



The Mustard Seed



Rehoboth Baptist Church Newsletter ~ August 2017



From the Desk of Pastor Steve:

Asking Good Questions

What are good questions? Before we tackle that we need to know what a “good” anything is. “Good” is used so commonly that it can be difficult to pin down it’s precise meaning. For our purposes let’s consider what we mean when we say, ‘that is a *good* hammer.’ A good hammer would be one that is well suited for the task it was designed for. Namely, hammering in nails.

So, using that definition, (well suited for the task it was designed for,) let’s consider “good questions” again. The specific kinds of questions I have in view are questions designed to draw out the purpose a person’s heart:

Proverbs 20:5

The purpose in a man’s heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out.

What exactly is meant by the word translated as, “purpose” in the ESV? The word could also be translated: ‘intention’, or ‘counsel’. I think what is in mind here is presuppositions or assumptions which guide people in their attitudes and opinions.

Let me give you an example. I once knew a man who, at the time, was probably in his 60’s while I was still a college student. He said to me, “you know what the key to life is, Steve?” I said, “no I don’t...what?” He said, “money, this life is all about having enough money.”

At that moment, many ideas raced through my mind of things I thought might be better answers to the meaning-of-life question. However, I did not know where to begin. I was stumped as to how to respond to such an assertion. How would you respond?

Of course, it is always easier to think of things when you have time to mull it over a bit but I think we would all be helped in situations like these if we spent more time thinking about how to draw out someone else rather than how we might argue with them.

What, “good question” could I have asked in this situation that would have helped draw out the assumptions he was standing on? Even though I was having trouble gathering my thoughts, if I had been wanting to draw him out I could have simply asked, “why do you think

money is so important?” From there the conversation might have gone in any number of good directions.

I would like to cultivate this mindset in myself. Do I ask my wife good questions? My kids, do I take time to draw them out? My church family?

Of course, drawing out the motives of our hearts is not an end in itself. Once we see our own hearts the next step is to find our way to the cross. In contrast to the culture we live in, the Bible teaches us that, “*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?*” (Jeremiah 17:9)

When we look honestly at the motives of our hearts, (what drives us and draws us), we begin to see our need for the gospel. In the flesh, we do not love God above all else and we do not wish to serve him. Our priorities are driven by desires for things like power, influence, pleasure, or some other means of securing our own glory. False worship, (treating created things as if they are God), is at the root of our sinful nature. Only the gospel of Jesus has the power to transform us, restoring us to become worshippers of the one true God.

God through the eternal Son Jesus has given us the tools to set us free from our deceitful hearts. This is the very topic we are discussing in Sunday School right now. I would urge you to take advantage of this most practical instruction.

So, ask good questions: What are the purposes of my heart? What ought they to be? How does the power of the gospel change me from the old to the new? May God help us ask ourselves and one another good questions like these.

Short and Up a Tree!



Jesus I Would See!

**RBC 8th Annual Family Fun Fair
August 12th 11:00 to 3:00**



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Visit us at: www.RehobothBaptistChurch.org
Ideas & Comments: dla85@dlittlehale.com

MISSION NEWS

Our missionaries for the month of August are Wayne and Joyce Raychard. They served with the Digo people in Kwale, Kenya, with Africa Inland Mission. They are now retired and live in Maine.

The following stories are written by members of the AIM team, who worked with Wayne and Joyce. They observed their deep love for the Lord, and their wisdom and compassion for the Digo people.

By Heidi Thulin- Ordinary People Wayne and Joyce Wayne Raychard reminds me of my father: a Vietnam veteran with a jovial personality who can offer a kind, wise word at just the right moment. Unlike my father, Wayne has spent most of his adult life teaching missions classes in an American Bible College, and serving among the Digo people in coastal Tanzania and Kenya.

Joyce, his petite, artistic, wife is joyful despite the loss of vision in one of her eyes, and exhibits a strong faith in God's Sovereignty that is inspirational. Wayne praises her and says, "She supports me and the teammates by praying for us always. She encourages us by creating little drawings. And all the while, she homeschooled our three kids from grade one to senior in high school.

They started their life on the Kenyan coast back in 1987. Wayne explains, "It was a mildly Islamic place at the time, but it became very strongly Islamic during our thirteen-year tenure, just because wherever Christians tend to be, the Islamic community pushes back. They built a bigger mosque and a madrasa, and they trained more teachers." Despite the resistance, after about seven years in the village, the Raychard's planted a church, met with the new believers in their home, and, in 1999, left the church in the capable hands of a Digo pastor.

"I prefer village environment over town," Wayne says with his hearty, one-of-a-kind laugh. "A village is focused on one culture, the Digo. For this reason, Wayne almost daily rode his bicycle out into the local villages to visit and minister to his Digo friends in their family-unit homes, called kayas. Wayne

describes, "The church model we want is something that's familiar to them. It's not meant to feel like other people are looking at them or down on them. We are seeing a lot more openness. People are recognizing that Islam does not satisfy them....There is something going on. Mainly with the young ones. The older ones have too much invested in the system. It seems to be the younger ones that God's drawing right now."

Because God is moving in the hearts of young people, Wayne and Joyce are thrilled to have lead a team of new, young missionaries. Two American families, two ladies from Australia and Canada, and a Kenyan couple, who will continue the work after their retirement. "Our role now," Wayne says, "is to equip and encourage this next generation, and show them that this ministry life is really doable. We want them to be thinking long-term." With the Raychard's rich missions' history and deep love for the Digo people, they seem well-suited to spread that zeal.

Who are the Digo people that Wayne and Joyce so faithfully served? The Digo are an East African tribe on the southern coastal strip of Kenya, between Mombasa and Tanzania. They have gained income through Muslim Arab trade, as well as fishing and farming. The Digo have mixed Muslim worship into their ancestral beliefs. A tiny percentage of the Digo have found and dedicated their lives to Christ, but for the majority of the people, a darkness and a stubbornness lives in their hearts. Wayne and Joyce have worked with the Digo for over 20 years. They feel that doing ministry as a team, especially in difficult contexts like this one, is ideal.

The future- only by God's Grace-
By Samantha Johnson- a member of the AIM team-
Our time as a Digo Focus team here on the coast of Kenya is coming to an end soon, and we're so thankful and humbled at what the Lord has done and allowed us to be a part of here in Digoland. He truly is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think! Almost immediately after arriving early last year, several of us on the team were connected through the providence of God and our respective ministry roles, with a few of the local Digo believers. It is these brothers and sisters who have since played a huge part in this ministry to the Digo, who are 99% Islamic. Fruit of the Gospel-

There have been Bibles handed out and read, audio scripture played, sick prayed over, young women and old men discipled, and churches planted, since we arrived almost 2 years ago. We know it is ONLY by the Grace of God! Jesus is here! We've pushed through 2 languages, eating crunchy, dried fish from our neighbors, and several bouts of malaria, but we can confidently say that Jesus is here in Digoland!

Our team leaders, Wayne and Joyce Raychard, have just retired from serving with AIM after over 20 years of ministry among the Digo. We know that their labor in the Lord has not been in vain. The 2 families and their 14 kids, as well as 2 of us single girls, will be returning to continue working the soil they, and many other missionaries before us, have faithfully prepared.



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It has been such a privilege to support Wayne and Joyce both financially and in prayer over these many years. We are humbled by their steadfast faithfulness and great love for the Lord and the Digo people. Please continue to uphold Wayne and Joyce, and their family in prayer.

Praise:

That Joyce is cancer-free! She is feeling stronger, and her hair is growing. Her creativity is returning, and she is painting lots of things, including pool storage boxes! Joyce has 20/20 vision in her left eye after laser surgery. Vision is limited in her right eye.

Prayer requests:

- For members of the Digo team that will be on home assignment for about 6 months.
- Team members that will fill teaching roles in their absence.
- Mature Digo believers that will have more responsibilities in the fellowship, and for unity among new believers and Digo leaders.
- pray for a new AIM Digo team member, Ellie, arriving in August.
- for Samantha, as she prepares for her new housemate, Ellie
- pray for Laura, from Australia, as she plans to return again in November
- for new Digo believers, and their walk with the Lord
- pray for Wayne, Joyce, and their family, as they enter their retirement, and enjoy each other.

Thank you so much for praying, and may the Lord be glorified in all things.

FALL MISSION CONFERENCE

Sat., Sept 16 & 17

Sat., 10 AM - 3 PM Rehoboth Harvest Block Party
Come out and share the Gospel

Sat., 5:30 PM Potluck Supper
followed by a report from Dan Bisbee
Missionary to the Wolof people of Senegal

Sun., 6 PM Mitch Forman, Chosen People Ministries
with a report on his work and ministry

Calling Youth to

Come Raise-the-Maze for the Family Fun Fair
& other setup projects

- When:** Friday, August 11th, starting at 10 AM until 4 PM (or whenever)
- Where:** Church Field
- Bring:** Your muscles, a hat, a hard work mindset and a serving heart.
- Provided:** Lots of water, burgers and dogs

Have fun and fellowship, too!
Let Dan Guest know if you are coming.

Short and Up a Tree!



Jesus I Would See!

RBC 8th Annual Family Fun Fair
August 12th 11:00 to 3:00

Updates about the Family Fun Fair

1. We will have live music - Bruce Swallow and the Just Us 4 group from 12:15-12:45 PM.
2. Suggest you bring a lawn chair for your comfort.
3. If possible, please park in along the edges of the parking lot or in the back of the field.
4. Even if you do not have a specific job, please come. Enjoy the day, help our where you might be needed, talk to our guests.
5. Pray for good weather, safety for all, good conversations about the Lord with our guests, for unity and love, for good fellowship!

Thank You Teachers!

I thank God for the many brothers and sisters who patiently teach our children every Lord's Day. Kathy Frye, Behiye Oldro, Claudio & Julie Rodrigues, Cindy Williams and Christine Guest have been faithfully serving in our Sunday School classes. And in the Children's Church: Linda Azevedo, Dan Guest, Dave & Diane Littlehale, Pat Carlone, and Wendy Soares have given of their time to serve our little ones. Truly you have all been a good gift to our church family!

Cindy and I would like to invite all of you to our home to say thank you and to encourage you. Please join us after church on Sunday, September 3rd if you are able. We will have some lunch, some fellowship, and a chance to talk, plan and pray for the future. The Sunday after the family fun fair we will post a sign-up sheet to give us an idea of how much food to prepare. I hope you will be able to join us.

– Pastor Steve



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“R” You Right?

Circle the right answer.

- Jacob's oldest son was
(Rehoboam)(Reuben)(Raamah).
- Issac's Bride was (Rachel)(Rebekah)(Rhoda).
- Joseph's mother was (Rachel)(Rahab)(Rebekah).
- (Ruth)(Romans)(Rabal) is a book in the New Testament.
- The Bible says there is none
(rich)(righteous)(right).
- Nicodemus was a rich young
(robber)(reformer)(ruler).
- We are told to (remember)(reject)(reward) our Creator in the days of our youth.
- The last book in the Bible is
(Ruth)(Revelation)(Romans).
- The woman who hung the scarlet cord in her window was (Ruth)(Rachel)(Rahab).
- Naomi's daughter-in-law was
(Reba)(Ruth)(Rhoda)

Bonus Questions:

- Moses and the Israelites killed
(Roshak)(Reba)(Remmon) a king of Midian.
- (Rithmah)(Rehabiah)(Rezon) was an adversary of King Solomon.

All the answers can be found in your Bible!

The Weight of Glory

by C.S. Lewis

Preached originally as a sermon in the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Oxford, on June 8, 1942: published in THEOLOGY, November, 1941, and by the S.P.C.K, 1942

If you asked twenty good men to-day what they thought the highest of the virtues, nineteen of them would reply, Unselfishness. But if you asked almost any of the great Christians of old he would have replied, Love. You see what has happened? A negative term has been substituted for a positive, and this is of more than philological importance. The negative ideal of Unselfishness carries with it the suggestion not primarily of securing good things for others, but of going without them ourselves, as if our abstinence and not their happiness was the important point. I do not think this is the Christian virtue of Love. The New Testament has lots to say about self-denial, but not about self-denial as an end in itself. We are told to deny ourselves and to take up our crosses in order that we may follow Christ; and nearly every description of what we shall ultimately find if we do so contains an appeal to desire. If there lurks in most modern minds the notion that to desire our own good and earnestly to hope for the enjoyment of it is a bad thing, I submit that this notion has crept in from Kant and the Stoics and is no part of the Christian faith. Indeed, if we consider the unblushing promises of reward and the staggering nature of the rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that Our Lord

finds our desires, not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.

We must not be troubled by unbelievers when they say that this promise of reward makes the Christian life a mercenary affair. There are different kinds of reward. There is the reward which has no natural connexion with the things you do to earn it, and is quite foreign to the desires that ought to accompany those things. Money is not the natural reward of love; that is why we call a man mercenary if he marries a woman for the sake of her money. But marriage is the proper reward for a real lover, and he is not mercenary for desiring it. A general who fights well in order to get a peerage is mercenary; a general who fights for victory is not, victory being the proper reward of battle as marriage is the proper reward of love. The proper rewards are not simply tacked on to the activity for which they are given, but are the activity itself in consummation. There is also a third case, which is more complicated. An enjoyment of Greek poetry is certainly a proper, and not a mercenary, reward for learning Greek; but only those who have reached the stage of enjoying Greek poetry can tell from their own experience that this is so. The schoolboy beginning Greek grammar cannot look forward to his adult enjoyment of Sophocles as a lover looks forward to marriage or a general to victory. He has to begin by working for marks, or to escape punishment, or to please his parents, or, at best, in the hope of a future good which he cannot at present imagine or desire. His position, therefore, bears a certain resemblance to that of the mercenary; the reward he is going to get will, in actual fact, be a natural or proper reward, but he will not know that till he has got it. Of course, he gets it gradually; enjoyment creeps in upon the mere drudgery, and nobody could point to a day or an hour when the one ceased and the other began. But it is just in so far as he approaches the reward that he becomes able to desire it for its own sake; indeed, the power of so desiring it is itself a preliminary reward.

The Christian, in relation to heaven, is in much the same position as this schoolboy. Those who have attained everlasting life in the vision of God doubtless know very well that it is no mere bribe, but the very consummation of their earthly discipleship; but we who have not yet attained it cannot know this in the same way, and cannot even begin to know it at all except by continuing to obey and finding the first reward of our obedience in our increasing power to desire the ultimate reward. Just in proportion as the desire grows, our fear lest it should be a mercenary desire will die away and finally be recognized as an absurdity. But probably this will not, for most of us, happen in a day; poetry replaces grammar, gospel replaces law, longing transforms obedience, as gradually as the tide lifts a grounded ship.

But there is one other important similarity between the schoolboy and ourselves. If he is an imaginative boy he will, quite probably, be revelling in



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the English poets and romancers suitable to his age some time before he begins to suspect that Greek grammar is going to lead him to more and more enjoyments of this same sort. He may even be neglecting his Greek to read Shelley and Swinburne in secret. In other words, the desire which Greek is really going to gratify already exists in him and is attached to objects which seem to him quite unconnected with Xenophon and the verbs in μ . Now, if we are made for heaven, the desire for our proper place will be already in us, but not yet attached to the true object, and will even appear as the rival of that object. And this, I think, is just what we find. No doubt there is one point in which my analogy of the schoolboy breaks down. The English poetry which he reads when he ought to be doing Greek exercises may be just as good as the Greek poetry to which the exercises are leading him, so that in fixing on Milton instead of journeying on to Aeschylus his desire is not embracing a false object. But our case is very different. If a transtemporal, transfinite good is our real destiny, then any other good on which our desire fixes must be in some degree fallacious, must bear at best only a symbolical relation to what will truly satisfy.

In speaking of this desire for our own faroff country, which we find in ourselves even now, I feel a certain shyness. I am almost committing an indecency. I am trying to rip open the inconsolable secret in each one of you—the secret which hurts so much that you take your revenge on it by calling it names like Nostalgia and Romanticism and Adolescence; the secret also which pierces with such sweetness that when, in very intimate conversation, the mention of it becomes imminent, we grow awkward and affect to laugh at ourselves; the secret we cannot hide and cannot tell, though we desire to do both. We cannot tell it because it is a desire for something that has never actually appeared in our experience. We cannot hide it because our experience is constantly suggesting it, and we betray ourselves like lovers at the mention of a name. Our commonest expedient is to call it beauty and behave as if that had settled the matter. Wordsworth's expedient was to identify it with certain moments in his own past. But all this is a cheat. If Wordsworth had gone back to those moments in the past, he would not have found the thing itself, but only the reminder of it; what he remembered would turn out to be itself a remembering. The books or the music in which we thought the beauty was located will betray us if we trust to them; it was not in them, it only came through them, and what came through them was longing. These things—the beauty, the memory of our own past—are good images of what we really desire; but if they are mistaken for the thing itself they turn into dumb idols, breaking the hearts of their worshippers. For they are not the thing itself; they are only the scent of a flower we have not found, the echo of a tune we have not heard, news from a country we have never yet visited. Do you think I am trying to weave a spell? Perhaps I am; but remember your fairy tales. Spells are used for breaking enchantments as well as for inducing them. And you and I have need of the strongest spell that can be found to wake us from the evil enchantment of worldliness which has been laid

upon us for nearly a hundred years. Almost our whole education has been directed to silencing this shy, persistent, inner voice; almost all our modern philosophies have been devised to convince us that the good of man is to be found on this earth. And yet it is a remarkable thing that such philosophies of Progress or Creative Evolution themselves bear reluctant witness to the truth that our real goal is elsewhere. When they want to convince you that earth is your home, notice how they set about it. They begin by trying to persuade you that earth can be made into heaven, thus giving a sop to your sense of exile in earth as it is. Next, they tell you that this fortunate event is still a good way off in the future, thus giving a sop to your knowledge that the fatherland is not here and now. Finally, lest your longing for the transtemporal should awake and spoil the whole affair, they use any rhetoric that comes to hand to keep out of your mind the recollection that even if all the happiness they promised could come to man on earth, yet still each generation would lose it by death, including the last generation of all, and the whole story would be nothing, not even a story, for ever and ever. Hence all the nonsense that Mr. Shaw puts into the final speech of Lilith, and Bergson's remark that the *élan vital* is capable of surmounting all obstacles, perhaps even death—as if we could believe that any social or biological development on this planet will delay the senility of the sun or reverse the second law of thermodynamics.

Do what they will, then, we remain conscious of a desire which no natural happiness will satisfy. But is there any reason to suppose that reality offers any satisfaction to it? "Nor does the being hungry prove that we have bread." But I think it may be urged that this misses the point. A man's physical hunger does not prove that that man will get any bread; he may die of starvation on a raft in the Atlantic. But surely a man's hunger does prove that he comes of a race which repairs its body by eating and inhabits a world where eatable substances exist. In the same way, though I do not believe (I wish I did) that my desire for Paradise proves that I shall enjoy it, I think it a pretty good indication that such a thing exists and that some men will. A man may love a woman and not win her; but it would be very odd if the phenomenon called "falling in love" occurred in a sexless world.

Here, then, is the desire, still wandering and uncertain of its object and still largely unable to see that object in the direction where it really lies. Our sacred books give us some account of the object. It is, of course, a symbolical account. Heaven is, by definition, outside our experience, but all intelligible descriptions must be of things within our experience. The scriptural picture of heaven is therefore just as symbolical as the picture which our desire, unaided, invents for itself; heaven is not really full of jewelry any more than it is really the beauty of Nature, or a fine piece of music. The difference is that the scriptural imagery has authority. It comes to us from writers who were closer to God than we, and it has stood the test of Christian experience down the centuries. The natural appeal of this authoritative imagery is to me, at first, very small. At first sight it chills, rather than awakes, my desire. And that is just



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what I ought to expect. If Christianity could tell me no more of the far-off land than my own temperament led me to surmise already, then Christianity would be no higher than myself. If it has more to give me, I must expect it to be less immediately attractive than “my own stuff.” Sophocles at first seems dull and cold to the boy who has only reached Shelley. If our religion is something objective, then we must never avert our eyes from those elements in it which seem puzzling or repellent; for it will be precisely the puzzling or the repellent which conceals what we do not yet know and need to know.

The promises of Scripture may very roughly be reduced to five heads. It is promised, firstly, that we shall be with Christ; secondly, that we shall be like Him; thirdly, with an enormous wealth of imagery, that we shall have “glory”; fourthly, that we shall, in some sense, be fed or feasted or entertained; and, finally, that we shall have some sort of official position in the universe—ruling cities, judging angels, being pillars of God’s temple. The first question I ask about these promises is: “Why any of them except the first?” Can anything be added to the conception of being with Christ? For it must be true, as an old writer says, that he who has God and everything else has no more than he who has God only. I think the answer turns again on the nature of symbols. For though it may escape our notice at first glance, yet it is true that any conception of being with Christ which most of us can now form will be not very much less symbolical than the other promises; for it will smuggle in ideas of proximity in space and loving conversation as we now understand conversation, and it will probably concentrate on the humanity of Christ to the exclusion of His deity. And, in fact, we find that those Christians who attend solely to this first promise always do fill it up with very earthly imagery indeed—in fact, with hymeneal or erotic imagery. I am not for a moment condemning such imagery. I heartily wish I could enter into it more deeply than I do, and pray that I yet shall. But my point is that this also is only a symbol, like the reality in some respects, but unlike it in others, and therefore needs correction from the different symbols in the other promises. The variation of the promises does not mean that anything other than God will be our ultimate bliss; but because God is more than a Person, and lest we should imagine the joy of His presence too exclusively in terms of our present poor experience of personal love, with all its narrowness and strain and monotony, a dozen changing images, correcting and relieving each other, are supplied.

I turn next to the idea of glory. There is no getting away from the fact that this idea is very prominent in the New Testament and in early Christian writings. Salvation is constantly associated with palms, crowns, white robes, thrones, and splendour like the sun and stars. All this makes no immediate appeal to me at all, and in that respect I fancy I am a typical modern. Glory suggests two ideas to me, of which one seems wicked and the other ridiculous. Either glory means to me fame, or it means luminosity. As for the first, since to be famous means to be better known than other people, the desire for fame appears to me as a competitive passion and

therefore of hell rather than heaven. As for the second, who wishes to become a kind of living electric light bulb?

When I began to look into this matter I was stocked to find such different Christians as Milton, Johnson and Thomas Aquinas taking heavenly glory quite frankly in the sense of fame or good report. But not fame conferred by our fellow creatures—fame with God, approval or (I might say) “appreciation” by God. And then, when I had thought it over, I saw that this view was scriptural; nothing can eliminate from the parable the divine accolade, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant.” With that, a good deal of what I had been thinking all my life fell down like a house of cards. I suddenly remembered that no one can enter heaven except as a child; and nothing is so obvious in a child—not in a conceited child, but in a good child—as its great and undisguised pleasure in being praised. Not only in a child, either, but even in a dog or a horse. Apparently what I had mistaken for humility had, all these years, prevented me from understanding what is in fact the humblest, the most childlike, the most creaturely of pleasures—nay, the specific pleasure of the inferior: the pleasure a beast before men, a child before its father, a pupil before his teacher, a creature before its Creator. I am not forgetting how horribly this most innocent desire is parodied in our human ambitions, or how very quickly, in my own experience, the lawful pleasure of praise from those whom it was my duty to please turns into the deadly poison of self-admiration. But I thought I could detect a moment—a very, very short moment—before this happened, during which the satisfaction of having pleased those whom I rightly loved and rightly feared was pure. And that is enough to raise our thoughts to what may happen when the redeemed soul, beyond all hope and nearly beyond belief, learns at last that she has pleased Him whom she was created to please. There will be no room for vanity then. She will be free from the miserable illusion that it is her doing. With no taint of what we should now call self-approval she will most innocently rejoice in the thing that God has made her to be, and the moment which heals her old inferiority complex for ever will also drown her pride deeper than Prospero’s book. Perfect humility dispenses with modesty. If God is satisfied with the work, the work may be satisfied with itself; “it is not for her to bandy compliments with her Sovereign.” I can imagine someone saying that he dislikes my idea of heaven as a place where we are patted on the back. But proud misunderstanding is behind that dislike. In the end that Face which is the delight or the terror of the universe must be turned upon each of us either with one expression or with the other, either conferring glory inexpressible or inflicting shame that can never be cured or disguised. I read in a periodical the other day that the fundamental thing is how we think of God. By God Himself, it is not! How God thinks of us is not only more important, but infinitely more important. Indeed, how we think of Him is of no importance except in so far as it is related to how He thinks of us. It is written that we shall “stand before” Him, shall appear, shall be inspected. The promise of glory is the promise, almost incredible and only possible by the work of Christ, that some of us, that



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any of us who really chooses, shall actually survive that examination, shall find approval, shall please God. To please God...to be a real ingredient in the divine happiness...to be loved by God, not merely pitied, but delighted in as an artist delights in his work or a father in a son—it seems impossible, a weight or burden of glory which our thoughts can hardly sustain. But so it is.

And now notice what is happening. If I had rejected the authoritative and scriptural image of glory and stuck obstinately to the vague desire which was, at the outset, my only pointer to heaven, I could have seen no connexion at all between that desire and the Christian promise. But now, having followed up what seemed puzzling and repellent in the sacred books, I find, to my great surprise, looking back, that the connexion is perfectly clear. Glory, as Christianity teaches me to hope for it, turns out to satisfy my original desire and indeed to reveal an element in that desire which I had not noticed. By ceasing for a moment to consider my own wants I have begun to learn better what I really wanted. When I attempted, a few minutes ago, to describe our spiritual longings, I was omitting one of their most curious characteristics. We usually notice it just as the moment of vision dies away, as the music ends or as the landscape loses the celestial light. What we feel then has been well described by Keats as “the journey homeward to habitual self.” You know what I mean. For a few minutes we have had the illusion of belonging to that world. Now we wake to find that it is no such thing. We have been mere spectators. Beauty has smiled, but not to welcome us; her face was turned in our direction,

but not to see us. We have not been accepted, welcomed, or taken into the dance. We may go when we please, we may stay if we can: “Nobody marks us.” A scientist may reply that since most of the things we call beautiful are inanimate, it is not very surprising that they take no notice of us. That, of course, is true. It is not the physical objects that I am speaking of, but that indescribable something of which they become for a moment the messengers. And part of the bitterness which mixes with the sweetness of that message is due to the fact that it so seldom seems to be a message intended for us but rather something we have overheard. By bitterness I mean pain, not resentment. We should hardly dare to ask that any notice be taken of ourselves. But we pine. The sense that in this universe we are treated as strangers, the longing to be acknowledged, to meet with some response, to bridge some chasm that yawns between us and reality, is part of our inconsolable secret. And surely, from this point of view, the promise of glory, in the sense described, becomes highly relevant to our deep desire. For glory meant good report with God, acceptance by God, response, acknowledgment, and welcome into the heart of things. The door on which we have been knocking all our lives will open at last.

Perhaps it seems rather crude to describe glory as the fact of being “noticed” by God. But this is almost the language of the New Testament. St. Paul promises to those who love God not, as we should expect, that they will know Him, but that they will be known by Him (I Cor. viii. 3). It is a strange promise.

Does not God know all things at all times? But it is dreadfully reechoed in another passage of the New Testament. There we are warned that it may happen to any one of us to appear at last before the face of God and hear only the appalling words: “I never knew you. Depart from Me.” In some sense, as dark to the intellect as it is unendurable to the feelings, we can be both banished from the presence of Him who is present everywhere and erased from the knowledge of Him who knows all. We can be left utterly and absolutely outside—repelled, exiled, estranged, finally and unspeakably ignored. On the other hand, we can be called in, welcomed, received, acknowledged. We walk every day on the razor edge between these two incredible possibilities. Apparently, then, our lifelong nostalgia, our longing to be reunited with something in the universe from which we now feel cut off, to be on the inside of some door which we have always seen from the outside, is no mere neurotic fancy, but the truest index of our real situation. And to be at last summoned inside would be both glory and honour beyond all our merits and also the healing of that old ache.

And this brings me to the other sense of glory—glory as brightness, splendour, luminosity. We are to shine as the sun, we are to be given the Morning Star. I think I begin to see what it means. In one way, of course, God has given us the Morning Star already: you can go and enjoy the gift on many fine mornings if you get up early enough. What more, you may ask, do we want? Ah, but we want so much more—something the books on aesthetics take little notice of. But the poets and the mythologies know all about it. We do not want merely to see beauty, though, God knows, even that is bounty enough. We want something else which can hardly be put into words—to be united with the beauty we see, to pass into it, to receive it into ourselves, to bathe in it, to become part of it. That is why we have peopled air and earth and water with gods and goddesses and nymphs and elves—that, though we cannot, yet these projections can, enjoy in themselves that beauty grace, and power of which Nature is the image. That is why the poets tell us such lovely falsehoods. They talk as if the west wind could really sweep into a human soul; but it can't. They tell us that “beauty born of murmuring sound” will pass into a human face; but it won't. Or not yet. For if we take the imagery of Scripture seriously, if we believe that God will one day give us the Morning Star and cause us to put on the splendour of the sun, then we may surmise that both the ancient myths and the modern poetry, so false as history, may be very near the truth as prophecy. At present we are on the outside of the world, the wrong side of the door. We discern the freshness and purity of morning, but they do not make us fresh and pure. We cannot mingle with the splendours we see. But all the leaves of the New Testament are rustling with the rumour that it will not always be so. Some day, God willing, we shall get in. When human souls have become as perfect in voluntary obedience as the inanimate creation is in its lifeless obedience, then they will put on its glory, or rather that greater glory of which Nature is only the first sketch. For you must not think that I am putting forward any heathen fancy of being absorbed into



The Mustard Seed



Rehoboth Baptist Church Newsletter ~ August 2017

Nature. Nature is mortal; we shall outlive her. When all the suns and nebulae have passed away, each one of you will still be alive. Nature is only the image, the symbol; but it is the symbol Scripture invites me to use. We are summoned to pass in through Nature, beyond her, into that splendour which she fitfully reflects.

And in there, in beyond Nature, we shall eat of the tree of life. At present, if we are reborn in Christ, the spirit in us lives directly on God; but the mind, and still more the body, receives life from Him at a thousand removes—through our ancestors, through our food, through the elements. The faint, far-off results of those energies which God’s creative rapture implanted in matter when He made the worlds are what we now call physical pleasures; and even thus filtered, they are too much for our present management. What would it be to taste at the fountain-head that stream of which even these lower reaches prove so intoxicating? Yet that, I believe, is what lies before us. The whole man is to drink joy from the fountain of joy. As St. Augustine said, the rapture of the saved soul will “flow over” into the glorified body. In the light of our present specialized and depraved appetites we cannot imagine this *torrens voluptatis*, and I warn everyone seriously not to try. But it must be mentioned, to drive out thoughts even more misleading—thoughts that what is saved is a mere ghost, or that the risen body lives in numb insensibility. The body was made for the Lord, and these dismal fancies are wide of the mark.

Meanwhile the cross comes before the crown and tomorrow is a Monday morning. A cleft has opened in the pitiless walls of the world, and we are invited to follow our great Captain inside. The following Him is, of course, the essential point. That being so, it may be asked what practical use there is in the speculations which I have been indulging. I can think of at least one such use. It may be possible for each to think too much of his own potential glory hereafter; it is hardly possible for him to think too often or too deeply about that of his neighbour. The load, or weight, or burden of my neighbour’s glory should be laid daily on my back, a load so heavy that only humility can carry it, and the backs of the proud will be broken. It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses, to remember that the dullest and most uninteresting person you talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship, or else a horror and a corruption such as you now meet, if at all, only in a nightmare. All day long we are, in some degree, helping each other to one or other of these destinations. It is in the light of these overwhelming possibilities, it is with the awe and the circumspection proper to them, that we should conduct all our dealings with one another, all friendships, all loves, all play, all politics. There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilization—these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit—immortal horrors or everlasting splendours. This does not mean that we are to be perpetually solemn. We must play. But our merriment must be of that kind

(and it is, in fact, the merriest kind) which exists between people who have, from the outset, taken each other seriously—no flippancy, no superiority, no presumption. And our charity must be a real and costly love, with deep feeling for the sins in spite of which we love the sinner—no mere tolerance or indulgence which parodies love as flippancy parodies merriment. Next to the Blessed Sacrament itself, your neighbour is the holiest object presented to your senses. If he is your Christian neighbour he is holy in almost the same way, for in him also Christ *vere latitat*—the glorifier and the glorified, Glory Himself, is truly hidden.

C.S.Lewis

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (NKJV)

Seeing the Invisible

Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Be Steadfast

Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.

You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.

II Peter 3:14-18 (NKJV)



The Mustard Seed



Rehoboth Baptist Church Newsletter ~ August 2017

Steve's Devotional - Hidden Agendas

By Steve Brown, Key Life

We all have hidden agendas in our relationships with people. Sometimes the agenda is as simple as our need to be liked. At other times it has to do with a business deal or an important favor we want. It would be naïve to think that we could or should never take an agenda into a relationship, but we ought at least to be aware of it when we're doing it.

In most of Jesus' relationships with people, he didn't have a hidden agenda. His only agenda was love, and that was worn on his sleeve. He said, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30). On another occasion he said, "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends" (John 15:13-14).

Most people are looking for favors, but Jesus was looking for a cross. Most people are trying to get something, but Jesus was trying to give something. Most people are harsh to people so they themselves will look better, but Jesus was harsh so that others might have it better. Most people are looking for acceptance, but Jesus was looking to accept.

Author Leighton Ford told me once about a man who rented billboards all over Northern Ireland and put this message on them: *I love you. Is that OK? – Jesus*

That's it.

Did you ever think that a Christian is a person who should have no agenda except Christ? I know. That's hard, maybe even nearly impossible, but I believe that is what we are called to do. If Christ is Lord of everything, then those who belong to him ought to have no agenda but him. I don't mean by this that we should have no plans or that we should always be "religious" or "spiritual." I mean that a Christian, recognizing that Christ is the King, doesn't have to manipulate or coerce or shout or beat people over the head about anything. We are his property, paid for at a very high price. Moreover, he controls our circumstances, every encounter in every situation in which we find ourselves. So our question should never be, "What can I get out of this?" The only legitimate question is, "What does Christ desire in this situation?"

We do, of course, have agendas. It would be impossible to live without one. However, when we take our agenda and submit it to Christ's agenda, knowing that he never makes mistakes and that he loves us, we can enjoy a great sense of relief. We don't have to force or manipulate anything. We can simply enjoy the ride.

Did you hear about the man who lived in India and was required to take a rather long train trip to another city? He had his most valuable belongings packed in a suitcase which he placed in the rack above his seat. He told himself that it was important he stay awake to keep track of that suitcase. But during the night, for only a couple of minutes, he closed his eyes and dozed off. When he opened his eyes and looked up, someone had stolen his suitcase. To his amazement, he was relieved. "Thank God," he exclaimed out loud, "now I can go to sleep!"

We have, if we belong to him, placed our important stuff in a suitcase. Jesus calls it the pearl of great price. Listen to his words: "The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it" (Matthew 13:45-46). We don't have anything to protect anymore. It's his, and he's watching it for us. So we don't have to have a hidden agenda. We don't have to manipulate people into the kingdom. We don't have to have folks think of us as wonderful people. We don't have to force people to do it our way. We don't have to make things come out right. We don't have to be successful or honored. All we have to do is be sensitive to his agenda for us and then be faithful to it.

You know, the best part of all this is that his agenda is always love. Within the context of his agenda, we will find forgiveness (when we fail and promote our own agenda), meaning (when we are looking for a reason to keep going), acceptance (when things don't turn out the way we expect), and a promise that in the end we will arrive safely Home.

There, now, don't you feel better?

Time to Draw Away

Read 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 & 2 Corinthians 6:3-13

Reflect on your relationships—with family, friends, co-workers and those at church. Are you carrying any hidden agendas into those relationships? Why? What do you hope to gain or escape? Lay all of that at the foot of God's throne and leave them behind. Let God begin to transform your relationships and make you secure in him and his plan, rather than in yourself and your plans. Then sit back and watch how well he works...you'll be amazed.

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.

Jeremiah 29:11-13 (nkjv)

August 2017

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September 2017

Rehoboth Baptist Church Mustard Seed

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9:00 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship 6:00 PM Evening Service		7:00 PM Elders & Deacons	7:00 PM Prayer Meeting 8:00 PM Choir Caleb Kitchen Cindy Kitchen			9:00 AM Rehoboth Block Party 5:30 PM Missions - The Bisbees
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9:00 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship 6:00 PM Chosen People		7:00 PM Elders/Deacons Pray & Visit	7:00 PM Prayer Meeting 8:00 PM Choir	Paul Schneider	John & Kathy Frye 33rd Anniversary	Mary Wick
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
9:00 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship 6:00 PM Evening Service	David & Elaine Costanzo 13th Anniversary (Textiles/Furs)		7:00 PM Prayer Meeting 8:00 PM Choir			Elaine Costanzo Jennie Turnquist