



"I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved." Hab. 2:1

September 16, 2011

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Feature Article – Except Ye Repent
by Harry Ironside

Introduction

Fully convinced in my own mind that the doctrine of repentance is the missing note in many otherwise orthodox and fundamentally sound circles today, I have penned this

volume out of a full heart. I hope and pray that God will be pleased to use it to awaken many of His servants to the importance of seeking so to present His truth as to bring men to the only place where He can meet them in blessing. That place is the recognition of their own demerit and absolute unworthiness of His least mercies and a new conception of His saving power for all who come to Christ as lost sinners, resting alone upon His redemptive work for salvation, and depending upon the indwelling Holy Spirit to make them victorious over sin's power in daily life.

The pages have been written during a busy summer, as I have gone from place to place trying to preach and teach the very truths herein emphasized. Most of the book was scribbled out in Pullman cars while speeding from one appointment to another. If there seems at times to be lack of continuity of thought, I hope the manifest defects of the treatise may not hinder the reader from getting the message I have endeavored to set forth as clearly as possible, under difficult circumstances.

I have not written for literary critics or for theological quibblers, but for earnest people who desire to know the will of God and to do it. And so I send forth this book, in dependence on Him who has said, "Cast thy bread upon the waters: and thou shalt find it after many days." If He be pleased to use it to arouse some at least to a deeper sense of the importance of reality in dealing with souls, I shall be grateful.

Harry A. Ironside

Chapter 1 - Repentance: Its Nature And Importance

More and more it becomes evident that ours is, as Carlyle expressed it, an "age of sham." Unreality and specious pretence abound in all departments of life. In the domestic, commercial, social, and ecclesiastical spheres hypocrisy is not only openly condoned, but recognized as almost a necessity for advancement and success in attaining recognition among one's fellows.

Nor is this true only where heterodox religious views are held. Orthodoxy has its shallow dogmatists who are ready to battle savagely for sound doctrine, but who manage to ignore sound living with little or no apparent compunction of conscience.

God desires truth in the inward parts. The blessed man is still the one "in whose spirit there is no guile." It is forever true that "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." It can never be out of place to proclaim salvation by free, unmerited favor to all who put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. But it needs ever to be insisted on that the faith that justifies is not a mere intellectual process -- not simply crediting certain historical facts or doctrinal statements; but it is a faith that springs from a divinely wrought conviction of sin which produces a repentance that is sincere and genuine.

Our Lord's solemn words, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish," are as important today as when first uttered. No dispensational distinctions, important as these are in understanding and interpreting God's ways with man, can alter this truth.

No one was ever saved in any dispensation excepting by grace. Neither sacrificial observances, nor ritual service, nor works of law ever had any part in justifying the ungodly. Nor were any sinners ever saved by grace until they repented. Repentance is not opposed to grace; it is the recognition of the need of grace. "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." "I came not," said our blessed Lord, "to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."

One great trouble in this shallow age is that we have lost the meaning of words. We bandy them about until one can seldom be certain just how terms are being used. Two ministers were passing an open grocery and dairy store where, in three large baskets, eggs were displayed. On one basket was a sign reading, "Fresh eggs, 24 cents a dozen." The second sign read, "Strictly fresh eggs, 29 cents a dozen." While a third read, "Guaranteed strictly fresh eggs, 34 cents a dozen." One of the pastors exclaimed in amazement, "What does that grocer understand 'fresh' to mean?" It is thus with many Scriptural terms that to our forefathers had an unvarying meaning, but like debased coins have today lost their values.

Grace is God's unmerited favor to those who have merited the very opposite. Repentance is the sinner's recognition of and acknowledgment of his lost estate and, thus, of his need of grace. Yet there are not wanting professed preachers of grace who, like the antinomians of old, decry the necessity of repentance lest it seem to invalidate the freedom of grace. As well might one object to a man's acknowledgment of illness when seeking help and healing from a physician, on the ground that all he needed was a doctor's prescription.

Shallow preaching that does not grapple with the terrible fact of man's sinfulness and guilt, calling on "all men everywhere to repent," results in shallow conversions; and so we have a myriad of glib-tongued professors today who give no evidence of regeneration whatever. Prating of salvation by grace, they manifest no grace in their lives. Loudly declaring they are justified by faith alone, they fail to remember that "faith without works is dead"; and that justification by works before men is not to be ignored as though it were in contradiction to justification by faith before God. We need to reread James 3 and let its serious message sink deep into our hearts, that it may control our lives. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." No man can truly believe in Christ, who does not first repent. Nor will his repentance end when he has saving faith, but the more he knows God as he goes on through the years, the deeper will that repentance become. A servant of Christ said: "I repented before I knew the meaning of the word. I have repented far more since than I did then."

Undoubtedly one great reason why some earnest Gospel preachers are almost afraid of, and generally ignore, the terms "repent" and "repentance" in their evangelizing is that they fear lest their hearers misunderstand these terms and think of them as implying something meritorious on the part of the sinner. But nothing could be wider of the mark. There is no saving merit in owning my true condition. There is no healing in acknowledging the nature of my illness. And repentance, as we have seen, is just this very thing.

But in order to clarify the subject, it may be well to observe carefully what repentance is not and then to notice briefly what it is.

First, then, repentance is not to be confounded with penitence, though penitence will invariably enter into it. But penitence is simply sorrow for sin. No amount of penitence can fit a man for salvation. On the other hand, the impenitent will never come to God seeking His grace. But godly sorrow, we are told, worketh repentance not to be repented of. There is a sorrow for sin that has no element of piety in it-- "the sorrow of the world worketh death." In Peter's penitence we see the former; in the remorse of Judas, the latter. Nowhere is man exhorted to feel a certain amount of sorrow for his sins in order to come to Christ. When the Spirit of God applies the truth, penitence is the immediate result and this leads on to repentance, but should not be confounded with it. This is a divine work in the soul.

Second, penance is not repentance. Penance is the effort in some way to atone for wrong done. This, man can never do. Nor does God in His Word lay it down as a condition of salvation that one first seek to make up to either God or his fellows for evil committed. Here the Roman Catholic translation of the Bible perpetrates a glaring deception upon those who accept it as almost an inspired version because bearing the imprimatur of the great Catholic dignitaries. Wherever the Authorized Version has "repent," the Douay-Rheims translation reads, "Do penance." There is no excuse for such a paraphrase. It is not a translation. It is the substituting of a Romish dogma for the plain command of God. John the Baptist did not cry, 'Do penance, for the kingdom of God is at hand.' Our Lord Jesus did not say, 'Do penance and believe the gospel,' and, 'Except ye do penance ye shall all likewise perish.' The Apostle Peter did not tell the anxious multitude at Pentecost to 'Do penance and be converted.' St. Paul did not announce to the men at Athens that 'God commandeth all men everywhere to do penance' in view of a coming judgment day. No respectable Greek scholar would ever think of so translating the original in these and many other instances.

On the contrary, the call was to repent; and between repenting and doing penance there is a vast difference. But even so, we would not forget that he who truly repents will surely seek to make right any wrong he has done to his fellows, though he knows that he never can make up for the wrong done to God. But this is where Christ's expiatory work comes in. As the great Trespass Offering He could say, "Then I restored that which I took not away" (Psalm 69). Think not to add penance to this -- as though His work were incomplete and something else were needed to satisfy God's infinite justice.

In the third place, let us remember that reformation is not repentance, however closely allied to, or springing out of it. To turn over a new leaf, to attempt to supplant bad habits with good ones, to try to live well instead of evilly, may not be the outcome of repentance at all and should never be confounded with it. Reformation is merely an outward change. Repentance is a work of God in the soul.

Recently it was the writer's privilege to broadcast a Gospel message from a large Cleveland station. While he was waiting in the studio for the time appointed an advertiser's voice was heard through the loud speaker announcing: "If you need anything in watch repairing go to" such a firm. One of the employees looked up and exclaimed, "I need no watch repairing; what I need is a watch." It furnished me with an excellent text. What the unsaved man needs is not a repairing of his life. He needs a new life altogether, which comes only through a second birth. Reformation is like watch repairing. Repentance is like the recognition of the lack of a watch.

Need I add that repentance then is not to be considered synonymous with joining a church or taking up one's religious duties, as people say. It is not doing anything.

What then is repentance? So far as possible I desire to avoid the use of all abstruse or pedantic terms, for I am writing not simply for scholars, but for those Lincoln had in mind when he said, "God must have thought a lot of the common people, for He made so many of them." Therefore I wish, so far as possible, to avoid citing Greek or Hebrew words. But here it seems almost necessary to say that it is the Greek word *metanoia*, which is translated "repentance" in our English Bibles, and literally means a change of mind. This is not simply the acceptance of new ideas in place of old notions. But it actually implies a complete reversal of one's inward attitude.

How luminously clear this makes the whole question before us! To repent is to change one's attitude toward self, toward sin, toward God, toward Christ. And this is what God commands. John came preaching to publicans and sinners, hopelessly vile and depraved, "Change your attitude, for the kingdom is at hand." To haughty scribes and legalistic Pharisees came the same command, "Change your attitude," and thus they would be ready to receive Him who came in grace to save. To sinners everywhere the Saviour cried, "Except ye change your attitude, ye shall all likewise perish."

And everywhere the apostles went they called upon men thus to face their sins -- to face the question of their helplessness, yet their responsibility to God -- to face Christ as the one, all-sufficient Saviour, and thus by trusting Him to obtain remission of sins and justification from all things.

So to face these tremendous facts is to change one's mind completely, so that the pleasure lover sees and confesses the folly of his empty life; the self-indulgent learns to hate the passions that express the corruption of his nature; the self-righteous sees himself a condemned sinner in the eyes of a holy God; the man who has been hiding from God seeks to find a hiding place in Him; the Christ-rejecter realizes and owns his need of a Redeemer, and so believes unto life and salvation.

Which comes first, repentance or faith? In Scripture we read, "Repent ye, and believe the gospel." Yet we find true believers exhorted to "repent, and do the first works." So intimately are the two related that you cannot have one without the other. The man who believes God repents; the repentant soul puts his trust in the Lord when the Gospel is revealed to him. Theologians may wrangle over this, but the fact is, no man repents until the Holy Spirit produces repentance in his soul through the truth. No man believes the Gospel and rests in it for his own salvation until he has judged himself as a needy sinner before God. And this is repentance.

Perhaps it will help us if we see that it is one thing to believe God as to my sinfulness and need of a Saviour, and it is another thing to trust that Saviour implicitly for my own salvation.

Apart from the first aspect of faith, there can be no true repentance. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him." And apart from such repentance there can be no saving faith. Yet the deeper my realization of the grace of God manifested toward me in Christ, the more intense will my repentance become.

It was when Mephibosheth realized the kindness of God as shown by David that he cried out, "What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?" (2

Sam. 9:8). And it is the soul's apprehension of grace which leads to ever lower thoughts of self and higher thoughts of Christ; and so the work of repentance is deepened daily in the believer's heart.

*"Let not conscience make you linger,
Nor of fitness fondly dream,
All the fitness He requireth
Is to feel your need of Him.
This He gives you,
'Tis the Spirit's rising beam."*

The very first evidence of awakening grace is dissatisfaction with one's self and self-effort and a longing for deliverance from chains of sin that have bound the soul. To own frankly that I am lost and guilty is the prelude to life and peace. It is not a question of a certain depth of grief and sorrow, but simply the recognition and acknowledgment of need that lead one to turn to Christ for refuge. None can perish who put their trust in Him. His grace superabounds above all our sin, and His expiatory work on the cross is so infinitely precious to God that it fully meets all our uncleanness and guilt.

(I recently discovered Harry Ironside's book on repentance online and downloaded it to read. This is the first chapter. To download the entire book, go to:

http://www.jesus-is-savior.com/BTP/Dr_Harry_Ironside/Except_Ye_Repent/toc.htm.

We need to preach repentance again! - Ed)

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New Technology for Reading -

ANNOUNCING the new Built-in Orderly Organised Knowledge devise, otherwise known as the BOOK; no wires, no electric circuits, no batteries, nothing to be connected or switched on. It's so easy to use that even a child can operate it. Just lift its cover. Compact and portable, it can be used anywhere, yet it is powerful enough to hold as much information as a CD-ROM disk.

Here's how it works: each BOOK is constructed of sequentially numbered sheets of paper (recyclable), each capable of holding thousands of bits of information. These pages are locked together with a custom-fit device called a binder which keeps the sheets in their correct sequence. By using both sides of each sheet, manufacturers are able to cut costs in half. Each sheet is scanned optically, registering information directly into your brain. A flick of the finger takes you to the next sheet.

The BOOK may be taken up at any time and used by merely opening it. The Browse feature allows you to move instantly to any sheet, and move forward or backward as you wish. Most come with an 'index' feature, which pinpoints the exact location of any selected information for instant retrieval.

Portable, durable and affordable, the BOOK is the entertainment wave of the future, and many new titles are expected soon.

Due to the surge in popularity of this programming tool, the manufacturers are making available the Portable Erasable-Nib Cryptic Intercommunication Language stylus (PENCIL). This innovative recording device makes it possible to transfer the information from the BOOK to separate locations for further reference, as well as highlighting portions of text in the BOOK.

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The Conversion of Father Charles Chiniquy 1809-1899

Foreword

Father Chiniquy was a famous Catholic priest of Canada, born at Kamouraska, Quebec, on July 20, 1809. He established the first temperance society there and won the title, "Apostle of Temperance of Canada."

Because of his ability and piety, he was entrusted with a colonizing party of French-Canadians, who settled in Illinois.

Late in life he was a friend of Abraham Lincoln.

He toured England several times and this particular narrative of his life was first given in London. He lived to his ninetieth year, dying in Montreal, on January 16, 1899.

The Gift Of Salvation

I was born and baptized a Roman Catholic in 1809, and I was ordained priest in the year 1833, in Canada. I am now in my seventy-fourth year, and it is nearly fifty years since I received the dignity of the priesthood in the Church of Rome. For twenty-five years I was a priest of that Church, and I tell you frankly that I loved the Church of Rome, and she loved me. I would have shed every drop of my blood for my Church and would have given a thousand times my life to extend her power and dignity over the continent of America, and over the whole world. My great ambition was to convert the Protestants, and bring them into my Church, because I was told, and I preached, that outside the Church of Rome there was no salvation, and I was sorry to think that those multitudes of Protestants were to be lost.

A few years after I was born we lived in a place where there were no schools. My mother became my first teacher, and the first book in which she taught me to read was the Bible. When I was eight or nine years old I read the Divine Book with an incredible pleasure, and my heart was much taken up with the beauty of the Word of God. My mother selected the chapters she wished me to read, and the attention I gave to it was such that, many times, I

refused to go and play with the little boys outside in order to enjoy the pleasure of reading the Holy Book. Some of the chapters I loved more than others, and these I learned by heart. But after my mother died, the Bible disappeared from the house, probably through the priest who had tried to obtain possession of it before. Now this Bible is the root of everything in this story. That is the light which was put into my soul when young, and, thanks be to God, that light has never been extinguished. It has remained there. It is to that dear Bible, by the mercy of God, that I owe today the unspeakable joy which I feel at being among the redeemed, among those who have received the light, and are drinking at the pure fountain of truth.

But perhaps you are inclined to say, "Do not the Roman Catholic priests allow their people to read the Bible?" Yes I thank God that it is so. It is a fact that today, almost all over the world, the Church of Rome grants permission to read the Bible, and you will find the Bible in the homes of some Roman Catholics. But when we have confessed this we must tell the whole truth. When the priest puts the Bible in the hands of his people, or when a priest receives the Bible from his church, there is a condition. The condition is that though the priest or people may read the Bible, they must never, under any circumstances, interpret a single word according to their conscience, their intelligence, or in their own mind. When I was ordained a priest I swore that I would interpret the Scriptures only according to the unanimous consent of the Holy Fathers.

Friends, go to Roman Catholics today, and ask them if they have permission to read the Bible. They will tell you, "Yes, I can read it." But ask, "Have you permission to interpret it?" They will tell you, "No." The priest says positively to the people, and the Church says positively to the priest, that they cannot interpret a single word of the Bible according to their own intelligence and their own conscience, and that it is a grievous sin to take upon themselves the interpretation of a single word. The priest says in effect to the people, "If you try to interpret the Bible with your own intelligence you are lost. It is a most dangerous book. You may read it, but it is better not to read it, because you cannot understand it." What is the result of such teaching? The result is that though both the priests and the people have the Bible in their hands, they do not read it. Would you read a book if you were persuaded that you cannot understand a single word by yourself? Would you be such fools as to waste your time reading a book which you were persuaded you could not understand a single line of? Then, my friends, this is the truth about the Church of Rome. They have a great number of Bibles. You will find Bibles on the tables of the priests and of Catholic laymen, but among ten thousand priests there are not two who read the Bible from the beginning to the end and pay any attention to it. They read a few pages here and there; that is all. In the Church of Rome the Bible is a sealed book but it was not so with me. I found it precious to my heart when I was a little boy, and when I became a priest of Rome I read it to make me a strong man, and to make me able to argue for the Church.

My great object was to confound the Protestant ministers of America' I got a copy of the "Holy Fathers," and I studied it day and night with the Holy Scriptures, in order to prepare myself for the great battle I wanted to fight against the Protestants. I made this study in order to strengthen my faith in the Roman Catholic Church. But, blessed be God! every time I read the Bible there was a mysterious voice saying to me "Do you not see that in the Church of Rome you do not follow the teachings of the Word of God, but only the traditions of men?" In the silent hours of the night, when I heard that voice, I wept and cried, but it was repeated with the strength of thunder. I wanted to live and die in the Holy Roman Catholic Church, and I prayed to God to silence the voice, but I heard it yet still louder. When I was reading His word He was trying to break my fetters, but I would not

have my fetters broken. He came to me with His saving light, but I would not have it. I have no bad feeling against Roman Catholic priests. Some of you may think I have. You are mistaken. Sometimes I weep for them because I know that the poor men—just as I did—are fighting against the Lord, and that they are miserable as I was miserable then. If I relate to you one of the struggles of which I speak, you will understand what it is to be a Roman Catholic priest, and you will pray for them.

In Montreal there is a splendid cathedral, capable of holding 15,000 people. I used to preach there very often. One day the Bishop asked me to speak on the Virgin Mary, and I was glad to do so. I said to those people what I thought to be true then, and what the priests believe and preach everywhere. Here is the sermon I preached: "My dear friends, when a man has rebelled against his king, when he has committed a great crime against his emperor, does he come himself to speak to him? If he has a favour to ask from his king, dare he, under the circumstances, appear himself in his presence? No; the king would rebuke him, and would punish him. Then, what does he do? Instead of going himself he selects one of the friends of the king, some one of his officers, sometimes the sister or the mother of the king, and he puts his petition into their hands. They go and speak in favour of the guilty man. They ask his pardon, they appease his wrath, and very often the king will grant to these people the favour which he would refuse to the guilty man." "Then", I said. "we are all sinners, we have all offended the great and mighty King, the King of Kings. We have raised rebellious colors against Him. We have trampled His laws under our feet, and surely He is angry against us. What can we do today? Shall we go ourselves with our hands filled with our iniquities? No! But, thanks to God, we have Mary the mother of Jesus, our King, at His right hand, and as a dutiful son never refuses any favour to a beloved mother, so Jesus will never refuse any favour to Mary. He has never refused any petition which she presented to Him when He was on earth. He has never rebuked His mother in any way. Where is the son who would break the heart of a loving mother, when he could rejoice her by granting her what she wants? Then I say, Jesus, the King of Kings, is not only the Son of God, but He is the Son of Mary, and loves His mother. And as He has never refused any favour of Mary when He was on earth; He will never refuse her any favour today. Then what must we do? Oh! we cannot present ourselves before the great King, covered as we are with iniquity. Let us present our petitions to His holy mother; she will go to the feet of Jesus, herself, Jesus, her God and her son, and she will surely receive the favours which she will ask; she will ask our pardon and will obtain it. She will ask a place in the Kingdom of Christ, and you will have it. She will ask from Jesus to forget your iniquities, to grant you the true repentance, and He will give you anything his mother may ask of Him."

My hearers were so happy at the idea of having such an advocate at the feet of Jesus interceding for them day and night, that they all burst into tears, and were beside themselves with joy that Mary was to ask and obtain their pardon. I thought at the time that this was not only the religion of Christ, but that it was the religion of common sense, and that nothing could be said against it. After the sermon the Bishop came to me and blessed me, and thanked me, saying that the sermon would do great good in Montreal. That night I went on my knees, and took my Bible, and my heart was full of joy because of the good sermon I had given in the morning. I opened and read from Matthew 12:46, the following words: "While He yet talked to the people, behold, His mother and His brethren stood without, desiring to speak with Him. Then said one unto Him, 'Behold Thy mother and Thy brethren stand without desiring to speak with Thee.' But He answered and said to him that told Him, 'Who is My mother, and who are My brethren?' And he

stretched forth His hand toward His disciples and said, 'Behold! My mother and My brethren, for whosoever shall do the will of My Father which is in Heaven, the same is My brother, and sister, and mother.' When I had read these words there was a voice speaking to me more terrible than the voice of loud thunder saying, "Chiniquy, you preached a lie this morning; when you said that Mary had always received the favours which she had asked from Jesus. Do you not see that Mary comes to ask a favour, that is, to see her son, during whose absence she has been lonesome., and who has left her during many months to preach the Gospel?" When Mary got to the place where Jesus was preaching, the place was so crammed that she could not enter . What will she do? She will do what every mother would do in her place. She raises her voice and requests Him to come and see her; but while Jesus hears the voice of His mother, and with His divine eyes sees her, does He grant her petition? No. He shuts His ears to her voice and hardens His heart against her prayer. It is a public rebuke, and she feels it keenly. The people are astonished. They are puzzled, almost scandalized. They turn to Christ, and they say to Him, "Why don't you come and speak to your mother?" What does Jesus say? He gives no answer except this extraordinary one: "Who is My mother, and who are My brethren?" and, looking upon His disciples, He says: "Behold, My mother, My brethren, and My sisters." As for Mary, she is left alone, and publicly rebuked.

And then the voice spoke to me again with the power of thunder, telling me to read again in St. Mark 3:31-35. You will find the same incident both in Mark and in Luke 8:19-21. Instead of granting her petition Jesus replied in such a way as to publicly rebuke His mother. And then the voice spoke to me with terrific power, telling me that Jesus, so long as He was a little boy, obeyed Joseph and His mother; but as soon as Jesus presented Himself before the world as the Son of God, as the Saviour of the world, as the great Light of humanity, then Mary had to disappear. It is to Jesus alone that the eyes of the world must be turned to receive Light and Life. Then, my friends, the voice spoke to me all the night: "Chiniquy, Chiniquy, you have told a lie this morning, and you were preaching a lot of fables and nonsense; and you preach against the Scriptures when you say that Mary has the power to grant any favour from Jesus." I prayed and I wept, and it was a sleepless night with me.

The next morning I went to table with the Bishop Prince, the coadjutor, who had invited me to breakfast. He said to me, "M. Chiniquy, you look like a man who has spent the night in tears. What is the matter with you?" I said, "My lord, you are correct. I am desolate above measure." "What is the matter?" he asked. "Oh! I cannot tell you here," I said. "Will you please give me one hour in your room alone? I will tell you a mystery which will puzzle you." After breakfast I went out with him and said: "Yesterday you paid me a great compliment because of the sermon in which I proved that Jesus had always granted the petitions of His mother. But, my lord, last night I heard another voice, stronger than yours, and my trouble is that I believe that voice is the voice of God. That voice has told me that we Roman Catholic priests and bishops preach a falsehood every time we say to the people that Mary has always the power to receive from the hands of Jesus Christ the favours which she asks. This is a lie, my lord-this, I fear, is a diabolical and damning error." The Bishop then said, "M. Chiniquy, what do you mean? Are you a Protestant?" "No," I said, "I'm not a Protestant." (Many times I had been called a Protestant because I was so fond of the Bible.) "But I tell you, face to face, that I sincerely fear that yesterday I preached a lie, and that you, my lord, will preach one also the next time you say that we must invoke Mary, under the pretext that Jesus has never refused any favour to His mother. This is false." The Bishop said, "M. Chiniquy, you go too far!" "No, my lord," I said, "it is of no use to talk. Here is the Gospel; read it." I put the Gospel into the hands of the

Bishop, and he read with his own eyes what I have already quoted, My impression was that he read those words for the first time. The poor man was so much surprised that he remained mute and trembling. Finally he asked, "What does that mean?" "Well," I said, "this is the Gospel; and here you see that Mary has come to ask from Jesus Christ a favour, and He has not only rebuked her, but has refused to consider her as His mother. He did this publicly, that we might know that Mary is the mother of Jesus as man, and not as God."

The Bishop was beside himself. He could not answer Me. I then asked to be allowed to put him a few questions. I said, "My lord, who has saved you and saved me upon the Cross?" He answered, "Jesus Christ." "And who paid your debts and mine by shedding His blood; was it Mary or Jesus?" He said, "Jesus Christ." "Now, my lord, when Jesus and Mary were on earth, who loved the sinner more; was it Mary or Jesus?" And again he answered that it was Jesus. "Did any sinner come to Mary on earth to be saved?" "No." "Do you remember that any sinner has gone to Jesus to be saved?" "Yes, many." "Have they been rebuked?" "Never." "Do you remember that Jesus ever said to sinners, 'Come to Mary and she will save you'?" "No", he said. "Do you remember that Jesus has said to poor sinners, 'Come unto me'?" "Yes. He has said it." "Has He ever retracted those words?" "No!" "And who was, then, the more powerful to save sinners?" I asked. "Oh! it was Jesus!" "Now, my lord, since Jesus and Mary are now in Heaven, can you show me in the Scriptures that Jesus has lost anything of His desire and power to save sinners, or that He has delegated this power to Mary?"

And the Bishop answered, "No."

(To read the rest of The Conversion of Charles Chiniquy go to:

<http://www.calltoworship.org/calltoworship/testimony/chiniquy.html>)

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Cartoons For Wise Men -

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Typing in Tongues? -

Charismatic "Prophetess" Types In Tongues

Charismatic "prophetess" Juanita Bynum not only speaks in tongues; she types in tongues on her Facebook page. On August 17 she typed the following prayer, "We call on you Jesus. You are our help and our hope!!!!INDHDIUBGUGTRUCGNRTUGTIGRTIGRGNRDRGNGGJNRIC. You are our help

and our hope. RFSCNGUGHURGVHKTGHDKUNHSTNSVHGN you God. You are our help and our hope!!!”

Bynum’s ministry did not return the call from The Christian Post to comment on this strange communication (“Televangelist Juanita Bynum Raises Brows with ‘Tongues’ Prayer,” Christian Post, Aug. 31, 2011).

This is the type of nonsense that has been part of the Pentecostal package since its inception at the turn of the 20th century. Tongues allegedly broke out at Charles Parham’s Bethel Bible School in Topeka, Kansas, in January 1901, led by a female student named Agnes Ozman. A reporter for the Topeka State Journal recorded the actual “tongues” of another female student, Lilian Thistlewaite. It went like this: “Euossa, Euossa, use rela sema calah mala kanah leulla ssage nalan. Ligle logle lazie logle. Ene mine mo, sah rah el me sah rah me” (Topeka State Journal, Jan. 9, 1901).

Though Thistlewaite’s “tongues” were more meaningful than Juanita Bynum’s, both are mere gibberish. “Ligle logle lazie logle” and “ene mine mo” are exactly the type of “tongues” I have heard dozens of times at Pentecostal and Charismatic meetings in various parts of the world, but it is childish nonsense. Biblical tongues were real languages that were spoken miraculously by those who had never learned the languages. This is what we see on the Day of Pentecost, and it was a very great miracle.

In 1914 Charles Shumway diligently sought evidence to prove that early Pentecostal tongues were real languages, but he failed to find even one person to corroborate the claims that had been made (James Goff, Jr., *Fields White Unto Harvest*, 1988, p. 76).

After examining the “tongues” spoken at the Azusa Street Mission led by William Seymour, Holiness leader W.B. Godbey concluded that they were not languages (G.F. Taylor, *The Spirit and the Bride*, 1907, p. 52). Many linguists have come to the same conclusion.

William Samarin, professor of linguistics at the University of Toronto, summarized his five years of research as follows: “Glossolalia is indeed like language in some ways, but this is only because the speaker wants it to be like language. Yet in spite of superficial similarities, glossolalia is fundamentally NOT language” (*Tongues of Men and Angels*, 1972, p. 227).

The fundamental key to understanding biblical tongues is that they were a sign to the unbelieving Jewish nation (1 Corinthians 14:20-22). In every case in the book of Acts where tongues were exercised, Jews were present. We have dealt with this at some length in the book *The Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements: The History and the Error*. (Friday Church News Notes, September 9, 2011, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

(What foolishness! Taker a moment to read over the line of gibberish above, and try to pronounce it. The very simple fact that Bynum typed 15 consonants in a row makes the line of letters unpronounceable! Charismatic errors multiply daily! - Ed)

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John Piper and Women Preachers -

(More and more evidence is accumulating that Evangelicalism is riddled with the "wisdom of men" disease. If you ever wonder what Rick Warren, Beth Moore, and John Piper have in common, it is this: They all believe that REASON MUST PREVAIL OVER REVELATION!!!!. Warren's New Age/Emergent methodology, Beth Moore's strange doctrines, and Piper's 7 points of Calvinism (combined with his church's rock music) can all get into the same bed if they agree that the wisdom of men is to be preferred above Holy Scripture. The following transcript of Piper's comments on listening to Beth Moore's sermons is a good example. - Ed)

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/is-it-wrong-for-men-to-listen-to-female-speakers-55118/>

Is It Wrong for Men to Listen to Female Speakers?

by John Piper

The following is an edited transcript of the audio.

"I'm a guy. Is it wrong for me to listen to Beth Moore? No. Unless you begin to become dependent on her as your shepherd-your pastor.

"This is the way I feel about women speaking occasionally in Sunday school. We don't need to be picky on this. The Bible is clear that women shouldn't teach and have authority over men. In context, I think this means that women shouldn't be the authoritative teachers of the church-they shouldn't be elders. That is the way Rick Warren is understanding it, and most of us understand it that way.

"This doesn't mean you can't learn from a woman, or that she is incompetent and can't think. It means that there is a certain dynamic between maleness and femaleness that when a woman begins to assume an authoritative teaching role in your life the manhood of a man and the womanhood of a woman is compromised.

"What I just said is unbelievably controversial. There are thousands, even millions of people that think this idea is absolutely obscene. That is the language people used back in the 70's when I was fighting battles over biblical manhood and womanhood. It isn't obscene. It is recognized profoundly in a lot of young people today, as well as older people.

"To the question of whether men should listen to a woman like Elisabeth Elliot-who was the Beth Moore of my generation. Elisabeth Elliot provoked students to be lay down your life missionaries. I love it! Sock it to them Elisabeth! She was so in your face about laying

your life down and being radically obedient and totally committed. She was not a pastor, and she didn't even preach on Sunday mornings. She is my kind of lady. I can learn heaps from her.

"I want to learn from my wife and I am happy to learn from Beth Moore. But I don't want to get into a relationship of listening or attending a church where a woman is becoming my pastor, my shepherd or my authority. I think that would be an unhealthy thing for a man to do. I could give reasons for that biblically, experientially and psychologically, but I have given the gist of it.

"So the answer is, no it is not wrong for you to listen to Beth Moore, but it could become wrong. I think Beth Moore would be happy with that answer. I've talked to her about this, and I think she would be OK with what I've said. Our paths cross at the Passion Conference every now and then, and we talk."

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Deacon True Sez -

"I notice that our preacher's knees always get very dusty just before we have a revival that really stirs folks up."

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What Jonah 2:8 Teaches Preachers About Their Idols -

"They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercies." (Jonah 2:8)

This is a most unusual text on the worship of idols. Unusual because of its location. Unusual because of its timing. Unusual because of its speaker. We find it in the book that bears Jonah's name. It is in the middle of his prayer of repentance (2:8), prayed in the belly of the great fish, prayed at the turning point in Jonah's life when he cast aside his idols and returned to the worshipful obedience of God.

Meditation upon this text yields precious, pointed, painful precepts:

- 1) Idols are deceitful (they are lying vanities.)
- 2) Idols are empty, imaginary, and devoid of substance (they are vanities.)
- 3) Idols are fashioned in the emotions and reasonings of our minds before they are ever graven by the artisan's tools (Jonah's self will and stubbornness and emotions are examples. See Jonah 4:1,2 "But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry. And he prayed unto the LORD and said, I pray thee, O LORD, was not this my saying when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew.....")
- 4) Idols are worshipped in our imaginations. Ezekiel

- 5) Idols are the offspring of resenting and rejecting truth about God (Jonah was dissatisfied with the nature of God, "thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of evil." 4:2)
- 6) Idol worship agrees with disobedience to God (Jonah's flight from God's call to Nineveh. 1:3)
- 7) Idols entice their worshippers to forsake the blessings God has for His children (We "forsake our own mercies." 2:8)
- 8) Idols we break are so frequently picked up and patched up and set in their places of honour in the pantheon of the heart. (Jonah's self will and stubbornness are cast aside in his prayer of repentance in the fish's belly, but are back in place in chapter 4, when he complains to God for showing mercy to the Ninevites.)

And, embarrassing as it is,

- 9) Idols are often owned and worshipped by preachers. (Jonah was a missionary to a pagan city.)
- 10) Idolatry is an indicator of immaturity - I John 5:21.

So there you have it, a believer who worshipped and served an invisible idol, the god of self-will enshrined in his heart. How embarrassing it is to read of Jonah's idols, and how revealing!

Is it possible that God sent Jonah to Nineveh in order to reveal to him the pantheon of idols in his own heart? Certainly God loved the Ninevites and desired to show mercy to them by sending to them His man with His message of judgment, and call them to repentance. But we must never forget that he who truly wields the Spirit's Sword must first wound himself. If Jonah would expose the idols of the Ninevites, he must expose and abandon his own. Jonah discovered idols in the dark corners of his own soul while he was in the blackness of the fish's belly. This text was penned by Jonah under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit for our benefit. Any student of Scripture who is provoked to do his own study on the subject of idolatry will find a wealth of material in the Bible. In addition to the many Old Testament references, there are over 20 in the New Testament, many of them directed to believers. John's last exhortation to the readers of his first epistle reads, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." Paul tells of his covetousness before conversion in Romans 7:7, and then calls it an idol in Ephesians 5:5 and Colossians 3:5. The teachings of Scripture are crystal clear: IDOLATRY IS A PERPETUAL PITFALL, EVEN FOR GOD'S PEOPLE!

So what are the idols of the 21st century? It comes as no surprise that the member churches of the World Council of Churches bow toward Rome three times a day. We observe modernists genuflecting at every opportunity to Bishop Spong and his like. Charismatics flock with groupie fervor around Benny Hinn, Joyce Meyer, and Hillsong. Worshippers of Westcott and Hort burn incense to the latest perverted money spinning Bible translation. And all over the world there are those who wait with bated breath for the latest encyclical pronouncement from the Baptist pope in California, South Carolina, or Tennessee. All the idols of preachers, whether in the heart, the head, or the hands are an abomination to God and must be forsaken!

Buddy Smith

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Poems That Preach -

The Perfect Church

*If you should find the perfect church
Without one spot or sore
For goodness sake! Don't join that church!
For it won't be perfect anymore.*

*If you should find the perfect church
Where all anxieties cease.
Then pass it by, lest you join it,
and mar the masterpiece.*

*But since no perfect church exists
with perfect women and men,
Let's stop looking for that church
And start loving the church that we're in.*

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Links In The Media Chain -

- How E- readers' screens work - <http://www.dump.com/2011/09/06/next-generation-color-e-ink-and-e-ink-explained-video/>
- Space Shuttle Cockpit 360 degree photo - http://360vr.com/2011/06/22-discovery-flight-deck-opf_6236/index.html
- A Pilot's Story from Sept 10th - 11th. - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cLj4akmnCSA&feature=youtu.be>
- What is really happening with the federal debt crisis? - www.ntrc.info/doorbell.html
- Largest Crocodile alive today - <http://news.yahoo.com/giant-crocodile-captured-alive-philippines-134625838.html>

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If Christianity is bad, why are Christians kinder?

by Andrew Bolt

Friday, September 09, 11 (09:25 am)

What a surprise. A religion which urges people to be more loving, responsible and generous tends to produce better citizens:

The results are in: *religious people are nicer*. Or so says Robert Putnam, professor of public policy at Harvard.

Described by London's Sunday Times as the most influential academic in the world today, Putnam is not a religious believer. Best known for *Bowling Alone*, the book that made "social capital" a key indicator of a healthy society, Putnam, with his co-author David Campbell (a Mormon), has waded into the debate about religion in the public square with his latest offering, *American Grace: How Religion Unites and Divides Us*. The book emerges out of two massive and comprehensive surveys into religion and public life in America.

Their most conspicuously controversial finding is that religious people make better citizens and neighbours. Putnam and Campbell write that "for the most part, the evidence we review suggests that religiously observant Americans are more civic, and in some respects simply 'nicer'".

On every measurable scale, religious Americans are more generous, more altruistic and more involved in civic life than their secular counterparts. They are more likely to give blood, money to a homeless person, financial aid to family or friends, a seat to a stranger and to spend time with someone who is "a bit down".

Another reason to marvel at the suicidal drive by many of the intelligentsia to destroy Christianity, one of the few remaining civilising influences.

By the way, where are the hospitals, schools, ambulance services and old folks homes set up by the Greens?

(From agnostic Andrew Bolt's blog page in the Herald Sun newspaper, Melbourne)

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Why Baptists Must Keep State and Church Separate -

The Formation of a Revolution

Governor Rick Perry's The Response prayer rally already has support from self-proclaimed prophets and apostles like Cindy Jacobs, Mike Bickle, Che Ahn, Doug Stringer, John Benefiel, and Jay Swallow, and now we can add one of the most prominent leaders of the [New Apostolic Reformation](#) to the list of endorsers: C. Peter Wagner.[1]

Background information:

Part 1: IHOP is starting to feel its Dominion oats

Part 2: IHOP: International House of Political Action

Last week C. Peter Wagner added his name to the list of The Response prayer rally endorsers.[2] This has the effect of putting the full weight of his New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) behind Texas Governor Rick Perry and his potential bid for president. The "Kansas City Prophets" via their IHOP movement was already a primary backer of this quasi-political "prayer event." But now, with Wagner's high-profile endorsement, the event takes on new significance. Wagner's presence indicates the [marshaling of forces](#) of his [Seven Mountains Army](#) behind a potential presidential candidate.

Meanwhile, on Sunday (7/10/11), IHOP moved to the national stage with a high-profile New York Times article, "Where Worship Never Pauses,"[3] which provided a superficial overview of Mike Bickle's movement, with only a few passing nods to the longstanding controversies surrounding this group's cult-like activities and beliefs. Bickle, in classic fashion, was able to dodge the conflict by persuading the reporter that he had "avoided direct involvement with partisan politics himself" even while acknowledging that "a member of his leadership group, Lou Engle," has now become a [high profile political activist](#). The article made no mention of Bickle's longtime association with C. Peter Wagner and the NAR.

Most Tea-Partiers don't have a clue about the significance of these endorsements from NAR and IHOP leaders. This type of prayer seems pretty benign on the surface but it is a cover for political activism. To the leaders of the NAR/IHOP movements this prayer rally is much more than just delivering votes to an anointed Tea Party candidate for 2012. The NAR/IHOP leaders hope to gain power -- political power. They have already built extensive downline networks which are well-developed at the precinct level.

To them, the real issue is their **agenda**. The NAR/IHOP movements have an agenda which has been percolating in the backrooms for three decades, and their leaders view an event such as this The Response prayer rally as a perfect opportunity to come onto the national stage as "[change agents](#)" on the political scene.

Their agenda in a nutshell: they want to rule the world.

Nope, this isn't nonsense. There is a long and very well documented history behind this.

There is a fascinating history of how these leaders have managed to [mainstream](#) their most [controversial doctrines](#) into evangelicaldom. The IHOP movement which is supporting Gov. Perry's prayer rally is part and parcel of [C. Peter Wagner's New Apostolic Reformation](#) and, in fact, helped to spawn the NAR and its [foundational doctrines for Dominionism](#). Here is a brief synopsis of the IHOP/NAR history:

- IHOP is just one arm of a multi-faceted group (with many names, entities and offshoots) known as the "Kansas City Prophets" that has been around since the mid-1980s.
- These Kansas City "prophets" are leaders who track a direct lineage back to the old Latter Rain cult.

- John Wimber became an overseer of the KC group in the late 1980s when their cult excesses became public and controversial, and set them up under his Vineyard denomination.
- John Wimber was a mentor to C. Peter Wagner and vice versa,[4] and the two of them have a history that tracks back into the mid 1970s at [Fuller Theological Seminary where they concocted doctrines](#) together.
- C. Peter Wagner's "Third Wave" movement, the predecessor to the NAR, was founded on Wimber's signs and wonders mysticism.[5]
- C. Peter Wagner's "New Apostolic Reformation" was founded on the convergence of the mystical streams of John Wimber, the Kansas City group, and Fuller Theological Seminary.

The Rise of Charismatic Dominionism

Al Dager, in his key book *VENGEANCE IS OURS: THE CHURCH IN DOMINION* (1990) chronicled the early history of the various Dominionist streams. He examined the phenomenon of "Charismatic Dominionism" which began in the Latter Rain movement during the 1940s. (Dager, p. 49) Key leaders included Franklin Hall, who taught that "fasting" could be "a means of bringing about revival and the 'restoration' of the Church" in the endtime days. Hall, who went off the deep end into UFO-ology and demon gods, astrology and mythology, taught that men could become "immortal while in their present flesh-and-blood bodies." (Dager, p. 51, 53)

William Branham, a Pentecostal preacher who heard "the Voice" and went into trances, (Dager, p. 57) was influenced by Hall's strange teachings. Branham came up with a doctrine that the Church was going through evolutionary "progressive stages of sanctification," based on his synthesis of "the Zodiak, the Egyptian pyramids, and the written Scriptures." (Dager, p. 55) Branham concocted an extremely controversial "Serpent Seed" teaching, which is "based on a twisted interpretation of Genesis 3:13" that Eve was sexually seduced by the serpent and produced a genetically mutant offspring. (Dager, p. 56)

Other notable men became part of this early cult movement, including George Warnock, George and Ern Hawtin (Dager lists many others on pp. 58-64). The cult was condemned as heretical at the time, but Dager explained in 1990 how the movement was able to continue:

Today, the doctrines of the Latter Rain Movement are experiencing a resurgence due to the charismatic movement and its influences in the Christian media. Although by all appearances the name has died out, the Latter Rain Movement has resurfaced under other names, and is held together by a network of teachers and organizations whose roots are in the healing ministries that grew out of the William Branham and Franklin Hall experiences. (Dager, p. 65)

The common thread that held all of these groups together is that these "men are seeking to establish the Kingdom of God on earth before Jesus returns" and that "the Church must be united in a dominion mindset." (Dager, p. 65) The most controversial teachings in this lineage of heresies are various forms of British-Israelism, Identity, and white Aryan supremacy -- teachings which subtly and occasionally reappear throughout Latter Rain teachings about their "destiny to rule the earth." (Dager, pp. 66-68)

Dager wrote that "Charismatic Dominionism is largely an outgrowth of the Manifest Sons of God" (MSOG). This is a catch-all term that has fallen into dis-use as a result of so many games of semantic deception over the years. But essentially MSOG is the generic name that applies to several sects birthed through the Latter Rain Movement. Manifest Sons teachings contain all the elements of classical dominion theory: perfection, immortalization, restoration of the Church, restoration of the offices of apostles and prophets, absolute authoritarianism, extreme shepherding-discipleship, attainment of godhood....(Dager, p. 69)

MSOG doctrine teaches an aberrant eschatology that "the Church, as the 'on-going incarnation of God,' is Christ on earth." (Dager, p. 71) This is the crux of the whole matter, because from this heresy they arrive at the conclusion that they, therefore, must BE Christ on earth and wield the sword of Dominionism to conquer their enemies. A corollary to the MSOG message is the "Kingdom Message" ("Kingdom Now") which states that the Kingdom of God is a present reality in the earth, and is only waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God to demonstrate the Kingdom by taking their authority over the kingdoms of the earth. This will take place before Jesus can return. (Dager, p. 72)

"Restoration" teachings, which have been widely popularized by the IHOP movement, indicate that in order to achieve this Dominionism in the endtimes there must first be a restoration of the offices of apostles and prophets, restoration of the 'Tabernacle of David' (signified by the restoration of worship and praise), and the restoration of power (signs and wonders). (Dager, p. 73)

Restorationists put an extreme emphasis on "repentance and holy living" due to their belief of "immortalization through perfection." Dager explains that this is not about "[a humble dying to self](#)", but [rather] the desire to see God move more quickly in establishing the Church in dominion over the nations." (Dager, p. 73) This is accompanied by a mystical false piety which emphasizes supernatural power in prayer and worship that creates "a euphoric state of [altered consciousness](#) from repetitious choruses.... [and] a frame of mind open to suggestion by the subsequent preaching of dominionist teachers who build on the fervor of the moment with messages of future power and glory." (Dager, p. 75)

The current IHOP movement can be characterized by precisely this description.

A key facet of Dominionism involves the use of "[covenants](#)" which are said to act "as a 'force'" in the spiritual realms, not unlike the "positive confession" of "name-it-and-claim-it." There are therefore numerous covenant documents, [decrees](#), formulas, principles, oaths, promises, and attempts to make binding declarations. These Dominionists believe that in so doing they establish [heavenly things on earth](#). This includes their use of [prayer walking](#) where they claim territories of the earth for their [Dominion](#). (Dager, pp. 75-85) Hence they utilize a [faulty method](#) of biblical interpretation called "Replacement Theology," which allegorizes Old Testament passages, and applies to the Church age (which is not a theocracy) "certain Old Testament Scriptures that relate to the Millennium and to eternity." (Dager, p. 92)

Throughout its 50-plus year history, the Latter Rain and its subsequent offshoots and associated groups have utilized the thought control methods of "Shepherding-Discipleship" to "stifle the individual believer's personal relationship to the Father and subordinate it to the corporate structure of the religious society." (Dager, p. 81) The NAR variant on this theme is a downline [interlocking networking structure](#) of self-appointed, self-anointed

"apostles" and "prophets" who claim to possess the penal powers of the Old Testament era. This "heavy shepherding" is a [top-down hierarchical structure](#) in which the sheep walk in lock-step, often signing covenants to obey. Obviously such a controlling structure is conducive to cult-type abuses, and many reports abound.[6]

Read the entire article at: <http://herescope.blogspot.com/2011/07/ihop-nar.html>

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Notable Quotes and Quotable Notes -

- "Around us there are influences at work which are directly antagonistic to Christianity, and anyone may see them who chooses to do so. The babyish game of shutting your eyes, and then crying, 'I cannot see you,' has been played at long enough: it is time that the most prejudiced should acknowledge that which everybody sees except themselves." (*Pastor C.H. Spurgeon*, *The Sword and Trowel*, July 1888).
- We side with A. W. Tozer when he says, 'I have done everything I can to keep performers out of my pulpit. God has never indicated that proclamation of the gospel is to be dependent on human performances.' (Page 156 - *Can We Rock the Gospel?* by *Dan Lucarini*)
- I reckon that when you mix a poor memory with paranoia and nostalgia you get hysteria. That's also the formula for conspiracy theories. - *B. Ferraro*.
- A member of the House of Lords asked Chaim Weizmann (Israel's first president), "Why do you Jews insist on Palestine when there are so many undeveloped countries you could settle in?"

Weizmann said: "That's like asking why you drove 20 miles to visit your mother last Sunday when so many old ladies live on your street." (*quoted by Benjamin Netanyahu*)

- Here lies a poor woman who always was tired,
For she lived in a place where help wasn't hired.
Her last words on earth were, Dear friends I am going
Where washing ain't done, nor sweeping, nor sewing,
And everything there is exact to my wishes,
For there they don't eat, and there's no washing of dishes....
Don't mourn for me now, don't mourn for me never,
For I'm going' to do nothin' for ever and for ever.
(*Epitaph in Bushey churchyard before 1860*)

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Salt Without Savour -

Wizard of Oz-Themed Sermon Series to be Preached at Florida Megachurch

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/wizard-of-oz-themed-sermon-series-to-be-preached-at-florida-megachurch-55245/>

(Here is another example of a megachurch "pastor" using the flotsam and jetsam of Hollywood for a theme for his sermon. I suspect he is not looking for blessing from Heaven, only applause from the pew. - Ed)

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Therapy for the Funny Bone -

Answers to last week's quiz questions :

1. Johnny's mother had three children. The first child was named April. The second child was named May. What was the third child's name? **(Johnny)**
2. There is a clerk at the butcher shop, he is five feet ten inches tall and he wears size 13 sneakers. What does he weigh? **(Meat)**
3. Before Mt. Everest was discovered, what was the highest mountain in the world? **(Mt. Everest)**
4. How much dirt is there in a hole that measures two feet by three feet by four feet? **(None)**
5. What word in the English Language is always spelled incorrectly? **(Incorrectly)**
6. Billy was born on December 28th, yet his birthday is always in the summer. How is this possible? **(He lives in Australia)**
7. In California , you cannot take a picture of a man with a wooden leg. Why not? **(Wooden legs can't be used for taking photos)**
8. What was the President's Name in 1975? **(It was Barack Obama then, too)**
9. If you were running a race, and you passed the person in 2nd place, what place would you be in now? **(2nd place)**
10. Which is correct to say, "The yolk of the egg are white" or "The yolk of the egg is white"? **(Egg yolks are yellow)**
11. If a farmer has 5 haystacks in one field and 4 haystacks in the other field, how many haystacks would he have if he combined them all in another field? **(one)**

The new preacher's first sermon lasted only fifteen minutes and the deacons thought it was great. The next week he preached for forty five minutes, and they wondered why, but on the third Sunday he preached for an hour and a half, so they asked to speak to him in his study.

"Pastor," we are concerned that your sermons are getting longer every week. Can you tell us why?"

The pastor replied, "It's easy to explain. I had new dentures the first week, and my gums were sore. The second week they had settled down pretty well."

"But that doesn't explain the long sermon today."

"Oh, that's easy," He replied. "I accidentally put my wife's teeth in this morning."

Deacon Jones invited the preacher home for lunch last Sunday. While he was setting the table, little Johnny played on the floor in the lounge room at the preacher's feet. Looking up at the preacher, he said, "I know what we're having for lunch today!"

The preacher smiled and asked what it was.

Johnny said, "Buzzard!"

"Buzzard? Are you sure?"

"Yep," Dad said to Mom, ""We've gotta have that old buzzard sometime, might as well be today!"

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Eddy-Torial - Nostalgia Ain't What It Used to Be!

Somebody somewhere keeps digging up old garbage and recycling it. They then re-package it as "Nostalgia for Christians", and send it around, and it lands in my Inbox. To be totally honest, I would like to be exempted from receiving any more "nostalgic" emails.

Let me explain. I don't mind photos of old cars or old aircraft. I can even handle photos of old people, and old scenery. Descriptions of historical events have their uses, especially church history. But what troubles my spirit is the useless trivia (replete with swear words and off colour jokes!) that my Christian brethren dredge up from fifty or sixty years ago and send it to all and sundry, as though they were doing us a big favour, or imparting an abundance of blessing to the recipient. I get the impression they expect me to reply with a big "AWWWWWWWWWWWWW !" every time, just because it is old.

Examples?

Sure. Like Roy Rogers and Dale Evans memorabilia, or Hopalong Cassidy's autographed photo, or Tex Ritter's, or quotes from John Wayne. Or magazine art of drive in restaurants (complete with car-hops in short shorts!!?!), or the Mickey Mouse Club tv stars, or photos of old service stations and movie theaters. Or price lists of groceries that used to be cheaper than they are now. The nostalgia list goes on and on.

Say, have you ever looked up the origins of the word "nostalgia?" Here is what the Online Etymology Dictionary tells us about it:

nostalgia 1770, "severe homesickness" (considered as a disease), Mod.L. (cf. Fr. *nostalgie*, 1802), coined 1668 by Johannes Hofer as a rendering of Ger. *heimweh*, from Gk. *nostos* "homecoming" + *algos* "pain, grief, distress" (see *-algia*). Transferred sense (the main modern one) of "wistful yearning for the past" first recorded 1920.

That pretty well describes much of the stuff that clogs our computers. "Severe homesickness and wistful yearning!" For what, for where? For the worldly pursuits of our past? For the fleshpots of Egypt? For the "Good Old Days?"

We are all aware that, if we pick and choose, we can find some things that seemed to be better fifty years ago. But some things were NOT better. Like our wages (I worked for McDonalds for five years before I earned \$1 an hour!) My first Bible cost almost 3/4 of a week's wage. My dad paid a year's salary for a new car, without airconditioning or automatic transmission or power brakes or Cd player. But then, he also paid a year's salary for the first house he ever bought.

Nostalgia ain't what it used to be!

There is an urgent need for discernment when it comes to looking back to the "Good Old Days." Certainly we need to "Remember the pit from which we were digged." And when it comes to doctrinal issues and church methodology we do well to remember Isaiah 58:12 "And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in." and Jer 6:16 "Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein."

But the Scripture also teaches us, "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, (we) press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ." (Phil. 3:13b, 14)

Whether we look back to the past or to the future, we need to wash our eyes first, and look for those things which edify, not the worldly things that drag us down.

Years ago we worked with a brother who saw much fruit as he preached the gospel to hippies and druggies. Sadly, almost all of them dropped out and disappeared after only a short time. Why? Because, when they got together, they always drifted into reminiscing about the "good old days." It just so happened that those "good old days" were the "bad old days" of drugs, immorality, and rock and roll. And as soon as they became nostalgic about the past they went back to it, and we never saw them again. They hadn't discerned the difference between good and evil. They needed that one teach (them) "the first

principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." (Heb. 5:12b - 14) They hadn't washed their eyes out often enough with the water of the Word to be able to tell the difference, when they looked back, between good and evil.

Israel became nostalgic for Egypt when they hungered and thirsted in the wilderness. Lot's wife became nostalgic, severely homesick for Sodom, wistfully yearning for what she left behind, and it turned her into a pillar of salt. Jesus warned us about people putting their hand to the plow and looking back. Some of their kinfolks have survived to our day. They "wistfully yearn" for the misspent days of their youth. Say, did you know Solomon commented on this backward look, this pining for the past? Hear him, "Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this." (Eccl. 7:10) Wise men know the dangers of always looking back.

There is a cure for nostalgia. Not a pill to swallow, but exercises to take. Like these:

- 1) Remember that the "good old days" weren't all that good. Sinners were sinners then just like today. Hollywood was just as immoral, profane, and perverted as it is today. In fact, the theatre has ALWAYS been a cesspit. If you stop and think about your favourite movie stars from the past, you may recall how many times they married and divorced. A. W. Tozer once said he would rather hear a lecture on honesty from Al Capone than have a movie star teach him morality.
- 2) Exercise the grey matter and call to remembrance how the heroes of your youth drew the wages of sin. Those wages have always been death, death in all its forms. Remember James Dean, Buddy Holley, Elvis Presley, Marilyn Monroe? They and all their friends experienced firsthand the high cost of low living. For another example of Hollywood's shipwrecks, have a look at what happened to the Little Rascals, one by one:
http://www.emmitsburg.net/humor/archives/interesting_facts/interesting_facts_16.htm
- 3) Get up off the recliner and get busy serving God again. Or maybe you need to pull the plug on the computer and go find someone that needs a helping hand. There is strong evidence that most Christians do not cope well with the pressures of this present evil world, and so they retreat into a fictional past, and spend their days longing for a world that no longer exists. In fact, it never did! How much better it would be if we became participants in reaching our present world, instead of being spectators of our past world!
- 4) Read all the verses in the Bible about the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is called the "blessed hope" in Titus 2:13. Instead of forever looking back and pining for the past, LOOK UP and plan for the future!
- 5) And then count your blessings, name them one by one! (Or weigh them ton by ton!) A Bible reading, praying, serving, witnessing Christian is the happiest, most fulfilled (and least nostalgic!!!) person on God's good earth! Homesick for Hollywood? You've got to be kidding! Yearning after the Grand Ole Opry? Get a life! Grieving over cheap groceries? Grow up and plant a garden! And then share it with a neighbour. And while you are at it, tell him about Jesus! Years ago, we stuck a sheet of paper on the fridge, on which we wrote down the daily blessings the Lord gave us, and kept track of them for a month. Best thing we ever did!

I've had it with "Those were the good old days!"

"THESE ARE THE GOOD OLD DAYS, by the grace of God!"

Bro. Buddy Smith.

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