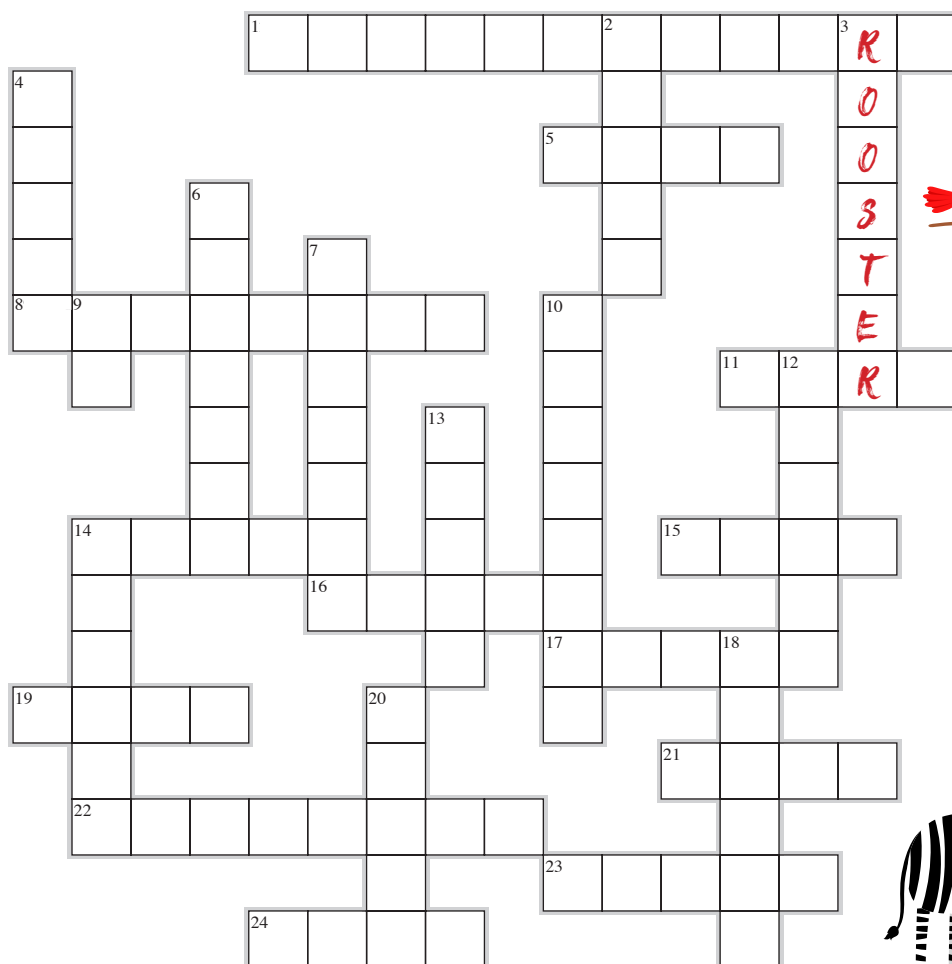
We all need Jesus to save us.

Like this woman, we must believe in Jesus. We must confess that we are unworthy to be called a child of God just like a dog. And then we must believe that Jesus loves sinners and saves those who are unworthy. Jesus loved us so much that He came to die in our place to take the penalty for our sins. His goodness and kindness are greater than all our unworthiness. His grace is greater than all our sin!

..... Mrs. Jan Kimbro
Grace FPC, Winston-Salem, NC

WINNERS
of the fall crossword puzzle:

Maria Messer, Grace FPC (Winston-Salem, NC)
Annabelle Stonger, Reformed Baptist Church of Coleman, Texas
Elissa Thomassian, Faith FPC (Greenville, SC)
Lois Thomassian, Faith FPC (Greenville, SC)



ACROSS

1. The "inhabitants of the earth" are compared to these insects.
5. God created fish, birds, and other living creatures "after their ____."
8. At creation, God gave man ____ over the fish, birds, and animals.
11. At creation, God gave what for the animals to eat?
14. The kind of animals and fowls Noah offered to God on the altar
15. Served at the dinner celebrating the Prodigal Son's return
16. Heaven rejoices over a sinner who repents in the same way a searcher rejoices over finding this one-out-of-a-hundred animal.
17. The Old Testament says the Lord will gather these in His arms.
19. Samson found these in the carcass of a lion he had killed.
21. He named the animals.
22. Even though these birds aren't worth much, God notices them.
23. The first bird Noah sent out of the ark
24. Animal used to chasten a disobedient prophet

DOWN

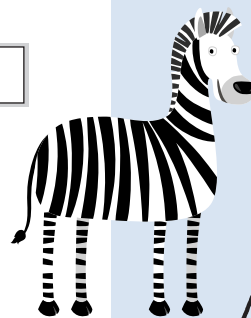
2. Leaf Noah's bird brought back to him
3. Animal God used to remind Peter of his sin
4. Future king who killed a lion and a bear to protect his father's sheep
6. A coin found in the mouth of a fish was used to pay what?
7. Those who could not afford to offer a lamb in sacrifice could offer two of these.
9. Animal that is supposed to get a sabbath rest along with its owner
10. After the flood, God wanted the animals to do this
12. Those who wait on the Lord are compared to these birds
13. When people saw Paul bitten by this animal they expected him to die.
14. A woman who gave water to these animals became Isaac's wife.
18. Animal whose skin was used as a covering on the tabernacle
20. Animals used to show a Persian king that God protects His children

SPRING 2022

Animals in the Bible!



Answers are found in these passages (KJV):
 Genesis 1, 2, 8, & 24;
 Exodus 23;
 Leviticus 5; Numbers 4;
 Judges 14; 1 Samuel 17;
 Isaiah 40; Daniel 6;
 Jonah 1; Matthew 10 & 17;
 Luke 15 & 22; Acts 28



KIDS' CORNER



PLEASE NOTE: Please send your completed puzzle to *Current Kids' Corner, c/o Judy Brown, 651 Ponden Dr., Greer, SC 29650* or to ljsbrown2@gmail.com by **April 17, 2021**. Include your name, address, age, and the name of the church you attend. Please also include an email address in case we need to contact you about your entry. Five winners will be drawn from all correct submissions received. **The contest is open to young people ages 5-12.** Winners will receive a \$10 cash prize.

..... Barriers to Assurance

God's true saints often lack assurance of salvation. There may be various reasons for this. For instance, the trials and troubles of life affect the peace and joy of the Christian. Ultimately the experience of testing may serve to increase assurance—the “afterward” of trial—yet during that time there may be a great sense of insecurity.

In bouts of sickness assurance may be affected. This can be seen in the experience of Job. God permits His people to be tested by numerous tribulations, including bodily illness. In such times we may reach conclusions about our spiritual state which are incorrect. Saints of God have been greatly troubled during periods of sickness. They may feel the Lord has deserted them (Psalm 77:7 -9). But even the worst of troubles are for our benefit and God's glory. The Psalmist did not lose his faith because of affliction. He said, “It is good for me that I have been afflicted that I might learn Thy statutes.” Job was enabled to say: “Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.”

In periods of sadness assurance may be lost. Some experience “spiritual depression” when their souls are “cast down” (Psalm 42:5, 11). The Lord may allow you to experience the emotions of a lost child. You might remember a time when, as a young child, you became separated from your parents in a store or crowded place. Oh, the fear and desolation you felt! Tears flowed. You did not know what to do or where to turn. You believed your parents loved you still, yet you just could not see them. But oh, the joy when you were re-united! There was huge relief when you were back in mother's or father's arms! (Psalm 31:22)

During times of self-abasement assurance may disappear. God's people sometimes engage in fruitless self-examination—morbid introspection. Finding sin and unbelief within they conclude: “I must not be truly saved.” Yet, one need not make such a hasty judgment. The verdict of our own hearts is not always right, since they are so fickle, and prone to reach wrong conclusions. Some will compare themselves to other eminent saints of God. They see the spiritual heights other Christians attain to and feel feeble by comparison, concluding, “Perhaps I am not converted!” Julius Caesar saw the statue of Alexander and uttered a huge sigh, because he himself at that age had done so little. Some Christians are like this. They are discouraged because they have lived so long and done so little for Christ. Such should understand that even they could do all they should, still they would be “unprofitable servants.” Salvation is of grace. Where grace is present unworthiness is felt. Consciousness of sin and confidence in God are often found in the same heart! Do not conclude that you are unregenerate because you feel unworthy. It may be itself an evidence of grace. Sin bothers you now as it never did before. You hate your sins, because now you love the Savior. Instead of listening to the changeable testimony of your own heart, listen to the Word of God (Isaiah 26:3; 1 John 1:9). Augustus Toplady wrote:

A debtor to mercy alone,
Of covenant mercy I sing;
Nor fear, with Thy righteousness on,
My person and offering to bring.

The terrors of law and of God
With me can have nothing to do,
My Saviour's obedience and blood
Hide all my transgressions from view.

The work which His goodness began,
The arm of His strength will complete;
His promise is Yea and Amen,
And never was forfeited yet.

Things future, nor things that are now,
Not all things below or above,
Can make Him His purpose forgo,
Or sever my soul from His love.

Rev. Stephen Hamilton

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Minister of Lehigh Valley FPC, PA