



March 29, 2011

Mental obesity is pandemic among Independent Baptists. The prevalence of undisciplined thinking with all its excesses explains why churches have "battleship sized pulpits" for pastors to hide their egos behind. Seminaries and denominational headquarters surely have to buy double wide leather office chairs for their CEO's to park their intellects in. After all, when they've taken the "go" out of the gospel, and all that remains is a "spell," so that their ministry is driving a desk, what could be expected but oversized and underpowered preachers?

Welcome to the 21st century pastor. He is the new model, and the old model is being phased out. Better get used to it, or so they say.

Clarence Sexton's IBFI conference is only a few weeks away. How many examples of mental obesity and spiritual malnutrition will be paraded before the adoring multitude?

There are many verses in the Bible that tell us to tighten our belts, like I Peter 1:13, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;"

Table of Contents:

[For All The Superb Mothers We Know](#)

[The Meekness of George Whitfield](#)

[Good Links Methinks](#)

[Therapy For The Funny Bone](#)

[Rob Bell's Universalism](#)

[Ole Bull and the Old Violin](#)

[For the Budding Archaeologists](#)

[Anybody Remember the Gender Neutral NIV?](#)

[Poems That Preach](#)

[Notable Quotes and Quotable Notes](#)

[Eddy-Torial](#)

For All The Superb Mothers We Know

Just a Mom?

A woman, renewing her driver's license at the County Clerk 's office, was asked by the woman recorder to state her occupation. She hesitated, uncertain how to classify herself. 'What I mean is, ' explained the recorder, 'do you have a job or are you just a .?' 'Of course I have a job,' snapped the woman. 'I'm a Mom.' 'We don't list 'Mom' as an occupation, 'housewife' covers it,' Said the recorder emphatically.

I forgot all about her story until one day I found myself in the same situation, this time at our own Town Hall. The Clerk was obviously a career woman, poised, efficient, and possessed of a high sounding title like, 'Official Interrogator' or 'Town Registrar.'

'What is your occupation?' she probed.

What made me say it? I do not know. The words simply popped out. 'I'm a Research Associate in the field of Child Development and Human Relations.'

The clerk paused, ball -point pen frozen in midair and looked up as though she had not heard right. I repeated the title slowly emphasizing the most significant words. Then I stared with wonder as my pronouncement was written, in bold, black ink on the official questionnaire.

'Might I ask,' said the clerk with new interest, 'just what you do in your field?'

Coolly, without any trace of fluster in my voice, I heard myself reply, 'I have a continuing program of research, (what mother doesn't) In the laboratory and in the field, (normally I would have said indoors and out.) I'm working for my Masters, (first the Lord and then the whole family) and already have four credits (all daughters). Of course, the job is one of the most demanding in the humanities, (any mother care to disagree?) and I often work 14 hours a day, (24 is more like it). But the job is more challenging than most run-of-the-mill careers and the rewards are more of a satisfaction rather than just money.'

There was an increasing note of respect in the clerk's voice as she completed the form, stood up, and personally ushered me to the door.

As I drove into our driveway, buoyed up by my glamorous new career, I was greeted by my lab assistants - ages 13, 7, and 3. Upstairs I could hear our new experimental model, (a 6 month old baby) in the child development program, testing out a new vocal pattern. I felt I had scored a beat on bureaucracy! And I had gone on the official records as someone more distinguished and indispensable to mankind than 'just another Mom.'

Motherhood! What a glorious career!

Especially when there's a title on the door.

[\(Back to Table of Contents\)](#)

The Meekness of George Whitfield

By Buddy Smith

How mysteriously the fruit of the Spirit grows! Bud, blossom, and fruit. These are the graces of Christ worked in us by the indwelling Spirit of God! Love, Joy, Peace, Longsuffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, and Temperance (Gal. 5:22,23) None of these are natural to man. They are the work of the Spirit, and of Him alone.

Have you noticed how He grows His fruit in the least likely places? I must confess that I do not expect to find it where it grows. Of course, the Bible is full of examples of men who discovered wonderful blessings unexpectedly. Samson found honey in a lion, Moses found in the desert a bush aflame, Jacob rested his head on a stony pillow and found the house of God, and Andrew beside the Jordan found the long awaited Messiah. Each of these had their own "Eureka!" (Now that's a good Bible word, "Eureka!") It would be a good idea for each of us to begin to shout out our own "Eureka's " every time we find the sweet fruit of the Spirit growing in a brother or sister's life.

Over the past few months I have been prowling the Lord's paddocks in search of the elusive fruit of the Spirit, and have found it in the lives of Billy Bray, RC Chapman, Hudson Taylor, and others. Well, this month I have been searching for the fruit of meekness and have found it growing in an unexpected place. No, it's not Moses, though the Spirit of God described him as being the meekest of men. Our attention is not turned to our dear Saviour who was meek and lowly of heart. Our thoughts are turned to George Whitfield, one of the best examples of what it means to be an evangelist. I have several biographies of Whitfield on my shelves, and treasure them all, but my favourite is the one by Dallimore. It is in two volumes and should be read by every preacher at least once in his life.

Now I feel that I need to emphasise that meekness is consistent with the office of evangelist. Keep in mind that are not speaking here of the ecumenical entertainers who call themselves evangelists. We are not thinking of wealthy celebrities who call themselves televangelists. We are thinking of men like Philip, the deacon from the Jerusalem church, who is the first to be called an evangelist by the Holy Spirit. His gospel ministry in Samaria, his willingness to leave the thriving work there and go at the Spirit's command to Gaza to win the Ethiopian eunuch to Christ and baptise him, his itinerant ministry along the coast, as well as the fruit in his own family, all these are consistent with the fruit of meekness.

So what is meekness? No doubt, in these giddy days of men's addiction to self esteem and self love, meekness would be thought to be weakness. Nothing could be farther from the truth. In fact, meekness is one of the most courageous and lionhearted character traits a man can have. It takes a brave man to be meek. Meekness is close kin to humility, but is not identical. Our Lord described His heart only once, "...For I am meek and lowly in heart." Matt. 11:29c He makes a distinction between meekness and lowliness of heart, or humility. Meekness is "that temper of spirit in which we accept God's dealings with us as good, and therefore we accept them without disputing and resisting them... The insults and injuries (which evil men inflict upon us) are permitted and employed by God for the chastening and purifying of His elect. Meekness recognises the danger that is in our assertion of our legal rights, lest they be pushed into moral wrongs." These words by RC Trench are a help to us in grasping what is meant by meekness. Another brother wrote once, "The meek man does not fight for his own rights or insist upon vindication of his own personal honour."

George Whitfield showed himself to be a meek man on many occasions. In the very early days of his ministry so many people turned out to hear him preach that many of the local clergy criticised him and banned him from their pulpits. Some even named him from the pulpit and roared against him while he sat in the congregation. The people who had been converted under Whitfield's preaching were so offended that some of them walked out of the church if they found he was not preaching, so Whitfield preached against their actions. When one of his admirers wanted to cut the salary of his minister for criticising Whitfield, he composed a sermon on loving one's enemies and his friend repented. Those sermons are acts of meekness. When an enemy printed a pamphlet against him, he took it upstairs, knelt by his bed, and prayed hard for the author.

One of my favourite stories about Whitfield is that of the drummer boy who was hired to stand right beside the pulpit and beat the drum to drown the preacher with noise. It happened on Society Hill in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Initially, Whitfield just preached louder, so the drummer boy just beat the drum louder. Whitfield stopped and the boy stopped his drumming, glad of a rest. Whitfield looked at the boy and laughed, and said, for all to hear, "Friend, you and I serve the two greatest masters existing, though in different callings. You beat up for volunteers for King George, and I for the Lord Jesus. In God's name let's not interrupt one another. The world is wide enough for us both and we will get recruits in abundance." The boy grinned and never touched his drum for the rest of the evening. Whitfield's meekness had won where belligerence would have failed.

Dallimore records the instance when Whitfield received a scathing rebuke from one of his critics, who chastised him for an offence. Whitfield graciously replied, "I thank you for speaking to me about this matter, but I must tell you that I know much worse things about myself than what you have written."

We must never think of this blessed fruit of the Spirit without remembering the third Beatitude, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." Matt. 5:5 There is contained in this verse a grand truth. The meek man who yields up his rights to God and is content with God's providence, even if that providence brings the censure of evil men, he will find that he will inherit much more than they take from him. Do the wicked pant after the dust on the head of the poor (Amos 2:7)? Let them have it. God offers the earth to the meek man. Will Saul deny David the honours he promised? God has better honours for him if he will learn meekness. Will Nebuchadnezzar deny Daniel and his friends the luxuries of the king's court in Jerusalem? Then give them up, lads, for God has bigger things in store. Will the rulers of the synagogue cast out the man who was born blind, but now can see? It is no great loss, for the Saviour will find him and welcome him into a better fellowship.

So we must ask ourselves, "Do I desire, do I long for and yearn earnestly that the Spirit of God will grow in the parched desert of my heart the meekness that will mark me as belonging to Jesus Christ?"

It is mine for the asking.

[\(Back to Table of Contents\)](#)

Good Links Methinks -

One of the largest payouts to victims of Roman Catholic priests' immorality is described at this link:

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/breaking-news/jesuits-settle-abuse-claims-for-us166m/story-fn3dxity-1226028469148>

[\(Back to Table of Contents\)](#)

Therapy For The Funny Bone -

(For those of us who are the "computer illiterati", computer jokes often cut too close to the bone. Nevertheless, some conversations between computer users and technicians are very funny. Here are a few examples I have not seen previously.)

Customer: 'I've been calling 700-1000 for two days and can't get through; Can you help?'

Operator: 'Where did you get that number, sir?'
Customer: 'It's on the door of your business.'
Operator: 'Sir, those are the hours that we are open.'

Samsung Electronics

Caller: 'Can you give me the telephone number for Jack?'
Operator: 'I'm sorry, sir, I don't understand who you are talking about.'
Caller: 'On page 1, section 5, of the user guide it clearly states that I need to unplug the fax machine from the AC wall socket and Telephone Jack before cleaning. Now, can you give me the Number for Jack?'
Operator: 'I think it means the telephone plug on the wall.'

Tech Support: 'OK. At the bottom left hand side of your screen, can You see the 'OK' button displayed?'
Customer: 'Wow! How can you see my screen from there?';

Caller: 'I deleted a file from my PC last week and I just realized that I need it. So, if I turn my system clock back two weeks will I get my file back again?'

[\(Back to Table of Contents\)](#)

Rob Bell's Universalism -

Over the past ten days or so, there have been a number of comments on Rob Bell's new book (Love Wins) in which he advocates an emergent perspective on universalism. Bro. Cloud's Friday Church News Notes last week had several excellent little articles on Rob Bell and his book. To read them, go here:

<http://www.wayoflife.org/files/d46749855e61e01ed8cf991566234e7c-762.html>

See also:

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/brian-mclaren-defends-rob-bell-against-mohlrs-critique-49534/#>

[\(Back to Table of Contents\)](#)

Ole Bull and the Old Violin -

(Our daughter, Jillian Holmes, sent this to me this week. She came across it in her devotions.)

Ole Bull, the world's most noted violinist, was ever wandering about. One day he became lost in the interminable forests. In the dark of the night he stumbled against a log hut, the home of a hermit. The old man took him in, fed and warmed him; after the supper they sat in front of a blazing fireplace, and the old

hermit picked some crude tunes on his screechy, battered violin. Ole Bull said to the hermit, "Do you think I could play on that?"

"I don't think so; it took me years to learn," the old hermit replied.

Ole Bull said, "Let me try it."

He took the old marred violin and drew the bow across the strings, and suddenly the hermit's hut was filled with music divine; and, according to the story, the hermit sobbed like a child.

We are battered instruments; life's strings have been snapped; life's bow has been bent. Yet, if we will only let Him take us and touch us, from this old battered, broken, shattered, marred instrument, He will bring forth music fit for the angels.

I never knew the old, brown violin,
That was so long in some dark corner thrust,
Its strings broken or loose, its pegs run down,
Could ever be of use again. The dust
Of years lay on its shabby case, until
One day a Master took the instrument,
And with caressing fingers touched the wood,
Adjusted pegs and strings; his mind intent
On making music as he drew his bow.
Then from the violin, long silent, sprang
Once more arpeggios, runs, trills. The wood
Quivered, leapt into life, and joyous sang.

I now believe that any broken life,
Jangling with discords, unadjusted, tossed
In some far corner, wasted, thrown aside,
Can yet be of some use; need not be lost
From Heaven's orchestra. A Master's Hand
Scarred with old wounds, can mend the broken thing
If yielded to Him wholly; and can make
The dumb life speak again, and joyous sing
In praise of One who gave His life that none
Need perish. And this message, glad, most blest,
I now believe; for placing in His Hand
My life, I find my world is now at rest.

Dorothy M. Barter-Snow.

About Ole Bull:

Bull, Ole (Bornemann), eccentric Norwegian violinist; b. Bergen, Feb. 5, 1810; d. Lyso, near Bergen, Aug. 17, 1880. He was extremely precocious, and played the violin experimentally even before acquiring the rudiments of music.

At the age of 9 he played solos with the Bergen Harmonic Soc. His teachers were then Niels Eriksen and J.H. Poulsen; later he had regular instruction with M. Ludholm. Ignoring academic rules, he whittled the bridge almost to the level of the finger- board, so as to be able to play full chords on all 4 strings.

He was sent by his father to Christiania to study theology, but failed the entrance examinations; instead, he organized a theater orch., which he led with his violin.

In 1829 he played in Copenhagen and Kassel. In 1831 he went to Paris, where he heard Paganini and became obsessed with the idea of imitating his mannerisms and equalling his success, a fantasy devoid of all imagined reality because of Bull's amateurish technique. However, he developed a personal type of playing that pleased the public, particularly in localities rarely visited by real artists.

During the season 1836-37 he played 274 concerts in England and Ireland; in 1839 he visited the great German violinist and composer Spohr in Kassel, in the hope of receiving useful advice from him. In 1840 he played Beethoven's Krentzer Sonata in London, with Liszt at the piano.

[\(Back to Table of Contents\)](#)

For The Budding Archaeologist -

Rare artifacts have now resurfaced 35 years after they were excavated from the Sinai by Israeli archaeologists and handed over to Egypt.

When Israel made peace with Egypt, some of the most intriguing archaeological artifacts ever discovered disappeared. Now they've apparently resurfaced.

As part of the 1979 peace agreement, Israel turned over to Egypt materials that had been excavated in the Sinai, among them the finds from Kuntillet Ajrud, a remote desert way station in northern Sinai that had been excavated in the mid- 1970s by Tel Aviv University archaeologist Ze'ev Meshel.

Located at the intersection of ancient desert tracks, Kuntillet Ajrud was both a caravanserai and a kind of spiritual center. Among the finds was a 400-pound stone bowl with an inscription on the rim in paleo-Hebrew letters (the kind used before the Babylonian destruction of Solomon's Temple) that read "(Belonging) to Ovadiah, son of Adnah, may he be blessed by Yahwe[h]."

Yahweh, spelled with four Hebrew letters (YHWH), known in scholarly literature as the tetragrammaton, is the personal name of the Hebrew God.

Even more intriguing were two large storage vessels over three feet high called pithoi (singular pithos) bearing inscriptions and crude, faint figural drawings. One of the inscriptions refers to "Yahweh of Samaria and his Asherah."

Read more at: <http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Op-EdContributors/Article.aspx?id=211997>

[\(Back to Table of Contents\)](#)

Anybody Remember the Gender Neutral NIV? -

I have learned that heretical books and Bible versions do not usually die when they are exposed to be in error. Just a couple of years ago or so, when the publishers of the corrupt NIV disclosed their plans to bring out a gender neutral edition of the popular translation, there was a loud outcry and it was shelved. At that

time, I remember saying to myself, "It will be back. When the dust settles, it will be back." And it is. Have a look here:

http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/42138347/ns/us_news/

Incidentally, several years ago, NavPress tried to print a book defending Judas. It, too, was shouted down. Anybody want to lay odds against it being dusted off and brought out before long?

[\(Back to Table of Contents\)](#)

Poems That Preach

Preacher On The Fence

From out the millions of the earth
God often calls a man
To preach the Word
And for the Truth to take a royal stand.
'Tis sad to see him shun the cross,
nor stand in its defense;
Between the fields of right and wrong,
A preacher on the fence.

Before him are the souls of men
Bound for heaven or hell;
An open Bible in his hand,
And yet he will not tell
All the truth that's written there;
To them 'twould be an offense.
The joys of heaven, the woes of hell.
A preacher on the fence.

Now surely God has called a man
To battle for the right;
'Tis his to ferret out the wrong,
And turn on us the light.
And yet he dare not tell the truth;
He fears the consequence;
The most disgusting thing on earth
Is a preacher on the fence.

If he should stand up for the wrong,
The right he'd not defend.
If he should stand up for the right,
The wrong he would offend.
His mouth is closed; he cannot speak
For freedom or against.
Great God, please deliver us
From a preacher on the fence!

But soon both sides will find him out,
And brand him as a fraud.
A coward who dares not to please
the devil or his God.
Oh Lord, free us from fear of man;
From cowardly pretense;
Cleanse out the dross and fear of loss,
And keep us off the fence!

[\(Back to Table of Contents\)](#)

Notable Quotes and Quotable Notes -

"Thou art a slave of slaves, for thou art a slave to those appetites over which I rule." Diogenes to Alexander the Great

"I will sleep in my armour. The war is not ended." Diogenes?

"When old men prepare for war, young men will die." - unknown

[\(Back to Table of Contents\)](#)

Eddy-Torial -

I am taking two weeks off to make a trip overseas, so there will be no Heads Up! until about the middle of April (Did I hear someone say, "Thank goodness!" ?) My sweetheart's dear mother, Mozelle Tonne, is celebrating her 90th birthday and needs help blowing out the candles and eating the cake.

Before we return to Australia, Clarence Sexton will have hosted his second Independent Baptist Friends International conference in Tennessee.

I stopped attending pastors' fellowship meetings about 40 years ago when I realised that the real thrust of the BBF fellowship meetings (and of the Sword conferences) I attended was not fellowship based on truth, but on the promotion of success oriented personalities. Oh, I would go once in a while. Some years later, Bro. Ernie Veszely, the pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Melbourne, asked if I would speak at the NBF meetings he hosted in 2007. I did so and was blest beyond measure with the messages Bro. Ron Comfort preached. His preaching was filled with Scripture and with plenty of old fashioned fire. So I thought, "If all the fellowship meetings are like this, I need to go!" So I started attending again.

I now believe I made a serious mistake in going back. I wrongly assumed that the speakers would be as good as they were that first year and that God's blessing would be on every year's meetings, as they were that year. I attended the meetings in Adelaide and Perth, and was terribly disappointed with most of the sermons I heard. Much of the music sung and played, at least in the Perth meetings, was Hillsong music and did not edify this old preacher. That's the way it is with CCM, whether it is hard or soft.

Several things have become increasingly apparent over the past forty years. One is, that IB pastors are just as enamoured with "big name" preachers as Southern Baptists are with Billy Graham. Have you also noticed that preachers do not attain "big name" status by wisdom, grace, faith, or soundness in doctrine, but by personality, humour, charisma, or "success" in "busyness" and "bigness?" Honesty in advertising would require the IBFI (and all its clones) to rebrand themselves as "Pragmatism Incorporated". (If it ain't big it ain't good.)

It has come to be an unquestioned tradition for pastors to go to as many preachers' fellowships as possible. As much as I appreciate good, sound, Christ honouring preaching from the King James Bible, I wonder what verses we can point to that support the idea that we preachers really need all the hype and tripe we find at these meetings? Maybe I missed it, but I can't recall reading that Peter, Paul, and John ever held an IBFI meeting in Jerusalem or Antioch, or that they needed ex-pat celebrity preachers and CCM to draw the crowds.

For myself, I have decided to fellowship with the brethren on an individual basis, not collectively. Biblically, fellowship is to be on the basis of sound doctrine, and not on the basis of who the preachers are or how big a church they pastor. It doesn't really make any difference who signed your diploma, whose book has your endorsement, who endorses your book, or what big name preacher patted you on the head when you were just a nipper. What matters is how well you know my Saviour and His Words. And how close you walk with Him.

Now that is a good basis for fellowship.

BroB

[\(Back to Table of Contents\)](#)