

REDEEMING THE TIME

"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:16).

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Putting First Things First

BY JACK HENDRICKS

As Christians, we are exhorted to redeem the time (Ephesians 5:16; Colossians 4:5). One of the most important aspects of accomplishing this is ordering our priorities aright. Many times, however, we may be inclined to make other priorities more urgent than doing God's work. Pressures, expectations, demands, and regular everyday duties, have a way of crowding out that which is most important in our lives. Whether it is our job, family, school, or even church activities, we may feel at times that everyone wants something from us, and right now! Soon there is little energy or time left to give, and so we become frustrated and discouraged, trying to get it all done. As a result, we end up hurrying through life, trying to juggle the "necessary," the "urgent," the seemingly constant demands.¹

But the real problem, perhaps, is not all the demands being placed upon us, but rather our failure to acknowledge what is most significant. For, much as we may hate to admit it, sometimes our actions run counter to our words. We say that God is most important, but then we proceed to put other matters and concerns ahead of Him.²

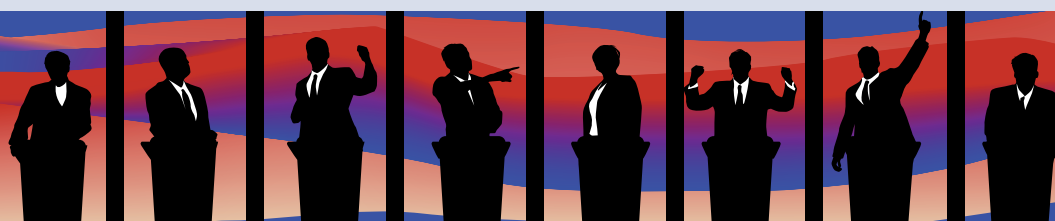
Twenty-five hundred years ago, there was a group of believers who confused their priorities, relegating God to a level below their own interests. To correct this situation, God sent a man to preach a

"Change We Can Believe in"

BY BRAD K. GSELL

In the U.S. Presidential Election of 2008, the candidate that prevailed promised us "change we can believe in." The specifics of this change were not detailed, but many American citizens pulled the lever in the voting booth based on the philosophy that change IN ITSELF must be good. Now, four years later, many are disillusioned and have not found the change for which

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THE FRUIT OF COMPROMISE

BY MARK W. EVANS

Possibly the most significant disciplinary case in the history of American Presbyterianism took place in 1935. The Presbytery of New Brunswick charged Dr. J. Gresham Machen “with disapproval, defiance and acts in contravention of the government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America, contrary to the Word of God and the rules and regulations of this Church....”¹

What horrendous crime had Machen committed? He was instrumental in the formation of The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions (IBPFM) and served as its president. Machen refused to leave the board at the command of the majority vote of the 1934 General Assembly of the PC(USA). That was his “crime.” He said “no” to a mandate that was unbiblical and unconstitutional.

The IBPFM was orthodox in Christianity. In contrast, the denominational board had succumbed to theological liberalism and supported missionaries who had departed from the essentials of the Christian faith. The IBPFM provided an option for donors not wanting to support a false gospel.

Liberals were striving to control the denomination. They produced a statement, called the Auburn Affirmation, which defined fundamental doctrines as mere theories.

Machen said: “According to the Auburn Affirmation a man may be a minister in the Presbyterian Church and yet deny the full truthfulness of Scripture, the virgin birth, the substitutionary atonement to satisfy divine justice and reconcile us to God, the bodily resurrection, the miracles of our Lord. It is not merely that according to the Affirmation a minister may deny one or another of these verities. No, he may deny all of them, according to the Affirmation, and still be a minister in the Presbyterian Church.”²

Some “conservatives” are leaving the sinking ship, but have compromised for so long that they are deficient in doctrine and practice. Instead of entering strong, Bible believing churches, many are content to join with weak denominations that lack faithfulness to the Word of God.

Many conservatives compromised with liberals because they hoped to preserve their denominations. However, Machen realized that compromise with liberalism would destroy the foundations of the church. He said: “Liberalism is not Christianity. And that being the case, it is highly undesirable that liberalism and Chris-

tianity should continue to be propagated within the bounds of the same organization. A separation between the two parties in the Church is the crying need of the hour.”³

With the help of conservatives, the liberals mustered enough votes to control the 1934 General Assembly. Having the majority, they voted to order all ministers and laymen to sever any connection they may have with the IBPFM. Refusal to obey would subject the offender to the discipline of the Church.

The New Brunswick Presbytery brought Machen to trial. During the trial, the court ruled that it would not receive arguments or inferences based upon the Auburn Affirmation, or any evidence against the PC(USA)’s Board of Foreign Missions, or allow questioning of the legality of the mandate of the General Assembly. This ruling removed the ability of Machen to offer a defense.

He said, as recorded in one of numerous *The New York Times* articles: “Yesterday’s action of the Special Judicial Commission of the Presbytery of New Brunswick of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., which is ‘trying’ me because of my membership in The Independent Board for Presbyterian Missions, exhibits a blatancy of unfairness which goes even beyond what might have been expected from so partisan a court.

“Without allowing a word of evidence or argument, the commis-

sion simply announced that all consideration of the constitutionality of the action of the last General Assembly of the PC(USA) against the IBPFM would be debarred, and also all criticism of the doctrinal policy of the official Board of Foreign Missions of the PC(USA).

“A moment’s consideration will show that simply prejudices my whole case without even allowing me a hearing.

“I am to be condemned on the ground that I have disobeyed a lawful order, but am not allowed to be heard when I offer to prove that the order is not lawful but unlawful.

“And I am to be condemned for making false assertions against the Board of Foreign Missions of the PC(USA), but am not allowed to be heard when I offer to prove that those assertions are not false, but true.

“It is difficult to see how ruthless unfairness could go much further than that.”

Machen was correct. The Presbytery’s Judicial Committee reached the verdict of his suspension from the ministry without giving him an opportunity to defend his innocence. Not surprisingly, he also lost his appeal to the Synod.

Edwin H. Rian, who was among Machen’s defense counselors, later said: “This travesty of justice remains as a blot on the history of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., and as an illustration that history repeats itself. The Church is once more in a state of apostasy and spiritual decay, for how else could it ‘excommunicate’ one of its greatest and most valiant soldiers of the truth.”⁴

In 1967, the Presbyterian Church (USA) (at that time called the United Presbyterian Church) cemented her apostasy by changing her ordination vows and formulating a new Confession. Today, the PCUSA, which has absorbed the Southern Presbyterian Church, embraces heretical doctrines

and immoral practices. The door is open for sodomites to enter her ecclesiastical offices, and they are going through the door. Some “conservatives” are leaving the sinking ship, but have compromised for so long that they are deficient in doctrine and practice. Instead of entering strong, Bible believing churches,

We should pray that those who have dwelt within apostasy will return to obedience to the Word of God. We should also take careful note of the absolute necessity of resisting error when it first appears. Machen’s nightmare came after decades of doctrinal and moral laxness. The Apostle Paul warned the believers of Galatia, “a little leaven, leaveneth the whole lump” (Galatians 5:9).

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people and weaken its testimony. “For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?” (1 Corinthians 14:8).

The Lord’s servants have a responsibility to “mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them” (Romans 16:17). We see the result of compromise with error in the PCUSA and other Presbyterian denominations. May the Lord preserve a separated witness in these dark days to stand for “the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Revelation 1:9). •

¹ Transcript of PC(USA) vs. J. Gresham Machen.

² J. Gresham Machen, *Modernism and The Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.: Argument of J. Gresham Machen in Support of an Overture Introduced in the Presbytery of New Brunswick at Its Meeting on January 24, 1933, and Made the Order of the Day for the Meeting of April 11, 1933* (Philadelphia: Press of Allen, Lane & Scott), 1933, 110 pp., p. 21.

³ J. Gresham Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism* (New York: Macmillan), 1923, p. 160.

⁴ Rian, Edwin H. *The Presbyterian Conflict* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publ. Co.) 1940, p. 186.



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Vatican Calls for One-World Global Economic Authority

Vatican Calls for Financial Oversight,” reported *The New York Times*, October 25, 2011. Reporter Elisabetta Povoledo wrote: “The Vatican on Monday called for an overhaul of the world’s financial systems and proposed the establishment of a supranational authority to oversee the global economy, saying it was needed to bring more democratic and ethical principles to a marketplace run amok....”

“The document grows out of the Roman Catholic Church’s concern about economic instability and widening inequality of income and

wealth, issues that transcend the power of national governments.”

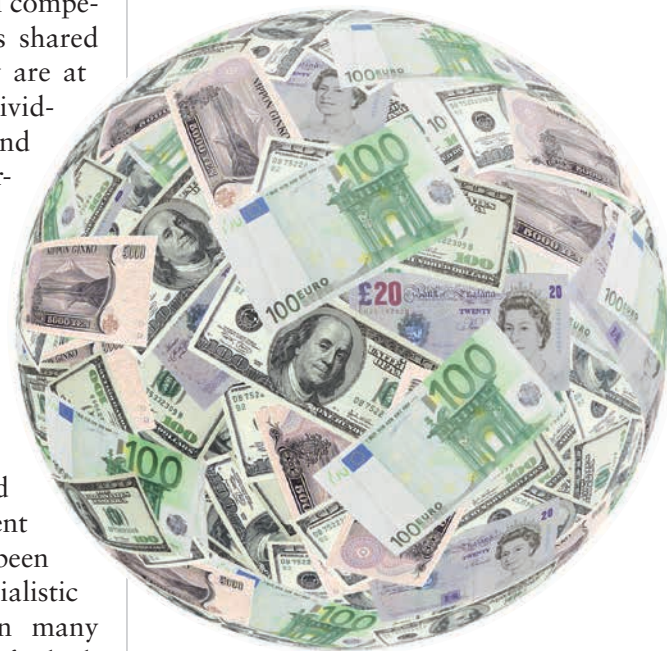
“The time has come to conceive of institutions with universal competence, now that vital goods shared by the entire human family are at stake, goods which the individual states cannot promote and protect by themselves,” Cardinal Peter Kodwo Appiah Turkson, the president of the pontifical council, said as he presented the report Monday.”

As the end times approach, we see more and more attempts to build a one-world government and one-world church. The current global economic crisis has been brought on largely by socialistic principles which have seen many governments, not the least of which is the United States, spending more money than it takes in. In socialist attempts to redistribute wealth and enlarge the welfare state, the liberals in our government and conservatives who refuse to stand on principle have allowed our once great nation to come to the brink of economic collapse. There is no incentive to work hard if the government can come and confiscate what you have

justly earned and decide to give it to someone who did not earn it.

Now, we see the attempts to repair the damage by bringing about a one-world institution which could decide that country A has too much wealth, and thus could be forced to give some of it to countries B, C and D. The idea of individual responsibility, with men being free in a fair capitalistic marketplace to gain wealth by much hard work has been replaced with the socialistic entitlement society. Unfortunately, as former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher once stated, “The trouble with Socialism is that eventually you run out of other people’s money.” And indeed we have!

The Vatican solution will not solve the problem. Do we want Vladimir Putin, Wen Jiabao and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad deciding eco-



nomics policy for the United States? Do we want to have “democracy” with the enemies of liberty and the masters of slaves? Can we really expect “ethical principles” from the tyrants of pagan nations? The United States is where it is because of the large abandonment of Biblical principles. However, the Vatican plan would only serve to more rapidly bring about our demise. •

REDEEMING THE TIME

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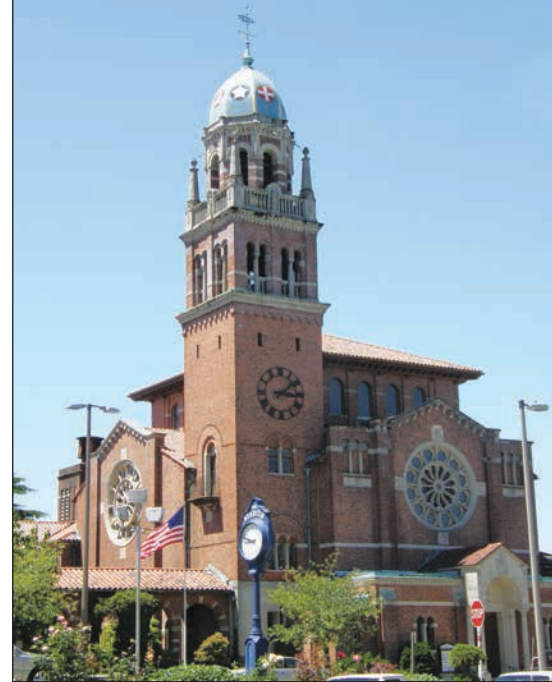
Tacoma First Presbyterian Church Leaves PCUSA

The First Presbyterian Church of Tacoma, WA, played an important role at the beginning of the Bible Presbyterian denomination. During the Modernist-Fundamentalist Controversy in the Presbyterian Church (USA) during the 1930s, the pastor of First Presbyterian, the Rev. Roy Talmadge Brumbaugh, led out a major part of this congregation to form what shortly became the Tacoma Bible Presbyterian Church. This was one of the first groups to leave the apostasy of the PCUSA, and over 700 attended the first service of the new church. They bought the imposing former Scottish Rites Temple, which sits right across the alley (nicknamed “The Great Divide” by some in both congregations) from First Presbyterian Church, and converted it into their church. The two churches have sat side by side, overlooking Puget Sound, ever since.

Now, with the vote of the PCUSA to allow the ordination of homosexuals, those remaining in First Presbyterian *finally* have had enough. A “Discernment Process” was established in which members of the Presbytery and members of the Church held several Wednesday evening forums, following the “Discerning God’s Leading Together” document prepared by the Olympia Presbytery. Following this, the congregation voted overwhelmingly to “disaffiliate” from the PCUSA. Only 5% of those voting favored remaining in the denomination.

Although not entirely settled, it appears that the church is leaning heavily toward joining the Evangelical Presbyterian denomination (EPC). A document produced by the church states that the EPC “still feels like the best fit for our congregation at this time.” This denomination is filled with compromise and in the past has

had dialog with the PCUSA and cooperation with many compromising evangelical and Reformed groups. It is part of the World Reformed Fellowship, problems concerning which we discussed in our last two issues of *Redeeming the Time*. The church is also keeping its eye on the new Presbyterian denomination which is being planned by some churches departing from the PCUSA (see article on page 6 of this issue of *Redeeming the Time*).•



“Franklin Graham: The Next Falwell?”

With the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association headquarters being located on Billy Graham Parkway in Charlotte, many articles appear in the *Charlotte Observer* which may not appear nationally. On May 22, 2011, the front page carried an article by the *Observer*’s Religion Editor titled: “Franklin Graham: The Next Falwell?”

Although we have serious reservations about many of Graham’s alliances, we are glad to see that he has departed from his father’s practice of failing to take a stand on the issues of the day. One reason Billy Graham is so idolized by the secular

media is because he has very rarely stood for righteousness against evil. He has been everybody’s friend.

But Franklin Graham is quick to state: “First of all, I’m not my father... And I have as much right to speak out as a citizen of the United States as anybody else. I mean, the gays and lesbians get involved in politics. How come a Christian can’t? What’s happening is that people are trying to say that Christians — even though we have a voice — shouldn’t speak out. I just don’t agree.”

Although we cannot endorse Franklin Graham, it is significant that his speaking the truth unsettles many in theological circles. The *Observer* article quotes Bill Leonard, former dean of Wake Forest Divinity School and now a professor of church history and religion: “Because America is now so diverse, [Franklin] Graham could reach more people by softening his tone in the public square — especially on TV.” The Scriptures repudiate such appeasement. God told Ezekiel: “... thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear” (Ezekiel 2:7). •



New Presbyterian Fellowship:

“One Foot
IN” & “One Foot
OUT”

In an *Orlando Sentinel* article, November 12, 2011, carried by news media across the country, writer Jeff Kunerth reports on the creation of the Fellowship of Presbyterians. This is part of the fall-out from the decision of the Presbyterian Church (USA) to allow the ordination of homosexuals.

The Fellowship will meet in January 2012 in Orlando, to make plans for the future. However, it is apparent that this new group is not destined to be founded on a solid Biblical foundation.

The article quotes Barbara Wheeler, former president of Auburn Theological Seminary, as saying: “Joining the Fellowship doesn’t mean leaving the denomination. The Fellowship is a very wide range of

conservatives and evangelicals who want to get together and talk about the lay of the land and what their place is in it.”

Kunerth continues: “Members would have the option of remaining within PCUSA but affiliating with the Fellowship, or breaking away to become full-fledged members of the new denomination. That half-in, half-out option appeals to conservative Presbyterians who feel a strong attachment to the denomination, but don’t like being associated with a church that endorses things they don’t believe in.”

Richard Mouw, president of Fuller Theological Seminary, stated: “A lot of the people who plan to be in Florida in January do not want to be a formal part of a new denomination, but would be happy to be part

of a body that includes both people who stay in and those who leave.” “... A fellowship would allow us to be one foot in and one foot out.”

As the Rev. Mark Evans states in one of his articles in this issue: “Some ‘conservatives’ are leaving the sinking ship, but have compromised for so long that they are deficient in doctrine and practice.” Instead of making a clear break with the apostasy, they take a position which is still found wanting.

In 1 Kings 18:21, Elijah presented a clear choice to the Israelites: “How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him.” May all true believers “depart from iniquity” and follow Christ in firmly planting BOTH FEET on the side of Biblical truth! •

“CHANGE WE CAN BELIEVE IN”

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they were looking. Others have a further confirmation that all change certainly is not good. Again we are entering a new election year with ALL candidates promising change of some sort or other, and trying to convince us that THEIR change will be better than that promised by the other candidates.

The Desire for Change

The reason people desire change is usually due to a dissatisfaction with present circumstances, a desire

to improve, or a rebellion against godly principles. Most successful companies are constantly analyzing and implementing changes. Products need to change to satisfy the current demands of the marketplace. Production procedures change to make the process more cost effective, more fool proof, and more efficient. We are often told, “If you don’t change, you will be left behind.” But, change is neither good nor bad of itself. It is the *characteristics* and *results* of the change which matter.

Some Things Cannot and Should Not Change

There are some things which cannot and should not change. God

declares in Malachi 3:6: “I am the LORD, I change not.” The writer of Hebrews declares: “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever” (Hebrews 13:8). “The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever” (Isaiah 40:8).

Why must God not change? David tells us: “As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler to all those that trust in him” (Psalm 18:30). David also proclaims: “The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple” (Psalm 19:7).

Because God and His Word are already COMPLETELY PERFECT,

there can be no change, now or ever. In theology this changelessness of God is often called “immutability.” It is considered one of the “incommunicable attributes” of God, because we as mere mortals do change. Peter contrasts this characteristic of God and His Word with that of all humanity: “For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you” (1 Peter 1:24-25).

Fallen Men Seek to Change God, Rather Than Desiring God to Change Them

Fallen men do not like a God who does not change. They try to conform God to THEIR carnal desires and wishes. When Moses was on Mount Sinai to receive the law of God, the Children of Israel worshipped a golden calf, desiring a tangible image over the true God, who is Spirit.

Paul begins his letter to the Romans by giving strong condemnation of this very thing: “Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.... Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen” (Romans 1:21-25).

Bad Change Is the Natural Path for Fallen Men

Fallen men are in a state of rebellion against God. Decline and apostasy is our natural course. The Prophet Jeremiah declared: “My peo-

ple have changed their glory for that which doth not profit” (Jeremiah 2:11).

At the very beginning of the Bible, we read: “And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” Jeremiah likewise, proclaims that “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9).

Only God Can Bring About Good Change

However, when the Spirit of God works in the heart of a man, we see a different result. David prayed to

When the Spirit of God works in the heart of a man, we see a different result. David prayed to the Lord in Psalm 139:23: “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” Instead of seeking to change God’s image to his liking, David was asking the Lord to examine him and to CHANGE HIM to conform to God’s standard of righteousness!

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It is only God who can change a man for good. David asks God in Psalm 51:10 to “Create in me a

clean heart.” Paul states concerning God in Colossians 1:13: “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.” Ephesians 2:1 says: “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.” In all these and many other instances, we see that the saving change taking place is wrought by God, not by man.

As Christians, we look forward to a glorious future as we will dwell with Christ throughout eternity in heaven. Whether at natural death, or in that great day when Christ shall return, we shall experience a glorious change! “Who [God] shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself” (Philippians 3:21). “Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed” (1 Corinthians 15:51-52).

Conclusion

As we live our lives on this earth, we will continue to see many changes which cause Satan to rejoice and the world to be emboldened. But, we as Christians have a glorious hope in our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who has wrought a work of grace in our hearts — a wonderful change.

Let us take courage and not despair. May the prayer of hymnwriter Henry Francis Lyte, likewise be the prayer of each of us:

*Swift to its close ebbs out
life’s little day,*

*Earth’s joys grow dim, its
glories pass away;*

*Change and decay in all
around I see —*

*O Thou who changest not,
Abide with me!* •

Wycliffe Takes Heat Over Non-Literal Translations

BY BRAD K. GSELL

In our spring 2011 issue of *Redeeming the Time* we reported on the attempts to produce “Muslim Sensitive” Scripture translations. The main issue centered on the mistranslation of Biblical words concerning the Sonship of Jesus Christ, so as not to offend Muslims. The Greek word *huios* was often translated “Beloved of God” or some other term to obscure the clear literal translation — and clear meaning — of Christ being the SON of God.

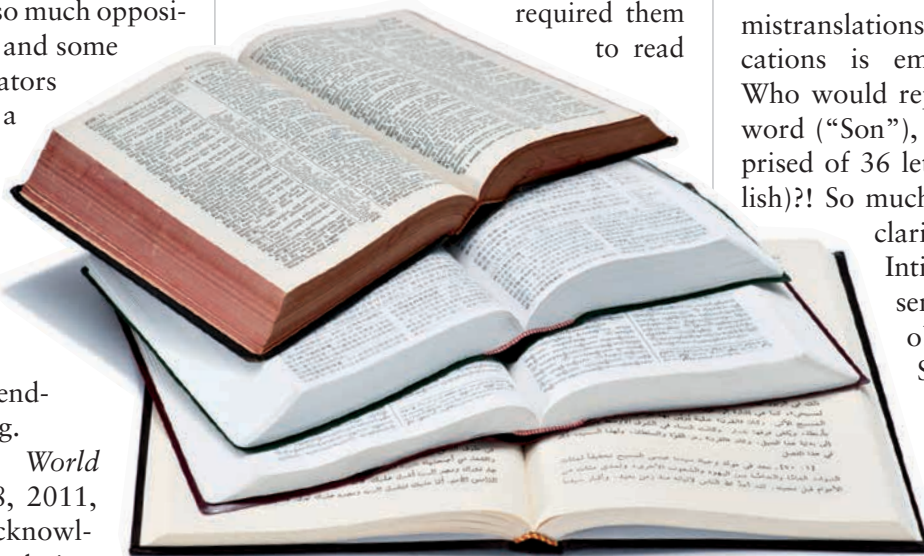
As this news began to be reported, Wycliffe Bible Translators and SIL (formerly Summer Institute of Linguistics) received so much opposition from supporters and some of their own translators that they convened a conference in Istanbul in August 2011 to discuss the matter. Thirty people from around the world, both from inside and outside the organization, attended the private meeting.

According to *World* magazine, October 8, 2011, Wycliffe and SIL “acknowledge backing translation work that didn’t render ‘Son of God’ and ‘God the Father’ literally. Russ Jerman, a Wycliffe USA senior vice president, stated that in the past some translators were ‘experimenting’ with some alternative terms like ‘Messiah of God’ or ‘Christ of God.... What we would say explicitly today: They don’t carry the meaning of sonship, so they’re not adequate.”

In response to the protests, the Istanbul collaborators, some who

disagree sharply on the issue, prepared and agreed on new translation standards that codify stricter rules. However, the *World* article reports: “The stricter standards aren’t satisfactory to some in Wycliffe, though. At least two families decided to leave the organization after the Istanbul statement, because they felt the organization wasn’t changing its position, leaving loopholes for different renderings of ‘Son of God.’”

David and Deana Irvine, who were accepted to serve under Wycliffe, have withdrawn over this issue. The Irvines report that Wycliffe required them to read



Muslims, Christians, and Jesus, by Carl Medearis. *World* states, in a nutshell, that this book advocates ideas of the “insider movement,” which teaches that outward “conversion” to Christianity is not necessary “as long as someone has a personal relationship with Christ, and ‘contextualizes’ Christian teaching and practice for Muslim cultures by finding common ground between the two.” (See *Redeeming the Time*, Winter 2010, p. 6.) As the Irvines

asked pointed questions concerning these things, David reported: “I wasn’t getting specific answers. I was just being given more things to read that were supportive of this contextualization idea.”

The unrest over this issue appeared at the June 2011 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA). In fact, before a general overture on the subject came to the floor (the overture did not mention any specific organizations), Wycliffe President Bob Creson circulated a paper trying to counter some of its statements. But, according to *World*, Creson’s paper defended using “‘God’s Uniquely Intimate Beloved Chosen One’ as a plausible alternative rendering of ‘Son,’ saying the title expresses ‘the deep relationship between God and the Lord Jesus Christ.’”

This sad attempt to justify such mistranslations and obvious obfuscations is eminently transparent. Who would replace one three-letter word (“Son”), with six words comprised of 36 letters (at least in English)?! So much for conciseness and clarity! “God’s Uniquely Intimate Beloved Chosen One” intentionally obscures the fact that Simon Peter so gloriously declared in Matthew 16:16: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” If Wycliffe wants to declare

its fidelity to this teaching, let them also do away with such purposeful attempts to obscure the truth. Few words in the history of language could be more clearly understood than the word “Son.”

World concluded its article by quoting Bob Ulfers, an SIL translator in Cameroon: “There are many wonderful SIL members doing very accurate translations. It would be a shame for them to lose support over concerns that Wycliffe Bible Transla-

tors/SIL is becoming ‘heretical.’ Yet on the other hand the issue needs to be pushed into the consciousness of the Christian public so that the church can hold Wycliffe/SIL accountable.”

As important as Bible translation work is, we cannot support those who in any way compromise the standards on literally translating the Word of God. We certainly realize the many challenges of going from one language to another, and one culture to another, but the Word of God is not something to be changed at will by the reasoning of those who have proudly declared themselves to be scholars. Any concepts which may be difficult to understand or are offensive in certain cultures are so because of some combination of finite human understanding and sin. Let’s translate what is there, and use the opportunity to teach with clarity such doctrines as the Virgin Birth of Christ, and His Eternal Sonship.

Most importantly, may we be reminded that it is the Holy Spirit of God — and not our efforts — that seals the Word of God to our hearts. “But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual” (1 Corinthians 2:10-13). •



Mr. Brad Gsell is an elder and minister of music of the Bible Presbyterian Church of Charlotte, NC, and President of The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions.

“The Evangelical Rejection of Reason”

Christians can expect scorn and dismissiveness from the world, but it was indeed a matter of note when an editorial with the above title, by two supposed “evangelicals,” appeared in the *New York Times* on October 17, 2011. Karl Giberson (who until earlier this year taught at Eastern Nazarene College, and now serves as the

Incredibly, after proclaiming the Bible to be their “sacred book,” they attack evangelical leaders who “pepper their presentations with so many Bible verses that their messages appear to be straight out of Scripture; to many, they seem like prophets, anointed by God.” Certainly, GOOD evangelicals must never be guilty of using too much Scripture!

president of BioLogos*) and Randall J. Stephens (current associate professor at the same school) went on the attack.

To prove their evangelical *bona fides*, Giberson and Stephens wrote: “Like other evangelicals, we accept the centrality of faith in Jesus Christ and look to the Bible as our sacred book, though we find it hard to recognize our religious tradition in the mainstream evangelical conversation. Evangelicalism at its best seeks a biblically grounded expression of Christianity that is intellectually engaged, humble and forward-looking. In contrast, fundamentalism is literalistic, overconfident and reactionary.”

Of course the writers would place themselves in the former category, and most of the rest of evangelicalism in the latter. Yet these two men are very “literal” in their blind acceptance of secular dogma, are very arrogant and confident in their claims to superior intellectual scope and are reactionary against true Bible Christianity — paralleling the very crimes of which they accuse the Fundamentalists.

The editorial takes aim at Dr. James Dobson, for his condemnation of homosexuality and his views on child rearing; Ken Ham, for his research which brings the evolutionary hypothesis into question; and David Barton, for his supposedly questionable historical work in showing the faith of our Founding Fathers. Since these three men do not match up with the latest secular dogma, they MUST be wrong. Yet Giberson and Stephens appear to take the secular pronouncements, seemingly without question.

Incredibly, after proclaiming the Bible to be their “sacred book,” they attack evangelical leaders who “pepper their presentations with so many Bible verses that their messages appear to be straight out of Scripture; to many, they seem like prophets, anointed by God.” Certainly, GOOD evangelicals must never be guilty of using too much Scripture!

On page 268 of their newest book, *The Anointed* (Harvard University Press, 2011), Giberson and Stephens reveal what they really think of God’s Word: “Christians have long been called ‘People of the Book.’ The label is especially appropriate for evangelicals. But the Book is thousands of years old, written in obscure languages, from a mysteri-

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American Council of Christian Churches

RESOLUTION ON

“The Multi-Denominational Heritage of Biblical Fundamentalism”

We appreciate the ministry of the American Council of Christian Churches (ACCC). It is a venue where Bible-believing Christians of different denominations, who stand on the truth of God’s Word, can have precious fellowship without compromising their distinctives. Following is a resolution passed at the recent ACCC Convention in October 2011:

With his prayer for the Ephesian believers, the Apostle Paul addressed the One “of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,” the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 3:15). It is in this name, Holy Father, that those who have

As a clearly identifiable movement, Biblical fundamentalism is not yet 150 years old. In its earliest phases, it gave voice to the foundational doctrines taught in the Bible and did so without reference to any particular denominational perspective. The earliest conferences, beginning in 1876 at Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, Canada, focused on that which various denominational groups held in common. It was the heritage, they argued, that had come down through the generations from the ministry of the apostles of Christ. As J. Gresham Machen observed, the movement was not the latest of a series of new “isms,” but the restatement of the historic Christian faith.

those who insisted on maintaining the orthodox doctrines taught in the Word of God.

Biblical Fundamentalism was from its inception a movement to reassert the weighty matters of Holy Scripture in the face of the tidal wave of skepticism. Thus, Biblical Fundamentalists, whatever their denominational distinctives and convictions, agreed to stand together on, among other things, the inspiration and infallibility of the Scriptures, the creation of man by God’s direct act, the historicity of Adam’s fall into sin with all its theological consequences, the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, His deity, the blood atonement of Jesus Christ for sinners, His bodily resurrection on the third day, His ascension bodily into Heaven, and the certainty of His second coming.

Biblical Fundamentalists also emphasized that it was necessary for sinners to be born again in order to enter the kingdom of Heaven, and that those who were converted to Christ would demonstrate that transformation through an increasing holiness of life in this world. Recognizing that, on less weighty aspects of Biblical teaching, those who held to Biblical authority at times disagreed. Biblical Fundamentalists resolved that they would emphasize the weighty matters on which they all agreed, and they would not consent to using their lesser disagreements as tests of Christian fellowship within the parameters of obedient orthodoxy. In regard to these issues, they resolved to respect the ability of brethren to disagree without surrendering their own denominational convictions or experiencing the condemnation of others.

In 1941, the American Council of Christian Churches was formed



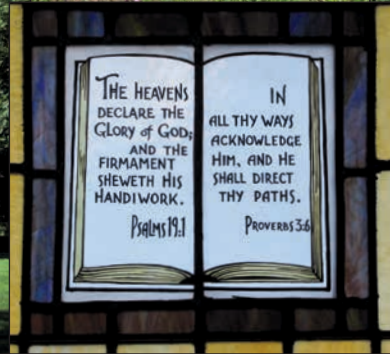
Photo courtesy of Don Nickson

The ACCC Executive Committee in session.

been given to Christ are to be kept as one, even as they are sanctified in the truth (John 17:11). Whereas denominational labels within the spectrum of Protestantism correctly identify important details of differing convictions, basic agreement regarding the “weightier matters of the law” has bound these traditions together as a common echo of the first century Church’s apostolic faith (Matthew 23:23).

Thus, there were Presbyterians and Methodists, as well as Baptists, from various fellowships that led the call for a return to the fundamentals of the faith. The latter part of the 19th century was a time of religious upheaval. The rapid acceptance of Charles Darwin’s ideas, following the publication of his *Origin of Species* in 1859, together with the effects of German rationalism in theology, produced a severe challenge to

Bible Presbyterian Church of Sodus, NY



Mrs. Mary Mortimer, whose husband, Jim Mortimer, served as a church elder until going home to be with the Lord, poses with Gary and Pat Johnson, missionaries to Kenya.

In September, I had the privilege of traveling to upstate New York to give a message and represent The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions at the Bible Presbyterian Church of Sodus, NY. This is the newest congregation to join Faith Presbytery, Bible Presbyterian Church. The church sits just a few miles from the southern shore of Lake Ontario, in the heart of New York's apple country.

— Brad Gsell, editor

as an explicitly multi-denominational organization with a clear doctrinal statement that represented a vivid understanding of the foundations of Biblical Fundamentalism. In spite of various attacks launched against the ACCC over the last 70 years, the organization has remained true to its founding purpose. It exalts the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus Christ as the only hope for the salvation of sinners. It exposes the work of theo-

logical apostasy, such as that of the World Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches. It rebukes the work of those who seek accommodation with promoters of that apostasy. And it expounds the Holy Scriptures as the only infallible rule of faith and practice.

Therefore, the delegates to the 70th annual convention of the American Council of Christian Churches, meeting October 18-20, 2011, at the Bible Evangelical Methodist Church

of Lancaster, PA, resolve with gladness to value and to maintain the multi-denominational character of the Council, as the Lord enables, and to promote in every obedient way possible the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We resolve to respect each other in the highest expression of Christian love and brotherhood and to stand with each other against every devilish device as we contend earnestly for the Faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 3). •

A Covenanting Stand Against Tyranny

BY MARK W. EVANS

The Reformation of Scotland came through the preaching of God’s Word. Reformers obeyed the apostolic admonition, “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine” (2 Timothy 4:2). Threats, bribes, imprisonments, tortures, executions and exiles, could not overcome the advance of the Gospel. Within a few years, the tyranny of Rome fell. However, forces opposing the Reformation began a relentless campaign to bring the Scottish Church back into bondage.

Advisors to King James VI of Scotland taught the monarch a belief called “the divine right of kings.” Historian Thomas M’Crie explained that this dogma was “a point of religious rather than political faith, that the king, in his sole person, was superior to all law, civil or ecclesiastical.”¹ The king thought God put him above the rule of law, and that he was the absolute sovereign over church and state. In 1603, at the death of Queen Elizabeth I, James VI, while retaining his Scottish crown, was also crowned James I, King of England and Ireland. This new sovereignty made him “head of the Church of England.” He believed that he must also govern the Church of Scotland. Adopting the motto, “No bishop, no king,” he endeavored to grasp control by appointing archbishops and bishops over the Presbyterians. The bishops were willing to lead the

flock, but the sheep refused to follow. Jesus Christ said, “And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers” (John 10:5).

The son and successor of James I — Charles I — continued to pursue absolute sovereignty. When he made his first visit to Scotland, his actions revealed that he was no friend of Reformation principles. A nobleman had to inform the king, “Sire, the people of Scotland will obey you in everything with the utmost cheerfulness, provided you do not touch their religion and conscience.”² The king found to his own destruction, that those who belong to the Savior are under the Lord’s protection. To fight against them is to fight against Christ.

William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, a favorite of Charles I, prepared a Prayer Book and Liturgy, also called a Service Book, to force

Episcopal worship upon the Church of Scotland. This Book contained Rome’s teachings, “resembling the popish breviary; and in various points, particularly in the communion service, borrowing the very words of the mass-book.”³

When the day arrived for its introduction (July 23, 1637), large crowds gathered in Edinburgh. St. Giles Church, the former church of John Knox, was selected for the event. Crowds filled the church and the surrounding grounds. The Dean of Edinburgh mounted the pulpit and commenced reading. “An old woman named Jenny Geddes, unable longer to restrain her indignation, exclaimed, ‘Villain, dost thou say mass at my lug [ear]?’ And seizing the stool on which she had been sitting, threw it at the dean’s head.”⁴ The congregation arose in fury and threw all manner of objects at the stunned cleric. He managed to duck the stool and wisely fled the building, thankful to escape with his life. The Bishop of Edinburgh entered the pulpit and attempted to quiet the storm. “He was answered by a volley of sticks, stones, and other missiles, with cries of ‘A pope! A pope! — antichrist — pull him down! — stone him!’ and on returning to his coach, had he not been protected by the magistrates, he might have fallen a victim to the fury of the mob — a martyr to Laud’s liturgy.”⁵

The riot in Edinburgh affected all of Scotland. It was a spontaneous uproar, coming from the lower classes, but it served to unite noblemen, barons, burgesses, ministers, and the mass of the Scottish people to stand against religious tyranny.

Undaunted, the archbishops under Charles I continued the plot to force a Romish Prayer Book upon Presbyterians. Ministers respectfully presented petitions and grievances to the king through his Privy Council, but the monarch remained unmoved. On February 20, 1638, the Privy Council received a definitive com-

mand from the king. Secret information had reached the Presbyterians and they gathered in great numbers.

Some believed their sovereign had received wrong information and the Episcopal clergy had deceived him. The king's proclamation would make plain that he was not deceived. He declared that "the bishops were unjustly accused as being authors of the Service Book and Canons, seeing whatever was done by them in the matter was by his majesty's authority and orders." He expressed his approval of the Book and prohibited all meetings to oppose it. He even refused to hear any more grievances.⁶ According to the proclamation, all who opposed the bishops were guilty of rebellion against the king, a crime punishable by death.⁷

The Scottish Presbyterians faced the reality of a king at war with their Christian beliefs and practices. He intended to subjugate them to tyrannical prelates and his own despotism. Alexander Henderson and others looked deeply at the crisis and realized that the nation must call upon the Lord. They announced a day of prayer and fasting. The need for a national covenant was upon the hearts of many. Alexander Henderson and Johnston of Warriston were appointed to compose such a covenant. Others were selected to review and revise it.

The Covenant contained three sections. The first was the repetition of the Old Covenant of 1581, detailing the abominations of Romanism and stating vows of adherence to the doctrines and practices of the Word of God. The second section listed numerous civil laws pertaining to the banning of Romanism and the establishing of the true Christian faith. Astoundingly, most of the laws were signed by James VI. These laws exposed the treachery of James VI and Charles I. The last section contained vows to defend the Reformed faith and to adhere to its teachings. "We promise and swear, by the great

name of the Lord our God, to continue in the profession and obedience of the foresaid religion; and that we shall defend the same, and resist all these contrary errors and corruptions, according to our vocation, and to the uttermost of that power that God hath put in our hands, all the days of our life." This

Covenanter John Main said in his last testimony before execution: "And let none fear to venture upon the cross of Christ, for I can say from experience (glory be to Him for it) that He has borne the cross and me both, or otherwise I could never have undergone it with so small difficulty. And the great reason of many, their fainting under the cross, is their laying so little weight on Jesus Christ, and so much upon themselves, and upon any bit of attainment they think themselves to have."

section also contained a vow to honor the King and stand with him "in the defence and preservation of the foresaid true religion, liberties, and laws of the kingdom."

The Covenant was signed at Greyfriar's Church in Edinburgh on February 28, 1638. Copies were sent throughout the land for signatures. Thousands signed, some opened their veins and wrote their names with their own blood; others wrote the words "till death" beside their signature. Some groaned with agony as they realized the approaching storm of persecution. Others gave the warrior's shout, as if charging into battle. Thomas M'Crie said of the Covenant, "It was the 'oath of God,' sworn in His name, in agreement with His Word, and in defence of His cause."⁸

In our day of indifference and compromise, it is rare to find those willing to suffer "in defence of His cause." Historian Robert Pollok Kerr said of the Covenanters: "Before the fight was finished and the victory won, about eighteen thousand of all classes, rich and poor, died for their faith, or were banished from the land."⁹ They not only suffered, but they suffered triumphantly in the Lord Jesus Christ. They knew a blessedness and closeness to Christ that we desperately need. Covenanter John Main said in his last testimony before execution: "And let none fear to venture upon the cross of Christ, for I can say from experience (glory be to Him for it) that He has borne the cross and me both, or otherwise I could never have undergone it with so small difficulty. And the great reason of many, their fainting under the cross, is their laying so little weight on Jesus Christ, and so much upon themselves, and upon any bit of attainment they think themselves to have. Oh, let everyone study that holy art of independency upon all things besides Him, and depend only upon Himself."¹⁰ The message of the Covenanters is the infinite sufficiency of the Lord Jesus Christ. Separated unto Him, "we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us" (Romans 8:37). •

¹ Thomas M'Crie, *The Story of the Scottish Church* (Glasgow: Bell and Bain Ltd.), n.d., p.136.

² *Ibid.*, p. 138.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

⁴ W.M. Hetherington, *History of the Church of Scotland*, Vol. I. (Edinburgh: John Johnstone), 1848, p. 281.

⁵ M'Crie, p. 141.

⁶ Hetherington, p. 296.

⁷ Robert Pollok Kerr, *The Blue Flag of the Covenant*. (Richmond: Whillett and Shepperson), n.d., p. 17.

⁸ M'Crie, p. 147.

⁹ Kerr, p. 16.

¹⁰ John H. Thompson, *A Cloud of Witnesses*. (Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle Publications), 1989, pp. 336,337.

PUTTING FIRST THINGS FIRST

Continued from page 1

series of convicting messages to get them back on track — putting first things first. This prophet's name was Haggai, and he understood what was most important. So, he challenged the people to get on with the work of God, rebuilding the Temple, the Lord's House. God's words in Haggai 1:8, "Build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified," emphasize the overall theme of the book.

Let us look together at Haggai chapter one.

Background

In 586 BC, the Babylonian army devastated the Temple in Jerusalem, and deported thousands of the inhabitants of Judah. In 538 BC, as a result of a decree by King Cyrus of Persia, many Jews left exile to return to their homeland for the main purpose of rebuilding the Temple. "Without the Temple, the continuity of Israel's religion could not be maintained.... The ethical spirit, the regard for each other and God, could prevail over their material interests in no other way than by common devotion to the worship of the God of their fathers."³

The work began in earnest, as they set up an altar for sacrifice, and within a year laid the foundations of the Temple (see Ezra 3:2,10). But soon they forgot their purpose due to their personal interests, as well as opposition from enemies of the work, resulting in a halt in the construction. "Then [certain] people of the land [called "adversaries," Ezra 4:1] weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building, and hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose ..." (Ezra 4:4,5). These "counsellors" were essentially government officials who were bribed in order to

cause delays and create difficulties, for the express purpose of hindering the work.⁴

We read the people's response in Haggai 1:2: "The time is not come, the time that the LORD's house

The main reason for the neglect of the things of God, it seems, is a wrong heart condition — a failure to obey what we claim to believe.

should be built." In fact, *15 years* had passed without any work being done on the Temple. God sent Haggai to confront the people, as he asked them the convicting question in verse 4, "Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house [Temple] lie waste?" The term "cieled" refers to their houses being lined with wood. In Judea, stone was readily available, but wood was a luxury (*cf.* v. 8).⁵

There are three identifiable stages in the people's attitude and behavior: 1. Wrong priorities (verses 1-4); 2. Dire consequences (verses 5-11); 3. Submissive obedience (verses 12-15).

1. Wrong Priorities — verses 1-4

The problem with the people of Haggai's day was that they had put selfish desires above all else. They had been diligent about building and furnishing their own comfortable houses, to the neglect of proceeding with construction of the LORD's house. Obviously the people were more concerned with their own "needs" than with doing God's will. The result was misplaced priorities.

The main reason for the neglect of the things of God, it seems, is a wrong heart condition — a failure to obey what we claim to believe. "It is very easy to be distracted when we are serving the Lord. Personal ambitions and pursuits" can get in the way of what is really important.⁶ In our present society, a fundamental problem is self-centeredness — focus

on self rather than true devotion to God. Have you ever put your interests ahead of God's purpose in a particular situation? You knew that the Lord would have you do a certain thing, or speak to a particular person about something vitally important, yet you chose instead to attend to your own concerns and interests. How did you feel afterwards? Let us re-dedicate ourselves to getting our priorities straight. Rather than making excuses, let us set our hearts on what we know is right and follow through.

2. Dire Consequences — verses 5-11

As a result of their wrong actions, the people experienced difficult circumstances (verses 5,6,9-11). It seems that the more they worked to help themselves, the less they actually gained. Material hardship was the result of unfaithfulness in commitment to building the LORD's house (verse 9). As God brought on drought, the crops suffered greatly (verses 10,11). "Corn" (wheat), grapes (for wine), and olives (for oil) were Israel's main products. "When they failed to fulfill His will [God] made life hard for them so that they would seek Him (verses 1:5,6)."⁷

Moses had long before predicted this is what would happen if the peo-

Let us re-dedicate ourselves to getting our priorities straight. Rather than making excuses, let us set our hearts on what we know is right and follow through.

ple hearkened not unto the voice of the LORD their God (see Deuteronomy 28:15,38-40). The people in Haggai's day had suffered poor harvests and partial crop failures, so most of their time and energy was taken up with trying to eke out a living. As a result, they were probably very low in spirit when Haggai be-

gan to preach to them. “Where the pre-exilic prophets had ministered to a violent and evil nation, Haggai was faced with the inertia of despair and sluggishness.”⁸

The same can happen to us. When we put God first, He will provide for all our needs, as He has promised to do (Philippians 4:19). If, however, we relegate Him to a lower place than first, all our self-efforts will be in vain (Psalm 127:2), and we may become despondent. We need to be on guard to keep our priorities right. Our spiritual well-being takes precedence over all other aspects of our lives. The Lord Jesus Christ taught in Matthew 6:33: “Seek ye first the kingdom of God ... and [then] all these things shall be added unto you.”

What is really important to you? People, goals, and the daily routine all compete for our time. If we’re not careful, any of these can supplant the Lord from His rightful first place. We must repeatedly decide to make Him top priority in our lives.⁹ God said to the people, “Consider your ways” (verses 5,7); literally, “Set your heart on your ways.” By doing this, and getting on with the work, God will be glorified (verse 8).

3. Submissive Obedience — verses 12-15

God used the preached word of the prophet to stimulate the leaders and the people, and together they began to rebuild the Temple (verses 12-14). In Psalm 11:3, David asked, “If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?” Here we have the answer: resume the work as begun before. The people returned to rebuilding the Temple 23 days after Haggai’s message to them.

How often have you heard a sermon and said, “That was a good point the preacher made. I ought to do that.” Instead, you leave the service and then forget to follow through. These people heard Haggai’s sermon and put their words into action.¹⁰

Two reasons for their response are given in the text. First, “the people did fear before the LORD” (verse 12). The word “fear” refers not

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to terror, but to awe — that reverence of God which, according to the book of Proverbs, is “the beginning of wisdom.” “They ‘feared’ in the sense that they had been startled wide awake by the voice of God.”¹¹ Second, “I am with you, saith the LORD” (verse 13). Once the people had expressed their intention of carrying out the prophet’s instructions, they received from the LORD this encouraging word (see Haggai 2:4). “There had been a complete change of heart in the whole community. Sluggishness had been replaced by the desire to work; despondency had been converted into enthusiasm.”¹² “And they came and did work in the house of the LORD of hosts, their God (verse 14).

We can be assured that God will not only approve but will also reinforce our right motives. Isaiah 41:10 says, “Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.” If God gives us a task, we are not to be fearful of getting started on it, for His resources are limitless. And, He will enable us to complete the job by the certainty of His presence, as well as encouragement from others along the way.¹³

So, let us listen to the message of the prophet Haggai as it speaks to us today, and be obedient by re-ordering our priorities in accordance with God’s purposes. When

we do so, we have God’s promise that He will be with us, and He will strengthen us to accomplish what He has called us to do. Priorities are important.

As we put God first, He is pleased and will bless us. More importantly, the Lord will be glorified — in our obedience, and in the finished work that He has for us. May God help us to be faithful in putting first things first. •

¹ *Life Application Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1988), p. 1286.

² *Ibid.*

³ George Adam Smith, “The Book of the Twelve Prophets: The Book of Haggai,” *The Expositor’s Bible*, Vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1982), p. 616.

⁴ Albert Barnes, *Barnes Notes* (Electronic Database. 1997 by BibleSoft).

⁵ H.L. Ellison, *Men Spake From God* (London: The Paternoster Press, 1952), p. 120. *Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary*: “How different David’s feeling (2 Samuel 7:2, ‘See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains’),” whereupon he proceeded to plan the work of building the original Temple. (Electronic Database. 1997 by BibleSoft).

⁶ Dennis Kwok, “The Love of God as Revealed in the Old Testament,” *Read, Pray & Grow*, April to June 2011 (Singapore: Reformation Banner Publishers), p. 87.

⁷ Joyce G. Baldwin, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1972), p. 32.

⁸ Peter C. Craigie, *Twelve Prophets*, Vol. 2 (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1985), p.134.

⁹ *Life Application Bible*, p. 1338.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 1288.

¹¹ Baldwin, p. 42.

¹² Craigie, p. 143.

¹³ *Life Application Bible*, p. 1287.



Mr. Jack Hendricks is a gifted Bible teacher and historian. He served for many years with the Charlotte Museum of History, and is a member of the Bible Presbyterian Church of Charlotte, NC.

"THE EVANGELICAL REJECTION OF REASON"

Continued from page 9

ous and incomprehensible time and place. The vitality of such a religious tradition depends on the ability of leaders — prophets, preachers, sages — to bring the Book to life so that it engages the worldview of each new generation."

But, instead of bringing people to the Book, we now are instructed to manipulate the Bible to "engage" the SINFUL "worldview of each new generation." If something like Biblical pronouncements against homosexuality and insistence that God created everything *ex nihilo*, are a stumbling block to the present generation, just kick those beliefs off to the side and by whatever means necessary to be relevant and respected by the world in its present state!

They seek to bolster their case by dismissing mainstream evangelicalism as intellectually inept and devoid of reason, without providing anything credible to prove their case. They refer to evangelical historian Mark A.

Bible believers have had a long tradition of the most excellent scholarship. However, they refuse to mindlessly accept the latest claims of "truth," when many such claims are skewed by a presupposition of naturalism — a very powerful filter which militates against Biblical truth.

Noll's "decrying the abandonment of the intellectual heritage of the Protestant Reformation," and quote him as saying that "The scandal of the evangelical mind is that there is not much of an evangelical mind."

Their left-leaning bent is soon betrayed when they praise such publications as *The Christian Century*

DR. JOHN ASHBROOK HOME WITH CHRIST

Just before going to press, we received word that Dr. John Ashbrook went to be with the Lord on December 20, 2011. Dr. Ashbrook served as pastor of the Bible Community Church in Mentor, Ohio, for over 40 years.

He was a member of the Ohio Bible Fellowship and helped edit and wrote articles for the Ohio Bible Fellowship *Visitor*.

Son of the late Fundamentalist leader Dr. William Ashbrook, he received a B.S. degree in the field of chemical engineering from Northwestern University and a B.D. degree from Faith Theological Seminary.

Among his many writings were such books as: *New Neutralism II:*



Exposing the Gray of Compromise; Axioms of Separation; and Family Fundamentals: Getting Back to Basics in a World Which Has Lost Its Biblical Family Values.

Dr. Ashbrook was truly a Christian gentleman and a statesman in every sense. He was a supporter of *Redeeming the Time*, and, despite his busy schedule, on several occasions took the time to send notes of thanks and encouragement for this paper.

He will be missed, but we know that he is now rejoicing with His Saviour. Please pray that the Lord will raise up young men of such stature to continue preaching the Word of God with all boldness and faithfulness. •

and *Sojourners* as good alternatives to the ignorant, mindless evangelicals and Fundamentalists. *The Christian Century* has been one of the most liberal religious publications for well over 100 years. It is considered a major voice of the mainline denominations, and has always reliably promoted unbelief and apostasy on its pages. *Sojourners* is headed by Jim Wallis, who has recently been making his rounds on the evangelical college debate circuit, decrying the supposed immorality of capitalism. It recently came out that he has received major donations from radical liberal George Soros. At first he angrily denied it, attacking evangelical leaders who made the claim. However, when they produced the official tax forms of one of Soros' organizations, Wallis had to backtrack quickly, but not without stating that it was such an "insignificant amount" (in the hun-

dreds of thousands of dollars!) that he had forgotten about it.

Giberson and Stephens state that they look at truth objectively, whereas most evangelicals filter it through their belief system, only allowing what fits their system. They state that truth is truth, no matter what your belief system. With this statement we can agree. However, many Fundamentalists refuse to blindly accept the "party line" without thinking critically. Bible believers have had a long tradition of the most excellent scholarship. However, they refuse to mindlessly accept the latest claims of "truth," when many such claims are skewed by a presupposition of naturalism — a very powerful filter which militates against Biblical truth. •

*See "Bruce Waltke & Theistic Evolution," *Redeeming the Time*, Summer 2010; and "Genesis Vs. Genome," *Redeeming the Time*, Summer 2011.