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# FrontLine

BRINGING THE TRUTH HOME

CREATION  
Why It Matters



# Creation—Why It Matters



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Our sincere thanks to Dr. David Shumate for coordinating this issue of *FrontLine* magazine.



Recent rapid changes in American culture were set in motion long ago. Many people failed to see the implications of the theory of evolution and its widespread acceptance. Many theologians followed the siren song of “science falsely so called” (1 Tim. 6:20) and accommodated the theory through “theistic evolution” or the “gap theory.” But the results of seeing evolution as a more scientific theory of origins than Creation are shockingly evident today. For example, biological gender is losing its meaning. It is baffling that supporters of the “science” of climate change reject the science of human anatomy! Paul’s admonition to Timothy should be our guide through the rapid decline of American culture: “O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called” (1 Tim. 6:20).

In the last issue of *FrontLine* we focused on the truth of Scripture concerning Creation. In this issue we focus on why it matters so much, as we address the practical implications of Creation. Our readers who were not able to attend the Annual Fellowship at Colonial Hills Baptist Church in Indianapolis are encouraged to listen to the presentations by Dr. John Whitcomb and the other speakers at [fbfiannualfellowship.org](http://fbfiannualfellowship.org). The conference theme, “Declarations from Our Designer, Focusing on Genesis 1–11,” was wonderfully supported by the conference excursion to the Creation Museum in Northern Kentucky. Thus, through two issues of *FrontLine*, the 2016 Annual Fellowship, and helpful material recently posted on the FBFI blog, [proclaimanddefend.org](http://proclaimanddefend.org), our aim has been to reiterate the truths that an increasing number of Western societies are denying. Short of a new Great Awakening, the history of Western culture may well have been written in Romans 1:18–32. Denying the truth of Genesis 1–11, we have not only exposed ourselves to the wrath of God to come but have followed the very sequence of degradation found in Romans 1. Indeed, “professing themselves to be wise, they became fools” (v. 22).

The articles to follow are a sampling of those that need to be written on the theme, *Creation—Why It Matters*. Dr. Brian Collins establishes the point of this issue in his article “Implications of Interpretation: The Effects of Accommodation” by explaining why science must not overrule Scripture but must submit to it. In “‘We Hold These Truths to Be Self-Evident’: What Does Genesis 1–3 Have to Do with Our System of Government?” Dr. David Shumate<sup>1</sup> shows the unbreakable connection between Creation and the Declaration of Independence, then explains why the Fall demands the governance of the Constitution. Moreover, we recall that when John Whitcomb and Henry Morris produced the seminal work *The Genesis Flood*, the foundation for Creation Science was laid, and biblical Creationism was shown to be fundamental to the Christian faith. In his article

“Remembering *The Genesis Flood*” Dr. Whitcomb recounts the story of how that volume came to be.

Some readers of *FrontLine* may not be aware of the dilemma our chaplains are facing as the military in particular has become a laboratory for social experimentation. The dominoes are falling rapidly. The repeal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” (DADT) not only permitted but practically promoted open homosexuality, encouraging the so-called “LGBTQ”<sup>2</sup> movement to pursue its aggressive agenda.<sup>3</sup> Shortly after the Secretary of Defense announced that all military specialties, including combat roles, were open to all genders, another announcement soon followed that females would need to register for Selective Service after their eighteenth birthday. Thus, we have reprinted, with permission, an article by Dr. Robert Miller USN, Retired, who is the executive director of Hope for America Ministry. The article “Woman as Warrior: Does It Matter?” takes a noticeably Reformed approach to the Old Testament verses used to support its argument, but Dr. Miller’s analysis is very important and well written in light of the truth of God’s purpose in His creative design of mankind as man and woman. Note that both in this article and in the Position Statements we are clarifying for our FBFI chaplains the foundation of their dual-role ministry in either “performing or providing” for the spiritual needs of all military personnel. FBFI has written extensively on the limitations it places on its chaplains in regard to this aggressive agenda. They fulfill their duties, but they neither compromise their convictions nor violate Endorser limitations.

The four articles mentioned above are the core of this issue on “Creation—Why It Matters.” However, most of the rest of this issue further supports this theme. Please read this issue carefully and prayerfully. *FrontLine* is dedicated to shining the light of the truth of God’s Word into an ever-darkening culture where men have lost their way concerning simple and self-evident truth. We ask our readers to pray for us, to continue to subscribe to and support this important magazine, and to share it with others who need to be prepared for what has happened and what is getting worse every day. And, as you pray, don’t despair. Hope in the Lord and rest in His soon coming. Heaven will be exponentially more joyful than earth has ever been bleak.

<sup>1</sup> David R. Shumate coordinated this issue of *FrontLine*, led the team that drafted the Position Statements included in this issue, and is an authority on both Law and Old Testament Interpretation. Note his brief biographical sketch at the end of his article.

<sup>2</sup> Bible believers are loathe to use this acronym or the words it represents. By some accounts this movement boasts variants of these behaviors that number more than thirty identifiable “genders.”

<sup>3</sup> President Obama declared the month of June to be “LGBT Pride Month,” mandating celebrations on military installations.



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**A**ddressed to Chaplain (COL) Joe Willis, the FBFI Associate Endorser:

The FBFI conference was a blessing on so many levels. The highlight for us, though, was the thoughtful tributes paid to Bob [Ellis] for his seventeen years of service [as chaplain recruiter]. The shadow box was a moving gift and one we are certain Bob will treasure. Thank you for the opportunity for Gene to offer a few minutes of tribute and testimony for all that Bob has meant to us and our family for thirty years.

*Gene and Rita Krehl  
McAllen, Texas*

**I** am writing this to thank you for the delightful 96<sup>th</sup> Annual FBFI Fellowship held in Indianapolis. I very much appreciated the God-honoring music, the singing, the fellowship, and especially the timely preaching of God's Word. It was both refreshing and encouraging to me in many ways. I just finished reading a good book that clearly documents how mysticism (via the seeker-sensitive and purpose-driven philosophies) has entered (the front door!) of the professing evangelical church of Jesus Christ in the USA. Sitting among believers that evidenced a desire for "Thus saith the Lord" was a joyful contrast. Creationism, as set forth by a literal, dispensational approach to Scripture, is also very dear to my heart, and the subject could not have been more timely! I in fact did not "budget-wise" have the resources to attend, but I believe God directed, and I am VERY thankful that I was able to be there!

*Ken Bond  
Nashua, NH*

**W**hen I read through the issue on prophecy, I found it helpful as always; thank you! Also, I have an observation/question. I noticed that you have an advertisement for Regular Baptist Press VBS on the back cover. I was just wondering if you have listened to the accompanying music tracks they offer? We haven't ordered from them for two years, primarily because of the music. Our previous experience was that they offered two tracks—one with nice conservative accompaniment, and the other was quite wild. Perhaps that is not an issue for you in regard to advertising, but just wondered if you were aware of it.

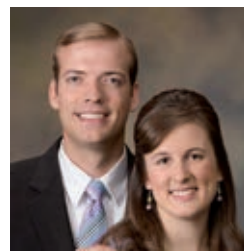
*Pastor Rob Adams  
Westbrook, MN*

**E**nclosed is a copy of the Regular Baptist Press 2010 DVBS soundtrack. I have noted three tracks in particular. I am concerned about *FrontLine* magazine carrying ads from RBP. When I promote

Continued on right

## Jeremy and Caroline Dion

are missionaries on deputation to go to Papua New Guinea with Gospel Fellowship Association (GFA) Missions ([www.gfamissions.org](http://www.gfamissions.org)). Their family is committed to indigenous church planting and national leadership training in the village of Kiari in the remote highlands of PNG ([www.dions2png.org](http://www.dions2png.org)).



June marked the thirty-ninth anniversary of the Bethany Baptist Church in Grand Rapids, Ohio. Its history is unique in that God brought a group of people out of the mainline Methodist movement having to go all the way to the Supreme Court to win a court decision to keep the property and assets. **Pastor Tim Coley and his wife, Leesa**, will celebrate their twenty-sixth year at the church later this summer.

After completing a four-year MDiv program at BJU and a pastoral internship at Faith Baptist Church (Taylors, SC), **Duane and Doris Smith** have returned to their home in Washington State.



Sponsored by GFA and FBC, the Smiths hope to plant an independent Fundamental Baptist church in Bellingham, Washington. Dave and Claudia Barba will assist with this work. Duane is a USMC veteran and former program manager in the oil-refining business.

the magazine, I say in effect, "Folks, if you are an independent, fundamental, separatist Baptist, then this magazine is for you. It stands for what we represent." I'm not totally sure that I can honestly say that and then see an ad promoting the kind of *non-separatist* stuff as this. Personally, I cannot promote RBP for these very reasons.

*Evangelist Ken Lynch  
Taylors, South Carolina*

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** RBP offers a wide range of church publications in a variety of media, including print and recordings among many other items. All pastors and members of churches who are readers of *FrontLine* should

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# Implications of Interpretation

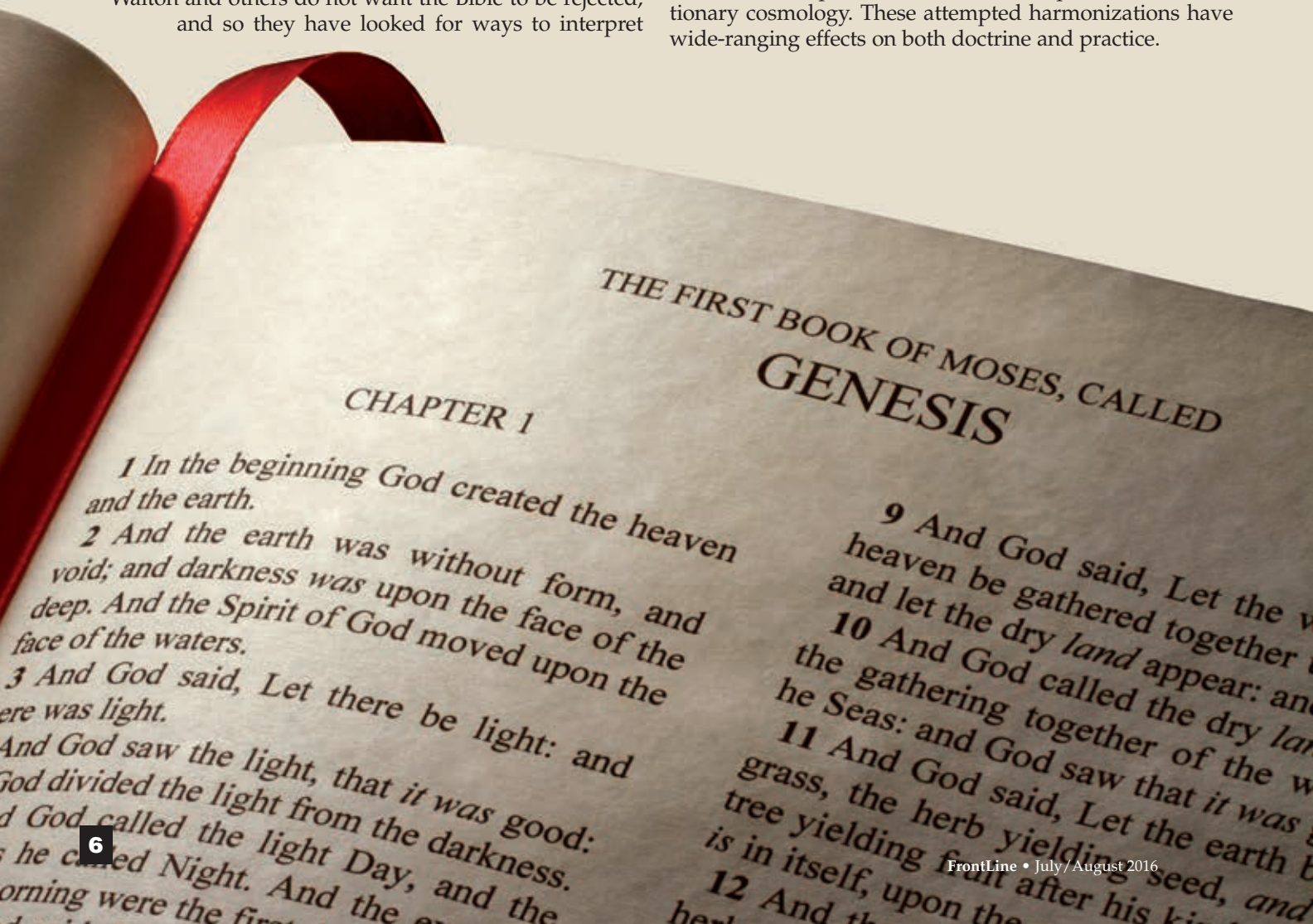
## The Effects of Accommodation to Evolutionary Thought

The interpretation of the opening chapters of Genesis is at the forefront of biblical and theological discussion once again. Evangelical scholars have recently put forward new interpretations of those chapters that attempt to harmonize Scripture with the evolutionary account of origins. The motivation for these attempts is understandable. John Walton represents many when he writes that young-earth “scientific scenarios have proven extremely difficult for most scientifically trained people to accept. When the latter find YEC [young earth creation] science untenable, they have too often concluded that the Bible must be rejected.”<sup>1</sup>

Walton and others do not want the Bible to be rejected, and so they have looked for ways to interpret

the Bible that harmonize with the prevailing evolutionary paradigm.

Re-examining one’s understanding of Scripture in light of new scientific paradigms is not intrinsically wrong. When the Copernican paradigm replaced the Ptolemaic one, Christians had to think about how they would interpret a passage such as Joshua 10. The answer in that case was fairly simple: the Bible was not speaking scientifically; it was speaking as things appeared to an observer from earth. We still speak this way when we speak of sunrise and sunset.<sup>2</sup> Such interpretations have no negative implications for the Christian system of doctrine or practice. Therefore, there is no difficulty in adopting them. The same is not the case with attempts to harmonize the Scriptures with evolutionary cosmology. These attempted harmonizations have wide-ranging effects on both doctrine and practice.





## The Problem of Evil

Though the conflict between evolutionary and biblical cosmology is often seen as the chief apologetic challenge of the present time, the chief philosophical challenge to Christianity is the problem of evil (in a nutshell: how can a good, all-powerful God permit evil). Attempts to harmonize Scripture with evolutionary cosmology make defending Christianity against the problem of evil more difficult.

Old-earth creationists and theistic evolutionists tend to deny that death and suffering in the natural world can be considered evil. But philosophers have not been willing to accept that death and suffering in the natural world carry no moral significance. Michael J. Murray observes that Darwin himself recognized the problem: “‘The sufferings of millions of the lower animals throughout almost endless time’ are apparently irreconcilable with the existence of a creator of ‘unbounded’ goodness.”<sup>3</sup> In other words, “What kind of God . . . could possibly permit preventable suffering in an animal that lacks moral responsibility, if, as seems to be the case, that suffering exists and serves no purpose?”<sup>4</sup>

Traditionally, Christians have held that natural evil entered the world due to Adam’s fall. Genesis 3:17 clearly states that the Fall had effects on the physical world. Genesis 3:14 may well indicate that all animals, not just the serpent, were affected by the curse that God brought on the earth due to Adam’s sin. Romans 5:12–19 and 8:19–22 tie death and corruption in the natural world to the Fall. Finally, certain passages indicate that redemption will remove pain and destruction from the animal world (e.g., Isa. 11:6–9). These passages imply that pain and destruction were not part of the original good created order.

## Goodness of the Created Order

An evolutionary view of the world also affects the theological claim that God created an originally good world. The world is full of death and suffering. What is more, some have suggested that Adam and Eve were not the first humans, meaning that human death existed prior to the Fall.<sup>5</sup>

But all of this compromises the goodness of the original creation. Walton attempts to deal with this problem: “As I have proposed elsewhere, if Genesis 1 is viewed as an account of functional origins rather than as an account of material origins, when God says repeatedly that ‘it was good,’ he is indicating that it is ready to function as sacred space. . . . In this case ‘good’ is not indicative of perfection (either moral or design), but of order.”<sup>6</sup> But this only attempts to explain the use of the word “good” in Genesis 1. It does not deal with the theological problem of that which is not morally good existing prior to the Fall.

Romans 8:19–22 teaches that God subjected creation to futility and corruption or decay. For God to subject the world to futility and decay implies that the world was not originally in such a condition. Verse 20 says the creation was subjected “in hope,” which fits nicely with Genesis 3, since the first gospel promise is given in Genesis 3:15 in the same account in which God curses the earth.

Romans 8:19–22 teaches us that God created a good world into which natural and moral evil entered later. Thus it affirms the natural goodness of creation. This is an essential doctrine of Christianity, as the early church recognized in the face of the Gnostic heresy. The goodness of God is tied up in His making a good creation. The goodness of creation is also important in understanding the extent of the Fall. There are consequences to our ethical systems if we limit the scope of the Fall. Such a limitation leaves neutral areas, places that sin doesn’t touch. But the biblical teaching is that there is no area of life untouched by the Fall. The very terms “world” and “worldliness” indicate the extensive reach of sin into every aspect of creation. Finally, limiting the scope of the Fall limits the scope of redemption. But Matthew 19:28, Acts 3:21, Romans 8:19–22, and 2 Peter 3:13 all teach that in redemption God will restore His good but fallen creation.

## Original Sin

Theistic evolutionists who deny a historical Adam or who deny that Adam and Eve were the first two humans have difficulties affirming the doctrine of original sin. This doctrine teaches that all humans are born sinners because of Adam’s initial sin. Walton, however, suggests that people who lived before Adam would have done things that were sinful by our understanding, but since there was no law before Adam, there was no sin imputed to these people. What is more, these people would have died, but they would not have died because they were sinners. This, however, contradicts Romans 5:12, which teaches that sin and death entered the world through one man, Adam. It fails to acknowledge that sin brought about a fundamental change in human nature (Gen. 5:3; 8:21; Ps. 51:5; Eph. 2:3). Walton’s view in particular fails to recognize that God built His law into the very fabric of creation and into the conscience of all humans (Rom. 2:15; Prov. 3:19–20).<sup>7</sup>

## Authority of Scripture

Attempts to harmonize Scripture with evolutionary cosmology undermine the authority of Scripture in several ways. Most obviously, there is an unwillingness to consider that a historic understanding of a young earth, a creation week of seven normal days, and a historical Adam and Eve as progenitors of the human race is possible in the face of the claims of evolutionary science. This means that evolutionary science has the authority to determine up front which interpretations of Scripture are permissible and which are not. This gives modern science authority over the Scripture.

Some of the new approaches to interpreting Genesis compromise the authority of Scripture in another way. For instance, John Walton’s proposal depends on his understanding of the worldviews of the Ancient Near East. His argument is plausible: we should read Scripture the way the original readers would have read it, the original readers shared the assumptions of the Ancient Near East rather than modern assumptions, and we should, therefore, read

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# "We Hold These Truths to Be Self Evident"

## What Does Genesis 1–3 Have to Do with Our System of Government?

If you want to get into a heated argument, go to a political message board and assert that America is a "Christian nation." That question is not only an emotional one, but it is fraught with difficulties, not the least of which is a serious ambiguity about what the words mean. Much of the debate involves the question of to what degree and what ways our constitutional order presupposes or depends upon Christian principles. There is ample disagreement, not only between Christians and secularists, but among Christians themselves.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless as we will see, there are some Biblical principles that are foundational to our constitutional system of government. Two of these are the fact of Creation and the fact of the Fall.

### The Creation and the Declaration of Independence

This July was the 240th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Last summer my family and I visited Washington, DC. While there, we biked the bridge over the Tidal Basin to the Jefferson Memorial. We looked around at the engraved words on the walls, excerpts from some of Jefferson's writings. On the Southwest portico is a selection from the Declaration of Independence containing these famous phrases:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness—That to secure these Rights Governments are instituted among Men.

Here is a succinct statement of the political philosophy upon which American independence and form of government rests. It is generally accepted out that Jefferson and the other Founders were significantly influenced by John Locke and various continental political philosophers, such as Montesquieu; however, the words of the Declaration itself point to another source: the creation of Man in God's image.<sup>2</sup>

How does this biblical principle form the foundation of the Declaration and its political philosophy? In the quotation above, we see four "self-evident" propositions: (1) that all people are fundamentally equal; (2) that they have inherent, inalienable rights; (3) that these rights include life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; and (4) that the purpose of government is to protect those rights. But where do these rights come from? The Declaration asserts that they come from the Creator.

Of all of God's creatures, human beings are the only ones made in His image. This image is reflected in the first mention of God's intention to create man (Gen. 1:26) and is reaffirmed after the Fall (Gen. 9:6). It is the fountainhead of human dignity (James 3:9). Also, in the political philosophy of the Founders, it gave rise to the idea of transcendent human rights. These rights are "unalienable," that is, they are inherent and may not be taken away. Their permanent legitimacy is due to their being given to us by our Creator. They are neither dependent on the government nor may they legitimately be abridged by the government.

Not only does Creation undergird the concepts of rights and of self-government, but it also by implication defines their nature and limits. Creatures are accountable to their Creator, and rights are subject to their Grantor. This truth necessitates that the equality and the rights referred to in the Declaration be defined by God and not by us. This provides a philosophical foundation for the concept of ordered liberty, and it prevents liberty from turning into license.

Although the Declaration of Independence was not made part of the Constitution, it is foundational to it and to the system of government that it created. In adopting the Declaration, the Second Continental Congress made two foundational claims: first, that the people of the Colonies had the right of self-government, and, second, that the Colonies themselves were independent states. Near the conclusion of the Declaration the signers stated,

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish



branches of government, and a Bill of Rights. But all of these provisions raise the question, why were they incorporated into our governmental system in the first place? The answer lies in a view of human nature that is consistent with the biblical teaching of the Creation and the Fall.

If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself.

As asserted by the Declaration, because people are created in the image of God, they have a fundamental equality

Of all the written national constitutions in operation today, the United States boasts the oldest.<sup>5</sup> It was unique in its day in its provision for and careful limitation of national governmental power. These structural elements include things that we tend to take for granted, such as a legislature with two houses, a federal system of state and national governments, the separation of powers between the three

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and liberty. Therefore, as the Declaration asserts, they have basic God-given rights, for which they are not beholden to the government. On the other side of the balance, because all people are fallen, they must be subject to governmental power so that they do not fall into anarchy and trample the rights of others. The necessity of governmental power introduces a new problem, however. Because those in power are also fallen, mechanisms must be devised to control the governing power and prevent it from devolving into tyranny. Therefore, the concept of limited government reflects both human nobility and human depravity.

These ideas were not new to Madison but were part of the Natural Rights Philosophy that influenced the Founders. According to Duane Smith, they came from the concept of “man’s fall from grace” that Locke received from his Puritan background:

It is important to remind ourselves that the political philosophy of natural rights was influenced by both Puritan and Enlightenment ideas. Nowhere is the Puritan influence more clearly illustrated than in this basic perception of human nature and its relationship to the political order.<sup>6</sup>

In large measure, then, it was to the twin ideas of our creation in God’s image and our fall from grace that provided both the rationale and the form for our system of government incorporated in the Constitution.

### Why This Matters

There are at least two important implications of what we have been discussing. First, for rights to have the meaning that they were intended to have in our Constitutional system, they must be more than mere human inventions. In the Western world we still use the language of the Declaration when we talk about political and civil liberties. However, without an acknowledgment of humans as creatures in God’s image, the concept of rights becomes progressively untenable. If not given by God, then rights have no greater moral sanction than the exercise of human will, either the will of the collective or the will of the individual. And, of course it is precisely the control of human will that is the essence of governmental power. If rights come from the political process, then those rights provide no genuine protection against tyranny. In fact, there is not even a logical basis to call it tyranny, since what “rights” the State gives it may just as easily take away. Your only protection in such a case is to try to influence the State to ensure that your “rights” are protected and your interests advanced. Everything becomes politics and everyone must be a lobbyist. There is no sphere of individual or social life outside the long reach of the government. Although the government may be limited as a matter of practicality, it cannot be limited as a matter of principle.

An alternative to seeing rights as coming from the State is to see them as coming from within the individual. Under

**Creatures are accountable to their Creator, and rights are subject to their Grantor. This truth necessitates that the equality and the rights referred to in the Declaration be defined by God and not by us.**

such a conception, rights are little more than deep-seated desires. This is a popular modern notion, but it is completely unworkable when my desires come into conflict with yours. As Orwell might have put it, “all desires are equal, but some desires are more equal than others.” This concept has been applied with a vengeance in the promotion and expansion of the Sexual Revolution. Sexual “rights” that are not in the Constitution are given preference over rights that are in the constitution, such as freedom of religion, association, and even life.

The second implication of a biblical view of human nature is the wisdom of limited government. As already noted, in our constitutional system government is subject to checks and balances out of a healthy skepticism of the pure motives and superior wisdom of the rulers. But there is a further rationale for limiting the aims and powers of government: people and societies are not perfectible. Because of the Fall, only radical transformation through Jesus Christ can genuinely make a person good, and even that transformation is not fully accomplished in this life. Therefore, in this age there will never be perfect people, and we will never have a perfect society. Of course, that is not to say things can never improve in human terms by the grace of God with wise effort, but they can also get worse through bad intentions, folly, or unintended consequences. There is no “long-arc of history” progressing inevitably toward heaven on earth, there is no policy or set of policies that will bring in the Millennium. In fact, history has shown repeatedly over the past two hundred years that utopianism has a way of promising heaven but delivering hell.

Our system of government is decidedly antiutopian. The system is designed on purpose to make it hard to get things done if those things do not command majority support or if they do not properly look out for the rights and interests of minorities. That often leads to messy compromises and gridlock. However, our constitutional system, based as it is on a realistic view of human nature, intentionally favored gridlock over tyranny. With significant portions of the electorate clamoring for the government to “do something” or for a political savior who will magically make everything better, the Founders’ caution is well worth heeding.

David Shumate holds doctoral degrees in Law and Old Testament Interpretation. He is the director of Mission Gospel Ministries International in Phoenix, Arizona, where he also serves as the graduate academic officer at International Baptist College.



<sup>1</sup> For example, see the video, “Russell Moore on Whether America Is a Christian Nation,” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cYtwU7dLMEo> (accessed 5/6/16). Moore denies that the United States was founded in some form of covenant relationship with God. He argues that the Founders were profoundly influenced by Christian ideas coming out the Protestant Reformation as well as by Enlightenment concepts.

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# Remembering *The Genesis Flood*

**Editor's Note:** Dr. John Whitcomb is internationally known as a Bible scholar, author, and teacher. The *Genesis Flood* is considered one of the most influential books of the twentieth century, marking the beginning of the modern Creationism movement. In addition to *The Genesis Flood* Dr. Whitcomb has published a number of books on science and the Bible, commentaries, and other works. (See them highlighted at [whitcombministries.org](http://whitcombministries.org).) He currently lives in Indianapolis, Indiana, where he attends Colonial Hills Baptist Church. The article below was originally featured in *Answers* magazine on December 8, 2010, and on February 2, 2014, and is used with permission. For further information, please visit [answersingenesis.org](http://answersingenesis.org), [creationmuseum.org](http://creationmuseum.org), and [arkencounter.com](http://arkencounter.com).

## "A word fitly spoken" has incredible power (Proverbs 25:11).

Burdened by the rampant disregard for God's Word in earth history, two young men joined to write a book called simply *The Genesis Flood*. Fifty years later their shout still reverberates round the world.

In February 1961 a small publisher in New Jersey—Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company—brought into this world a 518-page, somewhat ponderous volume entitled *The Genesis Flood: The Biblical Record and Its Scientific Implications*. The co-authors were a little-known theologian (myself) and a hydraulic engineer, Henry M. Morris. Little did we know what the future held for our new work.

### Conception

The book was conceived in September 1953 at Grace Theological Seminary, Winona Lake, Indiana, where I had already been teaching for two years. At the time I accepted the Gap Theory of Genesis 1:1–2, which was very popular in Christian circles and was the view held by most of the

seminary faculty. That changed when Dr. Henry Morris was invited to present a paper on "Biblical Evidence for a Recent Creation and Universal Deluge" to the American Scientific Affiliation, which met on campus.

I was profoundly impressed with his paper. Later, I wrote him a letter explaining its influence on me: "I feel that your conclusions are scripturally valid, and therefore must be sustained by a fair examination of geologic evidence in time to come. My only regret is that so few trained Christian men of science are willing to let God's Word have the final say on these questions. . . . I have adopted your views . . . and am presenting them to my class as preferable alternatives to the Gap Theory and the Day-Age Theory."

Dr. Morris immediately replied: "I have been trying to write a book of my own for some time, setting forth a scientific and scriptural exposition of the geologic data, harmonizing the latter with the basic facts of a recent, genuine Creation, and universal aqueous cataclysm. . . . I would appreciate your prayers about that."

During the next few weeks God led me to make a major decision that would change my life forever. I wrote to Dr. Morris: "I appreciate your fine letter. . . . I am planning to write my doctoral dissertation on the subject of your paper, so would appreciate any further references you might have on hand."

Four years later in May 1957, I completed my 452-page doctor of theology dissertation on *The Genesis Flood: An Investigation of Its Geographical Extent, Geologic Effects, and Chronological Setting*. That fall, Dr. Morris accepted my invitation to co-author a book.

### Co-Laborers

Those were amazing years! I still have over one hundred letters we exchanged as we labored over every sentence and every quoted document. In the years before the Internet, such collaboration was very laborious and time-consuming.



In Dr. Morris's own words, "Even though we worked on distinctively separate portions of the book ([John Whitcomb] wrote the first four chapters and two appendices and I wrote the introduction and the last three chapters), each of us continually reviewed the other's contributions to each other's sections so that the joint authorship format was genuine."<sup>1</sup>

During that period, Henry and Mary Louise Morris were also raising six children, and he headed civil engineering departments at three schools—Southwestern Louisiana Institute, Southern Illinois University, and Virginia Polytechnic Institute.

My wife Edisene and I were raising four children, while she taught part-time at Grace College and I taught full-time at Grace Theological Seminary and traveled in weekend ministries.

Our oldest son, David, born in December 1955, still remembers seeing me in the basement of our home, night after night, surrounded by books and papers and corresponding with a distant scientist whom he only saw briefly when the entire Morris family visited us in the summer of 1960.

In the meantime, the world's leading evolutionists gathered at the University of Chicago in 1959 for a Darwin Centennial Celebration. Ironically, Sir Julian Huxley announced that creationism was dead.

### Fifty Years and Counting

In the book *100 Christian Books That Changed the Century*, William J. and Randy Petersen acknowledge the long-term impact of *The Genesis Flood*. "Creation science has been controversial within the evangelical community as well as in society at large, but there is no doubt of the impact of this book by Whitcomb and Morris. . . . By the end of the century the book had gone into its forty-first printing. . . . Creation science became a major force . . . and has a substantial presence in the fields of science

and education, all stemming from the influential book by Whitcomb and Morris."<sup>2</sup>

How did this happen? By the mercy of God, through His inspired, infallible written Word.

We firmly believed that all compromise views, such as the Gap Theory, the Day-Age Theory, and the Framework Hypothesis, which had been taught in one form or another for over one hundred years, would eventually be crushed by the rock of Holy Scripture. Our Lord Jesus Christ was there when the earth was created, for "all things were made by him" (John 1:3). His account of creation and the Flood are perfectly true because He "cannot lie" (Titus 1:2) and He is "the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (Heb. 13:8).

Christ told us that human beings were created "at the beginning" of the world, not billions of years later (Matt. 19:4). He also affirmed that a man named Noah "entered into the ark" and thus survived "the flood." The rest of mankind "knew not until the flood came, and took them all away" (Matt. 24:38–39). Thus a recent creation and a universal Flood are realities of history, not myths or legends.

The rock of God's Word is the foundation upon which *The Genesis Flood* was written. That simple but profound truth, I am convinced, explains why God has so graciously blessed this work during the past fifty years.

<sup>1</sup> John Morris, "History of Modern Creationism," rev. ed. (Santee, California: Institute for Creation Research, 1993), pp. 160–70.

<sup>2</sup> William J. and Randy Petersen, *100 Christian Books That Changed the Century* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Fleming H. Revell, 2000), pp. 135–36.



This is the statue of Boudicca, the Warrior Queen, located near Westminster Bridge, London. Boudicca was the widow of a Celtic king, whose lands were seized by Rome. In 60/61 AD she led a revolt against Rome that destroyed three major Roman cities and left over 80,000 Roman citizens of Britain dead. She was defeated but is still celebrated as a symbol of the undying desire for human freedom and justice.

# Woman Does It Mat

*Note from the FBFI Chaplain Endorser: It is the policy and practice of all FBFI-endorsed chaplains to “perform or provide” ministry to male and female members of the armed forces serving in whatever capacity to which they are assigned.*

The sovereign Maker of heaven and earth has established for His own glory an order in creation governing the position which each part holds. God has revealed His will concerning this order, both in creation itself and in the Scriptures. When mankind arrogantly or ignorantly defies the divine order and abrogates divine law, he brings God’s inevitable wrath upon society itself for suppressing the truth by pretending autonomous freedom from God.<sup>1</sup>

With this conviction, we want to raise an alarm. This nation’s policy of enrolling women in the places of men in armed combatant roles and categories is contrary to the revealed will of Almighty God, from whom all human government derives its just authority.<sup>2</sup> A nation has no warrant to expect divine approval and to hope for providential blessing when its policy expressly opposes the Sovereign God’s revealed will. Instead, there is biblical warrant to fear divine discipline.<sup>3</sup> The enrollment of women as warriors, positioned to engage the men of enemy forces, marks an abdication by men of a solemn duty as protectors of women and children. It is a fundamental misuse and abuse of women to make them protectors of men.

## The Creation Order

The innovative enrollment of women for military armed combat ignores God’s authority to determine and prescribe the place, purpose, and functions of His creatures. According to the Genesis account, the LORD God designed and created mankind to manifest His image. He made them male and female, arranging for each one to exhibit and experience distinctive features and functional roles for God’s glory and mankind’s good. Originally, God established Adam to be the head of his family and assigned him the task of tending and guarding the garden.<sup>4</sup> God then created Eve to accompany and help Adam toward accomplishing God’s purposes for mankind. As leader at the head of his family,<sup>5</sup> Adam held primary responsibility for



# as Warrior ter?

protecting the garden and his wife from evil and harm. This arrangement remains God's rule for mankind, and man is primarily accountable to the Creator for conserving this norm.

## Adam's Failure and the Promise of a Warrior-Redeemer

Adam led his family into sin by failing God's command to guard the garden and his wife from the treason of a seductive intruder. He illegitimately relinquished his leadership to Eve by following her example and invitation to consume the forbidden fruit. Adam's sin warranted God's judgment, which He expressed in the form of enduring penalties upon all parties in the garden: man, woman, and serpent.<sup>6</sup> God's disciplinary action was directed against Adam in his role as head and primary steward of the creation by prescribing continuous adversities that would then impede all of mankind's endeavors. God's punishment was imposed on woman through the painfulness of bearing children and relational tension with her husband. God cursed the serpent, identified as Satan, by promising the woman a child who would defeat the evil one permanently. The Bible records that this promised seed of the woman would be the divine warrior<sup>7</sup> who would defeat the Devil, annul the curse and its effect upon the created order,<sup>8</sup> and redeem mankind.<sup>9</sup>

God's promise has been fulfilled by the eternal Son of God, who took on human flesh in the womb of a woman, was born a man, and was given the name Jesus. As avenger of evil,<sup>10</sup> Jesus executes wrath upon evildoers. As Redeemer, He sends the Spirit to raise up heirs of God. The Lord Jesus Christ rules the kingdom of heaven, has defeated the Devil, and has overcome death for all who believe.<sup>11</sup>

## The Warrior Is Born of Woman

By taking on human flesh in the womb of woman, the Lord Jesus Christ as the faithful Second Adam brought definitely into view man's perfect response to God's calling, as ideal exemplar of the manhood abandoned by the first Adam. As the Son of Man, Jesus is the model warrior for all men as protectors of the bearers of life against evil.<sup>12</sup> As the mother of this promised warrior, Mary is blessed in the bearing of Christ.<sup>13</sup> All women, married or single, are dignified in their symbolic identification with the Creator's divine purpose for woman as life-bearer of children.

## The Husband and the Bride

The Bible pictures Jesus as the husband who delivers His Bride, the Church, from the wicked enemy. This picture of the relationship between Christ as husband and the Church as bride<sup>14</sup> reinforces the truth that men have the primary responsibility of guardian and protector. In this paradigm, the man is called upon to represent Christ as servant and guardian;<sup>15</sup> the woman represents the Church as redeemed humanity where she helps her husband primarily by bearing godly offspring<sup>16</sup> and assisting him in cultural activities (e.g., education, arts, science, industry, etc.).<sup>17</sup>

## The Testimony of Biblical History and Law

Throughout the biblical narrative, God reveals His normative social order. The man serves as provider and protector, and the woman serves in her high calling as mother and as helper.<sup>18</sup> This divine prescription for man, created as faithful servant and guardian of woman, is explicitly sanctioned in the law of God as revealed through Moses. God appointed that the army of Israel was to be composed exclusively of qualified men, never of women.<sup>19</sup> The Lord commands women not to put on the gear of a warrior, a "mighty man," and, the Lord commands men not to wear the garments of a woman.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, the Lord God revealed clearly that it is wrong to corrupt the created structure of mankind as male and female; and in particular, it is wrong to confuse the place and role of protector (life-taking warrior) and life-bearing mother.<sup>21</sup>

## The Roles of Men and Women

The consistent witness of the Scriptures, then, is that the enterprise of lawful war,<sup>22</sup> with its license to destroy human life, is particularly man's vocation. Lawful war is a special work of man, the protector. Conversely, bearing children is a special work of woman as the protected one.<sup>23</sup> In functioning as agents of divine wrath, bringing righteous vengeance against evil, men represent *the Man*, Christ, the perfect avenger.<sup>24</sup> The calling of avenger is certainly not consistent with the holy vocation exemplified by Eve, the mother of all living,<sup>25</sup> or by Mary, the mother of Him who is eternal. Women are intended to be the bearers of life, not agents of death.<sup>26</sup>

Physically and psychologically, God made men to be warriors and women to be mothers. God restricts the recruitment of combatants to men, not because of some accidental or creatively imbued inferiority in women,

but because God's unique purpose for woman as bearer of life is to reflect the great life-giving work of God Himself. In this role she is to be recognized, honored, and exalted, not perverted, sullied, and degraded with the bloody work of war.

When men shrink from bold obedience to this divine calling, and especially when they enroll and allow women to respond in their stead, such men are guilty of violating the fifth commandment, which calls upon the head to guard and protect the body. By contrast, as men willingly serve and love God their Creator, they ought to be motivated to serve women and children by protecting them from all enemies.

Therefore, in light of the consistent and extensive testimony of the Scriptures, surely it is the will of God, our Creator and Redeemer and this nation's Benefactor, that the calling as warrior is properly and exclusively addressed to man and not woman. It is man's obligation to the Creator to honor and serve women in every way. When a nation becomes inclined to ignore and defy the Creator's purpose and God's commandment, it portends God's judgment upon the land. Women need to encourage men to be protectors, and men should willingly honor women by protecting them. Faithful men and women need to pray earnestly for national leaders who are accountable before God for legislating and administering the law. Pray that they would have courage and the wisdom to take seriously the warning by obeying and proclaiming the truth, that God might be pleased to bless our nation rather than to give it over to moral chaos and its consequences. Our national motto, "In God We Trust," will be an announcement of condemnation if the nation rejects it and fails to acknowledge Christ Jesus as Sovereign, mankind's Hope.

This article is a reprint of a brochure produced by Hope for America. Since mid-1990s, Hope for America has engaged accessible ordained teaching offices of the institutional Christian Church, at-large, urgently appealing for and assisting with sober, critical reflection on moral-theological implications of the expanding enrollment of women in man's ancient profession of military arms. The executive director is Robert H. Miller, a retired career Naval officer and aviator. He can be reached at hfa@aol.com or 215-659-0564.

<sup>1</sup> Romans 1:18–32; Psalm 81:8–16.

<sup>2</sup> Genesis 9:1–7.

<sup>3</sup> Psalm 33:8–22.

<sup>4</sup> Genesis 2:15–17.

<sup>5</sup> Ephesians 5:23; 1 Corinthians 11:3.

<sup>6</sup> Genesis 3:15–19; Revelation 12:1–6; Romans 8:18–22; 1 Timothy 2:15.

<sup>7</sup> Isaiah 42:5–13, especially verse 13; cf. Exodus 15:3; Revelation 6:2.

<sup>8</sup> Romans 8:19–21.

<sup>9</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:18–19.

<sup>10</sup> Romans 12:14–13:7; 1 Thessalonians 4:3–6; 2 Thessalonians 1:5–8.

<sup>11</sup> Revelation 19:11.

<sup>12</sup> Exodus 15:3; Isaiah 42:13; Revelation 6:2.

<sup>13</sup> Matthew 1:18–21; Luke 1:30–33.

<sup>14</sup> Ephesians 5:22–32; Song of Songs.

<sup>15</sup> Exodus 32:25–29; Numbers 26:6–9. (Levites were initially involved in protecting and guarding the people of God by joining Moses in executing those who worshiped the golden calf. There is a close relationship between the tabernacle and war camp; cf. Leviticus 15:11–18 and Deuteronomy 23:9–14—strict laws of ceremonial cleanliness were applied. The Levites' activity in the tabernacle is described by a term, to wage war or serve. The Levites had a particular type of "warfare" as they served God and Israel—Numbers 4:3, 23.)

<sup>16</sup> Genesis 3:16; 1 Timothy 2:13–15; Titus 2:4–5; Galatians 4:21–31; Revelation 12:17.

<sup>17</sup> Proverbs 31:10–31.

<sup>18</sup> Deuteronomy 20:1–7; 24:5; Proverbs 31:10–31; Titus 2:4–5.

<sup>19</sup> Deuteronomy 20:1–9 (only men were considered combatants as only men were to be struck down during the siege of a foreign city, Deuteronomy 20:13–14).

<sup>20</sup> Deuteronomy 22:5 (a woman is not to wear the clothing of a "mighty man" or warrior so that she might not be confused as a combatant).

<sup>21</sup> Deuteronomy 14:21; 22:5; Matthew 5:17–20; Romans 3:31.

<sup>22</sup> *The Westminster Larger Catechism*, Question 136, *What are the sins forbidden in the sixth commandment?*, does distinguish between three occasions where there may be a legitimate taking of human life: public justice (cf. Numbers 35); lawful war (cf. Deuteronomy 20); and necessary defense (i.e., self-defense, cf. Exodus 22:2–3).

<sup>23</sup> 1 Timothy 2:15.

<sup>24</sup> Joshua 5:3–15; Psalm 2; Revelation 19:2.

<sup>25</sup> Genesis 3:20 (expressing the significant life-bearing role for the woman).

<sup>26</sup> 1 Timothy 2:15; Titus 2:5.



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# FUNDAMENTAL BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

## Position Statements

Adopted March 11, 2016

### ON CREATION

1. The Bible teaches six solar days of creation, as indicated by a plain reading of Genesis 1, Exodus 20:8–11, and other passages that refer to the creation week. The Bible also affirms that God created by His miraculous, spoken word, not by any natural process. This precludes the change from one “kind” to another, although it allows for subsequent modifications within a “kind.”
2. The genre of Genesis 1–11 is the same as that of Genesis 12–50. Since Genesis 12–50 is taken as genuine history, then so should Genesis 1–11 be.
3. Humanity descends from a single pair of original humans, Adam and Eve (Gen. 1:27; Gen. 2:7, 21–23; Gen. 3:20; Luke 3:38; 1 Tim. 2:13). A literal, historical, grammatical interpretation of the Scriptures leads one to reject the concept that there were multiple evolutionary paths which led to multiple human ancestors.
4. The sin nature of all humanity is the result of the fall of Adam (Gen. 3:6–11; Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:22). If humanity today were merely the result of evolutionary processes and Adam and Eve were only symbols of early humanity, then what we call sin would only be the natural outworking of the evolutionary process. If God used evolution as His tool for creation, then sin would be a natural part of His work, not an aberration and affront to Him.
5. Death is the result of sin (Gen. 2:17; Gen. 3:19; Rom. 5:12–21; 1 Cor. 15:21–22). Death is not part of God’s creative design; neither is it a tool or a step on the way to a higher evolutionary plane. Rather it is the final enemy which God will destroy (1 Cor. 15:26).

### ON GENDER

1. In the beginning God created Adam and Eve, male and female respectively, as taught by Genesis 1 and 2 and as affirmed by Jesus Christ (Matt. 19:4–5) and by the apostle Paul (1 Tim. 2:13). As with the rest of the created order, the nature of mankind as male and female is by the will of God and for the purpose of glorifying Him (Rev. 4:11).
2. The creation of mankind in two genders is especially important because it is a central aspect of the image of God in Man (Gen. 1:27–28; 5:1–2). As image-bearers, men and women are of equal worth and dignity (Exod. 21:28; 35:29; Prov. 31:30; Matt. 26:13), of equal moral responsibility before God (Lev. 20:27; Num. 5:6–7; Mark 10:11–12), and equally heirs of salvation and spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus (Luke 7:47–50; 2 Cor. 6:18; Gal. 3:28; 1 Pet. 3:7). However, God also made them different in strength, disposition, and function (1 Pet. 3:7; Isa. 49:15; 1 Cor. 11:7–12), and He intends that they interact harmoniously in a complementary fashion to glorify Him (Gen. 1:28; 2:18; Prov. 31:10–12; Eph. 5:22–33; Col. 3:18–19).
3. Gender distinctions are not a temporary expedient made necessary by the Fall but are the product of the creation of man and woman from the beginning (1 Cor. 11:8–9; Eph. 5:25–33; 1 Tim. 2:12–13). Therefore, these distinctions remain and are no less valid today than they were at the moment of Creation (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5–6; Mark 10:7–9). The Fall did not eliminate or change gender distinctions but rather provided the corrupt vehicle for the perversion of those distinctions (Rom. 1:18–32).
4. Gender is not an individual self-identification or a social construct; it is a divinely ordained reality. The Scriptures nowhere regard social gender as different from biological gender. Because gender distinction is integral to God’s creation, this distinction is naturally reflected in human societies (1 Cor. 11:14). It is a sin against God and His created order for individuals or societies to try to erase or reverse gender distinctions (1 Cor. 11:3–12). Therefore, gender neutralism and transgenderism in any form and expression are contrary to God’s will and are incompatible with a God-honoring Christian life.

# Deliverance in Prison

We have learned more from Paul's time in prison than we have from his time in the third heaven. To a person who has never set foot in the Slammer, the Big House, or the Pokey, it may sound strange to hear that anything can be learned from behind bars, but to a person who has experienced the oxymoron of deliverance in prison, it's not strange at all. The conviction has grown deep enough that prison Christianity has resulted in a cliché: I wasn't arrested, I was rescued!

The notion is not foreign to the Bible. The Lord said that the truth would set us free. The psalmist stressed that it was good for him to be afflicted that he might learn God's ways. And if anything is to be learned from the parable of the two debtors, it's that he who is forgiven little loves little, but he that is forgiven much loves much. There is no place where all of this comes together like in prison.

When prisoners make a public confession for Jesus, they don't have the luxury of wearing baptismal robes, having friends and family cheer them on, or the convenience of being immersed within the friendly confines of a church. On the contrary, when they make a bold declaration for Jesus, it's in the discomfort of their underwear, having mockers and jesters booing them, and the hassle of being baptized within the hostile boundaries of a prison yard.

When Jesus told the disciples that He would make them fishers of men, we never would've thought that evangelizing would be as promising as fishing in a bucket. And if the fisher is effective, the fish will jump into the net. There's a school of prisoners swimming in that bucket, in a place where they're forced to question their life's purpose. What went wrong? How could it have been different? What is crucial during that struggle is a clear presentation of the gospel: Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, the only way to the Father, and He rose from the dead to give all repentant sinners life.

What we lack are people who are willing to see prisoners as more than recipients of getting what they deserved but as eventual recipients of the grace of God. Prisoners need to be told that every saint has a past and every sinner has a future. And once this is discovered, they will cry out

like David, "Bring my soul out of prison so that I may give thanks to Your name."

They don't need to be babied or patronized. Prisoners aren't fools. You will find among the population intelligent, even brilliant, people with professional careers. Remember: sin does not discriminate! Instead of looking at prison as a breeding ground for crime, look at it as one for Christ. To use the Lord's words, "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. . . . The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few."

Prisoners can relate to biblical themes with ease. For instance, justification by faith is grasped by the encounters they've had with the court system. By dealing with the law, a judge, a prosecutor, a mediator, and a trial, most forensic terms are understood. They will personally know what it means to be freed of their crime. With that comes gratitude toward the One who has taken their place and has declared them righteous.

As much as we need people with a heart for ministry, we also need people with the ability to articulate Bible doctrine. Competence and passion must unite! Here's why: prisoners are more willing to receive the gospel from an outside preacher than from an inside preacher. Truly, a prophet has no honor in his hometown! The initial message by the free preacher is more likely to be considered, yet it's the subsequent messages by the prison preacher that will provide sustenance. One sows and another reaps, yet they rejoice together.

Challenge yourselves and get involved in prison ministry. On one visit, you will be forced to acknowledge that God has chosen the foolish of the world to shame the wise. You will concede that the Holy Spirit has gifted the bound as much as the free. You will find that the penitentiary produces teachers as proficient as seminary professors and preachers as skillful as ordained ministers. You may never want to leave, because if you've never worshipped with delivered prisoners, I question whether you've ever worshipped at all!

Hugo Gutierrez is an inmate at the California City Correctional Facility in southern California. He and his brother, Mario, have written a novel, *The Mighty Men of King David*, in which their testimonies of trusting in Jesus are told through the story of David and his Mighty Men. The novel is available exclusively through Amazon.



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# SOUND WORDS

HOLD FAST THE FORM OF SOUND WORDS—2 TIMOTHY 1:13

## First Partaker

### Qualified in Our Relationships

In 1815, in its third year, Princeton Seminary matriculated thirty-nine students. A newcomer from New England named Sylvester Larned wrote home to a sister to share his impressions of relations among his classmates. *The young men are generally genteel, friendly and pious*, he wrote. *Indeed, one of the traits almost everyone here possesses is, particularly, politeness.*<sup>1</sup>

The students were *pious* in their devotion to God, the newcomer observed. Unquestionably, this is foremost among the character demands upon a minister. But between themselves the Princeton seminarians were *genteel, friendly*, and in particular, possessed *politeness*. Just how important for a minister is this kind of civility and courtesy with people?

Pastoral ministry is largely about relationships—not just with God, but with people. How easily we magnify a right posture toward God but display surprising insensitivity toward strained relationships with people. What keeps a man scripturally qualified for ministry is a track record of relations about which he can testify, as Paul did before Felix, *I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence, not only toward God, but also, toward men* (Acts 24:16).

Not surprisingly, then, the single largest category of a minister's qualifications concerns his relationships to people. The category itself can be subdivided into four contexts.

#### Relationships generally

*patient* (1 Timothy)  
*just* (Titus)

*not soon angry* (Titus)  
*no striker* (1 Timothy)  
*not a brawler*  
(1 Timothy)

#### Relationships in the home

*one that ruleth well his own house* (1 Timothy)  
*having his children in subjection with all gravity*  
(1 Timothy)  
*having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly*  
(Titus)

#### Relationships in the church

*given to hospitality* (1 Timothy, Titus)  
*a lover of good men* (Titus)

#### Relationships in the world

*a good report of them which are without*  
(1 Timothy)

*“The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits”*  
(2 Tim. 2:6)

This article will attempt to explain and apply the five **general** relationship qualifications, beginning with the three that are prohibitory or negative. Each is undoubtedly intended to fence out of ministerial office men who, whatever else may be their commendable capabilities or assets, have a disturbing reputation for displaying a pugnacious spirit that easily gives or takes offense. Those looking for qualified church leaders should not take lightly the proverb's warning, *A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city* (18:19). “A **brother**—not an enemy— . . . as if the nearer the relation, the wider the breach,” Charles Bridges observes. That being the case, churches ought be especially cautious about taking into their leadership men about whom there is any question in the areas of anger and combativeness.

#### Not Soon Angry (Titus 1:7)

“Do you have a temper?” Have you ever heard someone ask that point-blank at an examination for ordination? Probably not, yet every seasoned pastor can explain almost immediately why this would be an

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immensely significant question to pose to any ordainee.

Unfortunately, church members, and even deacons and other pastors, can be critical, unkind, or unreasonable. Most pastors, especially those with larger ministries, are confronted by these kinds of attitudes regularly, often weekly. It makes for living at a high level of tension much of the time, and a quick-tempered man simply will not be able to weather it. He'll erupt repeatedly, drive away one family after another, and eventually either resign or destroy the church. The sad history of many tattered churches is littered with the fallout from temperaments that exploded angrily in church board and business meetings, during counseling sessions, over the phone, or on paper in scribbled notes and formal letters.

There are occasions for anger. First Samuel 11:6 records a notable one. But old John Trapp cautioned wisely, *He that will be angry and not sin, must not be angry except for sin*. Generally, anger is a terrible thing. And very costly. Moses forfeited his long-awaited opportunity to enter Canaan because of a single instance of deviating from God's direction due to his spirit being provoked by the people (Num. 20:10–11; Ps. 106:32–33). David almost committed mass murder in a moment of unbridled wrath (1 Sam. 25:22). Jesus warned, *Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment* (Matt. 5:22).

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**There are occasions for anger. First Samuel 11:6 records a notable one. But old John Trapp cautioned wisely, He that will be angry and not sin, must not be angry except for sin. Generally, anger is a terrible thing. And very costly.**

But people given to anger aren't always that easy to spot. I've heard distressed wives testify that it wasn't until their honeymoon, or several months into their marriage, before they discovered that the man they married had a beastly temper. They claim that they had no hint of it during the entire time that they were dating. That's incomprehensible to me, but I don't doubt them. Evidently, men given to temper aren't necessarily personalities who simply lose control of themselves. They may, in fact, be just the opposite; able to turn anger on and off shrewdly in order to get and keep control.

I once read a book on leadership by a Christian businessman who related that before hiring someone he would take him (her) to lunch; but he always asked the applicant to take the wheel of his car and to do the driving. He said that you learn a lot by observing how someone drives, especially since a car has a way of magnifying a person's sense of power. Since reading that, I've been

more alert to both my own and other people's driving habits. It seems especially revealing when a driver keeps up a steady string of derogatory exclamations about other people on the road; *What a jerk! . . . Lady, you need some glasses! . . . Okay, come on buddy, we don't have all day!* A person who is that disturbed over the simple irritations of daily driving will probably find his patience unbearably taxed by the much greater complexities of irksome church dynamics.

### **No Striker (1 Timothy 3:3)**

A striker is someone who hits. In a prizefight, he's quick with his fists. But in a church, he's sharp with his words. Proverbs describes him as speaking *like the piercings of a sword* (12:18). To our everlasting regret, we've probably all occasionally done it from the pulpit in moments of frustration and impatience. But *behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth* (James 3:5)!

A man and his wife left our church over twenty-five years ago. They were honorable about it; he came to tell me they were going to look elsewhere. The nub of their differences with the church was something about which I could do nothing at that time, but toward the end of the conversation he sort of grimaced and said, *And pastor, we like your preaching, but every once in a while you get kind of sharp in the way you say something*. I knew exactly what he meant, and his words have haunted me many times since when I've repeated the mistake. Oh, to learn, that it is a *soft tongue that breaketh the bone* (Prov. 25:15)!

### **Not a Brawler (1 Timothy 3:3)**

The word is *amachos*. What's that? Well, the verb, *machomai*, means to fight. It is used of those who *engage in a war of words* (Thayer); those who *strive* (KJV) or are *quarrelsome* (NASB).

A striker may not always be a brawler. A striker may be simply unkind, sarcastic, too blunt, insensitive about hurtful one-liners. But a brawler strikes frequently, repeatedly, and combatively until he wins.

Regrettably, churches looking for leaders can mistake quarrelsomeness for courage. They can misidentify bellicose belligerence to be faithfulness to the Faith. There is, of course, necessary contending for the faith (Jude 3), but it shouldn't be confused with mere contentiousness.

A pastor needs to learn to walk away when someone picks a verbal fight. *The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water: therefore leave off contention before it be meddled with* (Prov. 17:14). *Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also*, our Lord commanded (Matt. 5:39). *The servant of the Lord must not strive*, Paul counseled (2 Tim. 2:24).

John Newton wrote to a younger man in the ministry,

If a chimney-sweeper insulted you in the street, would you demean yourself so low as to fight him? Let him alone, and he will expose himself more effectually than you can expose him. And his performance will soon die and be forgotten, unless you



keep the memory of it alive, by an answer. I believe scarcely anything has conduced so much to perpetuate disputes and dissensions in the professing church, as the ambition of having the last word.<sup>2</sup>

### **Patient (1 Timothy 3:3)**

What this characteristic describes is difficult to determine. Our English word, *patient*, is, of course, completely intelligible. But the Greek word (*epieikēs*) is another thing. One commentator has called it *completely untranslatable*. The King James translators seem to have acknowledged this, at least tacitly, when they rendered the word in three different ways; (1) *moderation* (Phil. 4:5), (2) *patient* (1 Tim. 3:3), and (3) *gentle* (Titus 3:2; James 3:17; 1 Pet. 2:18), even though it occurs in the New Testament only five times!

Coming to certainty about the word's meaning is compounded by the facts that (1) there is no corresponding verb with which to compare it, and (2) the corresponding noun occurs only twice—once by Tertullus in his opening words to Felix, *I pray thee that thou wouldest hear us of thy clemency a few words* (Acts 24:4) and once by Paul in an appeal to the Corinthians, *Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ* (2 Cor. 10:1).

What yields the most helpful hint toward clarity is the fact that in four of its five NT usages, the contexts contrast reactions to provocation. For instance, here in the qualifications list Paul sandwiches it between the two negatives, *no striker . . . not a brawler*. Reading the three as a kind of unit suggests that this positive trait is the exact opposite of the two negative ones. The same kind of contrast is posed in Titus 3:2, *no brawlers, but epieikēs*. First Peter 2:18 is particularly clarifying when it calls Christian slaves to submission, even when their masters are *froward* (crooked, perverse, unreasonable), not *gentle*. And a similar contrast is conspicuous in the larger context of James's usage of the word (3:14–18).

What emerges then, is that this qualification assumes situations in which a minister is tempted to react against someone's assertiveness, combativeness, or even abusiveness. The preacher feels ill-used. Perhaps his sense of fairness is offended. He feels that he can justify reacting in a hot spirit with hard words. He wants to strike back. After all, this church member is talking unkindly and acting unreasonably.

But God calls his ministers to the opposite response. What is it? Aristotle, who authored a classic work on virtues and vices titled *The Nicomachean Ethics*, summarizes it in the most helpful description that I've found. The man who possesses this characteristic, he says, is *not unduly insistent upon his rights, but accepts less than his share, although he has the law on his side*.<sup>3</sup>

*Not unduly insistent upon his rights*. That's not a neat one-word definition, but it's fairly easy to remember nevertheless. Would that the Spirit of God might bring it to our minds when the spirit of a church member turns ugly and sins against fairness. He's not talking rightly. Justice would demand that he retract his words,

that he apologize, that he be reasonable. But a *bishop must be epieikēs*. He must not unduly insist upon a correction. There will be times, certainly, when he cannot allow an accusation to stand, or when the wellbeing of the church requires that he insist upon a change of attitude. But even then, a man of God doesn't hit back. He doesn't respond in kind, giving a lick that's as good as or better than he got.

I observed this commendable spirit several times in the older pastor to whom I was an associate many years ago. One is indelibly etched in my memory. It was after a morning service, during a series in Philippians. The subject matter had concerned the doctrine of sanctification. The service had closed, pastor had walked about greeting folks as he customarily did, until finally the building was nearly empty. He began to make his way through a back room in which three men were counting the morning offering. Two of them were seminary students whom the church was helping to groom for future ministry. Pastor greeted them, only to be surprised when one of them voiced an objection to what he had just preached about sanctification. Pastor listened and then attempted to clarify. The seminary student responded with further objections, and soon the other one joined in the criticism as well. Again, pastor replied calmly and respectfully. All this time, the third man and I listened uncomfortably, constrained to watch these two young seminary students argue dogmatically with a venerable

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pastor forty years their senior. Finally, feeling the futility of trying to respond any further, pastor said quietly, *Well, I've got to go*. And he simply walked past the counting table, exited the building, escorted his wife to their car, and drove away.

Both those men are in pastoral ministry today, and I've wondered many times if they've ever experienced something similar from an unreasonable or disrespectful church member. Regardless, I'm confident that I was given a lesson in pastoral theology that day that was more valuable than any lecture I ever heard.

Luther used to tell the story of two billy goats on a narrow bridge over a deep ravine. For either to back up was impossible. Finally, one lay down and allowed the other to walk over him; no harm was done, and each went his separate way.

We all would like recurring evidence through the years that we are growing in this area of qualifications. Perhaps the Lord allows the occasional stubborn church member to stand squarely in our way in order to hand

us the opportunity to display, if to no one else, at least to ourselves, that we are capable of lying down and obliging at the very times that we feel like rising up and pushing.

**Just (Titus 1:8)**

How interesting it is to think of the last qualification, *not unduly insistent upon his rights*, alongside this one—*just*. To be *just* is, actually, to be insistent about what is right. It is to be consistently, inflexibly righteous, especially in relation to others. What a rare combination, then, these two character qualifications comprise. A minister is to be able to forgo his own rights, but he's to be scrupulously righteous when it comes to someone else's.

This was the aspect of his personal blamelessness toward them to which Samuel called the people's attention before delivering his final condemnation of their sin in asking for a king.

Behold, here I am: witness against me before the LORD, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you. And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any man's hand. And he said unto them, The LORD is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that ye have not found ought in my hand. And they answered, He is witness (1 Sam. 12:3–5).

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**To be just is, actually, to be insistent about what is right. It is to be consistently, inflexibly righteous, especially in relation to others. . . . A minister is to be able to forgo his own rights, but he's to be scrupulously righteous when it comes to someone else's.**

Without this conspicuous reputation for personal righteousness, Samuel's lips would have been effectively silenced at this critical moment in the life of the nation. *He who undertakes to reprove the world, must be one whom the world cannot reprove.*<sup>4</sup>

Paul, too, was able to leverage his consistent, blameless righteousness in order to dispose the Corinthians to accept his corrections of their conduct. *Receive us; we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man* (1 Cor. 7:2), he reminded his readers.

A preacher of the past has written,

Nothing so undermines the confidence of laymen in their spiritual leader as the slightest indication in him of double-dealing. . . . If a man is crotchety he can be tolerated; if he is prejudiced or ignorant he can be borne with; he may be lacking in a score of qualities which men count desirable and still be a useful and an honored man. But who can endure a minister who cheats or lies? The gospel preached by such a man falls dead and deadening. Prayer on his lips seems blasphemy. A religious service conducted by him exasperates every heart which doubts him.<sup>5</sup>

Whenever I think of a man's having a reputation for righteousness, a testimony given to a missionary comes to mind. This missionary was serving in a foreign country in which basic traffic laws are largely ignored. Intersections are snarls of cars just millimeters away from one another's bumpers, their drivers shouting, beeping horns incessantly, and aggressively edging every which way in order to crack the congestion. The man who was telling me about this brother was contrasting him with another missionary for whom he had little respect. But of the first missionary he had this to say: *If he was stopped by a red light in the middle of the night, and there was not another car in sight or a person around to see, he'd sit there for as long as it took until the light turned green.* That sounds like a just man. It makes me think of Hudson Taylor's observation, that a little thing is a little thing, but that faithfulness in a little thing is a big thing.

**Conclusion**

John Willison, a Scottish minister, was at first critical of George Whitefield. But after meeting the evangelist and observing his ministry in 1741, Willison reversed himself publicly. He wrote in *The Weekly History*,

I see . . . his life and conversation to be a transcript of his sermons. . . . It is a rare thing to see in a man, such a flaming fire for God in the pulpit; and yet most easy and calm when conversing with men out of it; careful not to give offence to them, and yet never courting the favour of any.<sup>6</sup>

Like their Lord, Christ's ministers must grow in right relations horizontally as well as vertically; [*increasing*] . . . *in favour with God and man* (Luke 2:52). ☞

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted by David Calhoun, *Princeton Seminary* (Banner of Truth, 1994), I, 74.

<sup>2</sup> *Wise Counsel: John Newton's Letters to John Ryland Jr.*, ed. Grant Gordon (Banner of Truth, 2009), 251.

<sup>3</sup> *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. J.A.K. Thomson (Penguin Books, 2004), 141.

<sup>4</sup> George Horne, *Considerations on the Life and Death of St. John the Baptist* (Clarendon Press, 1769), 81.

<sup>5</sup> Charles Jefferson, *Quiet Hints to Growing Preachers* (Thomas Y. Crowell & Company, 1901), 109–10.

<sup>6</sup> Quoted by Arnold Dallimore, *George Whitefield* (Banner of Truth, 1980), II, 98.



# Bring . . . the Books

*Heralds of God* by James S. Stewart

“The supreme need of the Church is the same in the twentieth century as in the first; it is men on fire for Christ” (220). With these words, James S. Stewart nears the end of his fifth and final lecture on preaching—and summarizes in one statement his instruction. It is hard to imagine that any divinity student who attended Stewart’s 1944 lectures on preaching at the Universities of Edinburgh or St. Andrews, Scotland, could have left unkindled. Likewise, one can hardly think of a student or pastor today reading through *Heralds of God*, the manuscript of Stewart’s lectures, without an igniting of his ministerial passion.

James Stewart (1896–1990) served twenty-two years as a pastor in the Church of Scotland, the final ten years at North Morningside Church in Edinburgh. With an education in NT language, literature, and theology, he preached with exegetical and theological precision and a passion to proclaim the supremacy of the one true God and the gospel of Jesus Christ. In *Heralds of God* the reader can’t escape the message that a preacher must keep God’s work through Christ for man’s needs the central theme of his pulpit. To Stewart, preaching is in short “the proclamation of the mighty acts of God” (5).

Stewart demonstrates his love of literature by quoting prominent authors profusely: poets, novelists, playwrights, philosophers, theologians, and pastors, spanning the centuries. His lectures include no less than 150 quotes from over ninety different authors, from Augustine, Baxter, Chaucer, and Donne to Spurgeon, Tolstoy, Virgil, and Wesley. Stewart read widely and extensively!

Stewart emphasizes that knowledge of “The Preacher’s World” is critical to communicational success. Remarkably, the “characteristic moods and tendencies” of Stewart’s day continue into the present: disillusionment, escapism, and skepticism. The preacher must inspire his hearers to find hope in Christ, proclaim the Truth, and exhort them to trust the Lord. In order to accomplish these tasks effectively, “You do not need to be eloquent, or clever, or sensational, or skilled in dialectic: you *must* be real” (32).

“The Preacher’s Theme” is the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ, His death and resurrection. “Nothing could be more marrowless and stultified and futile than the preaching which is for ever exhorting ‘Thus and thus you must act,’ and neglecting the one thing which essentially makes Christianity: ‘Thus has God acted, once and for all’” (66). We must present Christ! “To spend your days doing that—not just describing Christianity or arguing for a creed, not apologizing for the faith or debating fine shades of religious meaning, but actually offering and giving men Christ—could any life-work be more thrilling or momentous?” (57). Preaching—for both the herald and the hearer—is an act of worship as God’s majesty, Christ’s loveliness,

and man’s needs take the spotlight. The effective preacher, therefore, sets the cross in the context of the world’s suffering and sin.

In “The Preacher’s Study” Stewart encourages a minister to persevere courageously through the difficulty of sermon preparation, giving his very best to the task. He must “visualize a gathered congregation” and determine a “definite aim” (119–20). Stewart recommends that a preacher plan to begin a sermon by targeting the needs of the congregation rather than by giving the background of the passage, unless he perhaps does both in conjunction. He further advises that a preacher skillfully use a variety of approaches to the body of the sermon and that he “cultivate the quiet close” (139). Above all, a preacher must prepare to “draw back the veil and make the barriers fall that hide the face of God” (101).

“The only sermon the world wants to hear is one that throbs with the vitality of first-hand knowledge and experience. This alone carries authority and conviction” (218). In his closing lecture, “The Preacher’s Inner Life,” Stewart emphasizes that a preacher must be a man of absolute dedication, fervent prayer, humility, authority, and, most of all, passion for Christ. “The real work is done . . . on the deep levels of self-commitment where [a man] rigorously disciplines his life for love of Jesus Christ” (191). God works humility in a preacher when He works through him and shows him that he is completely unworthy of the insurmountable magnitude of the task before him.

If ever a man finds the work of the ministry becoming easily manageable and surmountable, an undemanding vocation without strain or any encumbering load of care, he is to be pitied, not congratulated: for he has so flagrantly lost touch with One whose ministry of reconciliation could be accomplished and fulfilled only through Gethsemane and Calvary (199).

The combination of Stewart’s theological and literary strength, practical advice, and cogent presentation makes this work valuable for its mental stimulation and spiritual edification. His obvious love for the Lord Jesus Christ throughout puts it in the category of a ministerial treasure. “It is only as we live in the Bible—devotionally, and as students of the sacred Word—that we can hope to find the manna falling regularly for our people’s need” (154). May Stewart help you find food for your soul and resulting nourishment for those in your care. ☞

“... when  
thou comest,  
bring with thee  
... the books”  
(2 Tim. 4:13)

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Most commentators (along with almost all modern versions) render the first half of Ephesians 5:16 something like, “Making the most of the time” (e.g., RSV, ESV, NASB). They point out that the verb in question (*exagorazo*) appears in the Septuagint’s translation of Daniel 2:8. There Nebuchadnezzar accuses the Chaldeans of stalling when they request that the king tell them his dream: “I know of certainty that ye would gain [*exagorazo*] the time.” Commentators then reason that Paul is likely using the verb similarly here in Ephesians. The application that follows is that believers are to take advantage of every moment, wasting none of the opportunities that stand before them.


But this interpretation has two flaws. First, the use of *exagorazo* in Daniel 2:8 is very different from its use in Ephesians 5:16. Nebuchadnezzar is accusing the Chaldeans of stalling; Paul is exhorting the Ephesians to take action. The same word is found in both passages, but a word has different meanings in different contexts. And the meanings of Daniel 2:8 and Ephesians 5:16 are not the same.

Second, this interpretation does not fit well with the following clause: “because the days are evil.” “Days” and “time” are both terms referring to periods of time. Paul uses these words as synonyms, though they are not exact synonyms (since “day” occurs in the plural). “Days” refers to time in a general sense: the current age.<sup>1</sup> “Time” refers to time in a more limited sense: a period of time along with the opportunities it offers to people (BDAG, 497). Since the definite article occurs with “time,” it probably refers to the time that is given to the readers—“your time” is the idea. So Paul is asserting that the *days* are evil, but within those days is *time* that believers must reckon with. Given that understanding, does it really make sense to say that Christians should make the most of the time *because it is part of something evil*?<sup>2</sup>

A better interpretation follows the literal rendering of the verse: “Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.” This translation is based on a well-attested meaning of *exagorazo*: to buy someone from a certain (usually unfavorable) condition, as a slave from bondage. This is the sense of *exagorazo* that Paul himself uses in Galatians 3:13: “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us” (cf. Gal. 4:5). This interpretation also fits well with the second part of the verse. If the days are indeed evil, one should seek to rescue them—or at least a portion of them—from their bondage to sin and corruption. It also fits well with the exhortations that have preceded. Paul has told the Ephesians to replace lying with truth-telling (4:25), sinful anger with righteous indignation (4:26), and stealing with hard work and generosity (4:28). In a fallen world, God’s gifts (including

language, emotion, and wealth accumulation) get twisted by sin into bondage. But the children of God are to untwist these gifts and thus “walk as children of light” (5:8).<sup>3</sup>

Some may object that this interpretation will lead Christians to try to “redeem the culture.” But both the wording of the verse and the rest of Ephesians suggest that “redeeming the time” is referring to something different. Paul does not say, “Redeeming the days because the days are evil.” Our age is evil, but that is not what we are called to redeem. We are to redeem our time—the opportunities that have been given to us, the duties that are placed in our charge. As we look at the rest of Ephesians, we see what Paul is calling on believers to do. Wives should submit to their husbands. Husbands should love their wives. Children should obey their parents. Fathers should patiently nurture their children. Slaves should serve with sincerity. And masters should treat their slaves as their equals.

When Christians live this way, they are living redemptively within their cultures—even if there is nothing dramatic about their lives. Such Christians are simply living each day as humans were always meant to live. And yet something very powerful is at work as well. The integrity and love that characterize such a life will shine the light of God’s conviction and hope into the dark places of this world: “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light” (Eph. 5:14). 

**“Rightly  
dividing  
the Word  
of Truth”  
(2 Tim. 2:15)**

<sup>1</sup> Although I disagree with O’Brien’s translation of the first half of the verse, I do agree with his analysis of “days”: “The notion that ‘the days are evil’ appears to be similar to the idea of ‘this present evil age’ in Galatians 1:4 (cf. ‘the evil day,’ Eph. 6:13). These ‘evil’ days are under the control of the prince of the power of the air (Eph. 2:2), who is opposed to God and his purposes. He exercises effective and compelling authority over men and women outside of Christ, keeping them in terrible bondage (2:1–3)” (Peter T. O’Brien, *Ephesians*, PNTC [Eerdmans, 1999], 383).

<sup>2</sup> Commentators who prefer the rendering “making the most of the time” tend to deal with this problem in one of two ways. First, some inject the idea that time is fleeting—as if Paul had said, “Making the most of the time because the days are passing quickly.” See John R. W. Stott, *Ephesians*, BST (Inter-Varsity Press, 1979), 202. Second, some explain “making the most of” so that it means something similar to “redeem.” See Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians* (Baker, 2002), 694–95.

<sup>3</sup> This is the interpretation adopted by Frank Thielman, *Ephesians*, BECNT (Baker, 2010), 356–57.



Every once in a while an Internet rabbit trail leads to homiletical gold. We've all got to have *some* justification for chasing those Internet rabbits, of course; mine is the noble goal of finding ways to illustrate the Bible text memorably for God's people. (I watch cat videos for their own sake, however; don't we all?)

One day an Internet rabbit was running away from me, and I chased him adroitly through several websites on various cyber-continents before, finally, I pounced. I looked around. We were at YouTube.com.

I began to watch as a young man named Josh Evans related his testimony of conversion to a collection of Muslim men and boys sitting in front of him in an Orange County, California, Islamic society.

But he was not testifying of a conversion to Christianity. He was telling of his turn away from it. Josh is now "Yusha," and he travels the world promoting Islam.

It turns out that Josh is from, of all places, Greenville, South Carolina—and he lived right down the street from where I myself once resided. As a teen he briefly intended to go to, of all places, my alma mater: Bob Jones University. His best friend attended the school, he says. Josh and I could easily have become classmates.

He gets a few things about BJU mixed up in his message: women aren't required to cover themselves up to their wrists and ankles (it's actually knuckles and toes, as we all know), and there is no "textual criticism" major. And when he credits a BJU professor for "wrecking my faith in Christianity," what the professor supposedly said doesn't sound anything like what any of my BJU teachers would say.

I feel compassion for Josh, however, because he apparently got poor answers to serious questions as a teenage seeker—particularly from his own pastor and fellow parishioners in a local Methodist church (if I understood him correctly).

### Bible Reading Assumptions

But what really caught my attention were his comments about reading the Bible. And this is where I found that homiletical gold.

Josh tells how his BJU-student friend asked him, "Have you ever read the Bible?"

"Of course," Josh said. "We read it in church all the time."

"No," said his friend. "Have you ever really read it?"

Josh had not, so he began to read it straight through (this starts at about 13:00 in the video; showing this to your listeners would add impact to this illustration if you were to use it in preaching or teaching). Josh shared his reaction to reading Scripture:

I was shocked by some of the stories of some of these people I kept hearing about in Sunday school.

If you read about Noah in the Bible, there's a story about him saving humanity from the flood, but there's another aspect of the story of Noah that you won't hear preached anywhere: he was an alcoholic. How could he build the ark if he was an alcoholic?

Then I came across the story of Lot. There's a very twisted story about Lot and his daughters that says his daughters committed incest with him. This is one of the Bible's portrayals of the prophets of God!

Then there's one story about David in the Bible that shocked me to my core, the story of David, Bathsheba, and Uriah. It says that David saw this woman named Bathsheba and she was a very beautiful woman. David was not able to resist his temptation to be with this woman, so he committed adultery with her. I couldn't believe that this perpetrator would be in the Bible!

Every pastor or evangelist whom I asked about this problem gave me the same answer: "Don't let a little bit of knowledge wreck your faith."

What did Josh come to the Bible expecting? Particularly when he came to the kinds of Old Testament stories he mentions, what did he assume he was going to find?

The good guys. Doing good stuff. To provide models for us. So we can all be good. Like the good guys. *That's* what Josh assumed the Bible was for.

Where did he get this assumption? From his own fallen heart, yes. But also, I'd guess, from his church.

What do *you* come to those Bible stories expecting? Do you permit the Bible to complicate the reputations of Noah, Lot, and David (or Gideon, or Jephthah, or numerous others)? Do your people ever get to hear the whole story of these men as the Bible records it? Why, indeed, would the Holy Spirit of God think it important to include Noah's drunkenness, Lot's incest, David's adultery (or, perhaps better, rape) and murder, Gideon's vengefulness, Jephthah's sacrifice of his own daughter? Most of the things these Bible characters ever did or said were *not* included in Scripture. The things that the Bible does record, even the bad things, must be there for good reasons.

### The Story of the Bible

Josh and I, it turns out, are the same age. Born two months apart. I wasn't smart enough to even ask Josh's questions when I was a teenager, to be honest. I had good answers presented to me before the questions had a chance to come up independently.

*"To every preacher of righteousness as well as to Noah, wisdom gives the command, 'A window shalt thou make in the ark.'"*

Charles Spurgeon

Around the one-hour mark in this talk, Josh describes how he read the Qur'an for the first time and found in it the moral exemplars he'd been looking for. He says that, by contrast with Christianity (and specifically the Trinity), Islam was "logical, rational, and reasonable."

I can see why the idea of the Trinity is hard to swallow. I believe that particular doctrine not because I understand it but because I accept that Creators are allowed to tell creatures to believe things they can't understand.

But I see other errors in Josh's thinking that I believe I understand quite well. It always pains me when someone rejects Christianity based on an easily corrected misreading of the Bible, and that's what he's done. Josh/Yusha presents us with a memorable reason why it is so important to view the Bible as one big story telling a lot of little stories—one big story that is not primarily about man and what he should do but about God and what He has done.

The Bible tells the story of what God is doing to glorify Himself by redeeming His fallen creation. There are moral lessons in the stories of Noah, Lot, and David (and Gideon and Jephthah and Samuel and Demas and Alexander the coppersmith), but we'll misunderstand those moral lessons if we think the Bible is mainly interested in giving us heroes to emulate and villains to excoriate. We'll be tempted to defend our "heroes" even when the text paints them as sinning. And we'll miss out on the all-important grace of God that is essential to human obedience of His will.

If the main point of our sermons consistently boils down to "Be like so-and-so" (or "Don't be like so-and-so"), we're probably missing what the Bible is trying to do.

I'll let Bryan Chapell—from a textbook assigned to me at Bob Jones Seminary—take it from here.

"Be like" messages focus the attention of listeners on the accomplishments of a particular biblical character. After identifying the exemplary characteristics of the character, the preacher exhorts listeners to be like that person in some commendable aspect of his or her personality or practice. In what is often called biographical preaching, pastors urge congregants to be like Moses, Gideon, David, Daniel, or Peter in the face of a trial, temptation, or challenge. Such exemplars, of course, can be used beneficially for instructing God's people in proper conduct and character. Biblical writers clearly intend for certain biblical characters to represent specific characteristics of godliness. A difficulty with much biographical preaching, however, is that it typically fails to honor the care that the Bible also takes to tarnish almost every patriarch or saint within its pages. Without blushing, the Bible honestly presents the human frailties of its most significant characters so that we will not expect to find, within fallen humanity, any whose model behavior merits divine acceptance.

For instance, while many sermons exhort listeners to emulate David's courage, wisdom, and love for God, such messages hardly present a full (or honest) picture of the shepherd king's life without mention of his adultery, murder, and faithlessness. Were we to ask David whom believers should emulate, can we imagine that his answer would be, "Me"? If even the biblical characters themselves would not exhort us to model our lives after theirs, then we cannot remain faithful to Scripture and simply command a congregation to be like them. Neither do we help others by encouraging them to be like Jesus if we do not simultaneously remind them that his standards are always beyond them, apart from his enabling grace.

## Ignorant of God

Josh/Yusha Evans ends his message with a ringing call for evangelism. He uses the classic tropes (and even the vocabulary) of American revivalism, something I've never heard done by a Muslim. Here's another quote/paraphrase—and notice whom else he quotes along the way!

People are walking around ignorant of God, like people with a terminal disease they don't even know about—a disease for which we have the cure. Many have died while I'm talking. We've got to take the truth to them. We must not keep our light under a bushel. I've made DVDs about Islam to send to every person in America, and I get about two shahadas [conversions] a month—recently someone from Irvine, Texas accepted Islam.

But precisely because Josh Evans was looking for morally exemplary characters to model himself after—and because he refuses to see the infinite difference between Jesus' divine-human example and anyone else's—his message is not one of hope. Josh's message is that I will be judged by my success or failure in being like the good guys and avoiding the behaviors of the villains. Ours is a message in which Jesus, the only Good One, paid a debt I could never pay in order to change me progressively, from the inside out, from villain to good guy.

## Morality Tales

Josh provides a sad illustration of bad Bible reading, but his story is also an opportunity to shine some harsh light back on the church. It was a Greenville, South Carolina, boy who grew up going to church and wanted to attend Bob Jones who brought these bad assumptions to the Bible. He held on to these assumptions even when the Bible tried to shake them loose. But there are plenty of Christians who somehow manage to hold onto both. We shouldn't. We Bible preachers and Bible readers need to view the Bible through a set of assumptions generated by the Bible. We who inveigh against works salvation should not let it in through the back door, by treating the Bible as a collection of mere morality tales. ☞

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Heredity is what a man believes in until his son begins to behave like a delinquent.  
—Unknown

From public policy to the pulpit, and in most things in between, one can find influences from evolution.  
—Cornelius G. Hunter

It is also worth noting that in Darwin's two works, *The Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man*, the phrase, "we may suppose" or some similar clause, occurs over 800 times.  
—Scott M. Huse

Was [evolution] devised not to get in facts but to keep out God?  
—C. S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*

Spontaneous generation of a living cell is as improbable as a tornado building a Boeing 747.  
—Sir Fred Hoyle

Ultimately the Darwinian theory of evolution is no more nor less than the great cosmological myth of the twentieth century.  
—Michael Denton

Through the use and abuse of hidden postulates, of bold, often ill-founded extrapolations, a pseudoscience has been created. It is taking root in the very heart of biology and is leading astray many biochemists and biologists who sincerely believe that the accuracy of fundamental concepts has been demonstrated, which is not the case.  
—Pierre Grasse

Random chance, natural selection and long time spans cannot explain either the origin or the development of living systems. The probabilities are infinitesimal even

with evolutionary time scales. If natural causes cannot explain the origin and development of living systems, a non-natural cause must be evident. Such non-natural cause is clearly presented in Genesis 2:7.

—David R. Boylan, PhD

Where did the atom for a so-called Big Bang come from? How did it originate?—John Schroeder

The "authorities," who ridiculed [William Jennings Bryan] for his supposed ignorance, created an entire race of humanity out of the tooth of a pig!

—Scott M. Huse, regarding the Nebraska Man

Evolutionists use negative theological arguments that give evolution its force. [The] creation doesn't seem very divine, so evolution must be true. . . . By Darwin's day the popular conception of God was a very pleasant one. Positive divine attributes such as wisdom and benevolence were emphasized to the point that God's wrath and use of evil were rarely considered.

—Cornelius G. Hunter

What are the Christians doing? We are moving with our culture away from Darwinian evolution (theistic evolution is Darwinian evolution with Bible verses tacked on) into punctuated equilibria (à la Stephen Jay Gould) which we have renamed "Progressive Creation." (Progressive creationism, as far as this writer can discern, is Gould's punctuated equilibria with Bible verses tacked on!)

—Jobe Martin, DMD, ThM

Compiled by Dr. David Atkinson, pastor of Dyer Baptist Church, Dyer, Indiana.



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# What Is a Biblical Fundamentalist?

Very few descriptive terms are more misunderstood than the word “fundamentalist.” Basic to a proper understanding of this word is an understanding of the term “fundamental.” This brings us to that which is basic, foundational, and absolutely essential—that which is biblically so clear that denial is tantamount to a denial of the very meaning of words and the integrity of language. So much of that which we believe, teach, and practice does not meet this qualification.

What then is a biblical “fundamentalist”? I offer the following definition: A “fundamentalist” is one who believes everything that is clearly taught and obeys everything that is clearly commanded in the Scriptures. In the main, Fundamentalism is about biblical integrity in both belief and practice, life and ministry. A Fundamentalist, then, will be one who believes the Bible, teaches the Bible, practices the Bible, and defends the Bible.

## Important Clarifications

- Genuine, biblical Fundamentalism is not primarily a relationship with men and movements. Fundamentalism is a personal relationship to the Word of God—a relationship that fully acknowledges and joyfully embraces the *absolute authority* of the Scriptures over all that we believe and practice. An inerrant, infallible, inspired Bible is useless if it carries no authority over our belief and practice—what we believe and what we do. Our relationship with men and movements is the resulting outcome of the kind of relationship we have with the Word of God.
- The Fundamentalist does not limit what he considers to be fundamental to the *irreducible minimums for salvation*. To the Fundamentalist, all that is clearly taught, whether for belief or conduct, is fundamental and therefore essential to the Christian faith.

Tragically, many limit their concept of the essentials of fundamental belief to the context of the irreducible minimums for salvation: the virgin birth, the deity of Christ, the blood atonement, Christ’s bodily resurrection, etc. And tragically to many, obedience to the commands of Scripture is not only nonessential but also irrelevant.

Should not the essentials of fundamental belief and practice rather go beyond these irreducible minimums for salvation and be defined in the context of the whole body of truth revealed in the Scriptures, the Word of God? Is not everything that is clearly taught in the Word of God essential for belief? Is not every clear command of Scripture essential for obedience?

- A Fundamentalist takes seriously the clear command to love his brethren and to promote biblical unity and harmony among those who believe and obey fundamental truths of Scripture. How is it

possible to exhibit due reverence for the Word of God and not insist on believing all that it clearly teaches and obeying all that it clearly commands? Fundamentalists must be fully devoted and submitted to the authority of the Word of God pertaining both to what they believe and what they practice. To the Fundamentalist, the only option in regard to clearly stated truths is to believe, propagate, and defend them as truths given by God. To the Fundamentalist, the only option in regard to clearly stated commands is to obey and insist on obedience to them as commands given by God.

Authentic Fundamentalism indeed goes beyond merely believing the core of irreducible minimums for salvation. A truly biblical faith demands that the scope of belief and practice be governed by the whole of God’s revelation to man. All that is clearly taught and all that is clearly commanded is essential to biblical Fundamentalism!

- A Fundamentalist will separate on the basis of any kind of denial of that which is clearly taught in Scripture. He will not compromise that which is fundamental. He will separate on the basis of two distinct categories:
  1. Heresy—on the basis of *belief*.
  2. Willful disobedience—on the basis of *practice*.
- A Fundamentalist will separate from either unbelievers or believers who violate fundamental, clearly revealed truths or commands of Scripture.
- A fundamentalist will *fellowship* with all who believe and obey that which is clearly taught.
- A fundamentalist will *participate* with other Fundamentalists to the extent that agreement on other nonfundamental beliefs renders it possible.
- A Fundamentalist operates on the basis of *principle* (what is involved), not *personality* (who is involved).

## Further Clarification on Separation

- Biblical separation is not isolation from the world. We are “in the world” but not “of the world”—molded by its culture.
- Biblical separation is not antiquation—holding on to the past. It is not Amish-ism or Luddite-ism (referring to those who resist progress in technology).
- Biblical separation is based on biblical commands and principles, not culture. Biblical commands and principles are timeless—they never change, but their applications change as culture changes.

Dr. David C. Innes has served as senior pastor of Hamilton Square Baptist Church in San Francisco, California, since January of 1977.





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## RESPONDING TO

Jesus is not only Son of God but also Son of David, Branch of Jesse, and Lion of Judah. In Psalm 2 Yahweh declares the appointment of His Son as King in Zion; wise kings will bow in obeisance, while those who rebel will be broken to bits like clay pots. King David is the quintessential type of the ultimate Divine Messiah-King. Passages that highlight David's dominion are designed to depict not only immediate historical events but bigger future realities as well. The ways people responded to God's anointed king, David, become parables of how people respond to David's greater Heir (cf. Ps. 110:1).

### Responding to Royal Authority: Submission or Destruction? (2 Samuel 8)

Chapter 8 recounts a succession of David's military conquests. This is not just history for history's sake. There is a narrative art to how this is recorded.

The chapter reverberates with repetitions: "David smote" (8:1), "and he smote" (8:2), "David smote also" (8:3), "David slew" (8:5), "David had smitten" (8:9), "and smitten" (8:10), and finally "he returned from smiting" (8:13). All these reflect the Hebrew verb *nakah* (strike, kill, defeat), a verb we haven't seen this much in one place since a much younger David slew Goliath (1 Samuel 17, where the same verb appears 12x). But that's not all.

As if to emphatically add insult to injury (or humiliation to hurt), the narrator adds that David *subdued* all his enemies (8:1, 11) made them his *servants* (8:2, 6, 14), and *took* their cities (8:1), their weaponry (8:4), and their wealth (8:7–8). The list of the defeated and despoiled territories spans the compass: Syria and Zobah to the north (modern Syria), Ammon, Moab and Edom to the east (modern Jordan), Amalek to the south (modern border of Egypt), and Philistia to the west (modern Gaza).

Why was David so successful and unharmed amid all this warfare and conquest? The narrator leaves no doubt, stating twice that "the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went" (8:6, 14).

Battles are bloody affairs, and the narrative details bear that out—executed enemies (8:2), hamstringed horses (8:4), heavy casualties (8:5, 13), forced tribute (8:2, 6). But none of this was necessary. Hamath (a region even farther north than Syria and Zobah) sent gifts to David and sued for peace (8:9–11). "Some . . . must be subdued;

others submit. Some [are] rebellious, others are repentant. Some must be crushed, others are contrite" (Davis, 2 Samuel, 113). That's why Psalm 2 ends with a plea to kings to "kiss the Son"—that is, to submit, be humble, show homage, and survive.

In dealing with the enemies of God's people, David's conquest foreshadows the coming conquest and judgment of David's Lord, Jesus the Messiah. And the captured wealth of the surrounding nations presages a coming period when the wealth of all the nations will flow into Israel as the heart of Christ's kingdom (Isa. 60). The chapter opens with a hint in this direction: "After this it came to pass. . . ." After what? After *the covenantal promise of God to David and to his seed* that occupies all of chapter 7. Who is the ultimate referent of the *seed* of David? Christ. David's kingdom is a picture of Christ's kingdom, for which also conquest by conflict will, in the end, be essential (cf. Luke 19:14, 27; Rev. 19). Because "on the whole men and nations do not long to receive but live to resist Christ's reign and . . . he will establish his rule at last not by popular demand but by armed might. . . . That kingdom will come at the last because Christ, David's seed, imposes it over all objection and opposition and conquers all his and our enemies" (Davis, 112).

The responses of the nations to David the King foreshadow the responses of people to Jesus the Christ, not only in the future but in the present as well. How one responds in the present will dictate how the King will react when He comes.

### Responding to Royal Loyalty: Reception or Rebuff? (2 Samuel 9–10)

Chapters 9 and 10 shift the focus by shifting the focal word. Again, repetition raises to the surface a recurring word—a word that displays the defining desire of David. The first verse introduces it when David asks, "Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him *kindness*?" (9:1). When Saul's former servant, Ziba, is brought before the king (9:2), David repeats the question verbatim (9:3). And when Jonathan's crippled surviving son, Mephibosheth, is found and introduced to the king, David swears, "I will surely shew thee *kindness*" (9:7). This is the Hebrew word *chesed* (lovingkindness, covenant loyalty)—a word we haven't seen this much in one place since



## GOD'S KING (2 SAMUEL 8–10)

1 Samuel 20, when David and Jonathan swore a covenant of loyalty to each other—which is, of course, the entire basis for his actions now (“for Jonathan’s sake,” 9:1; cf. 9:7).

David displayed his “kindness” in a very personal and concrete way, by making sure Mephibosheth ate his meals at the king’s own table from then on, “as one of the king’s sons” (9:11; cf. (9:7, 10, 11, 13)—an utterly unexpected and undeserved privilege of which Mephibosheth was keenly aware (9:8). The picture of God’s grace in our favored relationship to the King—not only in terms of God’s covenant faithfulness but also in terms of the excessive goodness of God’s posture toward us—is unmistakable. The King desires us to “eat continually at His table”—to enjoy the benefits of His provision and the privileges of His company. Do we? Davis (126) again puts his finger on it: “We are the Lord’s Mephibosheths, and there is absolutely no reason why we should be eating continually at the King’s table. And if we have any sense, we won’t be able to understand it either.” But if we have any sense, we’ll do it anyway.

This is a beautiful story; Mephibosheth has done nothing to deserve this grace from the king. It is rooted in something beyond him—in David’s love for and covenant promise to Jonathan. We talked about that covenant in a previous column, but I want to remind you of a specific statement in that covenant. Jonathan said, “Thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house for ever: no, not when the LORD hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth” (1 Sam. 20:15). What just happened in 2 Samuel 8? The cutting off of all David’s enemies by Yahweh. The juxtaposition of the events of 2 Samuel 8 and 9 is not accidental.

Nor is David content to fulfill his covenant obligations passively, only when asked or pressed. He does not wait for Mephibosheth to come to him. (Would he ever, knowing the risk as a survivor of his former royal rival?) David looks for the opportunity to lavish devoted loyalty. Does that remind you of Anyone? Does God ever do anything for you, without your asking Him specifically? Do you find that you have to hold God’s feet to the fire? Just as David did what he did “for Jonathan’s sake,” and just as God will deal patiently and loyally with David’s descendants “for David’s sake,” God does what He does for us, ultimately, “for Jesus’ sake.”

Unfortunately, this lovely story of loyalty does not

stand alone. In chapter 10 David also purposes to “shew kindness” to Hanun, king of Ammon, just as his father had “shewed kindness” to David (10:2). You can see the passage is still dealing with the same issue. What is so instructive, however, is that these two offers of loving-kindness are perceived and received very differently. Hanun’s cynical and suspicious counselors persuade him that David’s apparent extension of kindness cloaks an ulterior motive—“to search the city, and to spy it out, and to overthrow it” (10:3). So Hanun responds to David’s gracious overture by thoroughly humiliating the hapless messengers who delivered it (10:4–5).

It soon dawned on them that their response was a move of monumental stupidity; but instead of humbling themselves, they hunkered down in their obstinate ingratitude (10:6). The rest of the chapter describes David’s righteously wrathful reaction by trouncing the Ammonites—in spite of all the Syrian mercenaries who sided with them—so soundly that Syria revised its foreign policy toward Ammon for years to come (10:19).

Who could respond to such grace with such churlishness? What was their chief problem? In Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings*, describing the traitor Saruman, Gandalf remarks, “The untrustworthy are ever untrusting.” They measure others by what they know of their own heart. If we know ourselves to be untrustworthy, we are unlikely to trust others because we assume that deep down, they are untrustworthy too. Whenever we do that with God, it is a massive miscalculation that means we—at least in that moment—do not know God at all. Knowing David as we do, we can recognize that the Ammonites’ chief problem is that they really do not know David at all. The crookedness of their own hearts caused them to misjudge him completely. And in their reaction to David we can see again a reflection of people’s reaction to divine kindness. Those who mistrust or misinterpret the grace of God—and that surely includes everyone reading (and writing) this column, at some point or other in our lives—only show how little they know and understand Him.

The reign of David in these chapters models both the conquest and the compassion of Christ. And the people around David model both the wise and reckless ways one can respond to Christ’s conquest and compassion—either by submitting and embracing Him or spurning and resisting Him.





# Over *the* moat

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## Hate Speech in Canada

In an effort to “protect the legal rights for the LGBTQ2 community” Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s Liberal Party government introduced legislation this past May on the behalf of that community. The bill will first expand the Canadian Criminal Code to expand what constitutes “hate speech” to include gender identity and gender expression. Secondly, the bill will expand the Canadian Human Rights Act to include transgendered people. Consequences for violating this law, if passed, could include up to a two-year prison sentence for violators.

This article can be referenced at <http://www.christianpost.com/news/canada-may-ban-anti-transgender-speech-with-2-years-in-prison-164382/>.

## Police Called

A seven-year-old student of the Desert Rose Elementary School received a visit from a Los Angeles Deputy sheriff at his home to inform him and his parents that the school had filed a report against the child.

According to the Santa Monica *Observer*, the child had been handing out notes that contained Bible verses during the child’s lunch time. He was also observed passing these papers out on the school sidewalk. His teacher publicly rebuked him in class and called his parents. The child continued to pass out papers outside the school gate. This apparently was

too much for school officials.

The Liberty Counsel, an organization that is designed to promote and protect American religious freedom, wrote a response to the school, parts of which can be viewed in this article: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/elementary-school-calls-police-7-year-old-boy-sharing-bible-verses-164792/>.

## Puzzling Eisegesis

President Obama’s recent directive to allow transgender students to use the bathroom of their choice is drawing criticism from all directions. At least eleven states have filed a lawsuit against the Obama administration because of the directive.

In a recent press opportunity President Obama cited his Christian faith and the Scriptures as rationale for his directive. “My reading of scripture” the president stated, “tells me that that [the] Golden Rule is pretty high up there in terms of my Christian belief.” Somehow he believes this directive will protect transgender children from bullying. But appealing to Scripture is a puzzling move, given the Scriptures’ unambiguous statements to the contrary.

This article can be referenced at <http://www.christianpost.com/news/obama-uses-bible-christian-belief-to-defend-transgender-bathroom-directive-to-schools-164774/>.

## An Ominous Sign

On June 28 of this year the US Supreme Court announced it would not

hear a religious Liberty case, *Stormans v. Wiseman*. In this case three pharmacists sought to reject the delivery mandate for all legal pharmaceuticals when such prescriptions violated their religious consciences.

While the refusal to hear the case was not accompanied by a rationale, Samuel Alito did write the minority dissent: “At issue are Washington State regulations that are likely to make a pharmacist unemployable if he or she objects on religious grounds to dispensing certain prescription medications, yet the Ninth Circuit held that the regulations do not violate the First Amendment, and this Court does not deem the case worthy of our time. If this is a sign of how religious liberty claims will be treated in the years ahead, those who value religious freedom have cause for great concern.”

Ironically, this same court offered the same 5–3 split the day before when it ruled that the Texas law requiring abortion clinics to have the same standards as surgical clinics was unconstitutional. (See below.)

This article can be referenced at <http://www.christianpost.com/news/an-ominous-sign-supreme-court-rejects-washington-pharmacists-religious-liberty-complaint-165770/>.

## Muslim Attacks Son

A Muslim man, Abubakar Malagar, has been arrested and released on bail for attempting to burn his son. Nine-year-old Nassif Malagara attended church in Sudan

with his neighbor. After the service he asked the pastor to help him to receive Christ as his personal Savior. When he returned home, he shared with his family that he no longer wanted to attend Muslim school or take part in Muslim activities. Enraged by his decision, his family insisted he participated in the Ramadan fast. After two days, he decided to eat some food. His father took him and tied him to a palm tree and set the tree on fire.

Neighbors rescued Nassif from the flames, and he was taken to the hospital where at this writing he is still being treated for serious burns to several parts of his body.

The neighbor who took Nassif to church has also received threats on his cell phone. “We know you are behind the conversion of Nassif to Christianity. You will reap what you have sown, which will be a lesson to others. Islam is against such conversions.”

While Uganda is considered 85% Christian, Muslim retaliation does not need a majority to validate it.

This article can be referenced at <http://www.christianpost.com/news/muslim-father-burns-9-y-o-son-for-converting-to-christianity-in-uganda-165743/>.

## Texas’ HB 2 Struck Down

In a 5–3 decision the US Supreme Court struck down Texas’ HB 2, the first abortion case the High Court has heard in years. The bill had two basic components: first, it disallowed abortions after

twenty weeks of gestation, and, second, it required abortion clinics to meet the same safety standards as outpatient surgical centers.

As reasonable as these requirements may seem, the high court found that HB 2 put undue burdens on those who seek and provide abortions for the medical benefits that they offer.

This article can be referenced at <http://www.christianpost.com/news/supreme-court-strikes-down-texas-pro-life-law-hb2-164918/>.

### Do Not Evangelize

Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, had some advice that might cause the apostle Paul to scratch his head. His advice is that Christians should not talk about their faith unless asked to do so: "I draw the line in terms of respect for the other; in starting by listening before you speak; in terms of

## NOTABLE QUOTES

**I**t is only those that do nothing that make no mistakes.—Joseph Conrad

**W**hen the Bible itself becomes irksome, inquire whether you have not been spoiling your appetite by sweetmeats and renounce them; and believe that the Word is the wire along which the voice of God will certainly come to you if the heart is hushed and the attention fixed.—F. B. Meyer

**N**o pastor, no spiritual leader, is ever able to take his people any further than he himself has gone with God.—W. Phillip Keller

**I**t is becoming fashionable to scorn the idea of sin in society. The impact of humanistic thinking is to belittle the concept that man is corrupt. Psychologists and psychiatrists would persuade us that people really are not responsible for their wrongs. Rather, the view of sociologists is that the environment is all wrong. Their cry is, "Change society and you will get better men and women." It simply does not happen. Christ's call is, "Change men and women and you will get a better society." This does work. It always has.—W. Phillip Keller

love that is unconditional and not conditional to one iota, to one single element on how the person responds to your own declaration of faith; and of not speaking about faith unless you are asked about faith. . . . I draw a pretty sharp line, it is all based around loving the person you are dealing with which means you seek their wellbeing and you respect their identity and their integrity."

This article can be referenced at <http://www.christianpost.com/news/archbishop-justin-welby-tells-christians-not-speak-about-their-faith-unless-asked-164403/>.

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*Newsworthy* is presented to inform believers. The people or sources mentioned do not necessarily carry the endorsement of FBFI.

Compiled by Robert Condict, FBFI Executive Board member and pastor of Upper Cross Roads Baptist Church, Baldwin, Maryland.

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# ON LANGUAGE & SCRIPTURE

It's time for me to hear from you. I'm writing a book about the King James Version, and I need your help. I have a question: have you used the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED)? How has it helped you read the KJV? Please write to mark.ward@faithlife.com.

Nobody fluent in Modern English is utterly at a loss reading the KJV, especially once he learns to process the *thees* and *thous*, which isn't hard. Any kid can do it.

But there are words that we just don't use anymore, such as "besom" (Isa. 14:23). I looked that one up in all the major dictionaries: *Merriam-Webster*, *American Heritage*, and *New Oxford American* (the last comes standard on all Mac computers), and they all had the word. A besom is an old-style broom made of twigs.

But then I tried "chambering," a word that occurs in a very commonly referenced passage (Rom. 13:13)—and I struck out. None of the dictionaries people are most likely to have on their shelves include this word. A little poking around on the Internet led me to the right definition, but Internet poking is not a reliable Bible study method. I need to know with confidence not what a given word means now, not what it meant in 1828 (the year of Webster's first dictionary), but what it meant in 1611. I couldn't find that free on the Internet.

Because that's "expensive" information. Think about the work it takes for lexicographers (professional dictionary makers) to figure out what words meant four hundred years ago. They have to read lots of literature from that time period to find out how the word was used. That takes time, and time takes money. When you buy a dictionary, you are paying the lexicographers to do a ton of reading for you—and to arrange and share with you what they discover. That's why this information is not free online.

Modern dictionaries do sometimes include words used in 1611 but not in 2016, such as "besom." But (1) they don't include all such words and (2) they don't specify when the words meant what they did. Even if you do find a dictionary that defines "chambering" as "lewd, immodest behavior," it won't tell you for sure whether it was used that way in 1611. Perhaps it only began to be used that way in the 1730s. You can't know.

*Unless you have the OED.* The *Oxford English Dictionary* is the premier, exhaustive, authoritative, and HUGE resource for KJV readers. When I read the Bible I want to understand what I'm reading—I'm sure you do, too. I urge you to get the OED (many libraries pay for online access: check with yours). I use it all the time, and I want to know whether anyone else out there uses this essential tool.

Dr. Mark L. Ward Jr. works for Logos Bible Software; he is also the author of *Biblical Worldview: Creation, Fall, Redemption*, published by BJU Press.





# 96<sup>th</sup> Annual Fellowship

## June 14–16, 2016

Dr. Chuck Phelps, FBFI Vice Chairman and pastor of Colonial Hills Baptist in Indianapolis, Indiana, and his staff and conference team put together an historic Annual Fellowship. Focusing on Genesis 1–11, the meeting presented plenary sessions and workshops on the theme “Declarations from Our Designer.” The keynote speaker was Dr. John Whitcomb, noted co-author of *The Genesis Flood*. Following the usual preliminaries for the FBFI Board and Chaplains, the opening session on Tuesday evening introduced the theme in a powerful message by Dr. Gary Reimers on “God’s Design for Our Worship.” The time of fellowship that followed in the gymnasium/display area made it clear that people had come not only for clear preaching but also for time with friends, old and new.

Wednesday was a full day, beginning with several meetings of working groups who gathered for breakfast at Bob Evans at 7:00 a.m. One of them was a joint meeting of leaders of FBFI and NTA (New Testament Association of Independent Baptist Churches) who met to continue planning their joint meeting to be held on June 13–15, 2017, at Maranatha Baptist University. Watch for upcoming announcements of this event, which will be called, “New Testament Baptist Fellowship—A Combined Meeting of FBFI and NTA.” Be in prayer for MBU president, Dr. Marty Marriott, and all who will be working hard to serve as our hosts next year. But *this* year Wednesday’s sessions began at 9:00 a.m. with Dr. John Whitcomb presenting an irrefutable case for the connection between “The Genesis Flood and Final Judgment.”



At 10:30 Dr. Mike Harding preached a timely and formidable message on “Same-Sex Mirage” to answer the folly of the modern pretense that has overtaken our culture. Dr. Harding’s presentation will be the subject of an article in the September/October issue of *FrontLine*.

After lunch Dr. Whitcomb humbly presented his personal testimony, “The Conversion of an Atheist,” and led a Q&A time with those in attendance. He and his dear wife were present in the Colonial Hills bookstore to sign copies of his books. At 3:00 p.m. we were able to choose from four workshops: “Is Creationism Essential to Fundamentalism?” by Mr. Dave Woetzel; “God’s Social Plan: Family Foundations from Genesis” by Dr. Kevin Schaal; “Timothy Keller’s View on Creation” by Dr. Matt Recker; and “God’s Brushstrokes on Canvas”

by Mrs. Norma Whitcomb. Afterwards, dinner and rest prepared us for the 7:00 p.m. session with Mr. Dave Woetzel, presenting “Five Questions for Evolutionists” and featuring a special time of appreciation by the FBFI Chaplains and all in attendance for Dr. Bob Ellis and his sweet wife, Sylvia, to commemorate Dr. Ellis’s seventeen fruitful years as the FBFI Chaplain Recruiter. The evening ended with more fellowship, food, and laughter.

Thursday was simply amazing! We began with



Chaplain (COL) Joe Willis ably speaking on “Defending Genesis 1–11 in the Department of Defense.” Then the three men’s workshops were repeated while Mrs. Linda Phelps moderated “The Pastor’s First Lady Panel” in the Taylor Chapel. At 10:45 a.m. the coach departed along with a caravan of cars to head to Northern Kentucky for the Creation Museum Excursion. In addition to plenty of time to tour the museum and marvel at the power of its testimony for Christ, we were ushered into Legacy Hall where Answers in Genesis founder Dr. Ken Ham met with us to report on the opening of the Ark Encounter in early July and to answer questions from our group. No doubt, this excursion was the capstone of the conference.

If you would like to hear audio recordings from the FBFI Annual Fellowship, go to [proclaimanddefend.org/fbfi-audio](http://proclaimanddefend.org/fbfi-audio); in addition, keynote videos may be found at [fbfiannualfellowship.org/media.html](http://fbfiannualfellowship.org/media.html).





## Mailbag

Continued from page 5

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**O**ur Sunday school class, the Armor-Bearers Men's Class, is praying for you and FBFI during the month of June. We appreciate this ministry and all the work you do in serving our wonderful Lord and Saviour.

C. Wayne Berry  
Chesapeake, VA

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## Implications of Interpretation

(Continued from page 7)

the Old Testament in light of the worldview of the Ancient Near East.

While background material is often helpful in understanding Scripture, interpreters must be careful not to allow it to dictate their interpretation of Scripture. When an interpreter begins to claim that background material demands a certain interpretation of Scripture, then he is saying that his interpretation of background material has authority to determine what interpretations of Scripture can and cannot be accepted. But background material requires interpretation itself. It is fragmentary and sometimes difficult to understand. Often the worldviews found in the background material are contrary to a biblical worldview. Thus while background material can be a helpful servant in interpreting Scripture, it is a dangerous master.

### Conclusion

Modern Christians are not the first to face the challenge of interpreting the opening chapters of Genesis in the face of strong cultural pressures. The early church faced pressure from Greek philosophy. It seemed unworthy for God to take a full week to create the world. So under this pressure, men such as Augustine allegorized the creation account. They held that the actual creation took place in an instant.<sup>8</sup> The pressures from Platonism are long since past. If the Lord tarries, Darwinism too will be discarded and replaced by some other system. Given the high cost of accommodating Scripture to these transitory philosophies, the wiser course of action by far is simply affirm the plain sense of what God has said in His Word. Human philosophies come and go, but the Word of the Lord endures forever.

Brian Collins (PhD, Bob Jones University) serves as an elder at Mount Calvary Baptist Church and works as a biblical worldview specialist at BJU Press.



<sup>1</sup> John Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2009), 109–10; cf. Francis Collins, *The Language of God* (New York: Free Press, 2006), 173–74, 177–78.

<sup>2</sup> Interestingly, John Walton argues against understanding Joshua 10 in terms of the sun, by appearances, standing still in the sky. He thinks the language is incompatible with the Copernican paradigm and notes that some are “unpersuaded that physics could be so tamed.” He suggests that the whole issue can be avoided by looking at the text through an Ancient Near Eastern worldview. He noted that the opposition of the sun and moon on the fourteenth day of a month was considered a good omen but that if it occurred on a bad day, it was a bad omen. He thinks that the passage is indicating that the Canaanites received a bad omen (John H. Walton, “Ancient Near Eastern Background Studies,” in *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*, ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005], 44–45). But this interpretation fails to account fully for the precise wording of the passage. The sun and the moon stood still “until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies,” a time period

specified in the text to have lasted “about a whole day” (10:13).

<sup>3</sup> Michael J. Murray, *Nature Red in Tooth and Claw: Theism and the Problem of Suffering* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 2.

<sup>4</sup> Murray, 5, relating the position of William Rowe.

<sup>5</sup> This conclusion is based on the claim that DNA evidence shows that the earliest humans not only descended from lower primates but that the earliest humans existed in a population of at least several thousand. Not all humans are descended from a single pair of people, according to these theistic evolutionists. If Adam and Eve are affirmed as historical figures, they would be representative figures, like a king and queen over a tribe of people whom God set aside for special work.

<sup>6</sup> John H. Walton, “A Historical Adam: Archetypal Creation View,” in *Four Views on the Historical Adam*, Counterpoints, ed. Stanley Gundry, Matthew Barrett, and Ardel Caneday (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2013), Kindle loc. 1973–76.

<sup>7</sup> Wisdom is built into creation as the way God ordered His world to work. The Mosaic Law applies the wisdom built into creation, or creational norms, to the life of Israel (as well as adding material like that sacrificial system that pointed forward to Christ). God’s law is not something added to creation much later. It is inherent in creation.

<sup>8</sup> For a helpful survey of interpretations, see William VanDoodeward, *The Quest for the Historical Adam: Genesis, Hermeneutics, and Human Origins* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage, 2015).

## We Hold These Truths to Be Self Evident

(Continued from page 10)

<sup>2</sup> The Founders, of course had various religious beliefs ranging from orthodox Christianity to Deism. The content of their beliefs has been a matter of much argument. The common claim that they were mostly Deists is false. David L. Holmes, in his extensive analysis of their letters and public statements, concluded that a few were Deists, a few were conservative Christians, and a larger group were rationalistic Christians, or “Christian-deists” (*The Faiths of Our Founding Fathers* [Oxford, 2006]). The Declaration’s use of the phrase “Nature and Nature’s God” reflects this range of beliefs. Despite their religious differences, it is generally acknowledged that none of the Founders were atheists. The Declaration itself not only refers to the Creator but appeals to Him as the “Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions.”

<sup>3</sup> See the discussion in “Teaching with Documents: The Ratification of the Constitution” on the website of the National Archives, <http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/constitution-day/ratification.html> (accessed 5/5/2016).

<sup>4</sup> The protection of property is the guarantor of the liberty to “pursue happiness” not because riches make one happy but because “property” is the right to decide how to use resources in that pursuit. Without property, people are serfs, living only at the sufferance of others, whether of other individuals or of the collective.

<sup>5</sup> “The Charters of Freedom,” The National Archives Website, [http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/charters\\_of\\_freedom\\_6.html](http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/charters_of_freedom_6.html) (accessed 5/6/16).

<sup>6</sup> “An Introduction to the Political Philosophy of the Constitution,” <http://www.civiced.org/papers/political.html> (accessed 5/6/2016).

# Chaplaincy: A Multifaceted Ministry

FBFI Chaplains are involved in many different kinds of ministry: military, community, and hospital, among others. In addition to evangelizing, counseling, encouraging, and just “being there,” our chaplains, like most of their peers in their various organizations, are involved in almost constant training and advancement in their multifaceted ministries. The reports below will give our readers some idea of what this involves and why it is so important.

## Ranger School

Recently, Chaplain (CPT) Daniel Roland completed Army Ranger School, joining our other ranger chaplains, MAJ Mike Shellman, MAJ Doug Nab, and CPT Drew Paul, in wearing the Army Ranger tab. CPT Seth Hamilton was to attend Ranger School this year, but an unexpected reassignment put that on hold. You may wonder what Ranger School involves. The following information is summarized from the Army Ranger School website: [goarmy.com/soldier-life/being-a-soldier/ongoing-training/specialized-schools/ranger-school.html](http://goarmy.com/soldier-life/being-a-soldier/ongoing-training/specialized-schools/ranger-school.html).

Army Rangers serve in a storied tradition of warriors that makes them an elite group. Soldiers are motivated to endure the rigors of Ranger School because it is well known that “Rangers lead the way no matter what the conditions.” Thus, the Army unapologetically states, “Ranger School is one of the toughest training courses for which a Soldier can volunteer,” and eligibility is not restricted by a soldier’s Military Occupation Specialty (MOS), meaning that even chaplains may apply for Ranger School, enabling them to serve directly with Ranger units. However, only those who have successfully completed Airborne School are eligible to apply, since all Rangers must be fully “jump qualified.”



“Army Rangers are experts in leading Soldiers on difficult missions—and to do this they need rigorous training. For over two months, Ranger students train to exhaustion, pushing the limits of their minds and bodies.” Although Ranger chaplains will not engage in close combat and direct-fire battles, they will train alongside and serve beside soldiers skilled in combat arms and related functional skills. The three distinct phases of Ranger School are called, “Crawl, Walk, and Run,” and are described in the quoted excerpts below.

**Crawl Phase:** The crawl phase lasts twenty days. It’s designed to assess and develop the necessary physical and mental skills to complete combat missions and the remainder of Ranger School successfully. If a student is not in top physical condition when he reports to the Ranger School, he will have extreme difficulty keeping up with the fast pace of Ranger training, especially the initial phase.

**Walk Phase:** The Walk Phase takes place in the mountains and lasts twenty-one days. During this phase, students receive instruction on military mountaineering tasks as well as techniques for employing squads and platoons for continuous combat patrol operations in a mountainous environment. They further develop their ability to command and control a platoon-sized patrol through planning, preparing and executing a variety of combat patrol missions.

**Run Phase:** The Run Phase of Ranger School continues to develop the Ranger students’ combat arms functional skills. They must be capable of operating effectively under conditions of extreme mental and physical stress. This is accomplished through exercises in extended platoon-level patrol operations in a swamp environment.

Two of our FBFI chaplains who have completed Ranger School reported losing thirty pounds during Ranger School, pressing on through intense physical exertion, sleep deprivation, and rigorous weather conditions. Most soldiers in their twenties are unable to complete Ranger School on schedule, yet remarkably, one of our FBFI chaplains graduated from Ranger School at age forty-five! As far as we know, he was the first ever to do so.

A recent news release reported that one of our Airborne Ranger chaplains, MAJ Doug Nab, the 173rd Airborne Brigade Chaplain, had the unusual honor of being included in the 72nd anniversary jump as a part of Joint Task Force D-Day 72. “French Brigadier General Brice Houdet, Deputy Representative with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Army Major Doug Nab, 173rd Airborne Brigade Chaplain, pose on the ramp of the 815th Airlift Squadron’s C-130J prior to takeoff for the scheduled massive parachute drop at La Fièvre outside of Sainte-Mère-Église, France June 5, 2016, . . . to commemorate the selfless actions by all



of the allies on D-Day that continue to resonate 72 years later” (dvidshub.net/video/467332/d-day-72-jump#.V1gZ-zLQC70).

On Monday August 1, 2016, at 7 p.m., Chaplain Nab honored Mr. Harry Duvall, WWII veteran who landed on Omaha Beach on D-Day, June 6, 1944, and whose story was featured in the September/October 2012 issue of *FrontLine*. As part of the recognition of Mr. Duvall, Chaplain Nab presented the American flag (pictured below) that he carried on this commemorative jump on June 6, 2016.



### Chaplain Basic Officer Leader Course (CHBOLC)

CHBOLC, like most military acronyms, has become an actual word, pronounced “Chuh-bowl-ick.” All Army chaplains know what it means. But since all three service branches now have their chaplain training centers in the training center at Ft. Jackson, South Carolina, it is common for chaplains from the Air Force, Navy, and Army to refer to that center as “The Schoolhouse.” Civilians are not likely ever to learn the full acronym vocabulary, but if your chaplains ever mention “CHBOLC,” or “The Schoolhouse,” you will know that they are talking about a comprehensive military training program for chaplains.

Of course, all chaplains must be fully educated by their faith group by having completed a four-year college degree, a three-year seminary degree, and two years of full-time ministerial experience, preferably under the tutelage of a senior ministry mentor. But since the chaplain fulfills a dual role as both minister and military officer, he must be trained to be a good officer and to function as a minister within the military environment. Community chaplains, such as Law Enforcement and Emergency Services, Hospital Chaplains, and others, have training programs conducted by professional associations or individual departments. CHBOLC, however, is strictly for the military.

As stated on the Army website (usachcs.armylive.dod-live.mil/?page\_id=1085) the CHBOLC Vision is “to trans-

form civilian religious leaders into influential, adaptive, and critically thinking military religious leaders capable of meeting the religious support needs of the Army.” Any civilian pastor or prospective chaplain who believes his civilian ministry makes him fully prepared for chaplaincy ministry will need about twenty-four hours in the field under difficult circumstances to lose that notion. Of course, the Army’s stated mission for CHBOLC, of “train[ing] students to become religious leaders who demonstrate the core competencies of nurture the living, care to the wounded, and honor to the fallen,” could be just a refresher course for truly well trained ministers, but the rest of that stated mission is where CHBOLC truly becomes essential: “while advising Commanders and providing religious support to the Army family.”

CHBOLC is more than a chaplain’s course; it is a basic officer’s course, but for chaplains. There are actually two major phases of CHBOLC training. The first is completed early in the chaplain’s military career, offering “basic training” in which the “Army Basic Officer Leader Course common core, Army Warrior tasks, and orientation to the U.S. Army [or other service branch] Chaplain Corps are trained.” Here, during the first phase of training chaplains learn “essential staff officer skills needed to function” in the military. In the second phase they are trained in basic chaplain ministry and pastoral skills appropriate for service at the battalion level. Phase three “brings together leadership, professionalism, and officership in field, garrison, and social environments. The main focus of this phase is the 108 hour field training exercise (FTX).” (See the photo below of two FBFI chaplains in full “war paint”!) All official military chaplain training, among other things, could be summarized as “adapting civilian education and experiences to the [military] environment.”



But remember, many FBFI chaplains serve in their own communities, learning to adapt their extensive ministry preparation and experiences to the specific needs of the public servants they serve. The

motto of the FBFI chaplaincy is “Serving Those Who Serve.” Our newest FBFI chaplain, Pastor Troy Shoaf, is the assistant pastor at Independent Baptist Church, Bolingbrook, Illinois. Having worked on master’s-level online classes from Maranatha Baptist University and having served with the Will County Sheriff’s Department, Pastor Shoaf’s initiative has opened the door for local community chaplaincy. Last year he organized a First Responder Appreciation event at his church. As a result, he was asked to join the Bolingbrook Police Chaplain team. Chaplain Shoaf was interviewed and approved for FBFI Endorsement at the recent FBFI Annual Fellowship in Indianapolis.

# Confrontational yet Compassionate

Jerry Sivnksty

In 2 Samuel 11:2–3 we read

And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon. And David sent and inquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bath-sheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?

King David saw a woman who was beautiful. He inquired who she was and was told she was a married woman. David knew this; however, he arranged to have an affair with her, which resulted in an unexpected pregnancy. King David then tried to cover this up by having her husband, Uriah, come home from the battlefield with the purpose of Uriah being with his wife so it would appear she was with child by her husband. Uriah refused to see his wife because his fellow soldiers were in combat and he didn't think it right that he should be home. King David did everything he could to get him to see his wife, but Uriah refused in 2 Samuel 11:11: "The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? as thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing."

When King David saw Uriah's determination, he was frustrated that his plan did not work. So what did he do? He planned to have Uriah killed. He sent Uriah back to the battlefield but told his commander Joab in 2 Samuel 11:14–15, "Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die." What a dastardly deed of King David!

His plan worked; he was pleased that it succeeded, but God was not. He was not going to allow David to get away with it—no one ever gets away with sin. Proverbs 28:13 declares, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper." The Lord used the prophet Nathan to expose the sin of David. He confronted the king in 2 Samuel 12:9: "Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon."

Can you imagine the shocked look on the face of David as Nathan exposed his sin? Nathan's message was a personal confrontation with King David. When David heard the rebuke, the Scriptures show us his response

in 2 Samuel 12:13: "And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD." David confessed that he was guilty. He was truly broken in his heart. When David confessed his sin we then see the compassion of the Lord to him through the prophet Nathan. We read in the same verse, "And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die." What great compassion the Lord showed to David—He spared his life. The same is true today when a person sins. If a believer is truly broken over sin and confesses and forsakes that sin, the Lord will extend forgiveness and cleanse him of that sin! First John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

We find another example of this same principle in John 8 with a lady who had sinned. Verses 3–5 say, "And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?" These men were right; according to Old Testament law she was to be stoned. She was confronted with her sin in a very embarrassing and public way.

But what did Jesus say to her? He first said to these men in verse 7, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." When He said that, all of the men left; therefore, the Lord said to her in verse 10, "Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?" She replied in verse 11, "No man, Lord. And Jesus said to her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."

She was confronted with her sin, but the Lord showed compassion to her. This ought to be the way the Lord's people deal with others who sin. Do not condone their sin but confront it. But we should do so in a spirit of love and humility, remembering the exhortation of Galatians 6:1: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." Our lives should reveal a heart of compassion just as our Heavenly Father demonstrated in sparing the life of King David and forgiving the adulterous woman. Confrontation must be accompanied with compassion!

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