

CHRISTIAN WATCH

Issue No. 35

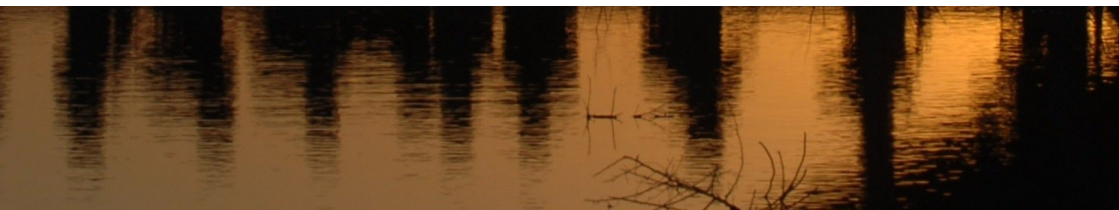
A Protestant Biblical Witness

Sept/Oct 2021



'And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.'

Mark 13:37



**Christian Watch Annual Subscription (2021),
including UK postage - £12**

A PRICELESS PROMISE

To be afflicted and poor means to be bowed down on account of one's sin and sinfulness, to be oppressed with the feeling of utter inability to deliver oneself, and to be thirsting for deliverance by the compassionate grace of God alone. It is to be poor in spirit. It is thus the opposite of the spiritual pride which trusts in its own strength and boasts in its own righteousness.

These poor and needy, whom the Lord designs for His own glory, He enables to trust in His Name. To trust in the Name of the Lord can never be a reality without trusting in the Word of God in which this Name is revealed. "The Name of the LORD is a strong tower" to which the needy flies for safety (Proverbs 18:10). By the phrase "the Name of the LORD" we must understand the perfections of His nature. "They that know Thy Name" (that is, His perfections) "will put their trust in Thee" (Psalm 9:10). Trust is an activity of the soul, a resting on the Lord. Trust reposes all its hope on the Lord's unfailing love. How precious are the unsearchable mysteries of love and grace revealed in the Name of the Lord!

Rev. G. Hamstra

www.tbsbibles.org/page/APricelessPromise

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(Some articles may not necessarily reflect the opinions and beliefs of Christian Watch but are included for information only and not as an endorsement.)

Dear Friends,

Greetings once again in the precious Name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

In this issue of our Newsletter, you will notice a brief Report on the arrest of Pastor John Sherwood and how he now has to face a Court Hearing later this year. This is not an isolated incident and I want to take this opportunity to include a Press Release here from Pastor Peter Simpson, who is a Committee member of Christian Watch and an active open air street preacher. He writes as follows:-

“Over recent weeks, the manner in which the Metropolitan Police prevented a Christian Pastor from going about his lawful duties has been in the hands of solicitors in a formal legal process. It is therefore only now possible to make known to the public the shocking police action which took place on 20th August in Uxbridge town centre.

On this date I was preaching the Gospel in the open area near to the entrance to Uxbridge Underground Station. Preaching on Bible texts including *‘all have sinned and come short of the glory of God’* (Romans 3:23) and referring to the sinful hearts of all men, I moved on to speak of the state of the nation. I had only been preaching for around 15 or 20 minutes when two police officers came up to me and said that ‘multiple complaints’ had been received about hate speech. A few minutes after that, there were no less than 14 police officers on the scene. Why is it necessary for so many officers to rush to the town centre to deal with one Pastor preaching from the Bible? The police were trying to give the impression that they were dealing with a serious public order situation, when there was no such situation at all. In fact, there had been no adverse responses at all to the preaching, in terms of heckling or gesticulations from passers-by.

The officers did not enter into any discussion about what had actually been said – and were unwilling to consider my own account. They expressed their concern about people in society with ‘protected characteristics’ (namely LGBT people) but did not demonstrate any parallel concern about the protected characteristic of religion and, more particularly, about the protected characteristic of Christians who actually believe what the Bible teaches.

Concerning the police order to leave the area, without taking any notice of my plea that nothing remotely approaching hate speech had been engaged in, the

impression was clearly given that if I refused to stop preaching and leave, an arrest would ensue; so I very reluctantly complied. The officers, when asked, were unable to repeat any actual words which I had allegedly spoken which could possibly come under the category of hate speech, saying that actual words did not matter, only that some people had taken offence. When I asked the officers precisely how many complaints had been received, they insisted on adhering to the word 'multiple'.

Furthermore, an attempt by a colleague to explain the Redmond-Bate v DPP case to an officer was ignored and yet, in that case in 1999, Lord Justice Sedley concluded that causing offence is not a crime - and ruled that freedom of speech under the law included 'the irritating, the contentious...the unwelcome and provocative...freedom to speak inoffensively is not worth having...a police officer has no right to call upon a citizen to desist from lawful conduct in this regard.'

The police action was nothing less than the State shutting down the public proclamation of the Christian faith. An ordained Christian Minister carrying out his lawful activity in a temperate and reasonable manner should not be made to feel like a common criminal and told to desist from preaching the very truths which Her Majesty the Queen promised to uphold in her Coronation Oath."

Please remember Pastor John Sherwood and Pastor Peter Simpson and many other street preachers in your prayers as they endeavour to preach the Good News that Jesus saves in the public domain.

Yours in His service,

Ian Henderson

Ian R. Henderson
(Chairman).



AFGHAN PASTORS REFLECT ON GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY

By: **Mark Morris**

The Gospel Coalition – 16 August, 2021

www.gospelcoalition.org

In early July, Afghan Pastors and church leaders made a difficult decision. They decided to formally register their faith with the Afghan Government. What an absurdity to register as Christians in an Islamic Republic that prohibits a person from converting to Christianity! Against the advice of many, these Afghan church leaders felt compelled, for the sake of future generations, to legally declare their true faith in Christ.

“What about our children and our grandchildren?” they said. “Someone should make this sacrifice so the next generations can openly call themselves followers of Jesus.” They registered with the Government, and we all prayed from outside, asking God to protect them from being rounded up and imprisoned the next morning. They were interviewed but not arrested.

Dramatic Church Retreat

This past weekend, we met in an Afghan/English church retreat. On the first night of the retreat, we learned that a Pastor in Afghanistan received a letter from the Taliban: “We know who you are, what you do, and where to find you.” By Saturday the Taliban were at his door, but he had gone into hiding. Praise God.

I listened as an Afghan Pastor spoke

through tears about his friend, a faithful believer, whose village was taken by the Taliban three days earlier. This dear brother’s 14-year-old daughter was ripped from his arms and forced into sexual servitude in what the Taliban would dub as “marriage” and her “dutiful Islamic privilege and responsibility.”

As news arrived on Saturday that the Taliban was already walking the streets of Kabul, we wept and prayed with our Afghan friends as they scrambled to make phone calls to family members who had hoped to leave for a safer location. Nobody was able to leave. The roads and flights had already been closed.

Of all topics, on Sunday morning, we tackled the plagues in Exodus 7-11. At times Pharaoh hardened his heart. At other times God hardened Pharaoh’s heart. An Afghan evangelist in the room added: “Don’t forget that God called the most wicked King on earth, Nebuchadnezzar, ‘my servant’ in Jeremiah 27:6 and Jeremiah 43:10. God is most certainly calling the Taliban ‘my servant.’”

We turned to Exodus 33:19: “And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.” I raised the question we all felt. “We know and believe that God is sovereign, right? We all believe that He is God, perfect in every way, right? He never sins, right? But evil surrounds your

brothers and sisters in Afghanistan. Evil is conquering your cities, your nation.”

We opened Romans 9 and were confronted with our presumption in questioning the wisdom of a good and merciful God. He is the potter; we are His clay. We explored the image of the foundation stone and the stone of stumbling from Isaiah 8 and Isaiah 28. From Romans 10 we were all reminded that we are to build our faith on Jesus, the only cornerstone that can stand firm through the storm of the Taliban.

How to Face Suffering

We ended with a synopsis of David Platt’s admonition at a secret church gathering on The Cross and Suffering:

1. We must face suffering with a higher view of God.
2. We must face suffering with a humble view of ourselves and other people.
3. Remember that suffering and evil exist to exalt the glory of God’s grace, as demonstrated through the suffering of Jesus for the salvation of all.
4. God ordains suffering for Christians in different ways for different purposes and through different means. Among other reasons, he leads us into suffering to refine our faith, to show His glory and to teach us to depend on Him.
5. Finally, our good and merciful Father leads His people into the turbulent waters of suffering as part of the orchestration of His plan to complete the Great Commission.

Our song leader chose the hymn - “A Mighty Fortress is Our God”. As we sang the final verse, an Afghan brother came and whispered in my ear, “Ashraf Ghani, Afghanistan’s President, just resigned. The Taliban are now in control”. And we sang,

*Let goods and kindred go,
This mortal life also;
The body they may kill:
God’s truth abideth still;
His Kingdom is forever!*

More Troubling News

It’s Monday morning and through tears I’m giving thanks for the way God planned the weekend. With one heart we gathered to comfort one another and pray together and groan and weep together in these difficult historical moments.

Since this weekend, more disturbing reports are coming in and life for the Afghan church is at the beginning of a new chapter. Young Christian girls are being pursued by the Taliban. The Taliban just raided the home of another church leader and confiscated his Bibles and literature.

Here in Memphis our Afghan Pastor wrote, “I don’t even have words to pray now.” Yet tomorrow he will somehow broadcast a live satellite message of hope from God’s Word into Afghanistan on Mohabat.tv and facebook.com/afghan.tv.

The potter is crafting His vessels for His purposes.

WHY HAS THE WEST BEEN HUMILIATED?

Reformation Scotland website

(www.reformationscotland.co.uk) 4th August, 2021

There is one word that the whole world seems agreed on in relation to the Western withdrawal from Afghanistan – humiliation. Whether we are truly humbled or only temporarily disgraced depends on how our nations respond. We ought, in all humility, to ask why this has happened. To do so does not minimise the heart-rending distress experienced by those abandoned in Afghanistan; nor does it reduce the courageous sacrifice of our troops. Asking why this has happened gives us a window into our real state as nations. This is not just a military and strategic defeat but a failure of the mission to re-make Afghanistan in the image of the West and its values. The decline of the West is due to its moral decay.

As Western nations we thought we could export to Afghanistan the benefits inherited from the Christian heritage we have rejected, without also giving them the framework of belief and morality that produced them. The US army were so afraid of doing that, they even burned Afghan language Bibles sent to them. It appears that British involvement commissioned fatwas calling for converts from Islam to be killed. As one writer has observed, the West in its decadence has lost its virtue; it has squandered the moral capital bequeathed by a living faith.

The emptiness of our pride as nations and the fatal complacency it produces have been exposed for all to see. The Old Testament prophets frequently show us such decadent pride in nations, with the implication that we are to learn from it. The small Book of Obadiah is largely taken up with the nation of Edom who manifested proud contempt towards Judah. They were proud of their prosperity, resources and wealth (v. 3-6);



allies (v.7); wisdom (v.8) and military might (v.9); but judgement is threatened against them. Ultimately their pride would be brought low and every one of these things in which they put their confidence pulled down. They would then be exposed to misery and contempt. As George Hutcheson observes, the prophet shows how “the Lord would diminish their number, power, wealth and reputation, and put them beneath all other nations and load them with contempt and ignominy.” In the following updated extract Hutcheson draws out the meaning of Obadiah 2-4 in teaching us the fearful danger of pride – the sin that God hates so much.

1. Pride can bring the greatest down

The Lord, in pursuing for sin, can bring down the greatest person and people in the world, lay them in the dust and pour contempt upon the most honourable. The Lord says He has made them small and greatly despised.

The Lord’s showing mercy to any makes way for others also to show mercy towards them for their good (Jer. 42:12). In the same way, when the Lord becomes an adversary in anger, the affections and respect of others will dry up towards them. For however Edom was esteemed before by others, when God deals with him, he is greatly despised.

2. Pride in outward advantages

A natural heart, together with outward advantages and benefits, usually produces pride, self-confidence and insolence. Edom is proud of their high and secure location and says in his heart, “Who shall bring me down to the ground?” But though a renewed heart has all these benefits, they are poor and depend on God.

3. Pride of heart is known to God

The Lord does not judge people’s pride by their outward conduct (which may be masked over with an appearance of humility) so much as by looking at their heart and discerning the conceit and lofty imaginations that reign there. He sees the pride of Edom’s heart.

4. Pride is self-deceit

Self-deceit is one of the greatest of all deceptions. In this they are given up to deluding themselves with vain imaginations and confidences so that their heart deceives them. However much pride and conceit musters up people’s excellences, it merely deludes them and makes a pretence of what will prove nothing. Either, it is an evidence of what is nothing in reality, or that which they are conceited about becomes blasted and withered. However much presumption may promise great things to make sinners secure and despise God’s threatenings, it only deceives them and feeds them with vain hopes. It will prove a deceiver in the end when they have greatest need of what they seemed to promise.

5. Pride is God's enemy

God looks on pride in the creature as an enemy against Himself. It strikes pre-eminently at His glory in failing to depend on Him and seeking to usurp His throne. It therefore provokes God, though there were no other aggravation or enemy; it engages Him to prove His power in abasing it. Therefore, that general defiance, "Who shall bring me down to the ground?" is answered by God as being His special concern. He says that He will bring them down.

The Lord is able to reach man and bring him down even though he has the maximum imaginable strength and greatness. He can make strongholds a vain refuge in a day of vengeance and is even able to overturn more confidences than man can build up for his own security. To dwell in the clefts of the rock was but a small thing for God's power to reach and, yet, that was the utmost of what Edom could boast of.

6. Conclusion

It is easy to be proud of many things, even spiritual privileges. We need to take this to heart ourselves, how can we see this in our national life without living more humbly before others in our personal life? Perhaps the West is as it is because the Church has not been what it should be. We also need to make it clear to others why the West has lost its virtue. The more moral decay we see, the more we need to shine as lights in the darkness and the more we need to plead with and intercede on behalf of our rulers and nations. We need to be a clear voice for the truth as well as salt and light that has a restraining influence.

UNITED PROTESTANT COUNCIL

The Relevance of the Protestant Reformation Today –

What does it mean to be Reformed?

Speaker: Pastor Mark Fitzpatrick (*Arann Reformed Baptist Church, Dublin*)

To be held (D.V.) on **Saturday, 6th November 2021** at **2.00 pm**

St. John's Wood Road Baptist Church, NW8 8QX
(*Nearest Tube Stations: St. John's Wood or Warwick Avenue*)

All welcome | Tea and biscuits available | Free-will offering

Hon. Secretary: Ian Henderson | Email: hendos146@aol.com

DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY

By: Thomas Reade
(1776 – 1841)

At the creation, amid the darkness of chaos, Jehovah said: “Let there be light: and there was light” (Gen. 1:3). When veiled in human flesh, He commanded the raging wind and waves, saying: “Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm” (Mk. 4:39). To His tempest-tossed people, He now speaks these composing words: “Be still, and know that I am God” (Ps. 46:10) – and they find rest unto their souls. In violent public commotions, God can still the madness of the people; and in inward mental agonies, He can calm the agitated spirit. “When He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? And when He hideth His face, who then can behold Him? Whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only” (Job 34:29).

When we read the history of past ages and consider the ever-changing scene before us; when we study man and perceive though but a small portion of the passions and contending interests which shake the fabric of society – how delightful, how composing to the mind, is this all-gracious declaration: “Be still, and know that I am God!”

The political world, like the air and sea that surround us, is ever in motion; but the happy believer finds his rest in God. In the present day, the human mind seems to be acted upon in a most remarkable manner. Knowledge is diffusing its light in every direction, and the intellectual powers are acquiring an expansion, which their ancient boundaries can neither limit nor control. The Christian world is all awake to the spiritual and moral degradation of mankind and is labouring to disseminate the sacred truths of revelation, which alone can raise our fallen race.

The enemies of the Gospel and of social order are alike awake to their deeds of darkness. There is, therefore, at the present eventful period, an evident struggle between light and darkness. The struggle may be violent, but the believer hears the cheering voice from Heaven, which dissipates every rising fear: “Be still, and know that I am God.”

Oh, my soul, rejoice that the Lord reigns! He can calm the rough surges of the mind. He can bid the inward tempest cease. He can pour an enlivening ray upon the drooping heart and cause a sweet serenity and peace to reign within. Trust in the Lord always. Be still, and know that He is God.

There is something peculiarly soothing to the heart of a pious Christian to know that He who rules over all worlds, in whose hands are the destinies of nations, and who guides the minutest concerns of families and individuals, is his Father and his friend. The more we know of God, of His power, wisdom, love, faithfulness, and truth, the more we shall bow before His throne in humble adoration and filial confidence and love.

To know God in Christ, to know Him as a covenant God, to know Him as our God, is to possess all the sources and secrets of true peace amid surrounding storms and tempests. This knowledge will raise us above the agitated elements of the world and place us in that pure region where the soul can breathe more freely and expand her powers more fully. Faith views with admiration the perfections of Jehovah. Hope rests the fulfilment of her expectations on these perfections. Love delights in them and gradually assimilates the soul to them, while patience calmly waits, under every changing dispensation, for that abundant harvest of rich blessings, which the God of truth has promised and which His faithfulness will perform.

Come then, O my soul, and learn from this view of your privileges the blessedness of trusting in God, "with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (Jam. 1:17). All His promises are yea and amen. All His ways are righteous and true. Cast your care upon Him who cares for you; and under every trying event, be still, and know that He is God.

It is truly animating to reflect that, while everything seems given to change, the Almighty has declared: "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isa. 46:10). "I change not" (Mal. 3:6). The purposes of God are moving steadily and directly towards their fulfilment. Many things, according to our short-sightedness, appear to thwart His designs. Persecutors arise and cut off His most zealous servants. Death seizes eminent labourers in His vineyard. Unforeseen circumstances spring up and appear to check the progress of the Gospel. Hence, we are ready to exclaim with David: "Let me not fall into the hand of man" (2 Sam. 24:14). But is not this the language of despondency, the language of a soul looking through a dark and gloomy medium? Man never had and never shall have the upper hand. David was in a right frame when he sang: "The Lord reigneth" (Ps. 96:10). This is the triumphant song of the redeemed above: "Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth" (Rev. 19:6).

Nothing can happen without Divine will and permission. The Almighty sees the end from the beginning. Unto Him are known all His works and all events from eternal ages. He has firmly laid His eternal plans of goodness, justice and mercy.

All things serve Him. "The Lord hath made all things for Himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil" (Prov. 16:4).

Can anything, then, unforeseen, strike across His purposes or change His plans? Can any man who is crushed before the moth, the creature of a day, turn aside the grand machine of providence, whose constant wheels revolve their everlasting rounds? Ah, no! As everything respecting the eternal purposes of Jehovah springs from His own will, so everything shall terminate in His own glory. Higher and further than this, we cannot go. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last" (Rev. 22:13). Clouds and darkness may surround the throne of the Eternal and veil His bright designs, but faith can pierce the veil and view, beyond this darkening scene, the rising glories of Emmanuel's Kingdom.

How great, then, is the blessedness of true religion! How highly privileged is the child of God! As nothing can happen without the Divine permission, so everything shall work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose (Rom. 8:28).

Satan may rage, the world may frown, the flesh may rebel and providence may seem to cross the humble believer; but, notwithstanding all this tempest, his soul is safe, being "hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3). He may "groan, being burdened" (2 Cor. 5:4); yet still he can rejoice. He looks through the curtain of time, which hangs over the glories of eternity; and in joyful expectation of soon entering within the veil, he endures with much patience the trials of this transitory state.

Not so the worldling. He knows no joys but those of sense, or those perhaps of a more refined nature, flowing from intellectual pursuits; but in respect of Heavenly pleasures, arising from communion with his Saviour and a delightful foretaste of future bliss, he is an utter stranger. To him, "the future is a dark unknown." His views are indistinct and dim when he reads or hears of joys forever flowing from those sources that are now the objects of his unvarying dislike.

What happiness can arise from the contemplation of being eternally with Jesus when prayer and meditation are now irksome and insipid to him? What happiness from the idea of being made like Jesus when holiness is offensive to him, or from the consideration of beholding His glory when the splendours of this world have far more powerful attractions to him?

It is true that he prefers Heaven to Hell as a choice of two evils; but he secretly

disbelieves the Word of revelation and therefore hopes that Hell has no existence and that death is an eternal sleep. If he is not thus far advanced in infidelity, yet he flatters himself that God will be more lenient and merciful than His own Word declares Him to be. Thus, he ventures upon the dreadful step of putting the truth of God to its most awful test and passes through death to learn by tremendous experience the madness of his unbelief!

Happy, thrice happy, is the man who receives with childlike simplicity the Word of God and acts upon it. He sees God in everything and can feed upon the hidden manna. He finds the promises to be full of truth and comfort. On them, as on a rock, he rests in safety. With wonder he beholds the raging tempest, which, sweeping over the nations of the earth, clears away deep-rooted prejudices and prepares a smoother path for the chariot of the everlasting Gospel.

He knows that glorious days are hastening on and therefore is not discouraged, though they be preceded by a stormy night. He hears the voice of his Almighty Father speaking in gracious accents to allay his fears, "Be still, and know that I am God" (Ps. 46:10), and he is kept in perfect peace.

Come, then, O my soul, and take courage. Fear not the face nor the frown of man. The Lord reigns, be the earth ever so unquiet. Sing with David, unite with Luther, and say: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Ps. 46:1). Do not be dismayed at the troubles of the earth. Tremble not at the convulsions of Empires. Only fear God; only believe in His promises; only love and serve Him; and all things shall work together for your good, as they assuredly will for His glory.

Life is hastening quickly away. Eternity is at the door. Live, then, for eternity and leave with God the concerns of time. Leave in His hands the safety of His church and the security of His cause. Cleave to Him with childlike simplicity. Seek His glory. Aim at perfection. Look high and look forward; and soon you shall be removed out of the reach of evil and be placed securely in the paradise above!

From: *Spiritual Exercises of the Heart*
Reformation Heritage Books

News and Current Affairs

Woke: A danger for the Church

Commentary by Prudence Dailey, English Churchman, Friday, 27th August, 2021

The phenomenon of 'wokeness' has in recent times risen to the forefront of public consciousness, and it often appears that the Church itself is not immune. What exactly is 'woke', and why might the Church fall prey to it?

It is sometimes assumed that 'WOKE' is an acronym: a friend speculated that perhaps it stood for 'women only, kill embryos'! Surprisingly, it originated as early as the 1930s and 40s, when black Americans would urge one another to 'stay woke' – that is, to remain awake and alert to the bigotry and injustice that they undoubtedly faced. It became part of American street slang, and thence its meaning expanded to include awareness of perceived prejudice of all kinds. Having begun as an epithet used almost exclusively by 'woke' people to describe themselves, more recently it has evolved into a term of mockery, because of the absurdities enacted in its name.



'Woke' is, in essence, synonymous with the more familiar idiom 'politically correct' (PC) (which also developed from a self-descriptor to an expression of ridicule). Canadian psychology professor Jordan Peterson rose to fame in part because of a series of online lectures entitled '*Professor against political correctness*', in which he analysed the phenomenon that was increasingly manifesting itself in academia:

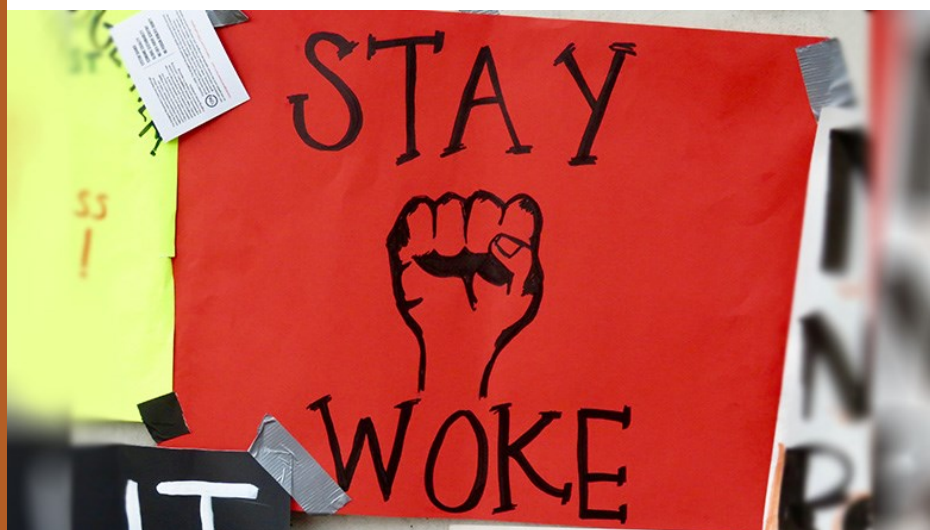
1. Identify a domain of human activity;
2. Note that some people are doing better than others;
3. Define those doing worse as victims and those doing better as perpetrators;
4. Identify with the victims and feel good about it (usually at no personal cost).

Christians are called to follow Christ's example of care for the poor and the oppressed and, throughout history, the Christian faith has motivated everything from the abolition of slavery to the provision of education for those who could not afford to pay for it. For centuries, it was the Church, rather than the State, which endeavoured to offer a 'safety net' for the destitute.

It is not difficult, therefore, to see how the Church might be duped into confusing PC with Christian charity, not noticing the sleight of hand occurring in step 3. This accounts for such things as the Church of England's obsession with its own imagined institutional racism, and the General Synod's request to the Bishops for special liturgies to mark 'gender transition' (having been assured that vulnerable young people would commit suicide if these were not forthcoming). Some other Christian denominations have gone even further down the PC rabbit-hole.

Christians understandably eager to appear – and indeed genuinely to be – caring, too often fail to see that those who promote PC, sometimes known as 'social justice warriors' are – as Jordan Peterson also observed – weaponising compassion for altogether less commendable ends. The concepts underlying PC have their origins in the social theories associated with the Institute for Social Research attached to Goethe University in Frankfurt in the mid-twentieth century, known as the 'Frankfurt School'. The thinkers of the Frankfurt School were Marxists; but rather than seeking to bring down capitalism by pitting the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, instead they sought to undermine the foundations of Western culture itself by dividing the world into 'oppressed' and 'oppressors'. Their ideology is therefore often referred to as 'Cultural Marxism' and – like classical Marxism – is absolutely antithetical to Christianity.

Of course, those who parrot PC or woke concepts in the misguided name of 'politeness' are rarely aware of their origins – and so are all the more likely to be taken in by them. The Bishops are not Marxists; but they may sometimes be naïve. For that reason, it is incumbent on individual Christians to recognise PC when it rears its head – and to resist it.



Pope due in Glasgow for COP26 in November: Strongly worded protest from Scottish Free Presbyterians – British Church Newspaper, 10 September, 2021

“The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland has continued to protest against visits of the Pope to this country in any capacity,” said the Rev. David Campbell, Clerk of Presbytery, in a letter to the Rt. Hon. Nicola Sturgeon.

“This is because it is harmful to the spiritual interests of your Government and of the people of Scotland to court and encourage the religion which he represents. Whether in a civil matter, as is intended for his visit to Scotland in November, or for religious purposes, we continue to protest against his reception by this and other nations of the United Kingdom.

Our Resolution makes clear that since the Reformation in 1560, the Pope has no authority in civil matters, however neutral his edicts may appear. His religious creed is also utterly contrary to the teaching of the Word of God and the constitutional securities of this nation. The influence of the Papacy has proved deeply harmful to this and other nations.

We ask therefore that you use your influence to encourage the Government of the United Kingdom to break all political and diplomatic ties with the See of Rome as this protest requests. “For her sins have reached unto Heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities...Therefore shall her plagues come in one day...for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her” (Rev. 18:5-8).”

Press Release

In the Press Release they add, “Free Presbyterians believe that the Pope is the Antichrist of Scripture.” They claim that Roman Catholicism teaches a false gospel, harming souls, and is a danger to morals, especially in the forbidding of marriage and imposing vows of celibacy. The Republic of Ireland cut diplomatic ties in 2011, in what many viewed as anger over child sex-abuse revelations.

The Resolution

“The Presbytery unequivocally asserts its continued adherence to the terms and effects of the Act of the Scottish Parliament on 24th August, 1560, subsequently approved by Act of Parliament in 1567 and enshrined in the Protestant constitution of this Realm, which declares,

“that the jurisdiction and authority of the Bishop of Rome, called the Pope, used within this realm in times bypast, has been very hurtful and prejudicial to our Sovereign’s authority and common weal of this Realm” and “therefore...that the Bishop of Rome has no jurisdiction or authority within this Realm in times coming, and that none of our said Sovereign’s subjects of this Realm suit or desire in any time hereafter title or right by the said Bishop of Rome or his seal to anything within this Realm.”

"The Presbytery maintains that the Pope of Rome has no right or claim to make or enforce civil or Ecclesiastical edicts on matters affecting the interests of citizens in or the Government of the United Kingdom or of any other nation. The Presbytery further calls on the Government of the United Kingdom and those of other nations, whose representatives court and flatter the See of Rome, to desist from further embroiling themselves and their people in the system of spiritual and civil tyranny which the Papacy involves.

"And I heard another voice from Heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev. 18:4)."

**Rev. David Campbell,
Clerk of the Southern Presbytery
30th August, 2021**



Pastor Sherwood, released without bail conditions, must face trial on 17 December
by a correspondent, British Church Newspaper, 10 September, 2021

Mr. John Sherwood, Pastor of the Pilgrim Tabernacle Church, Finchley, entered a 'Not Guilty' plea when he was arraigned before Ealing Magistrates Court last month (25 August).

He was granted bail and must stand trial at Ealing Magistrates Court on Friday, 17 December. A time estimate of one full day has been allowed for the trial, which may attract world-wide attention. He is accused of: "Using threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour" under Public Order Acts.

Eight Christians attended outside the Court and prayed together with Pastor Sherwood before the Proceedings. However, only two were allowed in Court to witness his 'Not Guilty' plea. He told supporters that he had gained strength by 'sensing' that many people well beyond the Court were praying for him and expressed his gratitude for their intercessions.

Abbreviated

“But let patience have her perfect work.”

(James 1:4)

By J. C. Philpot

Patience then has its work; and what is that? Twofold, according to my explanation of the word.

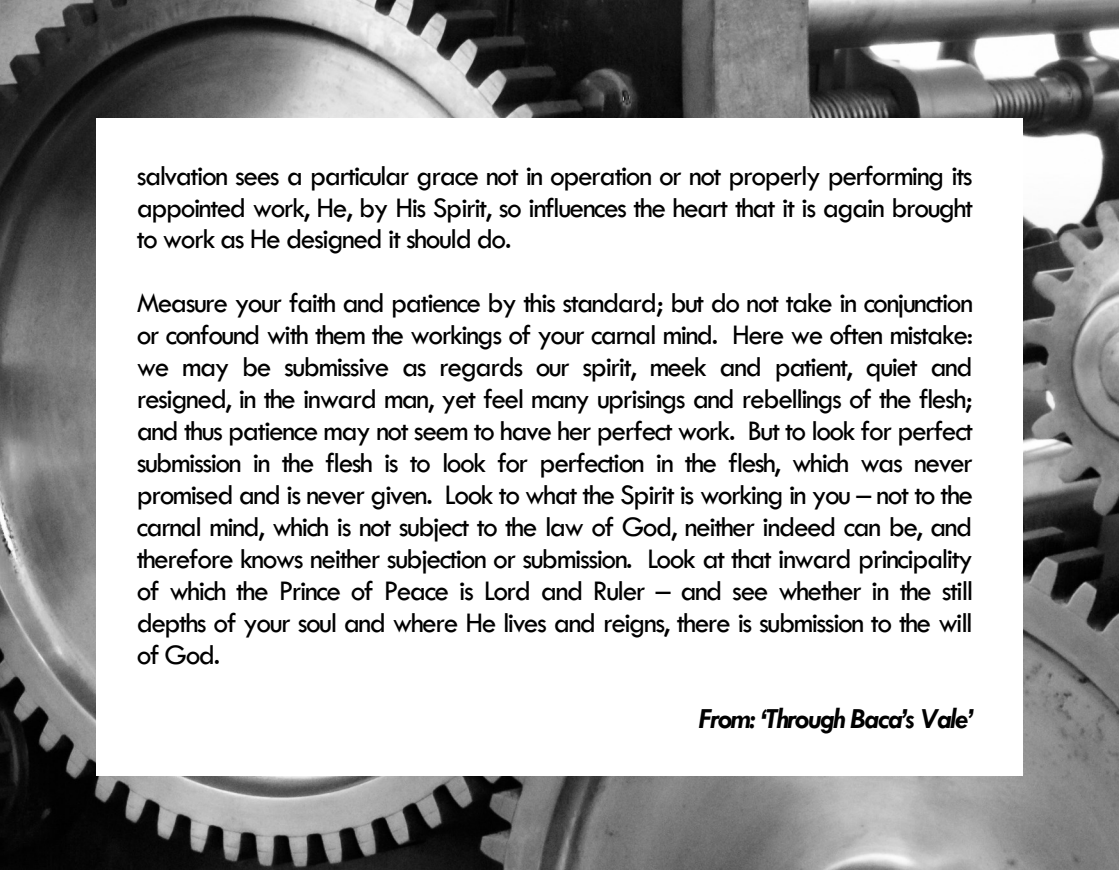
1. To endure all trials, live through all temptations, bear all crosses, carry all loads, fight all battles, toil through all difficulties and overcome all enemies.

2. To submit to the will of God, to own that He is Lord and King, to have no will or way of its own, no scheme or plan to please the flesh, avoid the cross, or escape the rod; but to submit simply to God's righteous dealings, both in providence and grace, believing that He doeth all things well, that He is a Sovereign, “and worketh all things according to the counsel of His own will.”

Now until the soul is brought to this point, the work of patience is not perfect; it may be going on but it is not consummated. You may be in the furnace of temptation now, passing through the fiery trial. Are you rebellious or submissive? If still rebellious, you must abide in the furnace until you are brought to submission; and not only so, but it must be *thorough* submission, or else patience has not its *perfect* work. The dross and slag of rebellion must be skimmed off, and the pure metal flow down. It is all of God's grace to feel this for a single moment. But are there not, and have there not been, times and seasons, in your soul, when you could be still and know that He is God? when you could submit to His will, believing that He is too wise to err, too good to be unkind? When this submission is felt, patience has its perfect work.

Look at Jesus, our great example: see Him in the gloomy garden, with the cross in prospect before Him on the coming morn. How He could say, “Not my will, but thine be done!” There was the perfect work of patience in the perfect soul of the Redeemer. How you and I must have a work in our soul corresponding to this, or else we are not conformed to the suffering image of our crucified Lord. Patience in us must have its perfect work; and God will take care that it shall be so.

As in a beautiful piece of machinery, if the engineer sees a cog loose or a wheel out of gear, he must adjust the defective part, that it may work easily and properly and in harmony with the whole machine; so if the God of all our



salvation sees a particular grace not in operation or not properly performing its appointed work, He, by His Spirit, so influences the heart that it is again brought to work as He designed it should do.

Measure your faith and patience by this standard; but do not take in conjunction or confound with them the workings of your carnal mind. Here we often mistake: we may be submissive as regards our spirit, meek and patient, quiet and resigned, in the inward man, yet feel many uprisings and rebellings of the flesh; and thus patience may not seem to have her perfect work. But to look for perfect submission in the flesh is to look for perfection in the flesh, which was never promised and is never given. Look to what the Spirit is working in you – not to the carnal mind, which is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, and therefore knows neither subjection or submission. Look at that inward principality of which the Prince of Peace is Lord and Ruler – and see whether in the still depths of your soul and where He lives and reigns, there is submission to the will of God.

From: 'Through Baca's Vale'

WHAT IS PRAYER?

Author unknown

What do we mean by prayer? I believe the vast majority of Christians would say, "Prayer is asking things from God." But surely prayer is much more than merely "getting God to run our errands for us," as someone puts it. It is a higher thing than the beggar knocking at the rich man's door.

The word "prayer" really means "a wish directed towards," that is, towards God. All that true prayer seeks is God Himself, for with Him we get all we need. Prayer

is simply "the turning of the soul to God." David describes it as the lifting up of the living soul to the living God. "Unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul" (Psa. 25:1). What a beautiful description of prayer that is! When we desire the Lord Jesus to behold our souls, we also desire that the beauty of holiness may be upon us.

When we lift up our souls to God in prayer, it gives God an opportunity to do what He will in us and with us. It is putting ourselves at God's disposal. God is

always on our side, but we are not always on His side. When man prays, it is God's opportunity. The poet says:

*Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed,
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.*

Prayer, then, is certainly not persuading God to do what we want God to do. It is not bending the will of a reluctant God to our will. It does not change His purpose, although it may release His power.

For God always purposes our greatest good. Even the prayer offered in ignorance and blindness cannot swerve Him from that, although, when we persistently pray for some harmful thing, our wilfulness may bring it about, and we suffer accordingly. "He gave them their request," says the Psalmist, "but sent leanness into their soul" (Psa. 106:15). They brought this "leanness" upon themselves. They were "cursed with the burden of a granted prayer."

Prayer, in the minds of some people, is only for emergencies! Danger threatens, sickness comes, things are lacking, difficulties arise—then they pray. Prayer is, however, much more than merely asking God for something, although that is a very valuable part of prayer if only because it reminds us of our utter dependence upon God. It is also communion with God—intercourse with God—talking with (not only to) God. We get to know people by talking with them. We get to know God in like manner. The highest result of prayer is not deliverance from evil, or the securing of some coveted

thing, but knowledge of God. "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God" (John 17:3). Yes, prayer discovers more of God, and that is the soul's greatest discovery.

Real prayer at its highest and best reveals a soul athirst for God—just for God alone. Real prayer comes from the lips of those whose affection is set on things above. What a man of prayer Zinzendorf was. Why? He sought the Giver rather than His gifts. He said: "I have one passion: it is He, He alone." Of course, we know that God bids us "ask" of Him. We all obey Him so far; and we may rest well assured that prayer both pleases God and supplies all our need; but he would be a strange child who only sought his father's presence when he desired some gift from him! And do we not all yearn to rise to a higher level of prayer than mere petition? How is it to be done?

It seems to me that only two steps are necessary—or shall we say two thoughts? There must be, first of all, a realisation of God's glory, and then of God's grace. We sometimes sing:

*Grace and glory flow from Thee;
Shower, O shower them, Lord, on me.*

Nor is such a desire fanciful, although some may ask what God's glory has to do with prayer. But ought we not to remind ourselves Who He is to Whom we pray? There is logic in the couplet:

*Thou art coming to a King;
Large petitions with thee bring.*

Do you think that any one of us spends enough time in pondering over, yes, and marvelling over, God's exceeding great glory? And do you suppose that any one of us has grasped the full meaning of the word "grace"? Are not our prayers so often ineffective and powerless—and sometimes even prayerless—because we rush unthinkingly and unpreparedly into God's presence, without realising the majesty and glory of the God Whom we are approaching, and without reflecting upon the exceeding great riches of His glory in Christ Jesus, which we hope to draw upon? We must "think magnificently of God."

May we then suggest that before we lay our petitions before God we first dwell in meditation upon His glory and then upon His grace—for He offers us both. We must lift up the soul to God. Let us place ourselves, as it were, in the presence of God and direct our prayer to the King of Kings, and Lord of lords, Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto . . . to Whom be honour and power everlasting (I Tim. 6:16). Let us then give Him adoration and praise because of His exceeding great glory. Consecration is not enough. There must be adoration.

"Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts," cry the seraphim; "the whole earth is full of His glory" (Isa. 6:3). "Glory to God in the highest," cries the "whole multitude of the Heavenly host" (Luke 2:14). Yet some of us try to commune with God without stopping to "put off our shoes from off our feet" (Exod. 3:5).

*Lips cry "God be merciful"
That ne'er cry "God be praised."
O come let us adore Him!*

And we may approach His glory with boldness. Did not our Lord pray that His disciples might behold His glory? (John 17:24). Why? And why is "the whole earth full of His glory?" The telescope reveals His infinite glory. The microscope reveals His uttermost glory. Even the unaided eye sees surpassing glory in landscape, sunshine, sea and sky. What does it all mean? These things are but a partial revelation of God's glory. It was not a desire for self-display that led our Lord to pray, "Father,... glorify Thy Son that Thy Son also may glorify Thee" (John 17:1). Our dear Lord wants us to realise His infinite trustworthiness and unlimited power, so that we can approach Him in simple faith and trust.

In heralding the coming of Christ the prophet declared that "the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together" (Isa. 40:5). Now we must get a glimpse of that glory before we can pray aright. So our Lord said, "When ye pray, say - Our Father, Who art in Heaven [the realm of glory], hallowed be Thy Name." There is nothing like a glimpse of glory to banish fear and doubt. Before we offer up our petitions, may it not help us to offer up our adoration in the words of praise used by some of the saints of old? Some devout souls may not need such help; but most of us need some help to realise the glory of the invisible God before we can adequately praise and adore Him. This point is of such tremendous importance that we venture to remind our readers of

helpful words. Some of us begin every day with a glance Heavenwards whilst saying, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost." The prayer, "O Lord God most holy, O Lord most mighty, O holy and merciful Saviour!" is often enough to bring a solemn awe and a spirit of holy adoration upon the soul. Which of us can, from the heart, utter praise like that and remain unmoved, unconscious of the very presence and wondrous majesty of the Lord God Almighty.

We need to cry out, and to cry often, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour" (Luke 1:46, 47). Can we catch the spirit of the Psalmist and sing, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy Name" (Psa. 103: 1)?

Such worship of God, such adoration and praise and thanksgiving, not only put us into the spirit of prayer, but in some mysterious way they help God to work on our behalf. Do you remember those wonderful words, "Whoso offereth the sacrifice of thanksgiving, glorifieth Me and prepareth a way that I may show him the salvation of God"? Praise and thanksgiving not only open the gates of Heaven for me to approach God, but also "prepare a way" for God to bless me. Paul cries, "Rejoice evermore!" before he says, "Pray without ceasing." So then our praise, as well as our prayers, is to be without ceasing.

You may perhaps be wondering why it is that we should specially give thanks to God for His great glory when we kneel in

prayer; and why we should spend any time in thinking of and gazing upon that glory. But is He not the King of Glory? All He is and all He does is glory. His holiness is "glorious" (Exod. 15:11). His Name is glorious (Deut. 28:58). His work is "glorious" (Psa. 111:3). His power is glorious (Col. 1:11). His voice is glorious (Isa. 30:30).

"For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things; to whom be glory for ever" (Rom. 11:36). And this is the God who bids us come to Him in prayer. This God is our God, and He has "gifts for men" (Psa. 68:18). God says that everyone that is called by His Name has been created for His glory (Isa. 43:7). His Church is to be a "glorious" Church—holy and without blemish (Eph. 5:27). Have you ever fully realised that the Lord Jesus desires to share with us the glory we see in Him? This is His great gift to you and me, His redeemed ones. Believe me, the more we have of God's glory, the less shall we seek His gifts. Not only in that day "when He shall come to be glorified in His saints" (II Thess. 1:10) is there glory for us, but here and now—today. He wishes us to be partakers of His glory. Did not our Lord Himself say so? "The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them," He declares (John 17:22). What is God's command? "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Nay, more than this: "His glory shall be revealed," says the inspired prophet (Isa. 40:5).

God would have people say of us as Peter said of the disciples of old: "The Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon

you" (I Peter 4:14). Would not that be an answer to most of our prayers? Could we ask for anything better? How can we get this glory? How are we to reflect it? Only as the result of prayer. It is when we pray, that the Holy Spirit takes of the things of Christ and reveals them unto us (John 16:15).

It was when Moses prayed, "I beseech Thee, shew me Thy glory," that he not only saw somewhat of it, but shared something of that glory, and his own face shone with the light of it (Exod. 33:18, 34:29). And if we, too, gaze upon the "glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (II Cor. 4: 6), we shall see not only a glimpse of that glory, but we shall gain something of it ourselves.

Now, that is prayer, and the highest result of prayer. Nor is there any other way of securing that glory, that God may be glorified in us (Isa. 60:21).

Let us often meditate upon Christ's glory—gaze upon it and so reflect it and receive it. This is what happened to our Lord's first disciples. They said in awed tones, "We beheld his glory!" Yes, but what followed? A few plain, unlettered, obscure fishermen companied with Christ a little while, seeing His glory; and lo! they themselves caught something of that glory. And then others marvelled and "took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13). And when we can declare, with John, "and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ" (I John 1:3), people will say the same of us: "They have been with Jesus!" Men will see in our faces "the outward and visible sign of an inward

and spiritual grace." Our value to God and to man is in exact proportion to the extent in which we reveal the glory of God to others.

What is prayer? It is a sign of spiritual life. I should as soon expect life in a dead man as spiritual life in a prayerless soul! Our spirituality and our fruitfulness are always in proportion to the reality of our prayers. If, then, we have at all wandered away from home in the matter of prayer, let us today resolve, "I will arise and go unto my Father, and say unto Him, Father—."

At this point I laid down my pen, and on the page of the first paper I picked up were these words: "The secret of failure is that we see men rather than God. Romanism trembled when Martin Luther saw God. The 'great awakening' sprang into being when Jonathan Edwards saw God. The world became the parish of one man when John Wesley saw God. Multitudes were saved when Whitefield saw God. Thousands of orphans were fed when George Müller saw God. And He is 'the same yesterday, and today, and forever.'"

Is it not time that we sought a new vision of God—of God in all His glory? Who can say what will happen if the Church sees God? But let us not wait for others. Let us, each one for himself, humbly seek this vision of the glory of the Lord.

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8). No missionary whom it has been my joy to meet ever impressed me quite as much as Dr. Wilbur Chapman. He wrote to a friend: "I have

learned some great lessons concerning prayer. At one of our missions in England the audiences were exceedingly small, but I received a note saying that an American missionary . . . was going to pray God's blessing down upon our work. He was known as 'Praying Hyde'. * Almost instantly the tide turned, the hall became packed and 50 men believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. As we were leaving, I said, 'Mr. Hyde, I want you to pray for me.' He came to my room, turned the key in the door, and dropped on his knees, and waited five minutes without a single syllable coming from his lips. I could hear my own heart thumping and his beating. I felt the hot tears running down my face. I knew I was with God. Then, with upturned face, down which the tears were streaming, he said 'O God!' Then for five minutes at least he was still again; and then, when he knew that he was talking with God . . . there came up from the depth of his heart such petitions for men as I had never heard before. I rose from my knees to know what real prayer was.

Dr. Chapman used to say, "It was a season of prayer with John Hyde that made me realise what real prayer was. I owe to him more than I owe to any man for showing me what a prayer-life is, and what a real consecrated life is. Jesus Christ became a new Ideal to me, and I had a glimpse of His prayer-life; and I had a longing which has remained to this day to be a real praying man." And God the Holy Spirit can so teach us.

*Oh, ye who sigh and languish
And mourn your lack of power,
Hear ye this gentle whisper:
"Could ye not watch one hour?"*

*For fruitfulness and blessing
There is no royal road;
The power for holy service
Is intercourse with God.*

Abbreviated

* **John Hyde** was born in Illinois in 1865, the son of a Presbyterian Minister. In 1892, he departed to preach in the Punjab region.

As he was partially deaf, he struggled to learn the native languages. His mission at first gained few converts and endured persecution. In 1896 there were no conversions at all. This greatly disturbed John and he went to prayer to "find the reason". Hyde and his fellow intercessors saw that there was one method to obtaining spiritual awakening – by prayer.

'Praying Hyde,' as he was called, spent days and nights in prayer for an awakening throughout India. In 1904, Indian Christians and western missionaries gathered for the first of an annual series of conventions at Sialkot in what is today Pakistan. John's prayers were answered in a series of outpourings of the Spirit. Often the glory rested on these meetings in a mighty way, while hidden, out of sight, John Hyde and a faithful few travailed in prayer.

John was willing to pay the price and lay down his own life so that God's Kingdom could come in power in India. The Sialkot revival still continued after his death in 1912.

Abbreviated. High Places Prayer.
www.highplaces.prayer.com

GOD'S AMAZING LOVE

By: Thomas Boston

See here the wonderful love and grace of God in sending His own Son to be the Redeemer of sinful men. It was He that contrived this method of redemption in the adorable depths of His infinite wisdom. He pitched upon His own Son as the only fit Person to set miserable captives free. He fitted and furnished Him for this work and sent Him to the world with full power and authority to go about it. It was God the Father that was gracious to sinners, saying, "Deliver them from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom." What an illustrious display of the astonishing love and grace of God is it that He should have remembered them in their low estate - and laid help on One that is mighty to save them! To enlarge upon this a little further, I offer a twofold consideration:

1. Who He was that was sent and came into the world to redeem the elect; not an angel or archangel, nor any of the glorious seraphims that stand about God's throne. Indeed, if it had been so, Divine love even in this had infinitely advanced itself, that God should be pleased to spare one of His own retinue from attending on Him - and give such a glorious servant, as an angel is, for the redemption of such a rebellious and miserable worm as man.

But O! how may it raise and heighten our admiration when we consider that it was not an angel, if he had been capable of

the mighty task, but the Lord of angels; not a servant but a Son, that the Father plucked from His own bosom - and sent upon this business! He spoke to Him, as it were, to this purpose: "Go, haste Thee down to the earth: for there are thousands of miserable creatures sinning themselves down to Hell and must for ever fall under the strokes of My dreadful and incensed justice. Step Thou in between them and it and receive the blows Thyself. Die Thou under the hand of vindictive justice, that they may be saved and live."

When God tried Abraham's obedience, He aggravates His command by many piercing words, which must needs tenderly touch and greatly affect the heart of a compassionate father (Gen. 22:2): "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering." It greatly heightened Abraham's obedience that, notwithstanding of all aggravations, yet he was willing to sacrifice his beloved son upon God's command. Just so here God heightens and sets forth His matchless love towards us. He takes His own Son, His only Son, the Son of His eternal delight and love and cheerfully offers Him up as a sacrifice for the sins of men. This is the greatest instance of the love of God that ever was given.

2. God's love is exalted here in that He freely sent His only begotten Son to be the Redeemer of an elect world. He was God's free gift, or else He could never have been obtained. If devils and men had joined their forces – and combined all their strength and power – and thus made an assault upon Heaven, yet they could never have plucked the Son of God's love from His eternal embraces. God gave Christ freely to redeem a sinful world, not only without, but against all merit and desert in them, nay, unasked and unsolicited to do so. From all eternity God foresaw that they would despise and reject His Son so that they would shed His precious blood and then trample it under their feet as an unholy thing; yet such was the height of His astonishing love that He bestowed Him freely upon sinners.

Then, see the matchless love of the Son of God to poor sinners. It was love that induced Him to substitute Himself in their room and to undertake to pay their ransom. He “loved me (says Paul), and

gave Himself for me” (Gal. 2:20). His love in this, as the Apostle speaks, passeth knowledge. How cheerfully did He engage to make His soul an offering for sin, that thereby He might pay their ransom! Though He knew the difficulty of the work and the greatness of that wrath which He was to bear, yet He cheerfully complied with the first motion of it that was made to Him by the Father. He knew very well what a vast burden of sin was to be laid upon Him and the dreadfulness of that wrath He was to undergo; yet He did not shrink from the imputation of the one, nor from the suffering of the other. He was willing to be reproached, that we might be glorified; to become poor, that we might be made rich; to be accused and condemned, that we might be justified; to enter into prison, that we might go free; and to die a cursed, ignominious death, that we might live and reign in honour for ever. O how great was His love to poor sinful men!



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