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# FrontLine

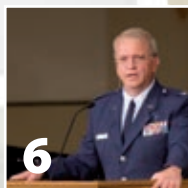
BRINGING THE TRUTH HOME

A photograph of a man and a young boy sitting on stone steps outdoors. The man, wearing glasses and a blue and white striped polo shirt, is holding an open black book and looking down at it. The boy, wearing a camouflage t-shirt and blue jeans, is also looking at the book. The man has a ring on his finger. The boy is holding a stack of books. The background is a light-colored wall with a decorative metal railing on the right.

Mentoring into  
Ministry



# Mentoring into Ministry



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

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## We all have a sad tendency to take for granted some of life's

greatest blessings. In thinking about this issue of *FrontLine*, "Mentoring into the Ministry," I came to the realization that my Christian life has been enriched beyond words by the influence of a group of Christian mentors. These have included a law student and attorney, a bivocational church planter, a couple of pastors, and several seminary professors. Over the years our relationship has changed. Two of these valued mentors have been promoted to glory, others I see only occasionally, and a few I continue to work with regularly. However, I think it is completely fair to say that I would not even be in the ministry, and I certainly would not be where I am in the ministry, were it not for their godly influence.

The modern term comes from Mentor, a character in *The Odyssey*, who served as an advisor to Odysseus and who took on supervision and guidance of his son, Telemachus, while Odysseus was fighting in the Trojan War. From that context, the word came to mean a trusted advisor, a wise coach, and friend. The one being mentored is often called the "protégé" or more recently the "mentee." Lately, mentoring has gained popularity as a prescription for success in various facets of life. Whether it means seeking a personal trainer, a corporate advisor, or a life coach, increasingly people sense the need for personalized guidance from those with experience and wisdom.

Although the term does not appear in the Scriptures, the concept certainly does. Both Joshua and Elisha served as personal assistants to their predecessors in ministry and leadership. The Bible specifically mentions that Joshua was Moses' assistant (Exod. 24:13) and that Elisha "poured water on the hands of Elijah" (2 Kings 3:11). In the New Testament, the Lord Jesus had many disciples, and He named twelve to be with Him constantly. Among the twelve,

He paid special attention to Peter, James, and John, allowing only them to accompany Him to the house of Jairus to witness the healing of his daughter (Mark 5:37, 40) and to the Mountain of Transfiguration to see Him glorified (Matt. 17:1). Of these three, the Gospels devote special attention to the development of Peter.

Perhaps the most extensive examples in the Scriptures is Paul's relationship with Timothy. Timothy accompanied Paul on missionary journeys (Acts 16:1; 19:22; 20:4) and was commissioned to minister in his stead (Phil. 2:23; 1 Tim. 1:3). Paul noted that Timothy was especially likeminded with him, having served with him like a son (Phil. 2:19-23). Finally, near the end of Paul's life, he devotes two entire letters to Timothy, giving him both pastoral and personal instruction and encouragement.

One regular question regarding mentoring is its relationship to discipleship. To some degree it is a question of terminology. However, if discipleship is thought of as the lifelong process of growing into Christlikeness and service, then one can view mentoring as a subset of that process. Given the biblical examples, mentoring can be characterized by one-on-one or small-group interaction to prepare someone for service, often with a view to multiplying leaders. Regardless of the terms used, mentoring is crucial to the life of the Church and to the Great Commission. May we all do our part to mentor a generation of leaders for the cause of the Gospel.

We would like to acknowledge the Lord's servants in two ministries for especially contributing to this issue of *FrontLine*. The first is International Baptist College and Seminary, a ministry of Tri-City Baptist Church in Chandler, Arizona. The passion of IBCS is "mentoring into ministry." The second is MGM, International (formerly Mexican Gospel Mission), whose vision is passing the baton of the Great Commission responsibility to the Hispanic world.

David Shumate

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**T**hank you for your generous gifts making it possible for us to receive the *FrontLine* magazine. That is a blessing to us as we serve in various places around the world. Thank you for your part in the work that God has called us to do.

*Ron Washer  
Director for Africa, ABWE*

**Y**es, we have enjoyed the magazine and although I do not know the good Samaritan who sent the extra funds, I am very grateful to them for their kindness. We have a few American students in our Bible college and they also enjoy them. Everybody's favorite was the wonderful information [on] Israel. I believe it was the best one I have ever read. Thank you very much.

*Jerrel Shaw  
Mexico*

**T**hank you so very much for your kindness in extending our subscription to *FrontLine* magazine. My wife and I enjoy the insightful articles, and it has been a great asset to our ministry. In fact, we have just started a Bible English course for Brazilians, and these students will be reading not only from the Bible in English but some articles from *FrontLine*.

May God continue to bless your ministry in SC and around the world.

*Vladimir Silveira  
Brazil, South America*

**W**e are very thankful for the magazine. I read it cover to cover every time we receive it. It is very encouraging and provides great information for those of us in the mission field.

Please thank from us the dear friend who provided the magazine subscription for us.

*Marco A. Nunez  
Missionary to Mexico*

**I**t is refreshing to read well-written articles that are current: dealing with issues while at the same time defending the faith. I appreciate *FrontLine* and the opportunity to receive [the] magazine. Thank you for making it possible for us to receive *FrontLine* on a regular basis.

*Dennis Killoran  
Alberta, Canada*



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**Foundations Baptist Fellowship International**

## Pastor Bruce Hamilton

has written an adventure novel set in the Brooks Range of Arctic Alaska, *God of the Brooks*. Though the storyline is fictional, the events in the book, other than the initial plane crash, have happened to Bruce in his fifty years in



Alaska. Bruce draws from many of his experiences to weave together a saga of extreme physical and spiritual survival. The book has a surprise twist at its conclusion and a clear explanation of the gospel. In addition, there is a hyperlink to a website that illustrates the adventure via pictures, video, maps, and paintings. *God of the Brooks* was published by Amazon as an eBook on April 28, 2017. It is also available in soft cover "on demand." This book will be a great devotional read for believers as well as a wonderful way to share the gospel with an unsaved friend or loved one.



**Rev. John Heffernan** was called to pastor Victory Baptist Church in Simpsonville, South Carolina, in September 2016. He had previously served with Dr. Larry Karsies at Harvest Hills Baptist Church in Yukon, Oklahoma, for the past four-

teen years as assistant pastor. After graduating from seminary in 2000, he had previously served as assistant pastor of Midland Baptist Church in Wichita, Kansas, for three years with Dr. Dale Heffernan. He is thrilled to serve as a senior pastor proclaiming God's Word each week.

## Join the conversation online

The screenshot shows the website for Proclaim & Defend, a ministry of the FBFI. The header includes the date APRIL 28, 2017 and a search bar. The main content area features a large image of the *FrontLine* magazine cover titled "A New Beginning for a New Year" for January/February 2017. Below this, there are two smaller images: one titled "The Impact of a Book" and another titled "Why We're Still Here". The website footer includes the URL [proclaimanddefend.org](http://proclaimanddefend.org).

# Creating a Mentoring Environment in the Local Church



“Mentoring” is a term that is fraught with many different nuances and about which there are many differing opinions. It seems to me that mentoring is different from discipleship. My concept of discipleship is that it involves the doctrinal issues of life, while mentoring seems to encompass more a worldview of life. Certainly, there is overlap, as a biblical mentor is going to give advice from a doctrinal worldview. But I’m going to make that slight delineation to help us better understand. The original Mentor in Greek mythology was a “life-coach” to the young son of a great Greek warrior as he went off to attack Troy. In this sense, a mentor is more than a discipler. As Christian mentors, we must be both disciplers and life coaches to those who are around us.



As a young man in the United States Air Force chaplaincy, I soon grasped the need for godly mentors. In five years on active duty, we probably had between five and six hundred single airmen visit our home and eat a meal with us—many of them multiple times. When we were leaving active duty in 1996, I asked my wife about the families of the young men and women coming through our home. We could count only five young airmen who shared a meal with us who had a healthy nuclear family. Young people like those airmen are now all around us, as the family is more under attack than ever before. The life lessons of frugality, work, sacrifice, delayed gratification, kindness, grace, mercy, and forgiveness, that are a vibrant piece of any Christian worldview, are absent from so many people in our churches today.

Given this great need, I suppose we would agree that the current mentoring efforts in our churches are not sufficient. But what can we do? Here are some suggestions for the senior pastor and other church leaders.

Preach on relevant passages that deal with “handing one life to another life.” Second Timothy 2 teaches that mentoring to engender a Christian worldview of behavior is much more than a list of dos and don’ts. It is wisdom and a love relationship with Christ and older men or women.

Make sure that you are a mentor and evangelist. What the senior pastor models is what the church will be more apt to do. It is vital that he sees everything he does as an example to those around him. If his ministry breathes mentoring, that will be the product in the church. If he thinks of himself exclusively as an administrator or preacher, then mentoring will get shunted to the side in his thinking. My preaching is constant practical mentoring.

Structurally organize your church to mentor at different levels and in different places. For instance, in addition to a monthly men’s prayer breakfast for the men of the whole church, schedule weekly men’s prayer breakfasts for smaller groups, maybe on different days of the week early in the morning so that the men can attend on the way to work. Game nights are also a popular with men in their twenties and thirties. After a time of fun and fellowship, a leader or member of the group can briefly share a life lesson. Similar kinds of activities and Bible studies can be geared to women in their areas of interest.

You could also schedule times to teach about and discuss specific issues of interest for individuals or small groups. These sessions can meet during the week or on a Saturday.

Consider reorganizing the Sunday night service to be geared to meeting the needs of new Christians in post-modern America. At Tri-City our attendance has grown tremendously since we went to an evening service that stresses preaching *and* practical application of a Christian worldview to life situations. We have regular expositional preaching through books of the Bible for about two hundred congregants. We also have AWANA and something else we have created, which we call PMDiscipleship. It stands for Practical Ministry Discipleship, and it’s accomplished on Sunday nights. During the fall and spring

semesters we teach fifteen-week courses during the evening service in small-group settings that lend themselves to discussion on a host of issues from marriage to childrearing to finances to witnessing to Muslims, Mormons, Catholics, and so on. We have classes on deeper counseling issues, lay training for leadership in the church, evangelism, music philosophy, and the list goes on and on. Some are video courses and others are taught by a pastor or lay leader. The key is a great deal of discussion on applying the Bible to practical problems of life. By having these on Sunday night and *not* during the Sunday school hour, more time is available for discussion, a key to effective mentoring.

One alternative for Wednesday evening is to use small groups to pray together and to discuss and apply the Sunday morning sermon to the members’ lives. One problem in our churches is that we preach too many times in a week with too little time to talk about the message’s application. Therefore we decided to have our care groups discuss how the message relates to the home, work, and personal lives. As members of the groups share their thoughts, they create an atmosphere of mutual caring and edification like that presented in Ephesians 4.

Individual counseling also often provides excellent mentoring opportunities. This is because, although many counseling needs are due to sin, often the counselor is simply faced with a person needing practical wisdom. Counseling sessions with such a person are what my wife calls “common sense” moments of biblical wisdom.

As some of the suggestions above indicate, I am convinced that to adequately mentor the younger generation we might have to restructure our church ministry. If we are going to win people to Christ we must recognize this is not 1980. People do not come to us with a natural Christian worldview of the converts of fifty years ago. In this sense, we have moved beyond being a Christian nation. Not only does the culture greatly hinder new believers from living out a Christian worldview, but, frankly, even long-standing believers are being overwhelmed by a post-Christian America. I constantly shake my head at believers whose lifestyle is a radical departure from the clear teachings of Scripture.

Mentoring is a must. Often mentoring is done in a casual, off-the-cuff, while-I’m-busy-doing-something-else “sorta” way. If we are to pass on our values to those coming after us, we must organize our churches and our lives around biblical mentoring. Giving Christian values, having times of discussion, and allowing the protégés to put those values into practice to see if they understand them is vital and must be a top priority of the church of Jesus Christ. That almost sounds like the way the Master gave His worldview to the apostles.

Dr. Mike Sproul is the senior pastor of Tri-City Baptist Church in Chandler, Arizona. He holds a bachelor’s degree from International Baptist College and Seminary, an MDiv from Calvary Baptist Theological Seminary, and a DMin, also from IBCS. In addition, he is the chairman of the board of International Baptist College and a chaplain in the Air Force Reserves and the Arizona Air National Guard. He and his wife, Elma, have two grown children.



Jeff Caupp

# "Life Touching Life"





# Grace has characterized my life.

I was born into a loving home. My father, while unsaved, was exemplary in his character.

I grew up going to church with my mother and two sisters. To date, I have attended three excellent institutions of higher education and currently am serving full-time within a “ministry of consequence:”<sup>1</sup> one that actively seeks to make disciples both locally and internationally. Throughout my life, I have had multiple mentors. I thank God for my parents, my coaches, for multiple Sunday School teachers, employers, professors, and pastors who took the initiative to be a mentor to me. Like any protégé, I am indebted to my mentors. Grace has certainly characterized my life.

Today, my desire, like that of my colleagues at International Baptist College and Seminary,<sup>2</sup> is to extend that grace by mentoring others. As we seek to improve in our mentoring we often ask our students to assess the process and their experience. We seek to understand *what makes a good mentor* and *what is both effective and necessary for excellence in mentoring*. This article aggregates their responses. Even though personally identifiable information has been sanitized and, when appropriate, thoughts have been summarized, the noteworthy qualities below are what define an excellent mentor from the protégé’s perspective.

## Loyal

The best Christian mentors love Jesus and are loyal to Him and His truth. The mentor’s counsel comes from an overflow of his or her relationship with God and is based on a careful and accurate handling of the Word of God. The best mentors are those who “cut straight” the Scriptures and are committed to speaking foundational truth to their followers with love, grace, and patience.

Protégés expressed their appreciation for this type of mentoring. “My mentor has taught me the importance of holding the Bible at the center of my life, career, and [at the center of] every subject that I teach.” “Through the influence of many godly mentors, I more acutely recognize the

importance of having a God-honoring, Christ-exalting, Word-driven, gospel-proclaiming, local-church-centered, missions-minded, people-loving worldview. But most of all, I long for the affections of my heart and mind to reflect and resemble an authentic and growing love for my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

Protégés also verbalized that they “want to know what is true.” Their desire is to be led from the text of Scripture and “not only talk about truths, but to under-

stand the process of discovering the truths for themselves.” They do not want to “just carry a denominational line, but to own the point, to defend the truth to their friends, and to know the strength of their positions.” They want to know the truth and to own it for themselves.

This is both a challenge and a blessing to the mentor. The challenge is in being willing to hear a student’s questions without offense and to answer them with boldness, wisdom, grace, and transparency. The blessing is in seeing another life grow in a genuine love for Christ.

## Authentic

Mentoring is most effective when the mentor’s words match his or her life choices. Excellent mentors “are the same in the classroom as they are outside the classroom;” their lives are “genuine,” “authentic,” “true,” and “consistent.” The truth that they embrace at church is also the truth that is in their hearts.

Disciples look for this authenticity during uneventful moments, when life is most routine. They listen to how a mentor speaks to his or her child or spouse; they take note of how the mentor conducts mundane tasks, and they assess how the mentor ministers.

They also look for authenticity over long periods of time, periods where the characteristics of faithfulness, trust, and the genuine love for the Lord gradually, yet dynamically, become evident. Nowhere is this more on display than when the mentor deals with tragedy. “We watched how you coped with cancer, how you served and ministered even after your husband passed away, how you dealt with a disobedient child.” “We watched the trials you faced, and I believe that it strengthened us. Seeing how you exemplified genuine joy, I couldn’t help but to want to find that joy.” “You mentored us as you just lived your life.” “By my mentor’s example in word and in action, they taught me to love God and His church, they gave me the tools to serve Him; they equipped me to influence my generation and the next.”

## Relational

Without exception, protégés value deep relationships. The depth of the relationship and the influence of that relationship are directly proportional. Drive-by or surface-level mentoring is not effective, nor is it appropriate. If heart issues are to be addressed, then a loving and true relationship is necessary.

Within the IBCS culture of mentoring, protégés often seek an official mentor. They begin the relationship by identifying a faculty/staff member, an administrator, or a church member and asking him or her to be their mentor. Simultaneously, unofficial mentors step forward and begin to influence these same protégés. Both relationships are often rich. The rapport the unofficial mentor has is organically formed and is the result of a shared mission or a joint ministry. This mentor often initiates and directs the relationship, even pursuing it more earnestly than the individual disciple would. Both types of relationships develop throughout life events. “Mentors minister in both





# Mentoring Cross-Culturally

## Lessons for the Mentor

Josué Guzmán is the academic dean at Ebenezer Bible College and Seminary in Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico, where I have been serving since 2001. Recently, Josué, as a proud new parent, sent me a picture of his newborn child. I responded by telling him that his life will never be the same! I have a close relationship with Josué. He is not only a coworker, fellow minister, and former student, but he is also one of my best friends. In many ways and at various times throughout our friendship and labors together at the college, our relationship has been like that of Paul and Timothy. Paul was instrumental in training Timothy for service, yet he was inclined to refer to Timothy as family as he mentored him for ministry.

Josué started as a student of mine, and after he graduated I continued to maintain communication with him while he was serving the Lord in his home church and simultaneously working on a master of ministry degree program with our college. Josué later returned to the college to work as a faculty member. At that point I began training him in different responsibilities, which allowed me to eventually hand over to him my former position as the academic dean of the undergraduate department. I believe he is more effective in the execution of that position than I was, even though I created and developed the position for the college.

Josué's effectiveness illustrates the point that in cross-cultural mentoring, the mentor has succeeded when the disciple serves the Lord in his native culture more effectively than the one who mentored him. The mentor reveals a selfish inclination when he desires to see someone whom he has trained maintain dependency upon him as mentor. In contrast, successful mentoring strongly manifests itself

when the disciple no longer depends upon his mentor.\* That success shines stronger when the disciple of Christ ministers alongside his former mentor rather than serving under him.

When mentoring involves crossing cultures, the mentor must first lead the disciple to maturity. This is a goal within any context of mentorship. The mentor must also be attuned, however, to the cultural differences affecting the mentoring process. My first years at the Ebenezer Bible College and Seminary provided more learning experiences for me than the lessons I provided to my students. Although I was a Spanish minor in college, when I arrived on the field I had much to learn about appropriate terms to use in Mexico. Additionally, even though my sending church was a Hispanic ministry in Greenville, South Carolina, I had much to learn about ministry application in Mexico.

My working with Josué permitted me to grow as I continued to further equip him through mentoring him as he in turn continued to train others. This article provides some essential considerations regarding mentoring across cultural boundaries and focuses on the mentor's task of training the disciple for ministry so that the disciple can serve successfully within his own native context. As an additional focus, these lessons can apply as well to a context where the mentor is training the disciple to work in the mentor's culture.

### Remember the Objective

A key lesson regarding cross-cultural mentoring is that the mentorship must develop organically, or have a natural development. Rather than having specific goals for the





disciple to accomplish within the mentor's provided time frame, the mentor must understand that the objective is the disciple's growth into the ministry that the Lord is preparing for him. The goal is not merely to fill a position that the mentor has created for the disciple.

After Josué graduated with his Bible degree he taught for a year at the college before returning to his home church to serve there for a year to figure out where the Lord was calling him regarding permanent ministry. It was my desire to see him continue teaching and even help me in my responsibilities, and it was a temptation for a couple of years to tell him that he needed to be at the college simply because he had teaching and leadership skills—because he would be a good fit for us regarding areas where we had needs. Rather than attempting to make my working with Josué conditional, I continued to counsel him whenever he asked, to have long discussions with him about systematic and practical theology, to pray with him, and to provide guidance regarding opportunities as he sought to continue studying.

Although this lesson of allowing the mentorship to progress naturally avails itself to those who disciple within their own culture, it is enhanced when multiple cultures are involved. Many missionaries have experienced frustration when they decide that a certain disciple is the person to be the future pastor of the church that the missionary has started, yet as the disciple grows he discerns the Lord's leading to minister elsewhere. The missionary then views the disciple as disobedient because he does not fill the gap that the missionary has created. Mentoring cross-culturally requires the mentor to realize that goals within timelines can be evidence of the mentor's cultural approach to ministry; consequently, the mentor must be willing to surrender nonbiblical or extrabiblical expectations.

Recognizing that the Lord is providing opportunities for growth means seeing areas for growth in someone's life as crucial to the development of the one being mentored, rather than peripheral to the mentoring process. Constantly and consistently, I have had the opportunity to encourage and give advice to Josué as he worked on different degree

programs to provide him with better training to teach others. We would discuss which degree programs were available to him online, the challenges that he would face as he began to explore learning English to take master's-level courses online, and which programs would provide for future steps in the ministry. In these conversations, and in the trenches of training him to take over the academic dean position, we discussed in detail practical and personal issues, such as how to confront challenges and how to discern the Lord's leading regarding marriage. Frankly, no topic was ever off the table or seen as a distraction from the ministry tasks at hand.

An important point regarding cross-cultural mentoring is that the mentor must reject the notion that his culture is better than the disciple's culture. When someone highlights a positive aspect or negative aspect of a culture, it is not evidence that the culture itself is positive or negative. Every culture has inherent aspects that are sinful, and in every culture one can find aspects that are admirable and even based directly or inadvertently on principles within Scripture. For instance, I have often heard the concept that one defrauds another when he arrives late to a prearranged event. In many cultures, however, arriving late is irrelevant when compared to the amount of time spent with someone.

The one being mentored can provide a better application to his native culture than the mentor can. When the mentor provides the disciple with a ministerial scenario in which the disciple learns to respond properly, the disciple grows within his cultural setting. The mentor may even see the wisdom of presenting a question and allowing the disciple to rephrase the question. For example, the mentor may present a question that reflects a cultural rather than biblical concern, such as, "What is the best way to refuse a meal that you think will give you a stomach problem?" If the disciple counters by reacting to the concern of how to honor the one who offers the meal, he demonstrates a better sensitivity to the cultural scenario. In other words, perhaps avoiding a temporary digestive problem is not as important as creating or maintaining an open door of ministry to someone who would be offended by your refusal.

## Keep Learning

Mentoring cross-culturally mandates that the one mentoring involve himself in the process of learning as much as the disciple does. The mentor may have more biblical knowledge and a thorough understanding of how to apply biblical principles to his own culture, but his lack of understanding of the disciple's culture can stifle growth within the discipleship process. In one college class that I took, for example, the teacher implied that once a church building arrived at 80% capacity, the pastor should consider constructing a larger church building to appropriately minister to his congregation. On the mission field, I have seen church buildings exceed 110% capacity based on how many people should fit on a pew, with no discomfort felt by the congregants. In this context, suggesting a building program could prove to be a major disaster.

Continued on page 25

# What My Math Disciples Have Taught Me

Often disciples make a choice about whom they will follow.

Mine have not specifically chosen me as their leader, but for nearly four hours each week I have the privilege of discipling the students in seventh, eighth, and ninth grades. I teach at a Christian school, so we emphasize the spiritual development of the students. All the teachers seek to live genuinely Christian lives for the love of God and for the sake of ministry, and we explicitly try to influence and teach our students to follow God wholeheartedly. But my specific role, secondary to our overall mission, is to make math disciples. I teach them what I know about the math that they are experiencing. I teach techniques and tricks that make their math processing both easier



and more automatic. I try to teach them how to think about math and how to overcome the math challenges that I have designed to help them learn more. I encourage them to strive for real learning at their individual academic level. Thinking about my students and of my teacher role in this way has led to some fruitful introspection—about myself as disciple-maker (math and otherwise), but even more about myself as disciple.

What encourages a teacher most? If you are a teacher you would probably agree that it is not necessarily the ultimate success of the brightest students. These students do need instruction, but once you show them a concept they are often quick to make the rest of the connections themselves. What brings me the greatest joy is a when a student who is really paying attention asks a question that indicates his thoughtful consideration of the problem. Often this one doesn't understand something correctly, but the key is that he is not just a passive learner. What I love is his attention to the teaching and the passion to learn, no matter whether his level of achievement is higher or lower. I might have to answer his question in a few different ways, but when my explanation is finally something that makes sense to him, I see the exact moment when he "gets it." And when that student does well on an assignment or a test—especially if he struggles in math—I rejoice with him in a special way. His careful work has resulted in learning and in a good grade!

### **Their Struggles . . . and Mine**

Of course, there are other students. Some just don't think it is worth paying attention in class—they might think that they already know the lesson, or else they don't understand the importance of learning it, both for now and for their math future. There are those who just want to get the homework done as quickly as possible instead of as well as possible—I can usually tell when a student has resorted to this. There are also some who have been discouraged by poor grades in the past, who don't think they will ever be able to do math, and are just trying not to fail. Sometimes this kind of student is quite good at doing math computation but the abstraction of variables in algebra just doesn't make sense to him. This one needs to be motivated; every student can learn math if he will focus on understanding rather than just on calculating. There are even some students who will stubbornly insist that they are correct even as I am trying to show them their error in a problem. I have even had students maintain that the way they arrived at an incorrect answer was by doing exactly what I told them to do. Well, no. These need a little firmer correction. Even in the classroom, 1 Thessalonians 5:14 applies, both for classroom management as well as for teaching itself:

**What brings me  
the greatest joy is  
a when a student  
who is really  
paying attention  
asks a question  
that indicates  
his thoughtful  
consideration of  
the problem.**

"warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men." The Gospels show Christ interacting with His disciples in all these ways. Christ rebuked the audacious Peter in Matthew 16:23, saying, "Get thee behind me, Satan" and "thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." On the way to Gethsemane, when the disciples didn't understand what Jesus meant about His going away, He reassured them of the consolation of the Father and the coming presence of the Holy Spirit (John 16). And Christ's patience with the disciples when

they just didn't understand the meaning of the parable, the lesson, or the miracle is truly amazing. They didn't always have "ears to hear." Think about how they responded to the parable of the sower (Luke 8:5–18) or His teaching on divorce and adultery (Matt. 19:7–10). After the miracle of the feeding of the 5000, when they were in the boat on the sea, they showed that they didn't quite understand the significance of the miracle (Matt. 16:5–12)

So, what have my math disciples taught me? I have seen my own attitudes mirrored in all of theirs. How am I as Christ's disciple? Do I have a passion to learn from and follow my Lord? Am I merely a passive hearer, listening only when it's convenient, or am I attentive to His many lessons? Do I seek spiritual learning—in faithful reading and study of the Scripture, in preaching, and in the communion with fellow disciples? I want my students to think about what each exercise is designed to teach them. Do I thoughtfully consider the trials of life that my Father, my Master, has designed for my learning? There seem to be a lot of them just recently. Do I merely endure, just wanting those trials to end, or do I run to God in the trials, humbly asking for wisdom, without doubting that He will give it? Am I reduced by discouragement over my many sins of the flesh and of the mind that I settle for just grinding along instead of actively striving for victory over a sin? Worse, do I (privately or publicly) stubbornly maintain my own righteousness, even in the face of abundant evidence to the contrary? Do I justify my own misdeeds and blame God for tempting me by making life hard? It turns out that all those weaknesses of my students are my attitudes as well. Surely the Lord has been just as patient with me as He ever was with the twelve.

Sometimes the teacher learns more than the students. Help me, Lord, to love You more, to seek You more diligently, to learn from You more eagerly, to serve You more zealously, to be a better disciple.

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# Charles Simeon

## The Mentor of a Nation

When Charles Simeon entered King's College, Cambridge, in 1778 to prepare as a minister for the Church of England, he was gangly, socially inept, at times ill-tempered, and spiritually unregenerate. He would spend virtually the rest of his life on that campus, initially as a student and then surprisingly as the minister for the Church of the Holy Trinity, the church attached to the university grounds.

When he died fifty-eight years after he stepped on to the campus, he was still gangly and awkward, still lacked some social graces, and still could be ill-tempered, but his life had been transformed by the grace of God. It had become a testimony of the grace that both inaugurates and sustains the Christian life.

He would also die as one of the great influencers of the Evangelical Movement in England in the nineteenth century. Simeon is widely credited as being one of the foundation stones of the evangelical church in England for the next hundred years. Lines of spiritual heritage can be traced from Simeon to people such as C. S. Lewis and J. I. Packer.

Simeon's life raises the question of how someone with such personal deficits could achieve this amount of influence. Below are some initial lessons on why Simeon had such impact.<sup>1</sup>

### 1. A Heart Gripped by the Gospel

Charles Simeon entered the ministry because it seemed his only option. He came from a wealthy but godless family. His older brothers were in law and politics, but these careers were considered too lofty for the sadly ill-equipped Charles. It was settled that he should become a minister. At the time, being a minister was largely a social and political

appointment. If Simeon could get the compulsory degree from a prestigious college, he could secure a comfortable position and be quietly tucked out of the way. Little did his family know what kind of rabble-rouser they would create!

As part of the perfunctory requirements of Cambridge attendance, the provost announced the mandatory participation in the Lord's Supper observance. Simeon attended the first of these, aware of the hypocrisy of taking these elements with an unbelieving heart. The Cambridge campus was bereft at the time of any evangelical witness, so God would reach Simeon through his "servants" in the stacks of the seminary library. Simeon began to read about the significance of the Lord's Supper. He recounts in his own words,

In Passion Week, as I was reading Bishop Wilson on the Lord's Supper, I met with an expression to this effect—"That the Jews know what they did, when they transferred their sins to the head of their offering." The thought came into my mind, What, may I transfer all my guilt to another? Has God provided an Offering for me, that I may lay my sins on His head? . . . Accordingly I sought to lay my sins on the sacred head of Jesus. . . . On the Easterday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, I awoke early with those words on my heart and lips, "Jesus Christ is risen to-day!" . . . From that hour peace flowed in rich abundance into my soul; and at the Lord's Table in our Chapel I had sweet access to God through my blessed Savior.<sup>2</sup>

The most fundamental key to Simeon's success was his deep commitment to the life-changing gospel. He was at that time likely the only evangelical on the campus of Cambridge. Through his influence that would soon change.





## 2. God's Providential Placement

Charles Simeon's success can also be attributed to the unique place of influence that God gave him. Upon completion of his degree, Simeon put in for the position of minister at the church attached to the Cambridge grounds. Simeon was an unlikely candidate for the position. Cambridge was known at the time as resistant and disdainful of the rising evangelical and Methodist movements in the country. Evangelical fervor was lampooned, yet God saw in His good favor to place the gospel-gripped Charles Simeon into that pulpit. Simeon's gospel fervor would bring great conflict into his early years of ministry—conflict that would also be greatly used by the Lord over the years.

Simeon was also well-positioned in life to influence the nation. Simeon had come from a wealthy and politically positioned family. Throughout his ministry, Simeon used his money and influence to place his protégés into strategic church positions throughout the nation.

## 3. A Deep Commitment to Ministry as a Divine Calling

Simeon suffered greatly in his early years of ministry. While he was the pastor of the church at Cambridge, his authority was severely limited by the Anglican form of church governance. When Simeon preached on Sunday, the attendees, disdainful of his evangelical message, would stand with their backs to him. For the first twelve years of his ministry at the church, the "pewholders" locked the pews, and Simeon was forced to preach to an audience that stood in the aisles. Simeon even purchased his own pews, which the caretaker promptly tossed onto the lawn.

These lessons taught Simeon the need for endurance in gospel ministry. He also learned gospel ministry was

the highest and most challenging calling that one could undertake. He knew that ministers needed to have a deep sense of a divine obligation to be an instrument in the Redeemer's hands. Only this kind of calling could sustain a lifelong faithful ministry.

He also knew that the university was not equipping its ministerial students for this kind of rigor. Simeon began to meet with the evangelical students in his chambers on Sunday evenings. He would sit and talk with them about the realities of ministry. He urged that ministry must be a calling, not a career. Real ministry required personal discipline and a willingness to roll up the sleeves. He would train them on the "how-tos" of ministry and would tell them the stories from the trenches. His students were contemptuously known as "Simeonites" on campus, but they left Simeon's mentorship with a passion for ministry and a conviction about their call.

God would sovereignly use Simeon's position and gospel passion to ignite a fervor for authentic ministry in the hearts of an estimated 1100 Cambridge-trained ministers. These "Simeonites" would fan out through England, revitalizing dead pulpits and reforming pastoral ministry as a gospel-centered calling rather than a socially acceptable career. Simeon's legacy lingered long and changed the spiritual trajectory of the nation for decades.

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<sup>1</sup>These lessons are culled from the excellent biography *Charles Simeon* by H.C.G. Moule (London: Intervarsity Press, 1948).

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 25–26.



# Mentoring God-Fearing Leaders

Much has been written about mentoring. The abbreviated mission statement that serves as the motto for International Baptist College and Seminary is “mentoring God-fearing leaders into ministry.” Mentoring is an integral part of the ethos of our college and a central aspect of our leadership development. Yet while mentoring is the process, it is not the goal. The essential question in mentoring is, “What are we seeking to accomplish?” At IBCS the goal of our mentoring is to raise up men and women who understand and apply the fear of the Lord.

## The Fear of the Lord

There was a day when a Christian considered it an honor to be called a God-fearing person. Today we seldom hear someone referred to by that terminology. The empha-

sis on the fear of God seems to be missing in our society: “There is no fear of God before their eyes” (Rom. 3:18). The secular culture has become openly hostile to the cause of righteousness. Biblical values are attacked and mocked. “Secularism has a daily routine in which God is essentially invisible, and practically irrelevant. Secularism has a routine which suggests that God does not matter” (de Bruyn 2013, 22). Sadly, the fear of the Lord has faded from within the Christian culture as well.

In an attempt to placate the critics and make church more appealing to the world, churches have promoted an unholy familiarity with God. The result is amusement over adoration, and a casual attitude has replaced a heart of consecration. Today’s professing Christians lack discernment to make choices based on principle; instead, they vacillate with the pull of personal preference, persuasive opinions, or the pressure of peers. Unfortunately, churches



and colleges that cater to the cultural obsession with entertainment and enthusiasm for the trivial encourage superficial commitments. What is lacking is a biblical understanding of reverence, the holiness of God, and the fear of the Lord.

But what does a God-fearing individual look like? What vital characteristics and attitudes are present in such a life? In Proverbs 1 Solomon provides some fatherly counsel that is foundational to such considerations. The two primary purposes of the book are expressed in the second verse, “to know wisdom and instruction” and “to perceive the words of understanding.” The proverbs are given so that one who heeds them will be morally skillful and mentally discerning. How does Solomon encourage his son to gain this skill and discernment? Verse 7 provides the disposition needed to accomplish these purposes: “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge.”

Presbyterian theologian John Murray wrote, “The fear of the Lord is the soul of godliness” (Murray 1957, 229). A biblical fear of God arises from a proper comprehension of the character of God. To fear the Lord means to hate evil (Prov. 8:13). Too often contemporary Christianity possesses an unfortunate caricature of the Lord that exalts the love of God and excludes the fear of God. The result of this misconception is that God is not properly revered or glorified. Those who revel in God’s mercy must also remember His majesty. As they are warmed by His love, they must be warned by His holiness.

Directing attention to the cross provides the necessary perspective to draw one in humble reverence to a loving and holy heavenly Father. The cross demonstrates God’s judgment on sin as well as His love in sending His Son to pay sin’s penalty. The hymn writer captured the tension when he wrote, “See from His head, His hands, His feet, sorrow and love flow mingled down! Did e’er such love and sorrow meet, or thorns compose so rich a crown?”

Both awe of His greatness and gratitude for His goodness are necessary and proper in expressing the fear of the Lord. “There’s a difference between holy and unholy familiarity with God” (Bridges 1998, 99). Because believers have “received the Spirit of adoption,” we cry out “Abba! Father!” (Rom. 8:15). But God is also “the light which no man can approach unto” (1 Tim. 6:16). In working with college students we strive to mentor young people to stand in reverential awe of God’s glory and rejoice in wonderment at His grace.

### Characteristics of a God-Fearing Person

A God-fearing person will possess a biblical understanding of reverence, the holiness of God, and what it means to truly fear the Lord. A God-fearing person will walk in a humble trust of the Lord. The familiar verses in Proverbs 3:5–6 urge us to walk humbly and trust in the Lord wholeheartedly. But verse 7 is especially applicable to the mentoring process: “Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.” Young people today possess much knowledge. They excel in technology and the ability to access information. A couple of dangers of such intellectual prowess are (1) to assume that knowledge

is the same as wisdom and (2) to become wise concerning evil. Jeremiah rebuked Israel for their cleverness in doing evil: “For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge” (4:22). A person can appear to be wise yet be a biblical fool. A God-fearing person will recognize that biblical foolishness is a spiritual issue, not an intellectual deficiency.

Young people with a biblical perspective will recognize that righteousness and lawlessness have no partnership, that light and darkness do not mix, that there is no harmony between Christ and Belial, and that the temple of God has no agreement with idols. One cannot walk with God and participate in idolatry (2 Cor. 6:14ff). The next generation of spiritual leaders must be “capable of defining good and holding it tight, and defining evil and holding it off” (McLaughlin 2015). A God-fearing person rejects the relativistic redefining of sin and shuns cultural corruption. “Living in the fear of God means living in the realization of accountability to him. . . . Living in godly fear means living in full light of God as a holy God who calls his people to holiness” (Tripp 1995, 187).

“To go through this world—this carnal, secular, evil world where the devil swishes his tail constantly and you can feel his hot breath on your neck—and yet to go through the world being a God-fearing man is an accomplishment. I’m telling you that only God can enable us to do it. So, fear God” (Tozer 1994, 116). Young people who fear God will experience the Lord’s favor. “Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in his commandments” (Ps. 112:1).

At International Baptist College and Seminary, we are striving to mentor God-fearing leaders into ministry. This goal affects not only what we do but who we are. I regularly remind our team that “we mentor God-fearing leaders as we model God-fearing lives.”

Ken Endean is the president of International Baptist College and Seminary in Chandler, Arizona. He holds an MA in Pastoral Studies and Specialist in Ministry degrees. His extensive pastoral experience includes tenures as a youth pastor (1989–96) and senior pastor (1996–2014). He and his wife, Judy, serve together at IBCS and Tri-City Baptist Church and have three children.



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# No Success without



My childhood home was filled with people—some gathering at our table for fellowship, others finding refuge during a few hard months. I thought that was normal for all Christian homes. So it made sense to hear my father say, “There is no success without successors.” My ministry parents invested heavily in people in a multitude of kind ways, so naturally their five daughters married pastors, and the gift of mentoring multiplied.

A mentoring heart is Christ’s heart. It isn’t something disciples *do*; it’s who they *are*. No barriers, walls, or obstacles hinder them. Christ’s followers have eyes to see people and know their potential in the Master’s hand. Mentors know they haven’t arrived themselves, yet they seek to bring others along that narrow road that brings glory to God.

Christ’s pattern was “learn of me” as He called others to walk by His side. Paul, the “chief of sinners,” said, “Follow me as I journey down this pilgrim road.” Mentoring is simply walking together, sharing one’s imperfect self with another.

This generation needs ready volunteers who pattern godly lives built on God’s Word. The women who trust in God (1 Pet. 3), meek and quiet-spirited ones, must teach younger women so that the Word be not blasphemed (Titus 2), that all may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.

Because I live on a Christian campus, the Lord has blessed me with many mentoring opportunities. I open my home weekly for Bible study and coffee. This setting opens doors for meaningful conversations that lead to relationships, many of which last years after these students have left our halls.





# Successors



Most of us as students at Maranatha Baptist University in the “old days” were somewhat terrified of our founder’s wife, Mrs. Thelma Cedarholm. But being a member of her Madrigal and Handbell Choir and traveling for the college gave me many opportunities to watch her holy life. Her authoritative yet loving ways still speak to my heart today!

You may not have an official “position,” but God can use you to greatly benefit others. Today’s young people aren’t the future church; they are members of the church now and our future leaders.

Some practical pointers from my heart:

- Be prepared to forgive and be forgiven. Working with people is the greatest joy and greatest frustration.
- Depend on the Lord to direct you in wisdom. These are difficult times; many have complex problems that won’t be remedied overnight. Be patient.
- Don’t write anyone off, but use caution, since some only want your time and attention, not discipleship. Use the 2 Timothy 2 principle; invest your greatest efforts in those who will learn, those who will in turn commit this teaching to others.

We are a vapor and will so soon be gone; we must remember, “There is no success without successors.”

Miriam Marriott and her husband, Marty, serve at Maranatha Baptist University, where her husband is president. Miriam’s father, Dr. David Cummins, was a member of Maranatha’s first board of trustees. The Marriotts have three adult children and six grandchildren, all of whom are serving the Lord.



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# SOUND WORDS

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

## First Partaker

### Pastoring the Heavy Laden

Which do you find to be harder, preaching or pastoring? I think that most would concur that generally, pastoring is the more consistently difficult. It often depletes the spirit far, far more than preparing and preaching another sermon. I find that to be especially the case when people are grieving.

How hard it is to say anything, even scriptural things, without feeling that they sound nearly meaningless, even trite in the face of deep sadness and loss. Verses that seemed stoutly faith-fortifying in the sterility of one's study suddenly turn to putty at an accident scene or bedside. One finds oneself envying doctors and nurses, even emergency personnel, because they're equipped to rush about doing something tangible to ease pain and rescue from trouble. What a priceless blessing it would be to be able to say soul-strengthening things at such times.

I've tried to learn from those who seem to have had such gifts. Samuel Rutherford (*Letters*), Andrew Bonar (*The Visitor's Book of Texts*), and John Newton (*Letters*) have each taught me something valuable about how to select and minister choice Scriptures in a crisis. And recently I came across three letters by the Welsh preacher John Elias (1774–1841) that seem to me to be touched with similar spiritual unction for such times.

I can't recall ever hearing anyone mention the name John Elias. But in the first half of the nineteenth century he was a powerful agent of revival in northern Wales. For most of his ministerial life he labored on the island of Anglesey, just off Wales's northwest coast. Due largely to his preaching, over forty chapels were

founded there, at least one of them large enough to seat thousands.

Once in Liverpool, England, he preached from Ephesians 2:12, *That at that time ye were without Christ.*

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

There was a feeling of tremendous awe in the hearers' hearts as he described to them man's wretched condition without Christ. Many were terrified and pale with fear. Elias himself was under the most intense feelings, and could not forbear from tears.

"Oh! Oh! the wretchedness of those without Christ! They are naked without clothing! Sick without a Physician! Famishing without the bread of life! Guilty without righteousness! Unclean without a fountain! Lost without a Saviour! Damned without atonement!"

He bent over the Bible on the pulpit before him, his tears wetting the pages of the sacred Book. A strange, oppressive silence, and sense of terrible solemnity brooded over the packed congregation. The people were overwhelmed by a sense of deep sadness, and many of them were on the verge of utter despondency. But suddenly, the preacher raised his head, and the people saw that his face was now transfigured. He was supremely happy, and his face glowed with heavenly joy. "Blessed be God!" he cried, "Christ can be found tonight for those who have been without him!" Light and divine power attended this statement with its message of hope, and scores of men and women leaped unconsciously to their feet, glorifying God for his mercy. Joy without measure filled the hearts of the people.

How can we explain this divine power and unction? In the first place, it was the power of the Spirit; and secondly, the preacher himself had entered into the spirit of his sermon.

On another occasion, at a large convening of what was called "the Association," he was preaching on, *That*

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ye may be able to comprehend the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ that passeth knowledge. One who attended related,

After the sermon was over, the people were still so overwhelmed, when, in moving from the field, they appeared as if not knowing the way out. Many were of the opinion that it would have been advisable to close the Association after this sermon; every attempt to gain the attention of the hearers in the remaining services was fruitless. "The breadth, length, depth, and height, of God's love to a lost world," continued ringing in every ear and every heart, during the whole day. Hundreds were added to the churches in that town and neighborhood.

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***What is particularly striking is the fact that there is very little in the letters of the nature of Bible promises. Instead, Elias does two things that require a great personal sense of Spirit-filled authority. He turns this woman's attention to massive theological truths, and on their bases he takes unusual liberty in urging and exhorting her resting in them. These are the factors that make them timeless and applicable to many varied situations.***

Mourners at Elias's funeral were estimated to approach 10,000, an immense number in days long previous to easy transportation. Owen Thomas, another widely used Welsh preacher and one who had heard Elias many times, stated that he was *without a doubt the most popular preacher that ever rose in Wales*.

Well, perhaps that brief introduction will encourage someone to read and profit from Edward Morgan's *John Elias: Life, Letters, and Essays*. My primary purpose for acquainting us with Elias, however, is in order to magnify his unusually insightful pastoral letters which I mentioned earlier. Three in number, they were written between July 1809 and September 1813 to a Christian woman whose son suffered from a mental disorder that eventually led to his death. Elias refers in each letter to this dear woman's *storm* and attempts to minister those things which would stabilize her shaken faith.

What is particularly striking is the fact that there is very little in the letters of the nature of Bible promises. Instead, Elias does two things that require a great personal sense of Spirit-filled authority. He turns this woman's attention to massive theological truths, and on their bases he takes unusual liberty in urging and exhorting her resting in them. These are the factors

that make them timeless and applicable to many varied situations. It's also why I feel that they are something of a pastoral theology course in miniature. I trust that they will be instructive in how to say good and profitable things at some of the most difficult times.

July, 1809. I have thought much of you and your family since I saw you. I long to hear how your son is. I trust our gracious Lord has either removed your trial, or else that he gives you the necessary aid to bear up under it. Always remember that the Lord reigns, and that our health and senses and property and all that we have are under his control and government. It is true that "clouds and darkness often surround his seat; yet righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne" (Psalm 97:2). He does all things well, though we do not perceive what may be his aim in them: but we shall see in his own time what was his mind in all his dispensations. We should endeavor to believe, in all trying cases, that it is his own glory, and our profit and sanctification, that God has in view in all his treatment of us. It is said that it is "for our profit he corrects us, that we may be partakers of his holiness" (Hebrews 12:11). He makes all things work together for our good. We are very apt to think, with Manoah, that he is going to kill us even when he comes to do us some great good; and we are ready to say with Jacob, "All this is against me:" yea, when all things are turning out favorable to us.

Dear sister, beware of entertaining hard thoughts of God in your trials. Aaron was silent when the Lord destroyed his two sons. Eli, when informed by Samuel of most awful threatenings, yet submitted, saying, "It is the Lord." Job blessed God even when his ten children were killed. The case of each of them was more distressing than yours. David when in trouble, said, "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it." Ezekiel was very resigned and quiet, when the Lord "took away the desire of his eyes with a stroke." The God that helped him is still the same, and his years have no end. These men had no strength in themselves; they received strength from the Lord as they wanted it: he is as full of compassion and readiness to assist us now, as others before us. Send your prayers and sighs up to him.

Don't think of second causes. Have neither an eye to man nor to the devil. Look beyond all to God alone. See and observe the hand of the Lord in the visitation you experience, till you are easy. Also consider that the Lord is able to restore your son, in his own good time. I hope this will be the case. Perhaps this storm that has overtaken you prevents some other from assailing you that would be far worse. The Lord sometimes sends one trial as a means to keep back another



that would be more distressing. He suffers one temptation to afflict his children that it may be the means of saving them from one that is more painful. As the “thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan,” was given to buffet St. Paul, that he might not be “exalted above measure.” The Lord had rather that the messenger of Satan should buffet Paul, than he be puffed up with his thoughts. And Paul himself, no doubt, preferred this when he perceived the end of the Lord in it. So perhaps the affliction that hath befallen you and your family is intended to prevent some evils that would be more overwhelming. I cannot say what they are, but God sees the evil afar off, and secures his people in a refuge before the storm comes. You shall hereafter see the end the Lord had in view, far better than I can tell you. And I have no doubt but that you shall have cause to praise the Lord for this distressing visitation. May “patience have its perfect work.” “Humble yourself under the almighty hand of God, that you may be exalted in due time.” Dear sister, all the storms will pass by soon, it is only “for a night that sorrow cometh,” but be assured that many a subject for praise and singing shall be obtained in the valley of humiliation. These trials shall be matters of joy and praise forever. A view of Christ’s glory and unspeakable riches of grace often causes the believer to forget his trouble. May your soul be enabled to see and delight itself in view of these.

September, 1809. I am sorry to find that your storms continue; but God is infinitely more careful of you than I can be, and it is easy for him to make the storms calm whenever he likes. He will do so, in the right time, when he thinks it best. Yea, he will do it early, though he seems to delay. It is early in his wise judgment, though it may be late in your opinion. He acts with judgment, therefore wait upon him patiently; “Joy cometh in the morning.” I trust you will find that this painful visitation is for your profit in the end, though, for the present, it is unpleasant. Thoughts of peace and not of injury are those which he entertains towards you, though he uses rather sharp means to prove you. Yet you shall clearly see that this kind of treatment was necessary, and that it was the best. Beg of him to be with you in the fire and water, as he promises. Even the center of the burning furnace is a good place if he that was the fourth with the young men in the plain of Dura be there. Yea, it will be delightful to be on the waves of the sea and in the howling wilderness, yea the swellings of Jordan, if he be with us. His presence is sufficient to make the most miserable place a heavenly rest.

The Lord has many ways to answer the prayer of his people. When Paul prayed many times for

the removal of the thorn in his flesh, the answer was, “My grace is sufficient for thee.” Indeed it was enough. So when Moses entreated the Lord to take away the fiery serpents; the removal of them was not the answer, but the direction given him to make a brazen serpent. Then do not conclude that the Lord does not hear you nor your friends in reference to your son’s case, [simply] because he is not immediately restored. God has his own time, as well as way, to answer the prayers of his people. He is sometimes pleased to keep them long at his door before he grants their requests. Christ gave the devils their desire immediately when they asked leave to enter into the swine. But the woman of Canaan had to cry after him before she was answered. He delighted to hear her voice. Therefore, my dear sister, be not weary in crying at the throne of grace. A faithful prayer shall not be made in vain, and it shall not return empty. If what you wish is not bestowed, yet help to wait and resignation to the Lord’s will, shall be granted, yea, acquiescence in his treatment as it is. Oh! endeavor to surrender your son to the Lord. He has a higher claim to him than you have. It was he that gave him to you, and he hath sustained his life hitherto, and he will soon take him out of this world, from all his relatives, to himself. Therefore it is but right that he should do as he pleases with his own.

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***Yea, it will be delightful to be on the waves of the sea and in the howling wilderness, yea the swellings of Jordan, if he be with us. His presence is sufficient to make the most miserable place a heavenly rest.***

September, 1813. I hope you are nearly come to land out of the great storm on your mind. The Lord that rules the storms can make a calm in your breast, even in the time when the tempest and waves are the most furious and boisterous. He sits upon the floods and rides upon the wings of the wind. Not a breeze shall blow, nor a wave arise, without his command or permission. High sentiments and confiding thoughts of him are the most suitable means to make the mind calm and quiet in fiery trials. May we entertain just thoughts of his greatness, that he is infinitely great in his essence and attributes, sovereignty and dominion;—that he is the Owner and Lord of all persons and things; that he has a full right to do as he pleases with his own; and that it is not proper for any to ask

him what he is doing, or why he does this or that. He gives no account of any of his matters. He is above being called to give reason for his doings to any. He is the owner, supporter, and ruler of all men and things; therefore it is proper that he should do as he pleases. The claim we have to persons is but borrowed. It is he alone that has a real and unalterable right to them. The claim that we have to a husband, wife, parents, children, brothers, sisters, health, good name, possessions, or any worldly comfort is but a loan which he is pleased to favor us with for some time. Therefore we should be silent when he thinks good to take them away from us. And whatever messenger he is pleased to employ to call for them and remove them, we should not murmur. The consideration of God's


***Perceiving and considering his justice will make us silent in the most trying circumstances. Considering the wisdom of God in all his works and ways is a remarkable means to make us quiet and resigned. Yea, when we cannot see the end and propriety of things, yet believing that the infinitely wise God ordered them so is enough to make us calm and easy, being persuaded that he has some wise end in them, though our eyes are so dull that we cannot perceive them.***

justice and equity in all his works and ways, is an excellent means to silence us under every trial, though bitter to flesh and blood. Though God is the sovereign Lord of all, yet he treats all in every respect according to infinite justice. "Righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne, yea when clouds and darkness are round about him." We may be certain that he will act rightly when he works in darkness in our sight. "His judgments are strong mountains." The Judge of all the earth shall do right. "He does not think it right to do wrong to a man in his causes." "Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee."

Whatever we may plead, he can prove his treatment just and proper. Perceiving and considering his justice will make us silent in the most

trying circumstances. Considering the wisdom of God in all his works and ways is a remarkable means to make us quiet and resigned. Yea, when we cannot see the end and propriety of things, yet believing that the infinitely wise God ordered them so is enough to make us calm and easy, being persuaded that he has some wise end in them, though our eyes are so dull that we cannot perceive them. It is impossible that anything should be better than as it has been ordained by him. The time and manner of doing all things have been ordered by him in his infinite wisdom. Though our corrupt nature is ready to plead that it would have been better if this or the other thing had occurred in some other time and manner. But this is our folly! We shall soon see that everything is arranged in its due place and in the wisest manner.

The consideration of God's goodness is necessary to make us easy under the painful and intricate changes of providence. It is a pure golden head that is under the locks that are disheveled and black as the raven. All the entangled locks are altogether in their proper places, their root being in the golden head! Good and gracious is the Lord. He is an ocean of inexhaustible goodness. He can do nothing but good. There is much more good in his most afflictive dispensations than can ever be related. But we need spiritual understanding to perceive his goodness in many of his proceedings, especially those that are unpleasant to our nature. But the Lord will cause "all things to work together for good to them that love him;" and they shall clearly see their benefit someday. Then they shall "sing of mercy and judgment," of corrections and of the furnaces of affliction.

But if the storm be so strong and overwhelming that the mind cannot have leisure to meditate on the above great subjects, endeavor to divert the thoughts from the painful circumstances of providence to the wonderful and glorious plan of salvation. That is an endless ocean of most joyful wonders at all times. There is an endless and unceasing fullness of every blessing that may be needful for us. We shall see there that God loves sinners in an infinite manner, so that he gave his own Son to undertake their cause, to assume their nature, to bear their sins, punishment and curse, to make an atonement for them, and to do justice to them; to open a way to God, and to ordain means, and make those effectual in rendering them fit for heaven, to be with God for ever, to intercede for them till they are brought home. Here is an ocean of wisdom that causes us to forget all our troubles, and enable us to live above them, and to count them as nothing in comparison of the glory we shall receive by their means. 

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# Bring . . . the Books

## *The Ministry of Intercession: A Plea for More Prayer* by Andrew Murray

Among the great examples of the transient nature of human life and influence made more permanent is Andrew Murray. We would be at risk of losing sight of Murray's profound life were it not for his books, more than 240 of them!

Born the son of a Scottish immigrant pastor in the Dutch Reformed Church who served in South Africa when it was a Dutch Colony, Andrew Murray (1828–1917) rose to become the most influential son of that denomination in its history. He was a pastor, serving several congregations in his homeland, but ultimately turning from a prestigious city ministry in Cape Town to a small, obscure congregation in a small town to allow for a closer, more intimate pastoral ministry with his people. He remained forty-five years in the same church, from which he eventually “retired” at age seventy-eight to enter probably the most profound period of his worldwide influence. His faithful pastoral ministry enjoyed astounding seasons of revival and served as the base of operations for the rest of Murray's far-flung work.

While a pastor, he also served as a missionary-evangelist, educator and founder of schools, and national moderator of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa for twenty-five years. As an internationally acclaimed author and conference speaker he wielded a worldwide spiritual influence during the Victorian Age. Murray was a contemporary and personal acquaintance of the spiritual leaders of his day including D. L. Moody, F. B. Meyer, Charles Spurgeon, and A. T. Pierson. He traveled extensively in Europe and America, speaking at the Keswick Conference in England and Moody's Northfield.

### A Literary Master Producer

While preparing to write this review, I perused my own library and pulled from the shelves seven of Murray's works that I have read in, or fully through: *How to Raise Your Children for Christ*, *The True Vine*, *Living to Please God*, *How to Work for God*, *Confession: The Road to Forgiveness*, *The Believer's Secret of Obedience*, and his edited version of *The Power of the Spirit: Selections from the Writings of William Law*. These books are deeply pastoral and remarkably insightful about living life fully for Christ through daily consecration and obedience empowered by faith in Christ alone, who pours out His grace upon us by the indwelling Spirit.

Murray's works are not in-depth Scripture expositions, and they certainly are not intricate theological tomes, but this was by design. While by all contemporary accounts brilliant intellectually, Murray was extending his pastoral ministry by what he wrote, to address what he believed were the greatest needs of the church. His books are powerful, scripturally based, and hermeneutically sound life applications of truth,

convicting and transformative to this hour.

Murray's fame as a Christian pastor-teacher followed quickly after the publishing of his works *Abide in Christ*, *Like Christ*, and *With Christ in the School of Prayer*.

*The Ministry of Intercession: A*

*Plea for More Prayer* was designed to supplement the latter work with two new emphases not made in *With Christ in the School of Prayer*. Murray always seemed to have more to say, so it's little wonder that one book on prayer led to another. He likened himself to a hen that was agitated until she laid her egg; this is how he described his getting a book off his mind and onto paper.

### An Extended and Penetrating Plea for Prayer

Most often, Murray structured his books either as thirty-one short chapters to be read in a month (one per day), or fifty-two chapters to be read in a year (one per week). In the case of *The Ministry of Intercession*, he chose fifteen chapters (one chapter per two days), but with a thirty-one-day guide for help in intercessory prayer as an appendix to the book. When paperback books came into vogue, Murray published his works, often limited to 100–125 pages, to be carried by believers easily and read often throughout the day when they felt inclined. *The Ministry of Intercession* in the current paperback edition, published first by Whitaker House in 1982, is 208 pages, made longer by the easy-to-read type size.

I first received this work as a gift from my praying mother in an earlier edition thirty years ago and chose to reread it a chapter a day before engaging in an extended period of intercessory prayer after each chapter. The help I derived from doing this was immeasurable. To describe what Murray has written as highly motivating to intercessory prayer is an understatement of significant proportions.

In this work, he addresses two great truths: “The one (first) is that Christ actually meant prayer to be the great power by which His church should do its work, and that the neglect of prayer is the great reason the church has not greater power over the masses in Christian and in heathen countries. . . . The second truth that I have sought to enforce is that we have far too little conception of the place that intercession, as distinguished from prayer for ourselves, ought to have in the church and the Christian life” (pp. 9–10).

It is a life-changing book. If you are ready for a change for the better, read it. You'll be glad you did. ☞

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

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# Straight Cuts

## “Others Were Tortured, Not Accepting Deliverance” (Heb. 11:35)

The apostolic author of the letter to the Hebrews urges his readers to “hold fast” their “profession” (10:23), and concludes with an inspiring roll call of the faithful from the readers’ own history and ancestry (Heb. 11). “Look back!” he exhorts. “Look at the men and women in your own heritage who remained faithful to God and obedient to His Word even in the face of incredible odds, temptations, and sufferings. Draw courage from their example and don’t let your present afflictions and persecutions turn you aside” (10:32–36).

The names in Hebrews 11 roll by like a *Who’s Who* of the Old Testament—Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Rahab (11:4–31). He ticks off more names without pausing to tell their stories (11:32): Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and the prophets. And he enumerates the exploits accomplished, the perils faced, the persecutions endured, the triumphant deaths (11:33–38). Tucked into the middle of these anonymous events is a curious reference to an overlooked era of unnoticed deeds in Jewish history.

The courageous faith of many of these historical heroes issued in tangible victories (11:33–35a). For “others” (11:35b), however, their faith issued in victories less tangible but just as real. These “others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection.” Who were these martyrs willing to stare unblinkingly into the face of a torturous death because they confidently looked by faith to what they could not see?

The translation “tortured” masks the full graphic sense of the original. The Greek term *tumpanizō* (meaning to *strike*, *pound*, or *beat*) is the source of our word *tympani*—the set of kettle drums used in an orchestra. A related Greek noun refers to just such a drum, where a dried animal skin is stretched tight over a frame. In the case of the verb used in Hebrews 11:35, however, it’s not an animal skin that is stretched tight over a frame; it’s a human stretched out on a rack and beaten with rods until his limbs are shattered and he dies. Some translations reflect this meaning directly by saying they “were stretched on the rack and beaten to death” (Complete Jewish Bible) or, more simply, that they “were racked” (Geneva Bible).

You probably don’t recall any events like this recorded in the OT. So where does this reference come from? They were events well-known to the original Jewish audience and preserved in the apocryphal book of 2 Maccabees.

William Newell, an older commentator, explains, “While the Apocrypha, in which the books of the Maccabees are found, is not inspired, and was never a part of the Bible, it has been very useful as history of the ‘four

hundred silent years’ between the Old and New Testaments. The Maccabees . . . are, on the whole, godly, earnest, historically accurate, and especially valuable” (*Hebrews Verse by Verse*, 392).

The apostle Paul’s quotations from pagan poets (Acts 17:28; 1 Cor. 15:33; Titus 1:12) certainly do not imply that either they or their writings were inspired. Likewise, the fact that the Holy Spirit directed an allusion to events recorded in the Apocrypha in no way implies inspired status for the Apocrypha or the books of Maccabees. It does, however, verify the historicity of this particular incident and validate the genuine spiritual value of its remembrance.

The allusion would have been instantly recognized by the original Hebrew readers. In 167 BC Antiochus Epiphanes unleashed severe persecutions on the Jews of Judea. Among those martyrs whose memory is enshrined in Jewish history was an aged priest named Eleazar who was publicly compelled to eat swine’s flesh; he refused. When some tried to persuade him to avoid death by surreptitiously replacing the pork with some other meat, so that it would only *look* as though he was eating pork, still he refused—choosing willingly to go to the rack instead (see 2 Macc. 6). Eleazar’s exemplary faithfulness unto death had a profound impact on others. The next chapter records another story of martyrdom—the torture of some younger Jews who also refused to accept the deliverance offered to them because they believed in the resurrection (2 Macc. 7). Given the comparatively limited revelation regarding the afterlife in the OT, their unshakable confidence in the resurrection is remarkable.

Both chapters bear several unmistakable vocabulary similarities to Hebrews 11:35b–36. The Jews in 2 Maccabees 6–7 died excruciating deaths rather than eat food forbidden by their God-given law. For what level of faithfulness to God and obedience to His Word are we willing to die?

The link between Hebrews 11:35b–36 and 2 Maccabees 6–7 is widely recognized by commentators as old as Matthew Henry, James Fausset, B. F. Westcott, and Marcus Dods, and as recent as Bruce, Morris, Lane, O’Brien, and Ellingworth.

These intertestamental heroes were among those of whom Daniel prophesied: “the people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits” (Dan. 11:32). They were some of those “of whom the world was not worthy” (Heb. 11:38). They comprise the “great . . . cloud of witnesses” (Heb. 12:1) who being dead yet speak (Heb. 11:4) and whose testimony urges us to cling to God’s words like they did—because what happens to us in this life is not the whole story, just the first chapter. ☞

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



Control your tongue, and you're "a perfect man, and cable also to bridle the whole body," the Scriptures inform us in James 3:2. Lenski says that if character defamation is absent in our speech, then many other sinful actions are absent as well (*The Epistles of Peter, John and Jude*, 78). But it is interesting to note the number of times in which believers use bad speech. A number of specific Greek words expose the nature of our own speech.

### General Bad Speech

The Greeks had numerous general words to describe bad speech. *Diabolai*, the most common, makes complaints or slander about another person (cf. our word "diabolical"). It is no accident that this word is used to denote the principal evil being: the Devil. We are most like the Devil when we complain and speak words that accuse and harm others. Let that sink in! A synonym to this word is *loidoreo* which denotes a reviling railer. Three other general words that have subtle nuances of difference are: (1) *epereazo*, treating someone in a despicable manner with despising, insulting verbal threats or abuse of any kind; (2) *kataraomai*, wishing or praying God's wrathful judgment upon someone or expressing great dislike for someone; and (3) *kategoreo*, reproachful accusing or bringing a legal charge against someone.

### Specific Bad Speech

These two words are quite specific and aptly illustrated. Both words describe people who slander with their speech and harm another's reputation (Barclay, *Letter to the Romans*, 126). Both call attention to another's faults while ignoring or darkening their virtues (Fronmuller, *The Epistles General of Peter*, 31). Both do not necessarily tell lies, but what they say is unloving; it may be true in content, but it is harsh and unkind in the telling (Burdick, "James" in *EBC*, 12:196). Both are assaults that result in eroding a person's character, motives, and reputation to those who listen (Hiebert, *James*, 267). Both can be disguised as a prayer request: "I need you to pray for Mr. \_\_\_, because he . . ." What follows is not so much a prayer as a character assassination (MacDonald, *1 Peter*, 34). Although both are bad, one is worse, as we will soon see.

### Whispering Gossip

*Psithurizo* means "speaking into the ear" (Robertson, *Word Pictures*, IV:332). It means spreading derogatory information about someone in secret. This person takes others from the crowd and whispers a story that destroys a character (Barclay, 36). This word is found in Romans 1:29 and 2 Corinthians 12:20. It is an example of onomatopoeia (the word sounds like what it is) (Boice,

*Romans*, 1:188). It sounds like the expression we use before whispering: "psst" (an expression that actually has its own listing in the *Oxford English Dictionary*). It is as clandestine as a secret meeting at midnight down a dark alley, looking around us to make sure that no one is watching, and then up a back stairs to a dark room (Hodge, *Romans*, 43). Why can we not do

it in the full sight of everyone in the light of day? Perhaps because it should not be done in the first place!

This word also means "to hiss" like the hissing of a snake (or its charmer) (Robertson, 269). The hiss of the serpent from the Garden of Eden is still heard in the whispering gossip's words. It's also the word used for a snake charmer in the Septuagint (Eccles. 10:11). There is something almost mesmerizing about a snake charmer, just as mesmerizing as the secret attention given to us by others when they start hissing whispering gossip in our ears. Beware! A snake bite usually follows the hiss of gossip (Barnhouse, *Romans 1:1-32*, 288).

A whispering gossip destroys people in secret, much like poison destroys a person secretly as opposed to outright murder with a gun (Godet, *Romans*, 111). The poison is carefully prepared and administered through the right instrument. The interesting thing is that if we listen to whispering gossip, not only does the poison destroy the person we are hearing about, but we are the very means of conveying the poison!

The Greek god Hermes was known by many names, and *Psithuristes* is one of them (BAGD, 1098). He was quick, cunning, and he outwitted the other gods for his own advantage. He was known as a charmer in public but a schemer and gossip behind people's backs.

Iago, in Shakespeare's *Othello*, is an epitome of treachery. Iago likewise is a charmer and known in public for speaking plainly, and people appreciate his candor. But the truth is that Iago speaks only partial truths to different people so that he might manipulate circumstances. The end result of his whispering gossip is that he and the audience stare at a bed in which there lie Othello and Desdemona dead! It is the same end result for all who are prey to the whispering gossip: they may not be dead physically, but their reputation is destroyed.

Perhaps you have heard it put this way: "I'm only going to say this once, so listen closely because I don't repeat gossip." Don't even say it the first time!

Some try to defend their gossip by redefining it. A pastor sought to lovingly confront a person in his church concerning gossip. Wisely, the pastor asked the question, "Do you think that our church has any problems with

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

Charles Spurgeon

gossip?" The person replied, "No, we just share all our griefs together." Unfortunately for that pastor, that individual regarded the pastor himself as a grief; as a result of this man's gossip the pastor ended up having to leave that church. But the rest of the story is that years later, that individual wrote a letter genuinely repenting and asking forgiveness from the pastor. Praise the Lord for repentance and forgiveness, but think of the damage that could have been spared (story told by Pastor Ross Davis of Littleton Baptist Church).

Talk radio host Laura Schlessinger reportedly sent a listener the following:

My name is Gossip. I have no respect for justice. I maim without killing. I break hearts and ruin lives. I am cunning and malicious and gather strength with age. The more I am quoted, the more I am believed. I flourish at every level of society. My victims are helpless. They cannot protect themselves against me because I have no face. To track me down is impossible. The harder you try, the more elusive I become. I am nobody's friend. Once I tarnish a reputation, it is never the same. I topple governments and wreck marriages. I ruin careers and cause sleepless nights, heartaches, and indigestion. I spawn suspicion and generate grief. I make innocent people cry in their pillows. Even my name hisses. I am called Gossip. I make headlines and headaches. Before you repeat a story, ask yourself, Is it true? Is it fair? Is it necessary? If not, shut up" (Zuck, *The Speaker's Quote Book*, 230).

The following story has been told and retold with variation. A boy in a classroom spread some vicious falsehood about his teacher to his classmates. It was discovered that it was untrue, and the boy told the teacher that he was sorry, and asked what he could do. The teacher gave him a feather pillow, told him to go outside, cut a hole in the pillow and shake all the feathers out, and then come back inside for further instructions. Once the boy had completed the task, he came back for further tasks. The teacher told him to go gather all of the feathers and put them back in the pillow (Zuck, 231). Once you gossip, it is impossible to undo the damage.

## Slander

This Greek word is *katalalos*, which could be literally translated as "down-speech"—to run someone down, to speak down about someone, or to talk against someone. The previous word only speaks in secret, but this word many times openly speaks words that are accusative, critical, derogatory, or unfavorable against someone who is usually absent (Ropes, *James*, 273). It results in influencing others against the person being spoken against because of the defamed character (Hiebert, 267). Whispering gossip has the sound of a snake's hiss in it, but the slanderer's words are circulated and trumpeted

(Barclay, 36). Aristophanes used this word of a slave who "blabs" his master's secrets (Rienecker, *Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament*, 750).

The Septuagint uses this word to describe the speech that Aaron and Miriam had in speaking against Moses (Num. 12:8). Complaining is slander and a type of poison under people's tongues; the children of Israel complained in Numbers 21:7, and it brought about a public poison of another kind: the plague of poisonous snakes! God's people in Psalm 78:19 spoke against God when they questioned whether God could take care of them in their trial in the wilderness. The point: do not complain about your divinely given circumstances or question God's goodness or ability to supply!

Complaining is a type of slander against God who sovereignly allowed the circumstance. It is not the greatness of our trouble but the littleness of our spirit that makes us complain (Zuck, 103). Some people find fault as though there is a reward for it. It has been said that a person can either complain that rose bushes have thorns, or he can complain that thorn bushes have roses (*ibid.*).

The word is also found in James 4:11 and 1 Peter 2:1, 12, and 3:16. These last two references refer to non-Christians speaking against Christians. When a Christian starts speaking to other Christians like non-Christians speak against Christians in a time of persecution, the fellowship is astonishingly unhealthy. When it is used against us, we feel justified in giving it back; after all, the other person has brought up something negative, and we deserve to let others know that he isn't perfect either. But when we speak against other believers, we are actually speaking against the perfect law of liberty, the royal law of Christian love (James 1:25; 2:8), and against our Father who gave the law (Hiebert, 267–68).

Those who hear slander have a responsibility of not believing it. The story is told of a young lady who said to a gentleman, "How this world is inclined to slander. Can you believe it, but some people reported that I had twins." He replied, "Ma'am, I make it a rule to believe only half of what I hear" (*ibid.*).

## Responsibility, Repentance, and Replacement

Both the whispering gossip and the open slanderer are bad, but which do you think is worse? If a slander is known in the open, a person can defend himself, but if the slander is secret, a person is practically helpless (Barclay, 36).

Not only is the person who uses such un-Christlike speech responsible, but so is the one who listens to it; both are responsible to stop it and turn from it. Psalm 101:5 gives the resolution of a righteous person: "Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off."

Psalm 100:4 brings a right replacement: "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving." Both of these kinds of un-Christlike speech can be replaced by calling attention to the commendable traits of God and others. May the Lord help us all to watch our own forked tongues! ☞



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An intense sophomore once accosted the chaplain at Yale. "Sir," said the boy belligerently, "religion is a crutch!" "Sure it is," agreed the chaplain, "but who isn't limping?"  
—Lowell Streiker

The call of Matthew signally illustrates [our Lord's] utter disregard of the maxims of worldly wisdom. A publican disciple, much more a publican apostle, could not fail to be a stumbling-block to Jewish prejudice, and therefore to be, for the time at least, a source of weakness rather than of strength.  
—A. B. Bruce

Men, and not manuscripts, however, were [our Lord's] chosen avenues of ceaseless ministry. This is why, although He died, He yet speaks through the lives and literature of the apostles.  
—Herbert Lockyer

Because the Lord hides from the wise and prudent what He reveals to babes, He chose those who were poor and teachable as the clay out of which to fashion spiritual geniuses, just as, in after history, He chose a Moody, a Spurgeon, a Bunyan—men of immense spiritual power who were innocent of college training (which one does not deprecate).  
—Herbert Lockyer

[Jesus] saw [His disciples'] hidden weaknesses and the incipient elements of strength. There was abundance of chaff with the scanty grains of wheat which would need much winnowing: but He was equal to the task.  
—J. G. Greenough

The Heavenly Alchemist transformed His disciples' very dust to gold.  
—John Greenleaf Whittier

In the worst failure of my pastoral ministry . . . I did leadership to people rather than leading them. I saw the ministry as being about me rather than about them. When things went wrong, I worried about what it meant for me instead of what it meant for those in [our] ministry or those it should have been reaching.  
—Brad Powell

The [Master's] aim is to succor and encourage those who feel that the work of grace goes slowly on with them, and wonder why it does so, and sadly sigh because it does so. Such we conceive to have been the state of the Twelve when this lesson [on importunity in prayer] was given them.  
—A. B. Bruce

I used to wonder why this new name, "sons of thunder," which Christ gave John and his brother, was not used by John or James, as Peter used his name of Simon, but I have come to see that it was not a "new name," but a name for the "old man" of youth, who was to be cast out and give place to the "new man" in Christ.  
—Elder Cumming

The "culture" can be an abstract, comfortably detached concept. People are not abstract. We must engage people one at a time.  
—D. Lee Atkinson

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

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## “Life Touching Life”

Continued from page 9

presence and in word. They sit beside you while loved ones pass into eternity; they provide funds and advice so that you are professional in both appearance and in character; they minister with you on the mission field and give you a burden for souls and a passion for ministry; they counsel you through difficult decisions; and they spend hours teaching you by example what biblical ministry looks like.” “Life touches life.”

When discussing character issues or necessary changes to the student’s life, the relationship often resembles that of a coach and his player. The mentor corrects, advises, and encourages out of his understanding of Scripture as well as out of his knowledge, experience, and wisdom. The mentor retains her authority but makes it a non-issue by laying it aside to empathize with her follower. The relationship is “honest,” “clear,” “patient,” “non-manufactured,” “open,” and even “vulnerable.” Genuine bonds are formed without fear of rejection or prejudice. Unless the learner harbors an unteachable spirit, there is little or no resistance to submitting to the mentor’s instruction, to accepting rebuke, to receiving a blunt critique, or to making necessary changes. An established, sincere, and secure relationship facilitates that change.

### Heart-Focused

From the protégé’s perspective, the best mentors were those who “biblically deal with heart issues.”<sup>3</sup> When the mentor asked probing questions they “were unconcerned with ‘got-ya’ moments” but instead “listened to hear and to discern my heart.” Correction was “not just confrontational” nor was it about conformity. The relationship was not about casting the student aside or reacting with vindictive discipline. The compassionate, heart-focused interaction that identified core errors in belief and trust often led to a confession of sin, forgiveness, and restoration.

### Proactive and Passionate

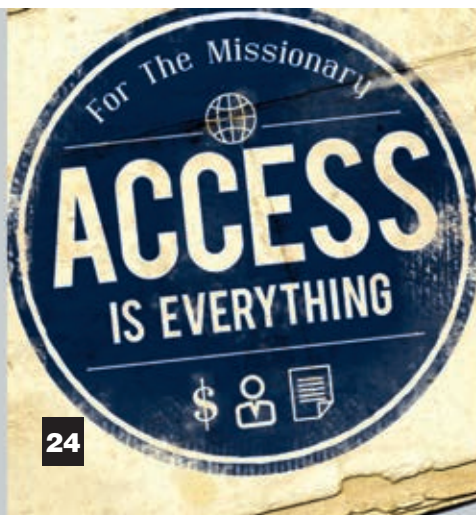
The best mentors were also characterized as proactive and passionate. The excellent mentor led the follower “to what was next.” His expertise came to bear in the other’s life. God-given wisdom and a teachable heart facilitated biblical growth.

This growth can be assessed by observing how protégés become mentors. A student-educator states, “I have learned the importance of valuing all students and helping them reach their God-given potential.” Others challenge their peers: “Now is the time to give our whole lives to Christ, to establish a pattern of faithfulness, and to allow God to speak to the world through us a little louder than He has before. If there’s one thing this class has learned, it’s that life is short and eternity is long. Don’t pursue your own success, wealth, and comfort. Be radically devoted to Jesus Christ; love God with all your hearts; and go share the gospel with the world.” Others make the decision to become mentors and disciple-makers on the campus of state universities and in limited-access countries. They share Jesus and seek to disciple others in Chandler and in Phoenix as well as in Mexico, Canada, Africa, Indonesia, India, and the Philippines.

### Aware

Finally, it should be acknowledged that experiences like the one shared at the beginning of this article are no longer common. Today’s young people rarely have the same privilege afforded to one who has “grown-up-born-again.” Mentoring is waning while the need to mentor is intensifying. Mentors need to be aware that alcoholism, premarital sex, substance dependence, abuse, same-sex attraction, unguided work ethics, eating disorders, and godless worldviews sit squarely in the disciple’s living room, while virtual and augmented reality, ethnic violence, transgender issues, terrorism, and true persecution stand at their door.

Now is the time for mentors to step forward. Regardless of age, employment, title, ethnicity, or social standing, young men need to see what a godly husband, father, employee, church member, and minister looks like. They need authentic relationships that seek to sharpen them and prepare them for what lies ahead. Equally, our churches need a host of women who will teach younger ladies how to effectively minister as twenty-first-century moms, educators, administrators, executives, civil servants, or lay-leaders. A tremendous need also exists for mentors to see their own children as their primary protégés. Fellow parents, we must proactively mentor the disciples in our own homes; we desperately need to renew our commitment to Deuteronomy 6. By God’s grace and in His power,



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we need to listen to the perspective of the protégé and mentor him or her into ministry for His glory.

Thank you to all who contributed, whether directly or indirectly, to this article: Becky, Katie, Priscilla, Jeremy, Horacio, Josh, Lupe, Andrea, Sarah, Emilio, Stephen, George, Erin, Myles, Acadia, Clayton, and the entire IBCS student body—both past and present.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Michael Sproul, the senior pastor of Tri-City Baptist Church in Chandler, Arizona, has characterized our ministry in this manner.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Kenneth Endean, the president of International Baptist College and Seminary, is at the beginning of his fourth year of effectively calling IBCS faculty, staff, and administrators to mentor *God-fearing leaders* for fundamental Baptist churches in the West and around the world.

<sup>3</sup> During his presidency at IBCS, Dr. David Brock, the senior pastor of Faith Baptist Church of Cherokee Road in Newberry Springs, California, effectively taught that “a stable life is the result of biblically dealing with heart issues.”

## Mentoring Cross-Culturally

Continued from page 11

The mentor must work towards the goal of seeing his disciple serve as his equal in the ministry. The mentor usually understands better than the disciple how to apply the Scriptures in the mentor’s own culture. However, success within a cross-cultural discipleship relationship is achieved when the disciple applies Scripture in his native culture as effectively as or even more effectively than the mentor does in the disciple’s culture. Opportunities for this type of application to take place must be provided.

Because I continue to teach courses on the undergraduate level at our college, as a teacher I am subordinate to Josué. If I wish to make an exception to the guidelines presented to the teachers, I need Josué’s approval because he is the academic dean. In the context of foreign missions, the baton of indigenization is not completely handed over while the national is still under the authority of the one who mentored him. If ministry continues between mentor and disciple in a cross-cultural context, complete indigenization has taken place only when the national becomes at the minimum a co-laborer or colleague.

To mentor someone in a cross-cultural setting provides unique opportunities and specific challenges. The mentor must address his own biases before attempting to mentor in a setting where the disciple will be ministering in a culture different from that of the mentor. The mentor must continue to grow in his understanding that the disciple

must apply Scriptural principles within the context of his native culture, just as the mentor has done within his own culture. As the mentor learns his lessons while mentoring the disciple, the mentoring process will prove to be less frustrating and more fruitful as the Lord provides opportunities for the disciple to grow and serve.

Dr. Dan Wokaty is the seminary dean at Ebenezer Bible College and Seminary (Instituto Práctico Ebenezer y Seminario) in Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico, where he has served since 2001. He ministers as a missionary with MGMI (formerly Mexican Gospel Mission). MGMI is a fundamental Baptist mission based in Phoenix, Arizona.



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\* In 2 Timothy 2:1 Paul encourages Timothy to be strong in Christ’s grace instead of being dependent upon Paul. In the following verse Paul commands Timothy to take what he learned and pour it into the lives of others. Although Paul continues to serve as mentor, he guides Timothy to develop his leadership qualities. Second Timothy 2:1–2 provides the philosophical and ministerial grid for the lessons mentioned in this article.

# Regional Report

## Alaska Regional Fellowship

*Earl Barnett*

The twenty-sixth annual meeting of the Alaska FBFI Regional Fellowship was held at Immanuel Baptist Church in Palmer in conjunction with the fiftieth anniversary of the church. Our host pastor, Ben Burtch, has been at the church for twenty-three years. He is the second pastor in the fifty-year history of the church.

Dr. Ernie Schmidt and Dr. Les Ollila were our main speakers. Dr. Schmidt brought a series of messages, using the lives of three kings of Israel, to illustrate the importance of finishing well in the ministry. He spoke on pastoral ethics in the men's session. Charlene Ollila and Gen Schmidt challenged the ladies in their session. Dr. Ollila brought a series of messages on leadership.

Our Tuesday afternoon was also a blessing. This session was

a question-and-answer session in which the pastors had an opportunity to ask questions about ministry. Pastor Ben Burtch, Pastor Bruce Hamilton, and Pastor Earl Barnett were speakers.

The meeting was well attended this year, considering the distance some of the men had to travel. Some travel 650 miles by plane and others travel up to 350 miles by car. Remember, Alaska is a big state—more than twice the size of Texas!



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### NOTABLE QUOTES

**A** man has to learn the plague of his own heart before his own problems can be solved.—Oswald Chambers

**"H**e will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able." He meant you to feel the stress and weight of the trial, but he never meant you to be crushed under it. There is majesty here. "He will not suffer." He will not allow Satan to tempt you too much. Be of good cheer.—Andrew Bonar

**T**he trouble with many Christians is that they want to reach the Promised Land without going through the wilderness.—Source unknown

**A**ttachment to Christ is the only secret to detachment from the world.—A. J. Gordon

**T**he success or failure of our work as a church or mission depends, in the last resort, largely, not on the number of preachers we put into the field, not on the size of our congregations, but rather on the character of Christianity we and our work produce.—Duncan Campbell

**T**he carnal can argue, but it is the Spirit that convicts. Education can civilize, but it is being born in the Spirit that saves. The energy of the flesh can run bazaars, organize amusement, and raise millions, but it is the presence of the Holy Spirit that make a temple of the living God. The root trouble of the present distress is that the church has more faith in the world and the flesh than in the Holy Ghost, and things will get no better till we get back to his realized presence and power.—Samuel Chadwick

**A** holy life will produce the deepest impression. Lighthouses blow no horns; they only shine.—D. L. Moody

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

# Reaching Your Community through

Lubec is a small fishing town in Down East Maine: it's the most easterly town and considered to be the last coastal frontier in the United States of America. I was reared in Bucksport, a paper mill community along central coastal Maine, about two hours west of Lubec. However, in August of 2014 my wife and I moved to Lubec so that I could pastor Ridge Baptist Church. Once there, I was continually plagued with the question, "How can I reach this area with the gospel since our little church does not have the money or volunteers to put on programs to reach people?" For years I had been reading with interest the articles on the chaplaincy in *FrontLine* magazine and realized, "I could do that in Lubec." Without training, example, or guidance, I jumped in with both feet. Actually, on second thought, my education for the challenge has been through *FrontLine* magazine. Although Dr. Vaughn didn't know it, his leadership as FBFI chaplain endorser helped me become a fire chaplain in Lubec, Maine!

The chaplaincy has become a wonderful mission field for me. Whenever my radio goes off, out I go. I have been to house fires, grass fires (which can quickly become out of control), forest fires, car fires, auto accidents, drug overdoses, and lift assists (helping the Emergency Medical Technicians from the ambulance). I have helped fight fires and encouraged firemen. I have prayed with drunks, drug addicts, and those who have just lost their homes. I have even prayed for the families of the dead. I don't proselytize—but I always introduce myself as pastor of Ridge Baptist Church and the chaplain for these guys! I have many opportunities to hand out business cards and gospel tracts. Sometimes I make follow-up visits the next day to see how people are doing. In addition, our church raises money for those who have suffered loss from house fires.

Soon after I became a chaplain I stayed with a man who had fallen in the street and waited for over thirty minutes for the EMTs to arrive. Several months later his sister passed away; because of the ministry I had had to him as a chaplain, the family asked that I preside at the funeral.

Last November I went to an accident where a portion of a pickup truck was resting on a man's head. The EMTs were working with him, and the firemen were desperately trying to get the truck off him. I got down in the middle of the EMTs and firemen as they tried to extract him from the vehicle, and I prayed for his life. They got him out and to the hospital, and he was home in a few hours. At the next



firemen's meeting, one of the EMTs that had been at the accident thanked me publically for my prayer.

Also in November, one of our church members passed away (he was a former EMT and fireman and had encouraged me to join the fire department). At his funeral our little church was packed to the doors and beyond. The firemen were in their dress uniforms, and the EMTs were in their work uniforms. At the end of the service I doffed my suit coat and donned my chaplain's coat. The gospel was heard, and the people of the community responded positively to the message.

Recently, after helping at a grass fire, I had an opportunity to pray with one of the firefighters whose mother-in-law had passed away. In addition, I prayed with the family of a girl who was in a diabetic coma. On Monday and Friday of the same week I followed up with a visit to the girl's mother which included prayer and a visit to the young lady in the hospital, where I spoke to her of salvation followed by Scripture reading and prayer.

The other day I was talking with Chief Robert Hood, and he said that the chaplaincy is especially needed in a rural setting. When there is a death it is up to the fire chief to deal with the aftermath, including the notification of the next of kin. That is where the fire service chaplain can step in to support his chief and minister comfort to the family.

I am thankful for the encouragement I have received from the late Warren Foley; our chief, Robert Hood; and especially my wife, Brenda. In addition, I am grateful to have been recently endorsed as a Fire Service Chaplain by FBFI. Not only am I able to minister at Ridge Baptist Church but also in the town of Lubec.



# the Chaplaincy

I challenge my fellow pastors to get involved in the chaplaincy. It is our responsibility to fearlessly point people to Jesus Christ. He is the only answer in the crises of life. Get in good

physical condition so you will have the stamina to perform at the scene of a fire or any other emergency. If this sixty-one-year-old grandpa can do it, you can too!



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# Beyond Separation

## The “Accursed” Principles—Part 1

There is nothing more basic, more foundational, or more essential to Christian faith than the gospel message. When you add to the truth, you no longer have the truth. When you subtract from the truth, you no longer have the truth. When you change the truth, you no longer have the truth. So it is with the gospel: if you add to it, subtract from it, or change it, you no longer have a genuine gospel message. It is therefore of critical and primary importance how we relate to those who—by whatever means—would corrupt or change the gospel message we preach.

One of the most powerful texts in all of Scripture concerning the doctrine of separation is the one found in Galatians 1. Because of the critical and essential nature of the gospel, the command given in this text is radical in nature and goes beyond what we normally call “primary separation.”

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed [third-person present imperative]. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed [third-person present imperative]. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

The central concern in this text is the purity of the gospel message and the dramatic consequences of making even minor changes to that message. In the context of Galatians, that change involves adding the requirement of circumcision as a part of the message of salvation, making it a requirement for justification. According to verse 7, these false teachers are “willing” (*thello*) to pervert of the gospel. It is not something done merely in haste, with good intentions or ignorantly, as damaging as such errors are. Paul’s anathema here is directed at those who deliberately preach a false gospel. Of course, the text would also apply to other additions or changes to the gospel message.

According to verses 6 and 7, this addition to the requirement for salvation results in a completely different (Gr. *heteros*) gospel, not just a different version (Gr. *allos*) of the same gospel. Here we see the corruption and changing of the gospel in such a way that it has no saving power—specifically by adding the requirement of circumcision. The result is a perverted gospel. The word “perverted” means turning something to its opposite state, therefore to change, twist, or alter.

A side issue regards the issue of persons. Paul absolutely forbids receiving a different gospel even if brought by someone with apostolic or angelic stature. There are no exceptions!

For emphasis and clarity, the command “let him be accursed” (a present imperative) is repeated twice. Just what does it mean, “let him be accursed”? What is it that Paul is commanding us to do when the gospel preached is perverted?

The Greek concept of this word “anathema” is centered on the idea of irrevocably dedicating or devoting something to divine purpose—something that is consecrated to God and His purposes. Used in its negative sense, “anathema” refers to a person or thing doomed by God and devoted to His destruction. A man who is accursed is devoted completely to the most horrible of woes.

In the text of Galatians 1, the word “accursed,” then, denotes someone who is hateful or detestable to God and who is therefore irrevocably dedicated or consecrated to God’s special purpose—someone delivered over to the judicial wrath of God, dedicated to destruction and thereby brought under a curse. And those thus devoted to divine destruction are taken completely out of ordinary human circulation and given up to divine destruction. You and I can no longer influence disposition.

The Old Testament Hebrew equivalent, *charam*, has basically the same meaning: solemnly setting something apart to God and His divine purposes, to be dealt with as He thinks fitting. No substitutions or other arrangements may be made! The word emphasizes that whatever action is prescribed must be radical and total—whether consecration for God’s use and pleasure—or for destruction and removal.

Regarding someone to be “accursed” in this way is not something you or I would personally initiate. God in His infinite and divine wisdom makes this determination. The word “accursed” always indicates that God has already set something or someone aside for a special divine purpose, whatever that may be. It is my responsibility to be in agreement with God, to concur with His purpose.

In our text in Galatians 1:8–9, “let him be accursed” therefore means, “Let him be being devoted completely to divine judgment!” God has declared that those who pervert the gospel, no matter who they are, merit the complete and utter condemnation of God. It is our responsibility to be in full agreement with God in this matter. We are to treat such a person as devoted to utter and eternal destruction.

The study of this word “accursed” will be continued in Part 2.

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





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# ON LANGUAGE & SCRIPTURE

## Water Closet

There are some jokes I have to *make* myself get—in a yes-I-acknowledge-that-that-is-funny-empirically-speaking kind of way. There is one in particular that some older relatives of mine always laugh about that just never quite registers with me.

It seems a particular young woman was visiting a certain town and was inquiring, delicately, about where to find a restroom. Only the proper term in the vaguely situated time period of this joke, some many decades ago, was “water closet”—or “W.C.” Or, rather, it *had* been the proper term. The visitor, out of extreme delicacy, decided to refer to it as the “bathroom closet.” Even this, however, was too gauche for our young heroine, so she referred to it by its initials, “the B.C.”

The locals thought she meant the “Baptist Church,” and she is astonished to find out what kinds of things go on at the B.C. in this town, up to and including potlucks.

Cue my relatives dissolving into laughter and me merely acknowledging that it’s funny. Ha. Ha.

The reason I don’t quite get it is that I have never in my life heard anyone refer to a restroom as a “water closet.” And I do not believe I personally have seen “WC” on signage in America (just in Britain and in Kenya, I think). One of my contemporary American dictionaries refers to the term as “dated.” Soon I suggest it will be “archaic” or even “obsolete.”

Why? Because of something now commonly called the “euphemism treadmill.” “Water closet” is a euphemism: “a mild or indirect word or expression substituted for one considered to be too harsh or blunt when referring to something unpleasant or embarrassing” (*New Oxford American Dictionary*).

But new euphemisms don’t make something unpleasant suddenly pleasant. So new euphemisms tend over time to gather the unpleasant embarrassment of a thing into their connotative embrace—and then we need even newer euphemisms.

*Water closet* becomes *toilet* becomes *bathroom* becomes *restroom* (it’s a bit more complicated than that, but you get the basic idea). It’s best to be aware when you’re using a euphemism, lest you accidentally offend someone (think of so-called minced oaths such as “Oh my gosh”). Other things being equal, in most situations we’re likely to find ourselves in, we should show complete courtesy toward everyone (Titus 3:2), and that means learning what words are polite and which are outdated euphemisms. Language is the premier vehicle of courtesy.

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## The Progress of Doctrine in

**Note:** The content of this column is highly condensed from T. D. Bernard's *The Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament*. The goal is to acquaint the reader with Bernard's insight into the NT "at a glance" and to whet the appetite for a fuller reading of Bernard's nineteenth-century classic.

### LECTURE VI: THE EPISTLES (PART 1)

Continuity is especially important in passing from the apostolic history [Acts] to the apostolic writings [Epistles], since the history gains significance from the doctrine, and the doctrine derives authority from the history. The persons and events in the Book of Acts are important because they were ordained for the working out of the truth of the Gospel. But *what* is that truth which they worked out? Christ was preached to the world—but how was he taught to the *Church*?

We are told, for example, how Paul passed two years at Ephesus, and a year and a half at Corinth; but no particulars of his teachings to the believers are given. Considering that we have specimens of every kind of address to those that are *without*, we might well ask, why there is no example to show how men were taught *after they had believed*. But they who hold that the scheme of Scripture as a whole is of the Holy Ghost will not ask that question; for this omission is part of a plan, which provides this information for us in a more worthy and perfect way; namely, by placing in our hands the collection of Apostolic Epistles.

They are the voice of the Spirit, speaking within the Church to those who are themselves within it, certifying to them the true interpretations and applications of the principles of thought and life which as believers in Jesus they have received. The Epistles are fitted to this course of teaching by their form, their method, their authorship, and their relative character.

#### 1. The Form of Epistolary Teaching— The Significance of Letters

##### 1.1. Different from the Prophets

The Prophets delivered *oracles to the people*, but the Apostles wrote *letters to the brethren*. It is a more familiar communication between equals.

##### 1.2. Different from Other Ancient Forms of Instruction

The form adopted in the New Testament combines the advantages of the treatise and the conversation. The letter may treat important subjects with accuracy and fullness, but it will do so in immediate connection with actual life. It is written to meet an occasion. It is addressed to particu-

lar states of mind. It breathes of the heart of the writer. In these respects it suits well with a period of instruction, in which the word of God is to be given to men, not so much as information but as *education*.

Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus supplied examples of different tendencies of the human mind in connection with the principles of the Gospel—tendencies which would ever recur, and on which it was necessary for the future guidance of the Church that the word of God should pronounce, not to possible but to actual cases.

#### 2. The Method of Epistolary Teaching— The Nature of the Letters

##### 2.1. A General Tenor of Brotherly Exhortation

The Apostles adopt a method of companionship rather than of dictation. The writer does not announce a succession of revelations or appeal to the unanswerable formula, "Thus saith the Lord." He rouses, he animates, he goes along with the working of men's minds by showing them the workings of his own. He utters his own convictions, he pours forth his own experience, he appeals to others to "judge what he says," and commends his words "to their conscience in the sight of God." He confutes by argument rather than by authority, deduces his conclusions by processes of reasoning, and establishes his points by interpretations and applications of the former Scriptures.

Consider, for instance, the argument on justification in the early part of the Epistle to the Romans, which accomplishes every step by the aid of the former Scriptures. Why all this labor in proving what might have been decided by a simple announcement from one entrusted with the word of God? Would not the apostolic declaration that one statement was error, and that another was truth, have sufficed for the settlement of that particular question? Doubtless! But it would not have sufficed to train men's minds to that thought fullness whereby truth becomes their own, or to educate them to the living use of the Scriptures as the constituted guide of enquiry. This is not only definite information, it is also effective education.

##### 2.2. Not Devoid of Apostolic Authority

Yet we should speak amiss, if we represented the education of Christian thought as carried on in the Epistles only by methods which seem to place the Apostle on the same level with his readers. There is everywhere present the sense of an authority which makes all things sure; and whenever occasion arises, it asserts its unhesitating and uncompromising claims, as when Paul informs the Thessalonians "in



# the New Testament, Part 4

the word of the Lord" (1 Th. 4:13–17) of some particulars not before made known. Apostolic authority and direct revelation diffuse over the Epistles their certainty and their majesty; yet the mind of the teacher still enters into a free companionship with the mind that is taught, so as to exercise and educate the spiritual faculties, at the same time conducting them with decisive authority to conclusions which they might else have failed to reach.

## 3. The Authorship of Epistolary Teaching —The Predominance of Paul

If the form and method of this scheme of Christian education are important features of it, so also is the selection of its agents. Who are the appointed teachers of the Church? Peter and John, the two chief Apostles; James and Jude, the brethren of the Lord. But the chief place in this system of teaching does not belong to any one of them, nor to all of them together. The office of working out the principles of Christian faith into full proportions and clearly defined forms was assigned to Paul.

Now is it not remarkable that this great office should have been assigned to one who had *not* been a witness of the Lord's life on earth? Yet on him, *although* born out of due time, the most extensive and enduring part of the apostolic work devolved. But his being born out of due time *was itself one of his qualifications*. We may be sure that the call of Paul *after* the manifestation of Christ was finished, was as much a part of the divine plan, as was the call of the Twelve, and that the later call corresponded as truly with his appointed work, as the earlier call did with theirs.

Yet a danger might arise. It might appear that the Gospel which he preached was not so much a stage of progress as an individual variety, and that in following it we diverge from the original doctrine, and were no longer sustained by the authority of the Twelve. The Twelve, therefore, are joined with Paul as authors together with him of the doctrinal canon of the Church.

## 4. The Varying Character of Epistolary Teaching

### 4.1. The Pauline Epistles

The Pauline Epistles appear to have been habitually ranged in that order in which we read them now; and it is one which produces the effect of a course of doctrine. They fall naturally into groups, which stand, relatively to each other, in the places which they ought to occupy for purposes of progressive instruction.

### 4.2. The Epistle to the Hebrews.

In its origin it evidently belongs to the last hour of transition and decision, when a large number of men, who were at once Jews and Christians, stood perplexed, agitated, and almost distracted, as they seemed to feel the ground parting beneath their feet, and hardly knew whether to throw themselves back on that which was receding, or forward on that to which they were called to cling.

### 4.3. The General Epistles.

These are, in effect, the confirmation and the supplement of Paul's doctrine, the *faith* expounded by Paul kindling into fervent *hope* in the words of Peter, and expanding into sublime *love* in those of John. It only remains for our last instructor to exhort us "earnestly to contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints"; to warn us of the dangers of relapse; to entreat us "to build ourselves up on our holy faith, and to keep ourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life"; and, finally, to commend us "to him who is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy."

## Conclusion

With such charges, warnings, and commendatory prayers is the didactic portion of the New Testament left in our hands. It supposes that the believer in Jesus has entered on a vast world of life and thought. What do you know of all this? Till you do know something of it, the Epistles are not for you. They are not written to suit a cool indifference, or to gratify a taste for discussion. It does not yield its true uses to a critical reference or an occasional consultation; only through a constant companionship and familiar intercourse does it accomplish the blessed transformation of the poverty and vanity of this poor human life into the glory and reality of a life that is in Christ.

## LECTURE VII: THE EPISTLES (Part 2)

*Of him are ye in Christ Jesus* (1 Cor. 1:30). I take this text, because it appears to me to contain the fundamental idea, which underlies the whole range of the Epistles, and gives the specific character to their doctrine.

### 1. The Distinctive Character of Epistolary Doctrine: "In Christ"

We have looked upon the doctrine of the Gospels as the *manifestation* of Christ to men. We have looked upon the doctrine of the Acts of the Apostles as the *preaching* of

Christ to men and gathering those who receive him into the life of a Church. As the manifestation of Christ when it was finished made way for the preaching of Christ, so the preaching of Christ when it has been received opens into *the life in Christ*. The Epistles pre-suppose the existence of this life, both in the community and in the individual, and their doctrine is directed to educate and develop it. The fundamental thought in every page is that expressed in my text, "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus."

They are little words, but they make an announcement of vast significance and boundless consequences. In Christ Jesus! It is no symbolical form of speech, but the statement of a fact, as real in regard to the spirit, as the fact of our being in the world is real in regard to the body.

Christ has been manifested, preached, received; and what is the state which has ensued? They are not merely professors of his name, learners of his doctrine, followers of his example, sharers in his gifts. I may go further. They are not merely men ransomed by his death, or destined for his glory. These are all external kinds of connection, in which our separate life is related to his life only as one man's life may be related to another's, by the effect of what he teaches, of what he gives, and of what he does. But it is assumed in the Epistles, that believers in Jesus are no longer living a life that is only external and parallel to his life. They are *in* Christ Jesus, and he also is *in* them.

*Believers are in Christ*, so as to be partakers in all that he does, and has, and is. They died with him, and rose with him, and live with him, and in him are seated in heavenly places. When the eye of God looks on them they are found in Christ, and there is no condemnation to those that are in him, and they are righteous in his righteousness, and loved with the love which rests on him, and are sons of God in his sonship, and heirs with him of his inheritance, and are soon to be glorified with him in his glory. And this standing which they have in Christ, and the present and future portion which it secures, are contemplated in eternal counsels, and predestined before the foundation of the world.

It is no flight of mysterious rhetoric, but the brief expression of the settled, habitual, fundamental view of the state of those who are here addressed, "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus." This idea underlies all that is said, gives the point of view from which every subject is regarded, and supplies the standard of character and the rules of conduct. We move in a new world of thought, and are raised to a level of doctrine we had not reached before.

The Churches are "in Christ"; the persons are "in Christ." They are "found in Christ" and "preserved in Christ." They are "saved" and "sanctified in Christ"; are "rooted, built up," and "made perfect in Christ." Their ways are "ways that be in Christ"; their conversation is

"a good conversation" in Christ; their faith, hope, love, joy, their whole life is "in Christ." They think, they speak, they walk "in Christ." They labor and suffer, they sorrow and rejoice, they conquer and triumph "in the Lord." They receive each other and love each other "in the Lord." The fundamental relations, the primal duties of life, have been drawn within the same circle. The man is not without the woman, nor the woman without the man "in the Lord" (1 Cor. 11:11). Wives submit themselves to their husbands "in the Lord," children obey their parents "in the Lord." The broadest distinctions vanish in the common bond of this all-embracing relation. "As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ; there is neither Greek nor Jew, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; they are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). The influence of it extends over the whole field of action, and men "do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." The truth which they hold is "the truth as it is in Jesus"; the will by which they guide themselves is "the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning them." Those who have entered into this existence depart, but they "die in the Lord," they "sleep in Jesus," they are "the dead in Christ"; and "when he shall appear," they will appear; and when he comes, "God shall bring them with him," and they shall "reign in life by one—Jesus Christ."

What correspondence is there between our own habit of thought and the Christian consciousness which speaks in these pages? "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus." That is not the statement of a doctrine, but the summary of a life. Is it a life which I am living now? Let me accept nothing in exchange for this. Men bid me live in duty and truth, in purity and love. They do well. But the Gospel does better; calling me to live in Christ, and to find in him the enjoyment of all that I would possess and the realization of all that I would become.

## 2. Particular Doctrines Affected by this Distinctive Epistolary Doctrine

*[Space does not permit even an abbreviated version of Bernard's treatment of how the premiere NT truth of union with Christ impacts the NT doctrines of salvation, sonship, worship, and sanctification.]*

## Conclusion

Through the Epistles we know that *the Son of God is come*, and hath given us an understanding, that *we may know him* that is true, and *we are in him* that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. "This is the true God, and eternal life" (1 Jn. 5:20). The Only-begotten of the Father came down to earth to take us into himself, and returned into glory to unite us to God.





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# What Do These Stones Mean?

## Mentoring through Remembering

When God divided the Jordan River to allow the Israelites to cross into the Promised Land, He ordered them to do something strange. He had representatives from the tribes take twelve stones from the middle of the riverbed and make a pillar beside the river in their new land. The exercise was designed to be a reminder to future generations of God's people of the great miracle He performed that day:

That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones? Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever (Josh. 4:6-7).

The ark represented Jehovah's presence with His people. Through this commandment, He was teaching Israel to remind each succeeding generation what God had done for them. One of the great mistakes we make is assuming that our followers know what we know. The fact is, we must regularly remind them of our God-infused history. Here are some practical suggestions to help your children and grandchildren remember the great things that God has done.

- Tell them how you got saved. This is so simple, but it is one of the most neglected ways to encourage ourselves and others. You have undoubtedly told your children the story before, but that does not mean that they remember it. Tell it again. If you want to begin or enhance a time of family devotions, a great way is to intersperse testimonies of how God has worked in your life, including bringing you to faith in Christ. Even if you have grown children, you can share testimonies with them through social media. If we have time to post cat videos, we have time to tell how we came to Christ.

- Make a display with pictures or objects that have special significance to your spiritual life. Businesses often frame the first dollar that they earned, and churches often keep a photo and gold-plated shovel to commemorate the beginning of a building project. If you are artistic, you could make it a project to enhance the beauty and interest of your home. On the other hand, it could be as simple as finding or printing out old pictures and placing them in a pile on the coffee table. This could be a great use for a TV or electronic picture frame. As the opportunity arises, you can explain what one or two of pictures mean.
- Take your family to visit seasoned saints or have them in your home for a meal and ask them about their experiences. I remember being greatly impressed a decade or two ago upon learning that two elderly church members had been in the heat of combat in World War II, one landing on Iwo Jima and the other flying combat missions in P-47 fighter aircraft. Retired or visiting missionaries are a wonderful source of stories of the working of the Lord. Simple conversation can spark in your children a desire to know and serve God.
- Create a special family ritual, perhaps at the turn of the New Year, in which each person in the family recalls what has been the most exciting thing that God has done in his or her life in the past year. Establish the habit of remembering in your children so that they have something to pass on to theirs.

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# The Threefold Ministry of the Holy Spirit

The Scriptures reveal the ministry of the Holy Spirit in our lives. It is crucial that we understand that the Holy Spirit is not just an influence, He is God the Spirit! He is co-equal with God the Father and God the Son, Jesus Christ. First John 5:7 states, "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." The Holy Spirit is not below the Father or the Son, as many people believe. This is one of the greatest and most wonderful truths of the Scriptures.

First, let us consider the ministry of the Holy Spirit in our worship. The Word of God declares that many sincere people are worshipping the Lord in ignorance. Jesus said in Matthew 15:8-9, "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." I literally saw this truth when I was preaching in the country of India. Eighty percent of the population are Hindus; they worship more than three million different gods, and idol-filled places of worship are everywhere. They no doubt are sincere people, but they are worshipping in ignorance.

Our Lord taught in John 4:23-24, "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." The Holy Spirit is not a part of any worship that is contrary to the Lord's revealed truth of the Scriptures. John 17:17 says, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." In John 16:13 we read, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." That is why it is so crucial to know the Scriptures that reveal the majesty of our heavenly Father—His omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence. When we worship the Lord, we do so with the aid of the Holy Spirit.

Second, let us consider the ministry of the Holy Spirit in our walk as a child of God. Galatians 5:16 declares, "This I say then, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." There is this constant war that every Christian encounters. Galatians 5:17 states, "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." The profound truth is if we walk in the Spirit, we can have victory over the flesh. The reason this is true is because the Holy Spirit dwells within

us. First Corinthians 6:19-20 tells us, "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." Since the Holy Spirit dwells within us, 1 John 4:4 gives us this promise: "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." If we do not walk in the Spirit, two things will happen. First, we will grieve the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 4:30 commands, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Second, we will quench the Holy Spirit in our lives. First Thessalonians 5:19 emphatically states, "Quench not the Spirit." Our constant prayer should be that our walk will be of the leading of the Holy Spirit. He will never lead you into sin! Colossians 1:10 says, "That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God."

Third, let us consider the ministry of the Holy Spirit in our witness. Acts 1:8 declares, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." It is crucial for every believer to be led of the Holy Spirit in witnessing to the lost. It is not our wisdom, our intellect, our personality, or our sincerity that will bring someone to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ—it is the work of the Holy Spirit! Christ said of the Holy Spirit in John 16:8, "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." Only the Holy Spirit can convince people that they are sinners and need God's righteousness through Jesus alone. We must witness depending upon the power of the Holy Spirit.

A few months ago, I led a man to Christ. As I was showing him the Scriptures, I was totally relying on the Holy Spirit to take the powerful message of the gospel to bring this man to salvation. This man accepted Christ as his Savior and is now growing as a new believer. Remember, it is the work of the Holy Spirit that brings sinners to Christ! Zechariah 4:6 states, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the LORD of hosts." I trust we will all see the great work of the Holy Spirit in our worship, walk, and witness.

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