

Expository Files

Editors: Jon W. Quinn, Warren E. Berkley



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The Discipline Of Apologizing

Warren E. Berkley

I preached last night on the subject, *The Discipline Of Apologizing*, or *How To Apologize*. You can hear the complete sermon at <http://www.lhmcallen.org/Mp3s.htm> (scroll to bottom and find July 29 pm).

This topic is of broad interests and application because you cannot go through life without needing to do this, many times!

First, I gathered up all the passages that point to attitude, method, sincerity, etc. and we based our study on the model of confessing sin to God. We observed the urgency of this in Matt. 5:20-25, briefly visited some passages in Proverbs. Then made these points:

- 1. Don't use the word "if."** An apology is a statement that expresses regret over a thought, action, non-action (neglect) or word. The word "if" clouds the purpose and may leave the offended party wanting, and the offender unforgiven.
- 2. Don't load your "apology" with excuses.** One of the quickest ways to ruin a perfectly good apology is, to attach an excuse to the end. Take the blame. Excuses sound like we are trying to avoid responsibility.

3. Don't apologize when you are not guilty. If we throw around apologies all the time, when there is no guilt – *when there is guilt*, that apology will not have the power it needs to have. Don't give apologies out like candy.

4. Always clear the matter up with God. Even when we have cleared up things with men – our sin may not be a closed case, if we neglect to confess to God and ask His forgiveness.

Finally, there is software you can purchase to write apologies. You type in the names, dates, circumstances, offense, etc., and the program produces an apology letter template to be mailed or e-mailed.

Before you buy that software, let me tell you - **As disciples of Christ, our hearts should be programmed for apologies!**

[Preachers – if you want this outline, send me an email request to: w.berkley@yahoo.com]

Habakkuk's Prayer

(Hab. 3:1-19)

Warren E. Berkley

Habakkuk is a unique Old Testament book. Even when classified within the “Minor Prophets” category, it has a marked difference.

Habakkuk is upset. He doesn't understand some things about God, and we have a record of his thoughts and his conversations with God about these issues. Jonah's case may come close to this. Yet Habakkuk remains unique.

A good starting place is, Habakkuk 1:6. God said, “I am raising up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, who march through the breadth of the earth, to seize dwellings not their own.” This plan nagged at Habakkuk. **Why would God do this?** How can God use the wicked as executioners against His people? Habakkuk stated his concern and the Lord replied. Then there came a time when – apparently – the prophet found resolution or satisfaction, though the future disaster was still dreaded. The following prayer of Habakkuk exhibits that satisfaction.

¹A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, according to Shigionoth.

² O LORD, I have heard the report of you,
and your work, O LORD, do I fear.

In the midst of the years revive it;
in the midst of the years make it known;
in wrath remember mercy.

- ³ God came from Teman,
and the Holy One from Mount Paran.
His splendor covered the heavens,
and the earth was full of his praise.

Selah

- ⁴ His brightness was like the light;
rays flashed from his hand;
and there he veiled his power.
- ⁵ Before him went pestilence,
and plague followed at his heels.
- ⁶ He stood and measured the earth;
he looked and shook the nations;
then the eternal mountains were scattered;
the everlasting hills sank low.
His were the everlasting ways.
- ⁷ I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction;
the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble.
- ⁸ Was your wrath against the rivers, O LORD?
Was your anger against the rivers,
or your indignation against the sea,
when you rode on your horses,
on your chariot of salvation?
- ⁹ You stripped the sheath from your bow,
calling for many arrows.

Selah

- You split the earth with rivers.
- ¹⁰ The mountains saw you and writhed;
the raging waters swept on;
the deep gave forth its voice;
it lifted its hands on high.
- ¹¹ The sun and moon stood still in their place
at the light of your arrows as they sped,
at the flash of your glittering spear.
- ¹² You marched through the earth in fury;
you threshed the nations in anger.
- ¹³ You went out for the salvation of your people,
for the salvation of your anointed.
You crushed the head of the house of the wicked,
laying him bare from thigh to neck.

Selah

- ¹⁴ You pierced with his own arrows the heads of his warriors,
who came like a whirlwind to scatter me,
rejoicing as if to devour the poor in secret.

- ¹⁵ You trampled the sea with your horses,
the surging of mighty waters.
- ¹⁶ I hear, and my body trembles;
my lips quiver at the sound;
rottenness enters into my bones;
my legs tremble beneath me.
Yet I will quietly wait for the day of trouble
to come upon people who invade us.
- ¹⁷ Though the fig tree should not blossom,
nor fruit be on the vines,
the produce of the olive fail
and the fields yield no food,
the flock be cut off from the fold
and there be no herd in the stalls,
- ¹⁸ yet I will rejoice in the LORD;
I will take joy in the God of my salvation.
- ¹⁹ GOD, the Lord, is my strength;
he makes my feet like the deer's;
he makes me tread on my high places.

What should this mean to you today? While it is one of the most beautiful literary passages in the Bible, the prominent value is – this helps you understand the full meaning of the righteous living by faith, and the joy you can embrace even when anticipating misery. Study the text with that in mind.

A “Shigionoth” is a type of music full of passion and the quick changes and movement of strong emotion. This was composed under strong emotional conditions. He expressed his perplexity. The divine answer was given. Now he is expressing his reaction to God. He is not writing an essay in cold, academic terms. He was emotional in his movement away from confusion to a fuller faith in God.

Habakkuk heard. As a result of his hearing from God and about God and His work, he said, “I fear.” His good listening to God produced this reverence and desire for revival.

To the God he feared, the prophet said: “in wrath remember mercy.” He could not know ask God to dismiss His wrath (it was just, see 2:20). All who truly know the wrath of God and expect His wrath against the wicked, are moved to plea for mercy.

Next, the prophet takes a journey back through time, and he marks out experiences where God “came” in His power, with wrath tempered with mercy. Habakkuk is no longer critical or doubtful. He is praising God for His power: “His splendor covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. His brightness was like the light; rays flashed from his hand; and there he veiled his power.” This is a recollection of Israel’s history, which was graced with God’s majesty. God acted perfectly in every case. Habakkuk is filled with a reverent understanding of God’s power and perfection.

“It has been the usual practice of God's people, when they have been in distress and ready to fall into despair, to help themselves by recollecting their experiences, and reviving them, considering the days of old, and the years of ancient times (Ps 77:5), and pleading with God in prayer, as he is pleased sometimes to plead them with himself. Isa 63:11, Then he remembered the days of old.” – Matthew Henry

Yet he still anticipates the coming calamity. And whatever happens – whatever God decides to do – he will trust. No affliction, however severe or wearisome, can sever a real believer from his trust in God. God’s past activity, the prophet now understands was right. He describes God’s activity: **He “stood . . . measured . . . looked . . . shook . . . saw . . . marched . . . went out for the salvation of” the people.**

Observe how the prophet, now with better perspective, describes his reaction to God’s activity: “I hear, and my body trembles; my lips quiver at the sound; rottenness enters into my bones; my legs tremble beneath me. Yet, I will quietly wait for the day of trouble to come upon people who invade us.” He knows, eventually, everything will be right and find its’ place under the hand of God’s providence. And through all of this impending turmoil, hope was not lost. Through the surviving remnant, God would bring the Anointed One of His eternal plan.

“From perplexity and doubt he has passed through the school of God’s revelation to him, and now he can look to whatever may come and meet it with quiet dignity and confidence,” (Homer Hailey, A Commentary On The Minor Prophets, p.# 295).

Now, read back through the third chapter of Habakkuk. Answer these two questions: (1) Do you see again, God is in control? (2) Do you see again,

whatever may happen here on earth, “the just shall live by faith” and “the Sovereign Lord” is our strength.”

Indeed we can rejoice that “the Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him,” (2:20). {Also see Psa. 18:31-33}.

Burning the Scroll ***By Jacob Hudgins***

“The king cut it with the scribe’s knife and cast it into the fire”(Jeremiah 36:23)

It was Judah’s last hour. Destruction was coming because of their wickedness and idolatry, and God had sent Jeremiah to give His people one last chance to repent. Finally, He tells Jeremiah to *“Take a scroll of a book and write on it all the words that I have spoken to you against Israel, against Judah, and against all the nations...”*(Jer 36:2). Why did God try this last time? *“It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the adversities which I purpose to bring upon them, that everyone may turn from his evil way, that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin”*(v. 3). The scroll was one last chance for Judah.

Ultimately, the scroll gets to the king. It is read in his presence. Imagine a king hearing that his kingdom will be taken from him and his city destroyed. *“And it happened, when Jehudi had read three or four columns, that the king cut it with the scribe’s knife and cast it into the fire that was on the earth, until all the scroll was consumed in the fire that was on the hearth”*(Jer 36:23). He burned God’s word!

King Jehoiakim had an unwillingness to receive God’s word. It stung too bad and said things he didn’t want to hear. Maybe he thought if he destroyed the words, they wouldn’t come true. Perhaps he trusted that he could politically maneuver a way by which he could avoid such a fate. Whatever his reasoning, it resulted in him refusing to hear God. The problem of being unwilling to hear God did not end with Jehoiakim. Even today, we can burn the scroll of God’s word by flatly refusing to submit to God.

Many in denominational error feel no need to change, no matter what God says. “I’m happy where I am.” “You believe your way, I’ll believe

mine.” “My parents belonged to ___ denomination, so it’s good enough for me.” In such a state, what good does Bible teaching do? Can’t we just burn our Bibles? Great men of God are willing to change when wrong! Apollos, when he was explained “*the way of God more accurately*”(Acts 18:26), was willing to change his teaching and life. Paul, when confronted by the Lord on the road to Damascus, was willing to change his life completely (Acts 9:4-6). Just because we believe something doesn’t mean we’re right! Just because we don’t like the truth doesn’t change it! Was ignorance bliss for King Jehoiakim? To refuse to change at God’s bidding is like burning the scroll, hoping it will make the truth disappear.

Often we begin to think we know better than God. In discussions about the Bible, often scriptural arguments are countered with statements like “I just believe...” Who cares what we believe if it contradicts God’s word? When Peter was asked, “What shall we do?”, he answered, “*Repent and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins...*”(Acts 2:37-38). Yet many teachers today, when asked the same question, give a radically different answer than Peter! They say “Receive Jesus into your heart and say a sinner’s prayer.” Should inspired Peter’s answer win or should our answer? Why would we think we know better than God how to be saved? God says “*For 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). Hear Jeremiah: “*O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps*”(Jer 10:23). How about Solomon? “*There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death*”(Prov 14:12). God says He knows far, far better than us! Yet when we refuse to hear because we think we know better, we might as well burn the scroll!

Yet even if we understand we must change and humbly submit to God’s law, we still must examine this principle closely. **Don’t we often refuse to face our sin because we like it?** Perhaps our pleasure is to gossip, so we don’t ever read passages that discuss talebearers and speaking evil. We get angry at the preacher who brings them up. When others mention it, we quickly change the subject. After all, gossip isn’t the worst sin, is it? Sure, sin is bad, but this is my pet sin! Aren’t we burning the scroll?

We also can shy away from difficult commands. Go to my sinning brother? (Gal 6:1, Matt 18:15-17) Forgive? (Eph 4:32) Visit the needy? (James 1:27, Matt 25:31-46) Those are hard! Surely someone else will just go see

the sinning brother. Maybe that person will forget that mean thing I did. I'll go visit when I get some free time. Isn't making excuses not to do God's will the same as rejecting it outright? Wouldn't it be easier if we just cut those passages out of our Bibles and burned them?

In our reading of the Bible, we can often fall into the trap of reading to reinforce what we already believe rather than to find what God is saying. Every passage that tells of trouble and destruction is speaking to someone else! Only the comforting passages are for me! Perhaps we read to simply have more ammunition to defeat those in error. Is Bible knowledge as simple as finding passages that will win us arguments? "*God...has in these last days spoken to us by His Son*"(Heb 1:1-2). Don't we want to hear what He has to say to us? Can we even be reading the Bible and still not be doing anything more than burning the scroll?

King Jehoiakim was punished for his insolence. We can learn from his mistake. Ignoring the truth won't make it go away. Jesus said, "*He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day*"(John 12:48). We must be brutally honest in our handling of the word of God. We must humbly submit to Him in everything (Eph 5:24). We must confront our own flaws and problems, do our best to obey even God's difficult commands, and handle God's word properly (2 Tim 2:15). May we ever listen to God and never burn the scroll!

To Canaan's Land I'm On My Way
Exodus 6:6-8
By Jon W. Quinn

The New Testament refers to the promises God has made to us as "precious and magnificent" (2 Peter 1:3). Other words associated with the promises of God are "glory" and "excellence" and "power."

Sometimes it is hard for us to understand just how precious and rich these promises are because of their spiritual nature. Jesus used many parables to illustrate the value of His kingdom. In doing so, Jesus used physical examples from our world to illustrate spiritual truths concerning the value of these Divine promises.

Another way that the Holy Spirit signifies the value of the promises of God is by drawing parallels with historical events. One prominent parallel used numerous times in the New Testament is that between God's people today and His people during the time of the Exodus. When we consider the promises of God made to the Israelites of Exodus and compare them to those made to Christians, we find similar parallels that ought to help us see the "preciousness" of God's promises to us.

I Will Bring You Out

"Say therefore to the sons of Israel, 'I am the LORD (Jehovah), and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians...' (Exodus 6:6a). The Children of Israel served in Egypt under the harshest of conditions. Their work was physically exhausting under normal circumstances, but it was made even more difficult by forcing the slaves to make the bricks without the use of straw.

One does not have to be loaded with back-breaking physical labor to be burdened though. Just as God promised to bring the Israelites out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, Jesus promises to give us rest from the mental, spiritual and emotional burdens of life (Matthew 11:28-30). He gives us the "peace of God" (Philippians 4:6,7). Why go through life burdened with despair when one can be free in knowing the truth (John 8:31, 32).

I Will Deliver You

"...and I will deliver you from their bondage." (Exodus 6:6b). The Egyptians were powerful. The Israelites did not have it within their power to break the shackles. Without God's help, they were doomed.

Today, as well, our only hope is in Christ Jesus. Sin is too cruel a taskmaster. It will take everything from us that is worth anything. To be sure, sin has its rewards, but nothing it offers is eternal except spiritual death (Romans 6:16; 23). Even as God promised to deliver Israel from Egyptian bondage, and just as Israel could not save themselves, God promises to deliver us from the curse of slavery to sin. God is able to deliver us from "the domain of darkness" (Colossians 1:13).

I Will Redeem You

"I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments." (Exodus 6:6c). To "redeem" something or someone is to buy

them back. The Lord promised to "redeem" the children of Israel. He would do so "with an outstretched arm" which means by His own might. His redemption would also come by means of "great judgments" which probably refers to the ten plagues and the destruction of the Egyptian army in the Red Sea.

Today, we think of Christ Jesus and the spiritual redemption He makes possible. It is by His power, through His sacrifice on the cross, that we are redeemed from our sins (Romans 5:6 Ephesians 1:7). It is by His stripes we are healed. It was on the first day of Pentecost following Jesus' resurrection that sinners were first told to "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). It was by God's "outstretched arm" that three thousand souls were redeemed from sin that day (Acts 2:41). And, the day you responded in the same way, the Lord stretched out His arm once again to redeem; that time it was you being redeemed from your sin!

I Will Take You For My People

"Then I will take you for My people..." (Exodus 6:7a). God loved the people of Israel. He nurtured them and protected them. These were God's own people; His own possession. The Canaanites were living on the land that God had centuries before declared belonging to Abraham's descendants.

This is exactly what the Christian is today. The Lord reminds us that we are not our own but have "been bought with a price" (I Corinthians 6:19,20). As His people, we are "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession" (I Peter 2:9). It is time to live our lives with the confidence fitting those who praise God as our Eternal Father.

I Will Be Your God

"...and I will be your God..." (Exodus 6:7b). There had been many gods in Egypt. But there is only one true God. There are many gods today. There is greed and selfishness and pride. But still today, there is only one true God (1 Corinthians 8:5,6; Colossians 3:5). Not only does the Christian identify with God, but God also identifies with the Christian. When one of His people suffer, God shares in that grief. This is why Jesus accused Saul of "persecuting Me" when Saul was persecuting Christians (Acts 26:14,15). We need never face the problems of life alone (2 Corinthians 6:18)!

I Will Bring You to the Land

"And I will bring you to the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob..." (Exodus 6:8a). It was a long journey Israel had to make through the wilderness to get to the land of promise. It is certain that the nation could not survive the journey at all without the providence of God. What Israel had to do was to respect and trust in God. They had to do the marching. They had to move at God's command.

The New Testament places us in the wilderness today. We are not at home in this world, but as we live by faith we are marching toward home (1 Peter 2:11). Though the journey sometimes seems filled with peril, we are confident because we know that God is with us. But like Israel of old, we must be willing to do the marching. We must move at God's command (Hebrews 3:14-19; 4:1,2).

I Will Give The Land to You For a Possession

"...and I will give it to you for a possession, I am the LORD." (Exodus 6:8b). The journey, though difficult at times, would not last forever. The goal was the land of Canaan, the land described as "flowing with milk and honey" which had been promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This land was to be the inheritance of Abraham's descendants.

Though on a journey that is at times difficult, we understand that we have an inheritance waiting for us; a place more beautiful than Canaan of old. It is described in the pages of the Bible variously as a paradise garden, a city with streets of gold, an incorruptible crown of life and as a treasure. This will be home. There is no place like it. Let us never be fooled into abandoning the journey we must make to reach it (1 Peter 1:3-5).

The Conversion of Lydia

Acts 16:13-15

By Wayne S. Walker

The book of Acts is a revelation from God of His will for the church through the inspired activities of first-century Christians. After Paul and Silas began Paul's second preaching trip, they came to Lystra where they found a young man named Timothy who joined them on their journey. Later, when they arrived at Troas, on the western coast of Asia Minor, Paul received a vision of a man of Macedonia saying, "Come over into

Macedonia and help us." Immediately, they set sail across the Aegean Sea, landed at the port city of Neapolis, and went to Philippi which was the largest city of Macedonia.

While Paul and company were at Philippi, we read in Acts 16:13-15, "And on the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the riverside, where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met there. Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul. And when she and her household were baptized, she begged us, saying, 'If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.' So she persuaded us." Here we learn about the conversion of Lydia.

A worshipper of God

First, we see that she worshipped God. Wherever there was a large enough colony of Jews, a synagogue was established. However, it appears that there were very few Jews in Philippi because these women met for prayer by a riverside. The fact that Lydia worshipped God tells us that she was a religious woman, and that is commendable. However, just being religious is not enough to be saved. "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God" (Rom. 10.1-3). The people of whom Paul spoke were religious, and even zealous in their religion, but they were religiously wrong and thus not saved. We must make sure that our religion is right in God's sight

Yet, the fact that Lydia worshipped God also tells us that she did believe in God, and this is important. "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him" (Heb. 11.6). No one could be called a worshipper of God who did not first believe in God. Lydia was obviously a believer in God, and that's always a good place to start in teaching anyone the gospel.

Heard what Paul spoke

To "hear" in this sense means more than just to be aware of the noise or sound of something--it means to listen to or to pay attention. Jesus wants us

to hear Him. He said of some in His day, "And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says:

"Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive; for the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them." Oh, they had heard what He said, but they just did not really listen to Him or pay Him attention. In contrast, others did. "But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for assuredly, I say to you, that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it" (Matt. 13.14-17).

Why is hearing so important? "For 'whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.' How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?...So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10.13-17). The Bible teaches that we are saved by faith, and the only way to obtain true faith in Christ is by hearing His word. Lydia was willing to listen.

Heart opened

We need to stop and ask, how was her heart opened? Yes, the Lord is said to have opened her heart, but nowhere does the text imply that it was by some miraculous or direct act of God by the Holy Spirit; rather, the text indicates that it was by what she had heard in the preaching of Paul. Notice that the passage does not say that the Lord opened her heart to understand what Paul said, but that the Lord opened her heart to attend or to give heed to what she had heard from Paul. There is a big difference. The word "heart" here does not refer to the blood pump in our chests. "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he...." (Prov. 23.7). Rather, it refers to that part of a person that is capable of thinking, or, in other words, the mind. The Lord opens our hearts in the sense that He calls to us through His word and we respond to His message by opening our minds to it.

Jesus wants us to open our hearts to Him. "Jesus said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment" (Matt. 22.37-38). Compare Rev. 3.20 where Jesus is pictured as knocking at the door, asking

that it be opened so that He can come in. So, while the Lord wants to open our hearts by means of the proclamation of His word, we have to do the actual opening up by responding to it. When Lydia heard the gospel preached by Paul, she allowed the Lord to open her heart by means of the message that Paul spoke.

Heeded the things spoken by Paul

The King James Version says "Whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken by Paul." It is not enough just to hear the truth; we must act upon what we hear. The parable of the two builders illustrates this (Matt. 7.24-27). Later, Jesus said, "If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them" (Jn. 13.17). And other Bible writers remind us that it is not the hearer who forgets but the one who does the work who will be blessed (Jas. 1.22-25). Some people, even some who claim to be Christians, seem to think that they can go to church, or turn on a religious radio program, or read the Bible, or hear God's word preached on TV, yet go their way, live as they choose, and still be blessed just because they listened to the will of God. Friends, that simply will not cut it!

The word translated "heed" or "attend" literally means "to turn to"--first to turn the mind to and then to apply oneself to. Obviously, then, it implies that she accepted the truthfulness of what Paul preached based on the evidence that he presented--same must be true with us (Jn. 20.30-31). But it also implies that she made a decision to do something about it. God has always demanded obedience of those who want to be saved (Heb. 5.8-9). What Lydia did in attending or giving heed to the things spoken by Paul is summed up in the words of a well-known gospel song--"Trust and obey, for there's no other way To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey." She believed his message about Christ, or trusted, and then determined to follow Christ's will, or obeyed. Lydia was not satisfied with just listening to Paul; she truly believed what he said and did what Paul told her she must do to obey God.

Baptized

Evidently, when Paul preached the gospel, he must have said something about baptism in order for Lydia and her household to know about it and comply with it. Why were she and her household baptized? One reason is because Jesus ordained and commanded it. "And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned'"

(Mk. 16.15-16). Jesus Himself made baptism a necessary condition to be saved.

Also another reason is because inspired men revealed and taught it. On the day of Pentecost, when Peter and the other apostles were asked by their audience about what they must do, Peter commanded them to repent and be baptized (Acts 2.37-38). Saul of Tarsus, after seeing the Lord on the road to Damascus, asking what he must do, and being urged to go into the city where it would be told him what to do, was commanded by the preacher Ananias to arise and be baptized and wash away his sins (Acts 22.16). Later as the apostle Paul, this same person wrote that we are baptized into Christ and that only after being buried with Christ in baptism can we walk in newness of life (Rom. 6.3-4). Lydia's desire to attend or give heed to the things spoken by Paul led her to be baptized
Besought Paul to come into her house.

Here was a lady who was given to hospitality. "Above all things, have fervent love for one another, for 'love will cover a multitude of sins.' Be hospitable to one another without grumbling" (1 Pet. 4.8-9). Evidently thankful for her newfound faith, Lydia loved those who helped her become a child of God that she wanted them to stay in her home. As a new Christian, there maybe was not a whole lot else that she was able to do for the cause of Christ at that point, but one thing that she could do was to provide a place for these gospel preachers to stay and help meet their needs.

Lydia evidently understood that baptism is not the end of one's obedience to God but merely the beginning. God expects His people to be noted for good works in their lives (Eph. 2.8-10, Tit. 2.11-14). This woman did not stop with being baptized, but continued to follow God's will because it was evidently her desire to be judged faithful to the Lord. Likewise, all Christians are promised, "Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life" (Rev. 2.10). We do not know what testings and tribulations she may have had to endure, but we can imagine that Lydia was the kind of person who was committed to be faithful to the Lord all the days of her life.

Conclusion

We really know very little about the life of Lydia. Nothing about her prior days is mentioned in previous scriptures. Nothing about her time after her conversion is recorded in later scriptures. However, in the simple snapshot of her that is found in this account there are lessons for all of us. Even as Christians, we need to have the same attitude towards spiritual things that Lydia obviously did. And those who are not Christians and want to be truly converted must submit to God's plan in the same way that Lydia did--listen to God's will, open their hearts to believe on Jesus Christ, obey his teachings by being baptized, and then continue to serve Him all the days of their lives.

Topic Page:

Worship – The Emotional Component
Warren E. Berkley

“God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth,” (Jno. 4:24).

Every element of true worship involves some emotional component. The emotional component is not driven by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit (as in Calvinism) or “getting the Holy Spirit” (as in Charismatic practice). The emotional component of true worship is the result of one’s informed relationship with Deity.

The faithful disciple will go into every assembly with the emotion of joy, reverence for Deity and the anticipated interests in praising Deity and being edified. The true worshipper will leave the assembly with the emotional satisfaction of participating in all that God has directed, unto His glory. The proper emotional component is not contrived and forced or coerced. It is the result of one’s informed relationship with God.

One should not perform some emotional display, because it is perceived it is expected by others. One should not imitate the emotional display of another. The faithful one’s emotional response (seen or unseen by men) is the result of one’s informed relationship with God.

When **the Word is faithfully preached**, there should be a range of emotions in the hearts of faithfully listeners (remorse, assurance, joy, the satisfaction of knowledge gained). In partaking of **the Lord's Supper**, remembering His death, the emotions of both sorrow and gratitude should combine in our reflection. **Singing** has a strong emotional component. But this emotional result is directed tied to lyrical content. What do the lyrics mean to the worshipper? Some love music and are moved by what they believe is good music, but without any self-examination or thought to lyrical content. The emotional connection derives from content (the words in the songs), not form (harmony, meter, structure). Likewise, **praying** is not simply a formal, mechanical exercise. It has great emotional potential, but not due to voice or poetic structure, but content and direction (praying to Deity). **Giving** should also have an emotional component (a cheerful giver, 2 Cor. 9:7).

In a lecture about this in 2005 I told the audience: Ignorance of what the Bible says about the Holy Spirit, combined with the popularly promoted Charismatic concepts can combine with the passion for the contemporary, and reduce our worship to events designed toward the pleasure of men instead of God! In this process (that may extend slowly into another generation), biblical knowledge can be set aside to pursue the emotional needs perceived by humans in their cultural context. True worship is not about competing with the modern marketplace. Our focus cannot be on drawing crowds or showing our affinity with the modern Charismatic style of worship. God is the object of worship, not the changing emotional needs of man. We must, from baptism until death, listen to the call of the gospel, not the call of the culture or religious world.

Regarding the influence of the Charismatic movement on worship, I want to recommend that we carefully consider the danger of engineering assemblies and meetings for emotional outcome. What's at stake here is the very definition of worship! In the New Testament, worship is not presented to us as something humans set up, so that other humans can find some "spiritual high" or emotional fix. The object is to respond to God with reverence and obedience: "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be held in reverence by all those around Him," (Psa. 89:7).

Worship is not depicted as a resurrection; conversion is! When people who are terminally unspiritual, willfully ignorant of the Scriptures and religious only in some systematic or institutional way, come to the building to be raised from the dead – we cannot cater to their wants. What these people

need is conversion, not “worship” designed to meet their felt needs. When we engineer worship to answer the emotional needs of people who are not concerned with the Scriptures, we fail to serve the Lord; we give people something that can never be ultimately satisfying, and we set ourselves on the road of apostasy. Worship is the avenue God has given for converted people to show their respect for Him and honor His Son. These purposes cannot be served in any sense until we decide to follow His instructions. The Charismatic format is motivated primarily by the aim to hit a human emotional target. God’s people cannot go there!

Plan of Salvation **By Jon W. Quinn**

Plan #1

Announced by the apostles, inspired by the Holy Spirit, to new believers in Christ who asked what they must do:

Acts 2:36-38

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ -- this Jesus whom you crucified." Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

(Acts 2:36-38).

Plan #2

On the back page of a tract, sinners were urged to pray this prayer to be saved. This prayer is not found in the Bible; nor were alien sinners commanded to pray for their forgiveness.

The Sinner's Prayer:

"O' Lord, I accept that I am a sinner and that Jesus died for my sins. I now accept Him into my heart as Lord and Savior asking for your mercy and forgiveness in His name. Amen."

The editors of Expository Files are happy with plan #1 and thankful to the God of all grace for it. We cannot recommend Plan #2 at all, but will change our minds when this prayer can be shown to us in the Bible.

The Final Page

“Hitler, Mao and Lenin Were Darwinists”

By Jon W. Quinn

It was a fossil exhibit. A young man was inviting passersby to visit it. Those who did visit the fossil collection and observe what this museum had to offer were greeted by colorful posters telling of the “myth of the evolution of the horse” and another, displaying a flying pterodactyl, denounced the evolution of birds as a “hoax.” Those who operate this museum were believers in creation.

Yes, a new museum has opened in Kentucky, operated by those who believe in creation, and I have been told it is excellent, but have not yet seen it myself. But this is not about that, though I expect some of the readers thought that perhaps it was.

No, this is about something else going on in other parts of the world that I thought was interesting and would like to share. First, the creationist efforts described in the first paragraph has nothing much to do with efforts of those who profess Christianity at all. The display was a part of a traveling show put on by the Foundation of Scientific Research. This group has, to this point, published books in 59 languages in 80 countries.

This organization is an Islamic creationist group. Its outreach efforts do include the U.S. One article states the following:

In the past year, BAV has blanketed several European countries and the US with its glossy "Atlas of Creation," a lavish 768-page tome weighing more than 13 pounds, sending it to scientists, professors, journalists, and schoolteachers.

One member of the organization estimates that it distributed well over 20,000 copies of the "Atlas," which, like all of the group's books, is written under the name of Harun Yahya. Amazon.com hosts a virtual bookstore that

sells "Atlas" (\$99) and other Yahya books, and booksellers across Europe have it on their shelves.

Harun Yahya, the author, blames most of the world's ills on Darwinism. He says, "Hitler, Mao, and Lenin were Darwinists. At the root of wild capitalism is also Darwinism. I think if we no longer believe in Darwinism, people will no longer be conditioned to believe in those things."

This most certainly does not win him many friends. It will be interesting to see how this all plays out. There are quite a few folks in government and science already opposing him. The increasing European activity of the BAV, as well as of Christian creationist groups, recently prompted a committee of the Council of Europe – a 47-nation group that acts as a kind of continental watchdog – to issue a report strongly warning about its dangers to education.

I am left wondering who I should root for. Ultimately, I will just remain faithful to the Biblical account of creation and be done with it. That is always the best option.