



The Glory of Preaching

Bill Dillon

The Lord Jesus Christ glorified preaching when he said: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord” (Luke 4:18-19). These were truly “gracious words.”

The apostle Paul likewise taught that no task was more noble than preaching. His inspired pen tells us: “For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel” (1 Corinthians 9:16). Again, he charges: “Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine” (2 Timothy 4:2). There is no greater work nor a more God-approved deed than to preach “the unsearchable riches of Christ” (Ephesians 3:8).

Preaching loses its glory, however, when the gospel is secondary in the message. The aspiration of every preacher should be to uplift the Savior and let men glory in the blessings of the kingdom of God. People whose hearts are right will come to the King. Little wonder then that Paul said: “For I have determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified” (1 Corinthians 2:1-2).

The glory of preaching is lost when the preacher doesn’t prepare. It was said of one preacher that he was so involved in hospital visiting and errand-running during the week that on the Lord’s Day he didn’t know his subject until he stood in the pulpit. The tragedy is that when he finished, his audience did not know his subject either!

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Where Do We Go from Here?

Andy Erwin

The late Bill Dillon published our lead article for this issue in the *Gospel Gleaner* in 1998. While much has changed in the world since then, his thoughts are as true and timely as ever, because of the things that haven't changed.

A Generational Problem?

It is not uncommon to hear Christians opine of "preaching today not being like it used to be." However, the decline of bold and decisive preaching is nothing new. Bill's article was published almost 27 years ago. Articles like his were published 27 years before that. The issue we are addressing became increasingly problematic at least 60 years ago or more and as a result the church has not grown numerically in the United States for last 45-50 years.

Certainly, we have had exceptional preachers and preaching during this time. But have we had sufficient gospel preaching to stem the secular tide sweeping over this nation?

The 1960's

In the 1960's the church heard some distinct sermons and sat at the feet of many distinguished gospel preachers. However, *some* were not *enough*. The decade of the 60s experienced events like the Cold War, Vietnam, the Civil Rights Movement, the assassinations of a president, a civil rights leader, and a presidential

candidate. The nation was full of civil unrest and societal upheaval.

It was a time when the bold proclamation of the gospel was essential to the church and the nation. However, too many sermons and too much effort was expended upon issues such as church support of colleges and orphan homes, the number of cups on the communion, and eating in a church building. Such issues were out of touch with the crises facing America during that time. As a result, many children who were raised during this period were left questioning the relevance of the church in the world.

The 1970's

By the time these children of the 60s left for college and began their own families, many of them left the church. The church simply was not relevant to them. Other issues of less or any importance pervaded the pulpit in the 70s, but seldom were these issues relevant to the crisis in our country. Most of them concerned matters within the church and were issues raised by preachers and Bible department professors in Christian colleges.

The nation was dealing with the aftermath of prayer being removed from public schools, doubt concerning the existence of God, *Roe v. Wade*, the expansion of recreational drug use, and the dissolution of the home and traditional values. Such are major issues and ones which have not gone away.

Looking back, it is fair to say that we could have done more and should have been more focused on these matters. This criticism can be proven by simply surveying a few of the most prominent issues we discussed among ourselves and heralded from the pulpit and brotherhood papers. Many of those issues are no longer relevant today. Were they ever relevant to anyone besides the preachers debating them?

The 1980's

For the first time in the 20th century, the church in the 1980s saw a decline in numbers from the first year to the last year of a decade. It was a decade prone to extremes in the pulpit: Liberalism vs. Traditionalism.

The Boston Movement, denominational fellowship, and lax morals were evident on one side, while the other side continued to grapple with a few of the lingering issues they held dear because they were important to previous generations while also hoping to stem the tide of liberalism in the church.

Once more, we can observe that too many of the issues (serious or not) were internal issues and mostly propagated by preachers.

Meanwhile, the nation experienced the advent of cable television and children were exposed to MTV and HBO. Morally speaking, television programming has only worsened

since that time. Entertainment was established as a god in this nation if it wasn't already. More and more were people giving their free time to television and entertainment rather than to spiritual matters and their relationships with God.

The 1990's

Shall we continue? Need we talk about the advent of the internet or Monica Lewinsky? The nation continued the downward trend from Christian values to secular humanism. Christianity came to be openly mocked more than ever before in this country and in the Western world at large. The church was viewed as irrelevant. More homes were being broken, civil government could not be trusted, and mainstream media and entertainment were complicit.

Too many preachers fell into the trap of wanting to satisfy the desire to entertain instead of the need and divine charge to edify. Needed yet controversial issues were outright ignored. Churches began to hire preachers based on what they *would not* teach rather than what they *would*.

The 21st Century

Need we continue? Everything we have said about society's ills thus far could be said again – *plus!* Did you ever think you would see the level of foolishness you are witnessing today?

Currently, the State of Tennessee's ruling not to allow children to have sex change surgery or hormonal altering drugs is being challenged in the United States Supreme Court. Is this what the Founding Fathers had in mind? Is this really a subject for debate? It is for a country that does not know or care for God.

In this current state of sin and despair, we implore our brethren to preach the word. Preach Christ crucified. Preach the gospel. Let us not waste our time on matters irrelevant to the real issues we are facing.

Sin is the Real Issue

The reason why the world is as it is can be stated singularly – man is under the dominion of sin. Sin is the real issue. The only remedy for sin is the blood of Christ. The only message that will ever address this issue is the gospel. Christ is the only answer to the world's problems.

No politician or political party will fix this country. No economic system will treat the issue of greed and corruption. Christ is the only cure. The Bible is the only book that can identify, address, and offer treatment for the world's sickness in sin.

The message of the Bible is as relevant and needed as ever before. The Bible is the only book that can offer a solution to sin and treat the world's sickness. A world that is not right with God can never be right with each other. We cannot love our neighbors as we should until and unless we begin to love God as we should. The Bible tells us everything we will ever need to know about man and his relationship with God and how this one relationship affects all other relationships in life. If we can fix that relationship, our relationship with each other will only improve.

Know the Difference

As Christians, we must be resolute in our understanding of sin and our teaching concerning it. Sin is a transgression of God's law and is thus unrighteousness in practice (1 John 3:4; 5:17). *God's* law. We cannot treat every violation of our personal

scruples with the same measure of scrutiny that we use when addressing violations of God's law. Such has been our failure in the past and cannot continue if we are to be relevant in the future.

For example, I do not have an earring, nor do I have any tattoos. I will never have either of these. My personal scruples will not allow it. Does that make a man's earring sinful? Is someone with a tattoo in violation of God's law?

When we are faced with such questions, ask yourself, could this person be baptized, become a Christian, and be added to the church with an earring or tattoo? You would hopefully answer, "yes." Then ask yourself if you would have to withdraw fellowship from them for having the same earring or tattoo. Hopefully, you would answer "no." If they can become a Christian and remain a Christian, then obviously they are not in violation of God's law even if they do not share your personal scruples.

A little logic and common sense will prevent us from wasting our time majoring in minors. Moreover, it will keep us from making laws out of our personal preferences. To make a law out of one's scruples and defend it as though it is a matter of sin is divisive to the church, irrelevant to the world, and sinful to God.

In this present evil world, we need the gospel. Christ gave us one job to do – "preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). No matter what else we may do, if we are not preaching the gospel, we are not obeying the Lord. Man must have a clear understanding of sin, its destructive capability, and the power of the gospel to save him (Romans 1:16).

We have no greater charge, no other course, no higher calling than to preach the gospel and perpetuate the mission of Christ. We must return to the clear, distinctive, and bold preaching which “turned the world upside down” (Acts 17:6), if we are to turn it right side up.

(Continued from Page 1: *The Glory of Preaching*)

The glory of preaching is lost when ear-tickling phrases of flattery are substituted for plain contending for the faith once delivered. If preaching is to reach men’s hearts, words must be pointed to them.

Let the gospel preacher stand before men, not framing his words to please his peers but, as it was said of Pericles, “on the strength of his character, even to brave their anger by contradicting their will.” The mantle of the gallant and the good shall rest upon him who so teaches the truths of God in love for the souls of his fellow men.

We have no company with the excesses of any extremists, nor do we defend rudeness in the name of soundness, but we do cast our lot with men who, without hesitation, haste or hate, “preach the word” in all its glory.



And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15

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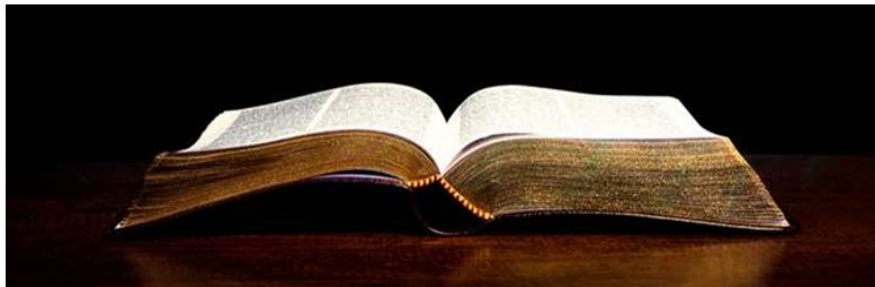
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Being a father of eight children (ages 22 down to 5) gives me plenty of opportunities to reflect upon my successes and failures as a parent. Ranae and I have been blessed by the LORD richly with these precious ones, but I know the heavy responsibility that is mine--particularly the teenage years and the transition into adulthood (suddenly changing diapers isn't so hard after all!).

I am not a perfect parent, though I strive to do the best I can. I try to be proactive rather than reactive. I try to learn from others, avoiding their mistakes and emulating their successes. I try to lead my family by the Scriptures. I suppose decades from now the fruit that is produced in the lives of my adult children (whether it be good or bad) will be a stronger testimony to my success or failure as a father than anything I might suggest here. Nevertheless, I'd like to share some thoughts now that have been on my mind lately regarding **balance**.

Balance is vitally important in parenting, and achieving a proper balance is a perpetual challenge. It is easy to go overboard with various extremes in either direction as parents, whether it be sheltering our children too much or not sheltering them enough, being overly strict or letting them run wild, never being away from them or being gone far

too often, etc. Ultimately, God puts the responsibility in the father's hands for the upbringing of children. He must train them in the way of the Lord (cf. Ephesians 6:4). Each father must decide for his family (and give account to God) for the decisions he makes on various aspects of balance within the home. Scripture sets forth general guiding principles but working out the details is something parents must prayerfully consider, always being willing to adjust as necessary. And certainly, a proper balance with the above issues will be different for a 5-year-old than for a 15-year-old. The fact that children are ever-changing and growing up is what makes it difficult.

In my opinion, **balance is about keeping the ultimate parenting goal in mind at all times, which is this: we want--above all else--to rear children who are faithful to Christ.** Good parents will have many goals for their children, but this one is supreme. Certain aims may be abandoned or set aside for a season, but never this one!

A child who is faithful to Christ is one who has the heart of a servant **and** is seeking first God's kingdom and righteousness (cf. Matthew 6:33) **because he wants to--**not just because mom and dad want him to (and there is a huge difference!). You won't achieve this goal, however, and your child will never be ready to go out and face the world on his own if you fail to **gradually** transfer more and more

responsibility and decision-making to him with each passing year.

Treating your teenager like an elementary school child is a recipe for failure. I am aware of children from strong, Christian homes who rebelled once they were out from under the iron-hand of their parents. Mom and dad set them up to fail (though not intentionally) by sheltering far too long, being overly strict, and never allowing them to make a decision or a mistake.

Children that grow up in this type of environment will find it difficult to have their own faith because their parents dictate everything. The appearance of a strong home is maintained by means of strict authority and discipline, but the family is not close. As adulthood is approached, there is much resentment and anger between this child and his parents, and not nearly enough compassion and understanding. These children find freedom for the first time at college or living on their own, and they aren't equipped to handle it. This sort of approach is imbalanced and is unlikely to achieve the ultimate parenting goal.

On the other hand, the ultimate parenting goal won't likely be achieved if parents aren't mindful of the real dangers that are present in the world today (cf. 1 Peter 5:8), and do not take appropriate steps to protect, educate, and lead their children away from sin in its manifold forms (cf. 1 John 2:15-17).

I have seen parents who are too permissive and naïve or simply too busy and uninvolved in their child's life. Their parenting approach is imbalanced. Children can easily get sucked into pornography or other forms of worldliness in their pre-teen and teenage years and some parents are irresponsible by not being around enough or by merely **hoping** their child will

turn out okay (friends, hope is good, but it's not a **plan** for success!).

Some parents forget about the ultimate parenting goal in the busyness of life and shift their family focus to temporal aims (e.g., paying off debt, getting a promotion, buying a new vehicle, planning a great vacation, etc.). They may encourage their children to be high achievers when it comes to academics, sports, or other extracurricular activities, but they fail to nurture spiritual excellence (though the potential is certainly there; cf. Matthew 13:22). Consequently, the hearts of their children are with the world, not the Lord. These children may be great successes in worldly terms, but they are lukewarm spiritually (cf. Revelation 3:15ff). This sort of approach is imbalanced and is unlikely to achieve the ultimate parenting goal.

Let's shift gears at this point and introduce another component we must be mindful of when it comes to parenting balance: that is, **individuality**. Each child is unique, and I've observed this truth repeatedly in my own home. My children look very much alike physically. It is easy to ascertain they all belong to the same family. But, regarding personality (i.e., likes, dislikes, strengths, and weaknesses), each child stands apart from the others in various ways from scholastic aptitude, to willingness to embrace risk and try new things, to athletic ability, to tenderness of spirit, etc). Although my children **look** very much the same, they are **not** the same.

Parents must come to terms with the fact that their children will be different than them **and**, if they have more than one child, the other children will be different than the first one. I have always

loved mathematics because it came easy to me, and I enjoyed school for the most part.

When my firstborn was young, I wanted him to follow in my footsteps and thrive at math and academics. It turned out that math was not his forte, and he doesn't excel like I did scholastically, but I've learned that this is okay! He has his own special talents and abilities that differ from mine and I have tried to nurture him in that direction. Ranae and I attempt to train all of our children in the way they "should go" while considering their unique God-given strengths (Proverbs 22:6).

Whether our children excel at math or earn A's in other subjects doesn't really matter when it comes to the ultimate parenting goal. I want them to love God and His word. **I want them to have a servant's heart and to choose to follow Jesus even when I'm not around.** That's what really matters. It would be foolish for me to try to force any of my children into a mold to make them exactly like me regarding unimportant matters. God made each one unique, and I must respect that as their father. In some ways, our physical

families are like the church (i.e., God's spiritual family). I am thankful that each child (and every Christian) is unique, for this makes our families (physical or spiritual) whole (cf. I Corinthians 12:18), but it also adds to the challenge for parents (and elders in the church) who are trying to keep balance.

Some children will require different parenting approaches because of their uniqueness. Some children are compliant naturally; others are not. What works in training and disciplining one child, may not be as effective with the next. Wise parents will do whatever it takes to bring out the best in their children for the Lord, keeping those personality differences in mind.

Friends, let me be quick to affirm that I don't claim to have all the answers when it comes to parenting, but clearly, balance is a must in a godly home and it is something that should be regularly evaluated and adjusted as necessary. Furthermore, considering the individuality of each child and training each one appropriately is important if balance is to be maintained. May God bless our efforts to rear Godly offspring for Him.

The banner features the GTKYB logo at the top, which consists of a stylized 'G' and 'K' followed by the text 'GTKYB GETTING TO KNOW YOUR BIBLE'. Below the logo, the text reads 'FREE BIBLE STUDY HELPS BY BILLY LAMBERT'. Three book covers are displayed in a row: '20 GOSPEL SERMONS' (Simple sermons about grace, truth, the cross, salvation, and a home in heaven), 'THE HARVEST OF AN EVANGELISTIC CHURCH' (A soul-stirring book about personal evangelism and fulfilling the Great Commission), and 'SEEKING GOD AFTER THE DUE ORDER' (Learning to navigate tough topics, establish biblical authority, and stay grounded in truth). At the bottom, there are icons for Facebook, Instagram, Google, Twitter, and Spotify, along with the website URL 'www.gettingtoknowyourbible.com'.

Refusing God's Grace

Johnny Trail

A peculiar story is related regarding the refusal of a pardon that was offered by Andrew Jackson in 1829. There was a man named George Wilson who had been convicted of murder in connection with a robbery he committed. Wilson was good friends with someone who knew President Jackson, and that friend asked him to pardon Wilson.

Oddly enough, Wilson refused Jackson's pardon from the death penalty. In his judgement on the case Justice Marshall said, "A pardon is a paper, the value of which depends on its acceptance by the person implicated. It is hardly to be supposed that one under sentence of death would refuse to accept a pardon, but if it is refused it is no pardon."¹

The reasons behind Wilson's refusal of the pardon are uncertain, but this brings to mind some biblical principles. Most people convicted of a crime that carried the death penalty with it would have availed themselves to the presidential pardon that was offered by Jackson, but Wilson was not of that persuasion. In the end, George Wilson was hanged for his crime.

God's grace, unlike righteousness of God in Him. We then, *as* workers together *with Him* also plead with *you* not to receive the grace of God in vain." To receive something "in vain" is to make it useless of or no effect. When one refuses God's grace, he rejects the free pardon that available through Christ and obedience to the gospel.

Scripture makes it apparent that one can depart from the grace of God. Acts 13:43 says, "Now when the congregation had broken up, many of the Jews and devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God."

Evidently the church at Galatia had fallen from grace by attempting to syncretize the law of Christ with the Old Testament law. Galatians 5:4 says, "You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace."

How does one gain access to the grace of God? The concept of obedience and grace are inseparably connected. We have access to grace by our obedience faith. Romans 5:1-2 says, "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

Most Bible students are aware of Ephesians 2:8 which says in part, "...For by grace you have been saved through faith..." The same epistle written by the apostle Paul later says in Ephesians, "That He might sanctify and

age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ." That being the case, all people have the potential to be saved. This passage (Titus 2:11) cannot be taken to mean that all people are saved without any expectations of obedience since that would contradict a plethora of other passages.

Consequently, God's grace is conditional. Calvinism teaches that God's grace is bestowed unconditionally by the sovereignty of God. Scripture does not teach this. The patriarch Noah found grace in the eyes of God (Genesis 6:8), but he was only saved by responding in a positive fashion to the commandments of God. Hebrews 11:7 says, "By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith."

Unlike what is taught by certain individuals, one can deny the grace of God. 2 Corinthians 5:21-6:1 says, "For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the

1 [UNITED STATES v. GEORGE WILSON. | Supreme Court | US Law | LII / Legal Information Institute](#)

cleansed her with the washing of water by the word.” This means that the church, as Paul is discussing per context, is cleansed from sin at the point of being washed. The idea of being washed means they were baptized and cleansed from their transgressions (cf. Acts 22:16). Thus, they were saved by God by grace through faith at the point of their obedience to the commandments of the gospel.

Sometimes members of the church are accused of not saying enough about grace. Really, when we talk about baptism we are teaching the means by which one accesses the grace of God. If one looks at the end of Romans chapter five, Paul engages the reader in a long discussion of God’s grace.

Notice as Romans 5:18-21 teaches, “Therefore, as through one man’s offense *judgment* came to all

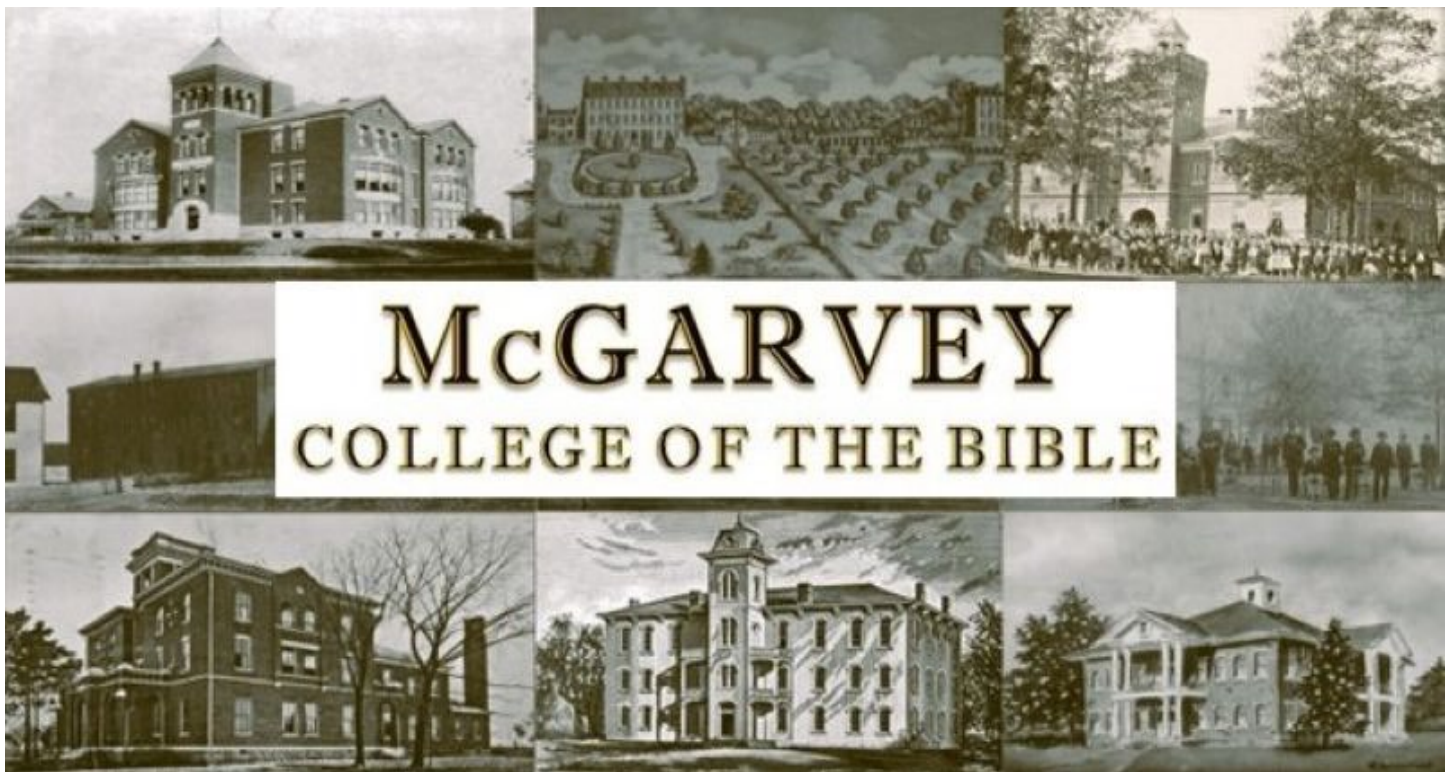
men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man’s righteous act *the free gift came* to all men, resulting in justification of life. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous. Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

In chapter six of Romans, Paul continues with his discussion of grace and he ties it with baptism. Romans 6:1-4 says, “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we

were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

Thus the grace, we obtained at the point of baptism constrains people arisen to “walk in newness of life” to act in a manner consistent with the grace that they had received. Amazing how that discussion makes the grace of God more understandable!

We should never refuse the pardon that is offered by the grace of God. We cannot expect to inherit eternal life without responding to the gracious invitation of God in a positive manner. It is the only means by which we expect to have a pardon from our sins. To reject this pardon, is tantamount to an eternal death sentence.



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There are two paths before each of us. They are: 1) the one we are considering, 2) the others we are not. The one we are considering, do we know its destination, the obstacles, the source of authority that makes this path the best one? Presumably, the other paths we have rejected, we are aware of their respective destinations, the obstacles and even the source of authority that generates these paths.

What if one of those paths we are not considering is a path set forth for us by God, would we change our mind and consider all over again His path? Wisdom says we should, but frequently the hearts tell another story. Jesus said of His path, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me (John 14:6, ASV). It might be the heart (which is nothing more than one's mind and volition) telling us another story because the Father's path is not desired at all. Since the heart is wicked and deceitful (Jer. 17:9), many of us like to be lied to so we can do what we want.

Jesus identified Himself as the way to the Father; there is no other way. "That's narrow minded!" someone might say. Perhaps so, but if the truth is spoken, would you not want to know it so you can walk on the narrow path that leads safely to the destination the Lord

has prepared? You can't make a cake with your own recipe when you are called on to make it according to the recipe given you. Likewise, you can't go your own way and expect the Father of Glory to receive you when He gives you a path to travel. If there is only one right way to build a house, would you live in a house not built according to that right way? If we don't listen to the Lord's narrow way, then what better path can you find or produce? If you assert you found one, do you know its destination?

Why these questions? These questions are important for us to consider and equally so for our children.

Think about the path the children walk. The Scriptures teach, Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it (Prov. 22:6). Reflect on what is said in this well-known proverb. Consider that it is saying to us there are instructions, a path to travel, maturity experienced, and understanding that helps us land safely.

The **instructions** parents instill in their children begin at an early age, and they are the values they adopt throughout the life they live. Parents take their experiences and couple it with the instructions given them earlier in their lives and as they go along, like others,

they adjust along the way. Sadly, some parents have not been given a solid foundation in their own upbringing; consequently, they have not much substance to offer their children. Those who are so unfortunate to have this experience start their own parenting with one, perhaps two strikes against them. With one, or two strikes against them, they must begin where they are, and with the Lord one can't go wrong.

With the instruction given, the experiences gained, **paths** are chosen. Plural at the outset (generally) because young people must find their way in a confusing world. As they grow, frequently, the world may still have its confusion, but young people begin to firm up and choose for themselves what path they walk on. One of the great benefits of parenting is the opportunity to instill in children the Lord's path. Parents who love the Lord know the destination He has prepared for those who walk His path, children do not (at least early on). When parents don't know or refuse the Lord's path, the destination's arrival come quickly and with no preparation.

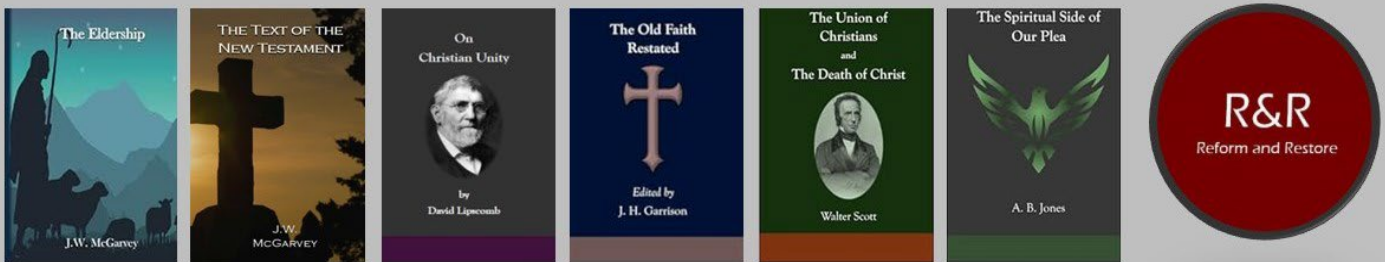
With the training in place, and the path chosen, **maturity** and now sets in. Maturity is the collection of years, coupled with experiences that make us who we are now. As each year comes and goes, as many experiences shape life, each of us adopt a new (or adjusted) approach, even when we stay on the same path. Maturity of years, however, does not always bring wisdom; what it does is teach each of us how to navigate life because of our varied experiences. My son, forget not my law; But let thy heart keep my commandments: For length of days, and years of life, And peace, will they add to thee (Prov. 3:1-2, ASV). How much better it is when the Lord's wisdom steers the navigation.

Lastly, when we learn from the Lord and we see the value of that learning, and with that vision, we have **understanding**. Because we understand, it is imperative we teach the younger generation, for if we do not, then result will be as we read in Scripture, ... also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, that knew not Jehovah, nor yet the work which he had wrought for Israel (Judges 2:10, ASV). Have you wondered why this occurred?

Perhaps among many things that might be said, there was at least one reason: the parents did not teach the young generation as they were taught. Maybe the parents that were taught simply thought what they were taught as youths the children would pick up and learn. It seems to be the way we operate, doesn't it? No doubt this is correct, but do children learn the value of the Lord's way and His warnings without being instructed?

Barton W. Stone once wrote: "Here I wish to give my testimony in favor of making the Bible a school book. By this means the young mind receives information and impressions, which are not erased through life. The Bible, not read in school, is seldom read afterwards. To this, as one leading cause, may be attributed the present growth of infidelity and skepticism, then scarcely known, and never openly avowed in all our country" (*The Cane Ridge Reader*, p. 4; written in 1843, reprint).

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MCGARVEY COLLEGE OF THE BIBLE

Est. 2024

A New School with an Old Soul!

In January 2025, we will begin the first classes of the McGarvey College of the Bible. The philosophy guiding MCOB is completely devoted to New Testament Christianity and the defense of holy scripture as the inspired word of God.

MCOB receives no government funding. We are determined and blessed not to seek any remuneration from any bureaucratic agency and are not bound to follow the rules they seek to impose upon educational institutions in general and Bible programs specifically.

We have eight faculty members. All our teachers are preachers of the gospel in fulltime ministry. Each teacher, four of whom have earned doctorates, has been educated in Christian schools and universities. Our board is comprised of three

faithful elders in the Lord's church, two of whom have preached for over 60 years. Our by-laws are written to ensure that our board remains faithful, as any future additions or subtractions must come with the unanimous consent of the existing members.

McGarvey College of the Bible has a singular goal which is shared by all parties involved – make good preachers better! Truly, we are a new school with an old soul.

A Graduate School of Preaching

MCOB is a graduate school for ministers who have graduated from a school of preaching or undergraduate college. We offer a Master of Arts in Christian Doctrine. The curriculum is comprised of twelve courses in doctrinal studies totaling thirty-six semester hours. Students are enrolled in six consecutive semesters until graduation. Our courses are offered

online using the latest technology. Students are also supplied with a laptop and a copy of our digital library totaling almost 17,000 volumes. Our first classes will be conducted in Ghana, Kenya, South Africa/Zimbabwe, and the United States.

A Five-Tool Preacher

Elite baseball players have been called “five-tool players” meaning they can run, throw, hit for power, hit for average, and field their position. Likewise, every preacher should possess five tools to be elite. He should be able to preach, teach, debate, write, and win souls.

His preaching should be clear, forceful, and entirely biblical. His teaching should be so that the common man hears him gladly. Concerning debating, he should be able to walk onto any ivory-towered university campus and defend the Christian faith against all objectors. He should

know and be able to answer any man-made doctrine contrary to the doctrine of Christ. He should also be able to write for publication. Christian journalism and publishing have been a staple in the efforts to restore New Testament Christianity. Media platforms are only expanding with technological advances. We must expand with them and continue to produce relevant resources to lead souls to truth. As for soul-winning, we take the perspective of leadership through ministry. Jesus came to serve. In serving mankind, He taught, converted, sacrificed, and ultimately triumphed. Preachers must lead through the example of Christ by serving, teaching, converting, and sacrificing for mankind.

Why Begin a New School?

McGarvey College of the Bible strives to be different in many ways – good ways. First, we seek a true biblical balance. We see no point in committing ourselves to advocating or defending practices or doctrines (conservative or liberal) not revealed in scripture. If God did not see the need to address these matters in His word, we see no need to make an issue out of them in the minister's education.

Secondly, we seek to make theology practical. What value is theology if it is not practical? No amount of education can make up the difference for a theology that lacks practical application.

Thirdly, we will never allow sectarian or secular doctrines to be advocated by our faculty. We promote a biblical plea for the unity of all believers based upon faith, repentance, and obedience to God.

Fourthly, you have our word that no denominational preachers or secular teachers will ever be invited to speak to our students or given any platform at MCOB to advance theories not aligned with our mission as directed from the word of God.

Fifthly, faithful stewardship and accurate accounting of all donations will go towards our goal of making good preachers better. It is troubling to see schools build multi-million-dollar endowments only to abandon the trust of the Christians who donated the funds. Financial reports are provided monthly to the board of

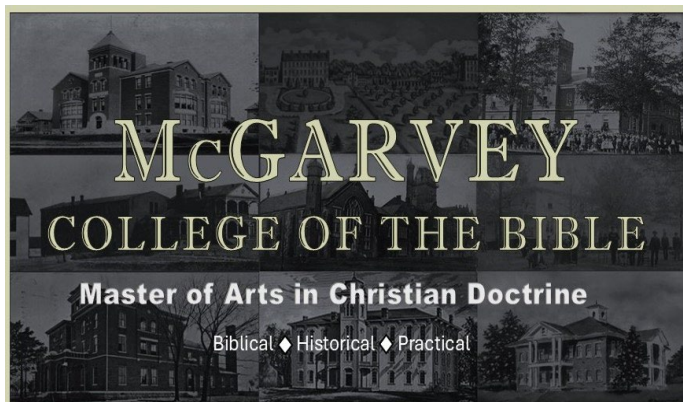
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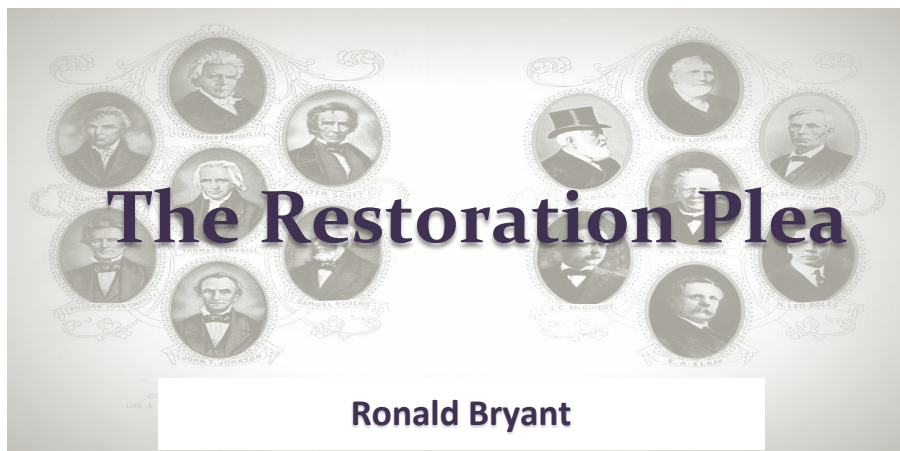
Will You Help Us?

We need your support. We have 40 students in five countries. Will you consider supporting our work with a one-time gift to help us launch the program? We will also need monthly contributions to help us cover the day-to-day operation of the school and salaries for teachers and administrative personnel. We cannot do this great work without you, and we need your support.

Please visit our website for more information (<https://mcgarveycollege.online>) or call me anytime.

Andy Erwin
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Please observe that we are setting forth a plea not a claim. We believe this plea honors the prayer that Jesus prayed recorded in (John 17:20-21), and the commands recorded in (1 Corinthians 1:10ff; Ephesians 4:1-6). The following statement expresses this plea well: Let us do that which God commands and let us be that which He intends us to be.

Central in Scripture is God's plan and purpose to save eternal souls and to bring each of them into right relationship with Him. God's will is to be the final authority. "Forever O Lord, Your word is settled in heaven" (Psalm 119:89). His power and purpose are real and are incomparable and irresistible. "I know that whatever God does, it shall be forever. Nothing can be added to it, and nothing taken from it. God does it, that men should fear before Him" (Ecclesiastes 3:14). It is Him with whom we have to do: "And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to which we must give account" (Hebrews 4:13). This plea rests upon respect and reverence for the Lord God of heaven.

We do not presume to restore the Lord God to His rightful place. The reason is simple. He has not stepped down, or aside, nor has He been

demoted. We are compelled by a desire and a commitment to know and honor Him and give Him the glory that is due Him. We plead for all to come to God (not to us), and worship and serve Him acceptably in godly fear and reverence (Hebrews 12:28).

We do not presume to restore Christ to His place as Sovereign and Savior. He has never stepped down from His role as Lord. We plead with all to believe in Him, obey Him, and live for Him giving full allegiance to Him as the Lord (Acts 2:36), as the author of eternal salvation (Hebrews 5:8-9). We believe that He has all authority in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18-20). We believe that He is the head of the body, the church (Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18, 24). We believe that He is King of kings and Lord of lords (1 Timothy 6:15). We believe that it is right and essential to seek to be one with Him and turn men to be in allegiance to Him alone.

We do not presume to restore the word God to its rightful place. We believe the word of God, the Scriptures inspired by God, have ever been given to rule and guide mankind, and that they are infallible and enduring (Matthew 24:35). We believe that the Scriptures are then only means to the new birth (1 Peter 1:22-25). We believe that

the word of God is not to be added to nor diminished (Revelation 22:18-19); that to pervert word of God is to bring condemnation upon oneself (Galatians 1:6-9). We believe that the Gospel is God's power to save (Romans 1:16-17). Therefore, we turn away from human doctrines and human creeds and urge all to return to the word that is able to save the soul (1 Peter 4:11-17). We believe that the facts, promises and commands of the Gospel have not changed. We plead for all to love, respect, obey, and abide in the revealed will of God.

We do not presume to bring back the "true church". We hold to the view that the true church is the one purposed by God (Ephesians 3:10-11), purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ (Acts 20:28), and established on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-47). It is the one that Jesus is coming back to receive unto Himself (Ephesians 6:22-32).

We believe that the "true church" is to be cherished as existing in its ideal form in the mind of God, as purchased by the blood of Christ, and established for all times (Acts 2). We believe that in it God had one objective – the realization of the ideal church as one body of redeemed souls fulfilling His eternal purpose (Ephesians 3:20-21). We believe that it is by the New Covenant that the redeemed are brought into right relationship with God, and that in the church they are the product of the New Covenant (Hebrews 8:6ff; 9:15-26). We believe that the church is now and has ever been one body (Ephesians 4:4-7). Its identity, organization, worship, and service has ever existed under the power and purpose of God.

Compelled by love for God, truth in Christ, reverence for the inspired word

of God, and desiring to be one with God in Christ, we plead that all of us yield to God and live for Christ under the authority of Christ and in the body of Christ. This is not a program, or a position, nor a plan, but is a passion that rules in our hearts. We truly long to be Christians, members of the body of Christ – the church revealed in the New Testament.



Premillennial Mistakes

John T. Polk, II

Millennialists (whether they're premillennialists, a-millennialists, or post-millennialists matters not) have twisted the Scriptures as if through a blender.

There is no Scriptural (Old or New Testament) teaching that, in the future, Jesus Christ will:

1. come again and set foot on earth;
2. establish a kingdom;
3. fight a war with the Devil;
4. re-institute Moses' Law;
5. rule over the wicked;
6. "rapture" away the saints.

Let God speak:

1. *There is no Scripture plainly teaching that Jesus will set foot on earth again.* "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up" (2 Peter 3:10). When "the day of the Lord" occurs, the Lord will cause "both the earth and the works that are in it" to

be "burned up." There will be no earth upon which Jesus will set foot and reign over anyone!

2. *Jesus established His kingdom.* Paul wrote, "He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love" (Colossians 1:13). At His Second Coming, "He delivers the kingdom to God the Father" (1 Corinthians 15:24), not establish it!

3. *Jesus' war with the Devil has already been fought.* Jesus "was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). While "casting out demons" (Mark 1:39), Jesus concluded, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven (Luke 10:18). John said, "the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8).

4. *Moses' Law saves no one today or tomorrow.* "For if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain" (Galatians 2:21). Since the Old Law of Moses was designed by God to bring us "to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:24-27). No one can be, or has been, saved by keeping "The Ten Commandments," or any of Moses' Law.

5. *Jesus will never rule over the wicked.* "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be" (Romans 8:7), and He saves "all who obey Him" (Hebrews 5:9). The "carnal mind" has refused to surrender

("subject") to Jesus Christ, but could by repentance and baptism: "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). "Then those who gladly received his word were baptized" (Acts 2:41). God said in Proverbs 3:34: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble. Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you" (James 4:6-7).

6. *Christians will not be "raptured" from the earth.* "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).

Those who will be "caught up" are those living "in Christ" who will be "seized, carried off" to meet the "dead in Christ" who rose "first," and both will "meet the Lord in the air," not on earth! At exactly the same time, Jesus Christ had predicted, "The hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth — those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation" (John 5:28-29).

This is not two resurrections separated by a thousand years, but one resurrection of two elements of mankind: "those who have done good," and "those who have done evil." Since "the Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35), these passages are impervious to the Millennialists' "blender."

Gospel Gleaner



For the Lord, His Word, and His Church

Thanks for Reading!

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