



The Mustard Seed



Rehoboth Baptist Church Newsletter ~ November 2017



From the Desk of Pastor Steve:

Are We Engaging the Fight?

I have just begun reading a new book written by Kris Lundgaard¹. He is attempting to make John Owen more accessible, particularly the insights he has gleaned from him in the area of spiritual growth. He writes the following:

“...many people live in darkness and ignorance about their own hearts. They keep careful track of how their investments are doing on Wall Street and get frequent checkups at the doctor; they watch what they eat and work out at the gym three or four times a week to keep their bodies finely tuned. But how many people give the least thought to their souls?”²

That last line has stuck in my head, “But how many people give the least thought to their souls?” I trust that you have given at least some thought to the spiritual condition of your souls but isn’t it far too easy to get distracted from what is most important?

To be wisely equipped for this battle he instructs that we have understand two “laws”: “The law of sin and the law of the Spirit of life...” He cites the Apostle Paul’s use of the word “law” in Rom. 7 & 8 which is very interesting. Consider this text:

Romans 7:21-23

²¹ So I find it to be a **law** that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. ²² For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, ²³ but I see in my members another **law** waging war against the **law** of my mind and making me captive to the **law** of sin that dwells in my members.

Kris (or John Owen) has a very helpful reflection on this use of the word, this “**law** of sin”. Law here, he claims, is being used as a metaphor to help Paul describe the nature and power of sin.

Think of the two senses we use this term *law*. We speak of natural law such as the *law of gravity* and we can also talk about *laws of the land* such as, ‘do not trespass.’ As we consider how these two kinds of ‘laws’ exert their influence on us we find a helpful illustration of how sin exerts it’s influence on us.

Consider the law of gravity first. You feel the pull of gravity all the time. It is an outside force always pulling on you. Sin is like this. Because of remaining

indwelling sin (the flesh), we all experience the constant draw away from the good and toward the evil. In Romans 7:21ff, Paul speaks of sin being right there “close at hand” when I want to do good resisting me, battling against me. Laziness, distraction, fear, doubt all assail us stumbling us up and keeping us from fruitful labor. Sound familiar?

But consider the other kind of law. The, “do not trespass” kind of law. How do laws of this sort exert influence over us? Laws of this sort influence us through the promised blessings and curses associated with them. Do not trespass or you will be fined. Stay out and you have the blessing of keeping your money. Violate the law and you will lose your hard-earned wealth.

Sin also works this way. Sin entices with promises (pleasure, satisfaction, fame, etc.) and warns against the curses, (looking foolish, missing out, being restricted, etc.).

Understanding sin in both these ways is quite helpful to us. Sin is like battling upstream with constant enticements to give up the fight and go with the flow! But Christians are not ultimately ruled by the flesh within themselves and have also the, “law of the Spirit of life”!

Romans 8:2

For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.

To be equipped for the most important fight of our lives we need to educate ourselves in how sin operates and how Grace overcomes this sin. Nothing is more important.

“The law of sin and the law of the Spirit of life (Romans 8:2) in us are mortal enemies. If we are not spiritually wise in managing our souls, how can we help making a wreck of ourselves?”²

May this be a reminder to you of the importance of being students of the Word generally and of the gospel in particular. May God grant us grace in this battle and most importantly, fight with us and for us!

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¹ Lundgaard, Kris. The Enemy Within: Straight Talk About the Power and Defeat of Sin). P&R Publishing. Kindle Edition.
² Ibid. (Kindle Locations 209-213)



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MISSION NEWS

In November, we will be praying for Russ and Beth White, missionaries with World Gospel Mission in Kenya, Tenwek Hospital.

World Gospel Missions purpose is to serve God in holiness and righteousness, connecting in ministry with churches worldwide, to make disciples of Jesus Christ among all nations.



About Russ and Beth-

Russ was born on the mission field to a medical missionary family in the Congo. Beth was born in Greenfield, Ma. Both were raised in Christian homes. They each felt the Lord's call on their lives toward full-time mission work while teenagers. This commitment came to be foundational in their relationship in college and in their marriage. When Russ chose medicine as a career path, it seemed obvious that the Lord was leading toward medical missions. Russ felt a clear calling toward teaching medicine in a distinctly Christian setting. At that time, there were no essentially no mission hospitals involved in post-graduate level training of national doctors in specialty areas. However, Tenwek Hospital was leaning in that direction. Russ and Beth spent 6 months at Tenwek during his training in public health. It was then that the Lord confirmed in both their hearts that His calling was to Tenwek. They began serving in Kenya full time in 1997.

Since that time, they have seen the medical internship program grow from 2 students to 16 students. These students have finished their medical school training and are choosing to serve their 1 year internships at mission hospitals. Tenwek has also added other programs such as, a 4 year training in Family Medicine, a 5 year training in general surgery, and a 5 year training in orthopedic surgery. Russ and Beth both continue to feel the Lord's calling on their lives in the area of discipleship of young African doctors, who are seeking to integrate their faith and their professions for the Glory of God.

Russ's ministry-

Russ spends the majority of his time teaching and discipling young Christian doctors who are studying surgery at Tenwek Hospital. His specific ministry roles include: Chief of Surgery, director of the

Residency Training Program in General Surgery, and director of Medical Education, Cardiac Surgery, and the Surgical Research Program at Tenwek. Russ is also actively involved in the life of the local church.

Beth's ministry-

One of Beth's main roles is to support Russ in his work from home. She is also actively involved in the discipleship of some of the female doctors in training and hosts a number of Bible studies for the wives of doctors in training. She takes care of their family, homeschools their youngest child Anna, and teaches in a homeschooling co-op. Beth also entertains visitors who come to serve at Tenwek, and is involved in care and outreach to the indigent in the Tenwek area.

Russ and Beth have 4 sons, Andrew, Adam, Peter, James, and a daughter Anna.

Tenwek Hospital- From the book *-Miracle at Tenwek-The Life of Dr. Ernie Steury-* by Gregg Lewis

Tenwek Hospital's first doctor-

"Lord, I don't know what you want me to do. But whatever you can do with my life, here it is!" When Indiana farm boy Ernie Steury uttered this prayer at the close of a church service in 1948, he could never have imagined how God would use him to build one of the most successful medical mission facilities in the world.

Raised in America's heartland, Ernie studied to be a medical missionary at Asbury College and Indiana University School of Medicine and then answered the call to Tenwek in 1959. He founded Tenwek Hospital and built it into what is widely recognized as one of the premier mission hospitals in the world.

Ernie's adventures in Kenya include, pincher ants, an angry baboon, and witch doctors. Cultural superstitions about surgery and other common medical treatments such as blood transfusions; limited human and medical resources; and facilities that, for many years, were inadequate to meet the needs of the thousands who came for help--all were obstacles Ernie overcame as he healed bodies and sought to change lives through the ministry of the Gospel.

One of history's great evangelists, Dwight L. Moody, used to challenge his listeners in the late nineteenth century by saying, "The world has yet to see what God can do with one man, totally committed to Him." Those who knew and loved Ernie Steury during the last half of the twentieth century and have heard of his work at Tenwek Hospital in Kenya, have now seen what God can accomplish with one committed Indiana farm boy. But because this statement would have embarrassed this humble man, we close with the words from the sign at Tenwek

Hospital :

"We treat.

Jesus Heals.

To God be all the Glory."



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The book -Miracle at Tenwek- The Life of Dr. Ernie Steury- is in our church library. It's an amazing, inspiring story.

Russ and Beth will be visiting our church on Sunday evening, November 12th. They will be sharing their ministry, and catching up on what has been going on in their lives, and how we can pray for them. It will be a wonderful time of fellowship!

Please come!!

Ladies Christmas Brunch

"Thanks be to God for His inexpressible gift!"
2 Corinthians 9:15



When: Saturday, 12/02/17, 11:00AM - 1:30PM
Where: Rehoboth Baptist Fellowship Hall
Bring: A dish to share for our luncheon and a gift to share for the gift exchange.

Ladies, please mark your calendars and join us for a celebration of the Christmas season. We will enjoy yummy food, singing Christmas carols, a time of devotion to our Lord, a craft to add to your collection from years past, and also a gift exchange. The gift can be bought, or homemade, or maybe a regift item. Be as creative as you know how to be! But please be aware that we have ladies who suffer allergies to scented candles and scented lotions.

All ladies of the church are invited, along with daughters, mothers, other relatives or friends. We look forward to seeing you Saturday morning on the 2nd of December.

Sign Up Sheet in the Foyer

Sin Like Coffee Cups — Christ Hold Fast

BY JESSICA DELGADO

I have this really terrible habit. A habit that involves my car and days-old coffee and a willpower so weak that nine out of ten coffee cups get left behind. A habit whose repercussions aren't so awful when you consider the fact that most days my car smells like classic vanilla Coffee Mate, but it's a habit I'm ashamed to call mine. Because where do those nine cups go if not shoulder to shoulder inside the automatic dishwasher, you ask? In the trunk. They go in the trunk of my car.

I know, this hardly seems sanitary, but sometimes when you're in a pinch and the cup-holders are full and someone you know is about to see

the state of your disgusting car for what it is, the easiest thing to do is hide your loathsome habit in the only place no one can find them, the only place the secrets of your car will remain secret. Your trunk is the only place no reasonable passenger will go snooping around, and, if they do, the scenario is easily turned around on them:

Why do you have 17 coffee cups in the back of your car, Jessica?

What are you doing in my trunk, Janice?

The trunk is my ideal catch-all, but what happens when someone has not just a reason, but the right to go into the dark recesses of your life? What happens when someone has access and permission to find your dirty places before you've had time to clean them out and pretend you're the pinnacle of neat and tidy? Let's just say, things get real uncomfortable.

My dad happened upon my nasty little habit when he was trying to change my flat tire. In order to get it to the tire store, he was going to have to put the spare on, and the spare had its home beneath a box full of what was now weeks-old unwashed coffee cups. (What can I say? I forgot they were back there.) I awoke the next morning to an utterly mortified father and 10 coffee mugs that had sprouted mold. My dad sat me down on the living room couch and explained to me the virtues of cleanliness.

I'm twenty-four. The conversation was part comical and part pathetic, an event I could spend the rest of my life forgetting to remember. Nevertheless, he had a point and we spent the rest of the morning bleaching, and scrubbing, and terrorizing black mold everywhere.

We had a good laugh about it, then collected the coffee cups that were scattered throughout the house, the ones laid to rest on desktops and bathroom counters while their drinker had hurried past them in order to make it to work on time. When we finished I went to my room to get a start on my day.

The cup count was high – I won't get into specifics, but I could run a restaurant with the number of mugs I'd neglected to wash. With every cup bleached and scrubbed, I felt a sense of ease enter the space between me and my father: him, because the cups were being washed, me because with every clean cup, I became less of a vile roach.

But that was all about to change, because taunting me from my bedside table were two-days-old coffee cups I had somehow overlooked.

I was devastated. We had just finished washing and I still had filth in my most sacred spaces. This was the place I slept and dressed and dreamed and prayed. This was the room I spent the most time in, the place I should be the most diligent in keeping clean. But sitting there, next to the expensive perfume and the beautifully framed Bible verse, were two horrifying reminders that I'm actually a swamp demon.

I didn't want to bring them out. I wanted to hide them for fear of the look on my father's face, the explanation I'd have to give, the shame I'd have to bear. Thirteen coffee cups was something we could



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deal with, but fifteen? I felt like I'd crossed a line. Our sin feels that way a lot of the time. We pray and we confess and we feel like, God and us? We're good. So we head on our merry way and realize that - oh. There's still sin here. Sin so ugly, so sticky that we don't even want to bring it to our Father. He just finished washing us, how can we possibly, so soon after that, come to him with more? What will he say? What will he think?

We forget that God is no longer judging us on our sin, that we stand clothed in the righteousness of Christ. God and us? We're good all the time because it's Christ's record God sees when He looks at us, not ours. We try to earn the favor that's already been given, bear the shame that's already been borne. We hide the true depth of our sin and pretend there are no more coffee cups left to wash but Jesus implores us, "give as alms those things that are within and behold everything is clean for you." (Luke 11:41)

When God declares us righteous, He begins the process of cleaning us from the inside out. It's not some magical wave of His holy hand and then, like the fairy godmother we've always dreamed of, our deepest darkest sin is neatly stacked and shimmering bright on the shelves, no. It's ongoing, a walk, a sanctification. Yes, we are holy because He says we are, accredited righteousness because He says He will, and made clean because He washes us so; but we must let Him wash us so.

We have to stop hiding our sin. Stop pretending like we're already clean when we have a Father who wants to make us clean. There's no point in giving our dirty dishes sparingly when the truth is, He already sees them all. We are the only ones surprised by our sin. While we may be discovering its depth for the first time, God is patiently reminding us that He made provisions to take care of our brokenness a really long time ago.

So come to the fountain, Church. Pour out your cisterns, or your coffee cups (or your Hydroflasks?) and be filled with the life that was promised. And behold everything is clean for you.

This article first appeared in "christholdfast.org"

Hurricanes and No Coffee

by Steve Brown, Key Life

As I write this in September we just went through Hurricane Irma.

She was the mother of all hurricanes...one of the biggest hurricanes to ever hit Florida.

We're fine. (So many of you called, wrote, asked and prayed—thanks.) There was very little damage to our homes and the Key Life building. While there was a whole lot of debris, fallen trees and limbs, loss of electricity, and some minor damage, everything is okay and quickly getting back to normal.

However there was one major tragedy. No coffee for almost three days.

So this Thanksgiving, coffee will be high on my list of things for which to be thankful. I'm also thankful that Jesus still likes me after the way I acted without my

coffee. I did okay the first day without power and coffee. The second day, not so good. By the third day, I became a serial killer. Old people are already irritated about being old...add no coffee to the mix and it's not very pretty. Frankly without coffee it was difficult to retain my usual nice, gentle, sweet, warm and fuzzy self.

In fact, I got so irritated I went out looking for an electric company truck. My wife Anna (who finds my mood puzzling given the fact that nothing bothers her) told me to just wait. "Besides," she said, "if you find a truck it won't do any good. That guy doesn't run the company." I told her that I knew that, but didn't care because I was going to yell at someone and the truck was as close as I could get to the problem. In fact, I went out twice looking for a truck and both times couldn't find a single one.

Anna was quite pleased and said, "Honey, that's because of my prayers."

I know, I know. You don't even have to say it. Jesus already did.

Irma was a massive hurricane. Some people died, while others lost everything and their lives will never be the same. And here I was really angry and upset about not having coffee. What's with that? Can you imagine someone being that self-absorbed and selfish?

Of course I repented. Are you crazy? Jesus told me that he wasn't surprised. For some reason, he knows me and loves me anyway. Jesus told me he still liked me but wasn't sure why. I wince as I write this and I'm ashamed of myself though.

Nevertheless, I'll be very thankful for coffee this Thanksgiving and, I might say, everybody who knows me will be even more thankful than me.

Where in the world are you going with this?

Just be patient, okay?

Other than the fact that confession is good for the soul, I've learned (or maybe been reminded of) some lessons from the hurricane. First I learned (again) how human, selfish and sinful I really am. I'm not being "authentic" here...just honest. I tend to forget my heart is "deceitful and exceedingly corrupt" (Jeremiah 17:9) until I'm in a hurricane without coffee.

I often say that our sin is a gift from God *when we know it*, and our obedience is the most dangerous place, *when we know that*. As you can imagine, I don't believe in the doctrine of "entire sanctification" (i.e. that a Christian can come to the place of no known sin in his or her life). I don't believe it because the Bible doesn't teach it. But there is another reason I don't believe it. God loves us too much to rob us of the experience and joy of his forgiveness, acceptance and love when we know we don't deserve it. In fact, you can't even go there until you know that you don't have any business being there in the first place.

You may have heard of the little boy punished with "time out" in the closet. His father checked in on him and asked what he was doing. "I'm spitting," the boy



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said. "I've spit on your shoes, mom's shoes and your clothes. Now I'm sitting here just waiting for some more spit." Now that's a kid who would be hard to love. Not my problem after a hurricane. I know I don't deserve God's love but I can now experience it... because you can't know love until you know you don't deserve it.

During the hurricane I also learned what's important...and it's not coffee. Do you remember when Jesus visited the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus? Martha was in the kitchen fixing dinner and was bent out of shape because Mary was in the living room listening to Jesus. Martha asked Jesus to tell Mary to get her posterior moving and come to the kitchen to help. Jesus was gentle, but admonished her with, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion..." (Luke 10:41-42).

During the hurricane I also learned what's important...and it's not coffee.

What is necessary? What is the good portion? If you want to find a quick answer, go through a hurricane. As you may know, a number of years ago, we went through Hurricane Andrew (up until Katrina, it was the worst natural disaster to hit the United States). During that hurricane we (almost everyone at Key Life) lost our homes and almost all of our stuff. As we waited for Irma, while listening to all the weather people tell us we were going to die, it was impossible to put out of our minds the memory of Andrew. Those memories were not altogether pleasant, but it was still a very important time in our lives because we were reminded then (and during the past few days too) that while stuff (including coffee) is kind of important, it pales in comparison to family, friends, love and Jesus.

One more thing before I finish. I learned in the hurricane with no coffee that God is sufficient. I knew he was. (After all, I'm ordained. (:) But sometimes we get too busy to remember. There is a danger for Christians in Romans 8:28—"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose." It can become a religious cliché. Sometimes it takes a hurricane, the death of a loved one, a major family tragedy, a physician's dark diagnosis, the loss of one's job or the death of a dream, to remember God's sufficiency.

My life has always been relatively easy. They say that God gives us only what we can handle, and I suppose the pleasant places where God has put me is a statement from God about my spiritual maturity and strength. Isaiah said in Isaiah 42:3 (quoted in Matthew 12) that a "bruised reed God will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench."

Nevertheless, when I was young, I always wondered how I would handle a major loss. Would I leave the faith or maybe "curse God and die" as Job's wife suggested he do? Would I would cave or curse, fight or flee, rest or recover? Frankly, I came close to losing it when we went through Andrew, when my brother died, and most recently in Hurricane Irma. But do notice that I'm still here—bloodied, weak, afraid and

sinful—but I'm still here. "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil: [not because I'm the meanest preacher in the valley, but because] You are with me, Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me" (Psalm 23:4).

One of the callings of old men and women is to tell their younger brothers and sisters about a kind, generous, good and faithful God whose promises have been tested "in the fire." Recently I spoke to our church's SALT (seniors) group. I love being with them. I said, "I love talking to old people because you've lived through the dark and know that life isn't for sissies. Having experienced the hard edges of life, you're still here and we share a secret that God is always faithful...always."

Jesus told this old man to remind you...especially at Thanksgiving.

But still, if there's no coffee in [heaven](#), I'm not sure I want to go.

God is Able by Max Lucado

What will happen if your job disappears? Or your health diminishes? Or the economy takes a nosedive? Does God have a message for his people when calamity strikes?

He certainly had a word for Isaiah. The prophet wrote, "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up. . .above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one cried to another and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: The whole earth is full of His glory" (Isaiah 6:1-3).

God calmed the fears of Isaiah, not by removing the problem, but by revealing his divine power and presence. Rejoice that God is able to do what you cannot do! Your anxiety decreases as your understanding of your heavenly father increases!

Read more in "[Anxious for Nothing](#)"

Steve's Devotional - Repent Now

I saw a bumper sticker once that read, "Sin Now, Repent Later!" Truth is, as blasphemous as that sounds, it's what most of us do anyway.

I have friends who like to feel pure by saying that they don't plan sin. They suggest it sort of sneaks up on them and, before they know it, they are caught. I guess they think that, if they didn't plan it, God will understand and love them more. Frankly, if that is true, I'm in serious trouble.

Sin hardly ever sneaks up on me. In fact, most of my sins are first degree. I planned the sin, I thought about it for some time, I considered the consequences...and by then, it was too late...I did the sin.

Our dearly departed dog, Quincy the Wonder Dog, who is now in heaven, did that too. He decided to run when I said "come"; to chase a cat when I wanted



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him to heel; and, stick in mouth, to bound off in the opposite direction...away from me. Sometimes, when he was thinking about chewing up a shoe or worse, I yelled at him, "Quincy, don't you even think about it! If you do it, I'm going to come after you!"

Whenever that happened, Quincy stopped for a moment, looked at me then looked in the "wrong" direction, thought about it some more...and did it anyway.

I could see it in his eyes and I know exactly what was going through his head: "I'm in trouble if I do this...big time trouble. But it's worth the price and, besides, Steve really likes me. After I pay the price, he'll scratch my head and give me a treat. And what I'm getting ready to do isn't all that bad anyway." I know Quincy did that because I do it with God.

Do you know the biggest problem with the church and with individual Christians? It isn't our lack of knowledge. It isn't our lack of obedience either. (We were never all that obedient in the first place and God seemed to be doing okay.) The problem isn't with our tithing or evangelism or missions.

The biggest problem with Christians is that we don't feel free to repent. We can't repent to God because we don't trust him and what he says about his love. We can't repent to one another because we know that, if we repent, they will know and we will no longer be a respected part of the church, the fellowship or our circle of Christian friends. We can't even repent to ourselves because we simply wouldn't be able to live with ourselves. So we lie. It's the only option we think (usually subconsciously) we have. Lying to God, to our friends and to ourselves may feel comfortable at first, but it robs us of our power.

I think God winces whenever we say to him or ourselves, "I may be bad, but I'm not as bad as he/she is" or "I think I'm getting this stuff licked and, after only a few minor adjustments, then I'll be pleasing to God" or "I used to be really, really bad, but now I'm redeemed and walking with Christ."

Repentance is the center and source of the Christian's power. Without it, our prayers are empty, our religion is shallow and our effectiveness is nil. Repentance is at the very core of the Christian's life. We are called to live a life of repentance before God. Repentance gives us the freedom Christ promised. A friend of mine was harshly criticized and I told him what they were saying. He said, "Steve, don't get so upset...they're right."

"Are you crazy?" I responded, "They aren't right. Let's fix it."

"No," he said, "as long as I know they're right, I'm free. I don't have to pretend any longer and I don't have to be right. God likes me a lot and that is all that matters. And I'm getting better...better than I was."

"Repentance," by the way, comes from a Greek word meaning to change one's mind. In the Christian sense, repentance isn't change. It's God's methodology for changing us. It is knowing who you are, what you've done and who God is, and then turning away from whatever is occupying your mind and heart, and turning to him instead, in agreement with his assessment of the matter. Again: *Repentance isn't changing...it is God's methodology for change.*

The Psalmist wrote, "The Lord is near to the

brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit" (Psalm 34:18). Jesus said that, whereas the tax collector who could do nothing but cry out for mercy was justified before God, the Pharisee who did almost everything right went away without the power and joy of being right with God (Luke 18). One of the most radical things Jesus ever said was about a prostitute: "Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little" (Luke 7:47).

Now to the point of all this. John wrote, "My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:1-2).

Don't miss what John did here. John gave us permission—permission to repent! He gave us the key to spiritual power and effectiveness in glorifying God. It is the very Gospel for Christians. John said, in effect, "It is my fond hope that you won't sin...but you probably will anyway, so when you do sin, you have an advocate with the Father."

That's so great, I can hardly stand it!

As you know, I'm often accused of encouraging people to sin. (Frankly, that's not true...people were doing fine long before I came along!) Some say that when I give "three free sins," teach that God isn't angry at you, or say something like "you wouldn't be so shocked by your own sin if you didn't have such a high opinion of yourself," it is all only a blasphemous way of granting people permission to sin.

You wouldn't believe the number of letters I've received over the years on my prayer before I preach/teach, the one in which I ask God to forgive my sins "because they are many." One pastor told me, "Steve, if you keep praying that prayer, people will think you're a really bad sinner."

Bingo!

I'm not giving people permission to sin. I'm giving them permission to repent. That's what we are to do for one another. If we don't give one another permission to repent then we will have no power to be anything other than little Christians good for nothing but religion.

So, go ahead and repent.

No, really. Do it. It's all right. God won't be angry and I won't think less of you. Just do it!

He asked me to give you permission.

And you give me permission too.

Time to Draw Away

Read Luke 15:11-32, the story of the prodigal son. Do you feel free to repent? Do you trust God and what he says about his unconditional love for you? Confess your sin. No need to lie or pretend. (He knows anyway.) Just be honest before God and run to Jesus. He's waiting with open arms.



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Proverbs Drinking Quiz

1.) Solomon identifies those that tarry long at the wine as...

- a. those who have sorrow and woe.
- b. those who have contentions and babbling.
- c. those who have wounds without cause and redness of eyes.
- d. All of the above.

2.) Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it ____.

- a. is murky in the dregs
- b. doeth good as a medicine
- c. biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder
- d. leaveth bitterness in the mouth

3.) Wine is ____, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

- a. a mocker
- b. shouting
- c. enticing
- d. for the dejected

4.) Proverbs tells us, "Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thy heart shall ____."

- a. fail thee
- b. utter perverse things
- c. deceive thee
- d. be led to the depths of sheol

5.) They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and ____: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.

- a. I am bruised
- b. I am chastised for my folly
- c. I felt it not
- d. robbed me

6.) It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: Lest they ____.

- a. perish
- b. be overtaken in sin
- c. disregard the affairs of state and lose the crown
- d. drink, forget the law, and pervert the judgment of the afflicted

7.) Give strong drink unto him that is ____, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts.

- a. ready to perish
- b. despairing utterly
- c. despondent
- d. evil

8.) Let him drink, and forget ____, and remember his misery no more.

- a. his despondency
- b. his poverty
- c. the day of his birth
- d. those that compass him about

TWO LITTLE BOYS

A couple had two little boys, ages 8 and 10, who were excessively mischievous. The two were always getting into trouble and their parents could be assured that if any mischief occurred in their town their two young sons were in some way involved.

The parents were at their wits end as to what to do about their sons' behavior. The mother had heard that a clergyman in town had been successful in disciplining children in the past, so she asked her husband if he thought they should send the boys to speak with the clergyman.

The husband said, 'We might as well. We need to do something before I really lose my temper!' The clergyman agreed to speak with the boys, but asked to see them individually. The 8 year old went to meet with him first. The clergyman sat the boy down and asked him sternly, 'Where is God?'

The boy made no response, so the clergyman repeated the question in an even sterner tone, 'Where is God?' Again the boy made no attempt to answer. So the clergyman raised his voice even more and shook his finger in the boy's face, 'WHERE IS GOD?'

At that the boy bolted from the room and ran directly home, slamming himself in the closet. His older brother followed him into the closet and asked what had happened.

The younger brother replied, 'We are in BIG trouble this time. God is missing and they think we did it.'

NO TIME

**Got no time to pray?
It's gonna be a busy day.**

**Got no time to read the Bible
All tied up with worldly survival?**

**Got no time to spread the Word
Who cares for those who haven't heard?**

**Got no time to count my blessings
and follow God's good lessons.**

**Got no time to help the sick
Making money is my only trick.**

**Got not time to listen to you
My selfish ambition is all that I do.**

**Where will I go on Judgment Day?
The time of salvation
has drifted away.**

(M.Poole)



The Mustard Seed



Rehoboth Baptist Church Newsletter ~ November 2017

Don't Waste Your Failures

by Max Lucado

My wife and I spent some years as missionaries in Brazil. Our first two years felt fruitless and futile. More often than not I went home frustrated. So we asked God for another plan. We prayed and reread the Epistles, especially focused on Galatians. It occurred to me I was preaching a limited grace. When I compared our gospel message with Paul's, I saw a difference. His was high-octane good news. Mine was soured legalism. We focused on the gospel, proclaiming forgiveness of sins and resurrection from the dead. We baptized forty people in twelve months! God wasn't finished with us. We just needed to put the past in the past and God's plan in place.

Don't waste your failures by failing to learn from them. Rise up! God hasn't forgotten you. Keep your head up. You never know what good awaits you.

From "Glory Days"

When the Bible Blows Your Mind

by John Piper

The Bible teaches us to expect mental jolts when we think about God. It teaches us that our familiar ways of seeing things may be replaced. For example, it says, "Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!" ([Romans 11:33](#)). Or again, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts" ([Isaiah 55:9](#)).

One of the reasons (not the only one) that some people reject the biblical teaching of unconditional election is that it seems and feels to them out of sync with other teachings in the Bible - like the compassion of God for people or the moral accountability of people before God. It seems to many that God can't choose unconditionally to save some and not others and then also feel compassion for those he does not choose and hold them accountable for their sin.

The problem here is that our instinct or intuition for what is right or possible for God does not fit Scripture. And the danger is that we shape Scripture to fit our feelings.

The Scriptures teach that God chooses who will be saved before we are born or have done anything good or evil ([Romans 9:10-12](#)). "It depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy" ([Romans 9:16](#)). The Scriptures also teach that we are responsible for the obedience of [faith](#) and will be judged if we are disobedient. "But for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury" ([Romans 2:8](#)). We are chosen (or not chosen) unconditionally for salvation. And we are accountable for our faith (or unbelief).

As I said in my sermon on 12-8-02, I do not fully understand how God renders certain the belief of the elect and the unbelief of the non-elect. If you want to go deeper into this, I recommend Jonathan Edwards' book *The Freedom of the Will*. It is slow reading, but

you will grow more from the effort than you can imagine.

To help you accustom yourself to living with such felt tensions (unconditional election and human accountability) consider two similar ones from the example of Christ.

First, we see Jesus weeping over Jerusalem because the things of the kingdom were "hidden from [their] eyes." But on the other hand we also hear Jesus say that God has "hidden these things."

>Luke 19:41-42. And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it, saying, "Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes."

>Luke 10:21. In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will." Second, we see Jesus feeling compassion for those who were sick - irrespective, it seems of their faith. On the other hand, we know from illustrations and teachings elsewhere in the Bible that God is finally and decisively in control of sickness. So we have Jesus feeling sorry for people who have sicknesses that God's wisdom has ordained (at least for a time).

>Matthew 14:14. When [Jesus] went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick.

>Exodus 4:11. Then the LORD said to him, "Who has made man's mouth? Who makes him mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, the LORD?"

>1 Samuel 2:6. The LORD kills and brings to life; he brings down to Sheol and raises up.

Implications: 1) Don't cancel one truth in the Bible because it feels out of sync with another. 2) Don't draw emotional or behavioral implications from God's sovereignty that contradict faith, compassion, accountability, prayer, evangelism, or hard work. On the contrary, consider [Colossians 3:12](#) and let your unspeakably happy condition as "chosen, holy and loved" produce "compassion, kindness, humility and meekness."

By John Piper. (c) *Desiring God*.

Website: www.desiringGod.org.

Quiz Answers:

- (1) All of the above. Proverbs 23:29,30
- (2) Bitch like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder Proverbs 23:31,32
- (3) a mocker Proverbs 20:1
- (4) utter perverse things Proverbs 23:33
- (5) I felt it not Proverbs 23:35
- (6) drink, forget the law, and pervert the judgment of the afflicted. Proverbs 31:4,5
- (7) ready to perish. Proverbs 31:6
- (8) his poverty. Proverbs 31:7

November 2017

Rehoboth Baptist Church Mustard Seed

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December 2017

Rehoboth Baptist Church Mustard Seed

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