

The Summit Chronicle

Come let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh — Isaiah 2:3



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Contributing Writers for this Issue's Articles

• Rex Banks • Edwin Jones
Dave Bell • Wayne Jackson
Ian McPherson •
Hugo McCord

Scripture of the Month

"If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand O king. But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up"

– Dan 3:17-18

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Greetings brethren,

We would like to extend a very warm welcome to you and your loved ones as we greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus!

Issue 18 is set to bring you—as is the tradition of *The Summit Chronicle*—powerful, faith-building articles from equally faithful and sound brethren.



Liberalism is a plague to the church! Brethren who were once faithful to the pattern and teachings of Scripture are overcome by the temptation to all “get along” but at the expense of doctrinal truth. As such, issues like fellowship are affected and when this occurs in the body of Christ, it needs to be addressed **immediately**.

Due to this, we will be running several articles on the subject of fellowship from **sound** brethren so that you can arm yourself against liberal thinking and begin to discern the language they speak.

The New Plymouth church together with other sound congregations in New Zealand—in the past—have worked together to maintain the true harmony and unity of the brethren through Scriptural guidelines and not rely on the wisdom of men.

As a result, false teachings on the subjects of Marriage, Divorce & Remarriage (MDR), Fellowship and Unity were kept at bay. The Bible is VERY CLEAR on the issues and provides ample evidence to keep the sound Christian awake to the influence of false teaching and its change agents.

But every now and then, liberalism raises its head and challenges the established truth of God’s pattern for the Christian. We strongly recommend that you read these articles carefully and pass them on to brethren whom you know may be encountering the plague of liberalism.

With that in mind, the first article we have

on the issue of fellowship is from brother **Edwin S. Jones** who is a faculty member of the *East Tennessee School of Preaching & Missions* and likewise, someone we like to think of as a ‘Founding Father’ of the New Plymouth church. Edwin and his lovely family helped the New Plymouth church grow in its early years from 1985-1986. Edwin has since returned twice to preach and teach as a guest speaker.

Rex Banks continues his excellent series on Matthew 24 with another addition. Rex is a very sound teacher of the Word and this work on Matthew 24 has provided great information you can use in accurately dividing the Word of God. Again we thoroughly recommend that you get all the various series he has written for *The Summit Chronicle* for your spiritual repertoire against false teachings out there.

Ian McPherson delivers a brilliant article on *Parenting in this Present World*. Are you really doing a good job as a Christian parent in bringing up your child/ren in a world that is constantly trying to lure them away from God? Ian brings very good points to consider and ponder on from Scripture.

Wayne Jackson admonishes us on the subject of belief and how important it is to understand the need to cry out for the Lord’s help at certain times—especially when we are frustrated with things in life. A great reminder of how God is able, we just have to believe that (Heb 11:6). Wayne shows how unbelief can occur so we need to be ready.

Dave Bell starts Part 1 of his series on *Feminism* and the misunderstood role of women as outlined by the Scriptures. Enjoy!

In the service of the Most High God,

Jaracz J. Heather & Allan G. Fowell
Co-founders of The Summit Chronicle

FELLOWSHIP BIBLICALLY UNDERSTOOD

by Edwin Jones

In the fragmented state of churches of Christ the issue of fellowship has taken many interesting turns. We can find among us everything from an open fellowship that uncritically accepts denominational practices to an ever narrowing misunderstanding of fellowship that would in principle condemn the very practices of Jesus. The currently turbulent world of fellowship understandings is, to say the least, very unsettling. We need not, however, give up in utter dismay—the full Bible teaching on the matter of fellowship presents a clear picture. This picture is death to the extremes among us, but it is life to the true cause of Christ.

Fellowship is first a thing that deals with our relationship with God. Those faithful to Christ are in fellowship with the Father, and the Son, and with all faithful brethren (I Jn. 1:1-3). We enter this condition or state of fellowship as we are baptized “into” Christ (Gal. 3:26-29). We remain in this fellowship as long as we are found walking in the light (I Jn. 1:7). As long as we abide in Christ and do not “turn aside” from the Lord (cf. I Kg. 15:5), we remain in the sphere of grace (I Jn. 3:6-10). The faithful child of God sins (I Jn. 8, 10), but sin does not define the life of the faithful Christian (I Jn. 1:6).

While fellowship is first a thing about our relationship with God, in a secondary sense it is a matter of the mind. “As a man reckons in his soul, so he is” (Prov. 23:7). Consequently, we are admonished, “have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2:5). In this secondary sense, therefore, it is not primarily matter of where we are found physically, but where we are located mentally. This explains how Jesus could eat with sinners and yet not be guilty of sin (Matt. 9:10-13). Our Lord was physically present and dining with sinners, but His mind had nothing in common with their sinfulness. By taking note of the way Jesus lived, we have a key for unlocking the truth about the practical aspects of fellowship. In short, our conclusions will be correct as long as they reflect the behavior of the Christ.

For those among us who have concluded that denominationalism is acceptable, Jesus stands against them. The Christ who died for a united church has nothing in common with anyone who finds religious division agreeable (Jn. 17:17-23). To approve unauthorized activities and beliefs is to set oneself against a Jesus who never suggested to a single man or woman that such behavior is approved by God (Matt. 5:17-20). Giving either mental assent or heartfelt endorsement to that which is contrary to God’s word is, as we should expect, contrary to Christ. Likewise, to those of our number who have determined that physical proximity to those in error equals fellowship,

Jesus also stands against them. The Messiah who kept company with sinners has nothing in common with anyone who would keep healing from those sick with sin (Matt. 9:10-13). When godly men cannot, without being condemned, take opportunity to be among those in need of help, it is the way of Christ that is being hindered (Matt. 9:13; 12:7). How, pray tell, can we be of Christ if we censure those who do as Jesus did?

Indeed, reflecting on Jesus’ life is enlightening! But we need to go one step more to get the entire biblical picture. We need to look at how the New Testament makes application of the spirit of Christ to the circumstances faced by the church. In this we are still dealing with Jesus—His mind is the basis for the Apostle’s revelations (I Cor. 2:16).

Those in arrogant, highhanded rebellion are to be rejected without hesitation, even as Christ demonstrated (II Jn. 9-10; I Tim. 4:1-6; I Cor. 5:1-7; cf. Matt. 23:1-39). However, for those who are mislead yet teachable, patience is required, just as Jesus practiced (II Tim. 2:23-26; cf. Jesus with the Apostles). In these things there must also be place given for human judgment. Choosing between condemnation and patient cultivation can be a judgment call for mere mortals. Those closest to the situation may well have insights not known to those at a distance. We must be reluctant to judge when we are not fully informed. We certainly do not need self-appointed guardians making rules for the church in such matters. Those who measure how much truth one must speak at a given occasion, or determine timetables and deadlines with precision are such as speak where God has not spoken.

Questions concerning fellowship are important for us to resolve. Resolution, however, cannot be found in extremes that view only those passages that comment on a part of the story. We need, therefore, men and women of balance to get the Lord’s people back on the track. Jesus, not tradition or prejudice, must be followed to victory. It is only in the fullness of Christ that truth is found (Eph. 4:13-15).

PRINCIPLES RELATING TO FELLOWSHIP

I John 1:1-3

Introduction:

1. The Bible has many things to say about fellowship and its relationship to false things.
2. We must use wisdom in putting the information together.
3. We must be sure to grant or withhold fellowship only as God instructs.

The Bible Has Some Very Interesting Contrasts For Our Consideration

1. II Timothy 2:24-26 and II John 9-10.
2. Galatians 1:8-9 and Acts 18:24-28.
3. Matthew 9:10-13 and I Corinthians 5:11-13.

Different Kinds of Problems Received Different Kinds of Teaching

1. A brother who refuses to make things right with a brother (Matt. 18:15-17).
2. A person who causes divisions (Rom. 16:17-18; Titus 3:9-10).
3. A Christian who commits a gross public sin, and persists (I Cor. 5:1-8).
4. A Christian who continues in behavior that is against God's standards of righteousness (I Cor. 5:11-13).
5. A leader who continues in sin (I Tim. 5:19-20).
6. A person of the world who behaves in an openly perverse manner (Eph. 5:11-12).
7. People of the world in general (I Cor. 5:9-10).

Considerations That Account For Differences In Instructions

1. The intentions of a person.
2. The severity of the problem.
3. How a person deals with a problem.
4. The amount of time a person has been a Christian (Heb. 5:11-14).
5. At times, ignorance is a factor.
6. The attitude of a person.
7. Whether one deceives or is deceived (Matt. 18:6-7).

Guilt By Association

1. Matthew 9:10-11; 11:19.
2. A congregation is called "liberal" because they use a speaker who spoke at a congregation that used a speaker deemed to be liberal.
3. Disappointment is expressed because a preacher of unquestioned faithfulness was on a program where one of the speakers preached for a church with questionable practices.
4. A teacher who is not accusatory or overly negative in tone is hired by a Christian school. The man has had articles appear in a paper that routinely accuses brethren falsely and has an almost totally negative tone. A faculty member of that school objects and treats the new teacher with belligerence.
5. It is wrong to ascribe guilt solely by association. If guilt by association is correct, then our Lord is condemned as a sinner, and, of course, He is not a sinner.

Guilt In Fact

1. A problem exists when a congregation or program features preachers who teach false doctrines and an otherwise sound preacher appears on that program, but does not attempt to address the error.

2. True guilt does not have to do with where one speaks, but with whether or not one speaks so as to address real problems.
3. Freedom, however, must be allowed a brother to work as he thinks best to address error—allowance must be given for a long-term, patient approach (II Tim. 2:24-26).

Conclusion

1. We should look to preserve fellowship whenever we have biblical grounds for so doing (Eph. 4:1-3).
2. Patience is in order whenever possible (II Tim. 2:24-26).
3. Those who refuse all reasonable efforts to correct false doctrines must be avoided (II Jn. 9-11).

NOW ACCEPT THE ONE WHO IS WEAK IN FAITH...

Romans Chapter 14

Romans chapters 12-16 apply the principles of justification through faith to everyday life. The abstract case of Paul's argument relating to our justification here gives way to very concrete applications.

1. Chapter 12 first deals with the great living sacrifice of self to God—the heart of this entire last section (vv. 1-2).
2. Next is a discussion of individual gifts or talents that are to be used for God. In contrast to I Corinthians 12, which takes up the same point, Romans 12 views it much more from a nonmiraculous vantage point (vv. 3-8).
3. Following the remarks about gifts is a discussion about how sincere love is to abound, even in dealing with those who do us evil (vv. 9-21).
4. Chapter 13 begins by developing the point that the government, not an individual, is the authorized agent for God's vengeance (vv. 1-7).
5. Our obligation is to owe nothing but love, for this fulfills all obligations (vv. 8-10).
6. The behavior that characterized the world had already had too much of the Roman Christian's time—they were to put on Christ and deny the flesh (vv. 11-14).
7. Next, in chapter 14, Paul makes a point that unfortunately sounds strange even to many who today profess Jesus, even as it must have back then—accepting a brother when there are differences in judgment.

JUST WHAT IS AN OPINION ANYWAY (v. 1)?

1. Consider the following translations:
 - a. KJV "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations."
 - b. NKJV "Receive one who is weak in the faith, but not to disputes over doubtful things."
 - c. ASV "But him that is weak in faith receive ye, yet not for decision of scruples."
 - d. NASB "Now accept the one who is weak in faith, but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions."

- e. RSV “As for the man who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not for disputes over opinions.”
- 2. Literally, the Greek carries the idea of “judgments about thoughts” — meaning that a weak brother is not to have his thoughts called into question on unnecessary, personal religious scruples (i.e. matters of conscience).

SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF SUCH SCRUPLES (vv. 2-6).

- 1. Foods (vv. 2-4).
 - a. A man of weaker faith has more objections of conscience in such things.
 - b. The full liberty found in Christ is not realized (Col. 2:16-23).
 - c. But, as long as these scruples are not bound on others, there is to be nothing done to interfere with fellowship—God accepts the person.
- 2. Days (vv. 5-6).
 - a. Religious days also fall into this same principle.
 - b. A Jew, for instance, who had been accustomed to keeping various days might find his conscience too weak to allow him to abandon their observation.
 - c. As long as theses “days” were not pushed on others (note Gal. 4:8-11), the weak brother could observe them, and God would receive the offering.
 - d. In Christ, as opposed to Moses, there are many fewer scruples that are matters of necessity, but a brother or sister might still self-impose limitations to Christian freedom and yet not be rejected by the Lord.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR MATTERS OF OPINION (vv. 7-12).

- 1. The relationship that matters most is the one we have with the Lord.
- 2. In concerns where Christ grants liberty, and where judgment ultimately has to do with a person’s heart, we are not to judge.
- 3. We dare not find ourselves holding in contempt a brother or sister whom Jesus accepts.

THEREFORE (vv. 13-23).

- 1. We are not to put a stumbling block in front of a brother in things relating to individual scruples that are not wrong in themselves—such scruples are dealt with by God as though they were matters of faith.
- 2. If we force a person to violate their conscience, we cause them to sin and endanger their salvation.
- 3. Remember, self-imposed scruples limit freedom, but they do not in themselves constitute sin.
- 4. Conversely, freedom exercised without suitable restraint is reckless (I Cor. 10:23).
- 5. But objections to an aspect of our enjoying Christian liberty must be of a serious nature so as to actually be something that could cause a sincere brother to be

lost (cf. I Cor. 8:9-11).

- 6. Otherwise, Christian liberty could either be held hostage by every whim and fancy entertained by even the most insincere of brethren, or it could be compromised to actually encourage immature behavior in those of weak faith.
- 7. Jesus’ example is most instructive in such cases (Matt. 12:20; Mk. 3:1-6; Jn. 5:8-11, 16; 9:13-16; Mk. 7:14-23)—He never made ruin of a sincere person’s faith, but neither would He bow to the hypocritical scruples of the self-righteous, nor refrain from challenging people to mature in their understandings.
- 8. And lastly, viewing this whole chapter, we must conclude that there is much more liberty in the private expressions of religion than in those of a corporate nature.

Let us, therefore, be careful not to misuse principles of liberty to either attack a weak brother’s scruples, or to recklessly flaunt our own freedom.

FALSE TEACHERS AND FALSE TEACHING II Timothy 2:24-26; II John 9-10

Introduction:

- 1. The Bible has many things to say about false things.
- 2. We must use wisdom in putting the information together.
- 3. If we are not careful, we will take part of God’s word and treat it as though it is the whole.
- I. The Bible Has Some Very Interesting Contrasts---They Are There To Show Us the Nature of the Complete Teaching of God On A Given Subject.
 - A. II Timothy 2:24-26 and II John 9-10.
 - B. Galatians 1:8-9 and Acts 18:24-28.
 - C. Matthew 9:10-13 and I Corinthians 5:11-13.
- II. Different Kinds Of Problems Received Different Kinds of Teaching.
 - A. A brother who will not make things right with another (Matt. 18:15-17).
 - B. A person who causes divisions (Rom. 16:17-18; Titus 3:9-10).
 - C. A Christian who commits a gross public sin, and persists (I Cor. 5:1-8).
 - D. A Christian who continues in behavior that is against God’s standards of righteousness (I Cor. 5:9-13).
 - E. A leader who continues in sin (I Tim. 5:9-10).
 - F. A person of the world who behaves in a perverse manner (Eph. 5:11-12).
 - G. People of the world in general (I Cor. 5:9-10).
- III. Considerations That Account For Differences In Instructions.
 - A. The intentions of a person.
 - B. The severity of the problem.
 - C. How a person deals with a problem.
 - D. The amount of time a person has been a Christian (Heb. 5:11-14).

- E. At times, ignorance is a factor.
- F. The attitude of a person.
- G. Whether one deceives or is deceived (Matt. 18:6-7).

Conclusion

1. As with almost any Bible subject, it is the whole of the thing that gives the most accurate meaning.
2. We must be a people who will think through the full story before we determine our actions. ■

**Come fellowship with the New
Plymouth church of Christ and enjoy
sound teaching and preaching and the
warm hospitality of the family of God!**

*“Behold how good and how pleasant it is for
brethren to dwell together in unity”
- Psalms 133:1*

Product Recommendation: **LOGOS BIBLE SOFTWARE**

While surfing the Internet recently, I came across a Bible software program that I rate as being the best of the best. Its called **Logos Bible Software** and it is phenomenal to say the least!

Imagine having access to all the theological books you need for proper study of the Scriptures... as well as access to the proper tools for utilizing the Hebrew and Greek... as well as getting to know how those original words are pronounced... and when you are doing your research, the program instantly transfers the references to a word document at the bottom... maps that visually show you where that person was and what took place there... 3-D images of buildings which you can go into... and much more...

Now imagine having your own personal copy of this program for your serious Bible study. All you need is a laptop or desktop and you're away!

It comes in the form of CDs or DVD ROM. So rather than packing your whole entire library with you—you simply take your **Logos Bible Software** with you on your laptop. Simple, easy to use and easy to transport.

And to help make it affordable, they have different products for you to choose from. However, I thoroughly recommend the **Scholar's Library: Gold** which you see to your right. It contains everything that I mentioned above and much, much more.

What would cost you thousands of dollars in printed books cost you only a fraction with the software!

If you want to seriously study the Scriptures, I strongly recommend you invest in this Bible study tool. This is the only one of its kind in the world. No other program that I've seen remotely comes close.

If you are considering going to a Bible School or Institute, this is a must-have for the student who wants to know his Bible well and attain the knowledge that is essential to biblical accuracy.

With how things are today, having a tool like this at your fingertips will allow you to find out for yourself in-depth just exactly what the original intent of Scripture is in each passage—in other words, what is the context? Taking the church back to the study of Hebrew and Greek is paramount to the survival of sound teaching and preaching for the future.

Jaracz J. Heather

Editor *The Summit Chronicle*

Click on link to view demo: www.logos.com/demo



PARENTING IN THIS PRESENT WORLD

TAKEN FROM THE 15TH ANNUAL EASTERN SHORE LECTURESHIP, HOBART, AUSTRALIA

by Ian McPherson

If we were to think of someone in the Bible who had a similar task to parents of today it would certainly be Noah and his wife. The world in that day was so corrupt that the imagination and thoughts of man's heart was "only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5). Society was so bad that God regretted even creating man. Noah and his family were the only righteous people on earth at that time (1 Peter 3:20-21). However, even in this society, Mr. and Mrs. Noah not only raised faithful children and his children married believing wives.

Not all godly men were successful parents. Eli the high priest for example raised immoral godless children who brought his house to shame (1 Samuel 2:12; 3:13-14), Samuel a great prophet raised sons who took bribes and subverted judgement (1 Samuel 8:3), and David, a man after God's own heart experienced terrible grief in his family life. Amnon for example raped his sister, and Absalom murdered his brother, committed treason, and raped David's concubines on the roof top (2 Samuel 16:22). The difference between these parents and Noah is seen in Hebrews 11:7: "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith" (Hebrews 11:7). Noah shows us that it is possible, even in a completely corrupt world to raise faithful children. He had only one main objective in life and that was to get to heaven and bring his family with him. His whole life was centred on his family. If we are to raise faithful children in this present age we must do the same. We too must work to the saving of our house.

The text allotted to me is Ephesians 6:4. However I will quote V 1-4 as this gives the whole context.

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise ;) that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. (Ephesians 6:1-4).

Let us consider some of the things we can learn from this text about parental responsibilities.

PROVIDE THEM A GOOD PARENTAL MODEL

They need the influence of both mother and father. The mother is a homemaker (Titus 2:4-5) and the father is a home ruler (1 Timothy 3:5) and provider (Genesis 3:17; 1 Timothy 5:8). The ideal home is one in which the children are a product of a loving relationship between husband and wife. I remember when our daughter was at high school we received a notice from school asking if we agreed to her receiving sex education. Mabel and I were not against this but we wanted it to be taught in the context of marriage. When we expressed our concern to the teacher she said; "If we taught it in marriage we would offend too many of our students. Some of them have single parent homes, some have unmarried parents and some even have homosexual parents"!

My heart goes out to the many Christians who have come to Christ with such mixed up homes. However all parents must teach their children that the marriage bed is the only honourable way to have sex and conceive children. God wants children to know the importance of marriage and the sin of fornication. "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge" (Hebrews 13:4)

TEACH THEM TO RESPECT AUTHORITY

Rebellion is a natural tendency in a child. God has placed this tendency within the child so that he can learn respect of authority and develop knowledge of right and wrong. Children must be taught to obey their parents. If they do not, then they are very unlikely to respect and obey God. It is the responsibility of parents to remove any rebellious tendencies from the child's character, even if it involved the use of physical chastisement. "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him" (Prov. 22:15). In spite of what modern psychologists are saying, the rod of correction is a very important tool in driving out foolishness. To withhold it when it is needed is parental neglect. Notice the following proverbs "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." (Proverbs 13:24). "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying." (Proverbs 19:18). "Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell." Prov 23:13-14. We see here that the

rod is actually a tool of evangelism, not a tool of hate as modern psychologists say.

DO NOT PROVOKE THEM TO WRATH

Our children need definite perimeters. They need to know exactly where they stand. A properly disciplined child will know what the rules are. Our child needs to be loved unconditionally at all times, however he will soon learn that if he stays within his defined boundaries he will feel secure and happy. Children have very tender feelings; they can easily be hurt if they are treated hypocritically or inconsistently. Isaac and Rebecca's home for example suffered because they showed partiality in their love towards their children (Genesis 25:28). Other things can provoke our children such as constant nagging, humiliating them, and expecting them to do things beyond their capabilities.

NURTURE AND ADMONISH THEM

"Nurture" is in the present tense which means that it is a continual process. To admonish means to warn and rebuke. It involves continually enforcing rules and developing godly habits in the child. Parenting is likened to farming. If a good crop is expected then diligent attention must be given early. The crop must be fertilized, weeded and watered. If weeds are rooted out early they cause little harm, but if they are left to grow to maturity they become deep rooted and ruin the crop. This principle is seen in the parable of the sower and the seed. The seed that grew among the thorns was choked (Matthew 13:7). An example of this is Adam and Eve. Their eldest son Cain slew his brother because of envy (1 John 3:12). His parents failed to observe this trait of jealousy and weed it out before it became deep rooted and a part of their son's adult character. A diligent parent will be able to see sinful trends in their young child's nature and remove these while they are young. Proper nurture and admonition should result in our children having a genuine (unfeigned) faith like Timothy (2 Timothy 1:5). This faith was instilled in him by his mother from childhood. "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim 3:14-17). There have been many devastated Christian parents whose children have been faithful while under their roof, but

when they leave home, their faith has not been strong enough to withstand the pressures of life. (Matthew 7: 24-25). Here are some hints in instilling such a faith in our children:

1. As they get older, allow them to discuss and even question, difficult concepts of Scripture such as marriage and divorce (Matthew 19:9), Church discipline (2 Thessalonians 3:6). Let them express their own views and discuss their conclusions with you, and trust them to come up with the right answers.
2. Do not hide them from church problems. If the church is undergoing difficulties share these with your children and ask them what they think. While you are doing this realize that your attitude is important teaching also.
3. Share with them any difficult passages of scripture you are thinking about and ask them what their view is. Don't be alarmed or angry if they temporarily come up with a different conclusion, but have confidence in the Scriptures to correct and enlighten.

RAISE THEM "IN THE LORD"

There are many basic principles which all diligent parents want to instill in their children. Things such as good manners, respecting their fellow man, being honest and reliable, having integrity, compassion, love and good morals etc. These qualities make good citizens, of our children, but alone they do not save their souls. It is not even enough to teach them to read their Bibles and have Jesus living in their hearts. Denominational parents teach their children these things. (Matthew 7: 21-23). To be faithful our children must be taught such things as the distinctiveness of the New Testament church (Acts 2:47; Matthew 16:18; Colossians 1:18), that baptism is for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), that true worship is commanded (John 4:24) and that we must abide in the doctrine of Christ to be saved (2 John 9). It is these concepts, which make a Christian differ from the denominational people that surround them.

THINGS FOR PARENTS TO BE CAREFUL OF TODAY

The Media

I recently saw on the television the distress of a mother whose daughter had committed suicide because in a vulnerable moment when she was drunk, she sent a naked picture of herself to her boyfriend via her phone. When she broke off with him, he sent her picture to all her acquaintances. Incidents like this happen every day.

In this present world the Internet and mobile phones are Satan's favourite tools to draw away our child after pornography or into some illicit relationship with someone they contact on a chat programme or the telephone. Our young children are being addicted to these things by the thousands. One only has to open the email to have it flooded with offers of sex or an invitation to meet someone for friendship. Since they cannot go completely unexposed to these things, they must be trained with a will to say "No"! This ability can only come from a mind renewed by the gospel. "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:2). Here are some suggestions concerning the use of these things:

1. Set the right example yourself. Many adults unfortunately are addicted themselves. If this is so it would be natural for your children to become addicts.
2. Never start a "chat" programme with anyone who is asking for friendship. There is no way of knowing who you are speaking to.
3. Do not contact anyone unless you have something important to say (The type of information you would phone or write a letter to someone for).
4. Never send pictures or information about yourself that you would not want the world to see or know.
5. Never say anything about someone else that you would not want others to know.
6. Never open any message that is obviously inviting you to participate in any lustful or worldly activity. Satan's agents are everywhere who want your soul as well as your children's.

Friendships

"Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go: lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul". (Proverbs 22:24-25). Parents are often faced with the problem of their children forming bad friendships. Let me share an experience that Mabel and I had once with our son at school. Our son's behaviour suddenly began to deteriorate—we found out from the teacher that he had recently formed a friendship with a boy of unsavoury character. We were faced with a dilemma: We did not want to say bad things about his friend or just tell him not to associate with him anymore,

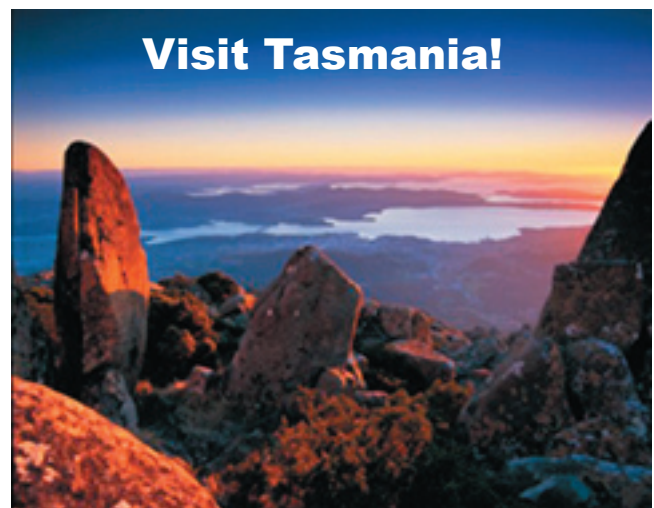
because the Bible teaches us to reach out to all types of people. We decided instead to discuss the problem in a loving way with our son and encourage him to be a good example on his friend with the view of influencing him to come to church. Immediately we began to see an improvement and soon the boy lost interest in our son's friendship, because he no longer enjoyed the friendship. However we handle these types of problems, we should not worry. We can use these type of circumstances to teach our child important lessons on human relations etc.

School

All parents realise how strong the influence of school is. Parents today are faced with difficult choices. They basically have three choices. To send them to a secular school. To home school them, or to send them to a "Christian school" which is run by either a denomination or an interdenominational body. All of these have their particular influence on our children. Secular schools have a strong emphasis on humanism, and evolution. In this present world Home Schooling and especially Christian Schools put our children and us to some extent, into fellowship with denominational and interdenominational concepts.

Just as Noah was faced with raising his family in a sinful generation so are parents today. He succeeded because his goal in life was to save his family. This was the same goal that Joshua had. He said:

"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD (Joshua 24:15) May God help us to be perceptive to problems facing parents in this present world, and go forward with the confident goals of Noah and Joshua to the saving of our house. ■



HELP MY UNBELIEF!

by Wayne Jackson

It is an episode fraught with mystery; one about which we wish we knew more. A man brought his son, who was possessed of a demon, to the Lord's disciples. He wanted the Master's men to cast out the evil spirit, but they could not. Jesus pinpointed the problem; the disciples' faith was lacking (Mark 9:17-19; cf. Matthew 17:20). Accordingly, the lad was brought directly to the Savior himself. As they came near, the malignant force threw the child into a convulsion, and the boy fell to the ground, foaming at the mouth.

The father subsequently informed Christ that this had been going on for a long time, and the lad had suffered much damage. The gentleman then said to Jesus: "If you can do anything, help us." Note carefully that "if" (Mark 9:22). The Savior then said, with something of a rebuke, "If you can!" The meaning obviously is: "What do you mean, **if** I can? All things are possible to him who believes."

There are two points to be noticed here. First, the Master was saying this to the father: "The issue is not **my power**; it is **your faith**!" The man obviously had some faith in Christ or he would not have approached the Lord. On the other hand, his trust was not at the level it needed to be. He still had some doubts. Perhaps he was growing; but the fact is, he was struggling.

Second, the Lord's affirmation that "all things are possible to him who believes" is limited by the context. The Lord was not asserting that one can do anything he believes he can do. You may be led to believe that you can spread your arms and fly off the Golden Gate Bridge, but regardless of what you believe, you'll fall straight into the bay. Here is a point that must be understood. The supernatural works that were possible during the ministry of Jesus are not possible today, inasmuch as God himself has removed miraculous phenomena from the church (see [Miracles](http://www.christiancourier.com/articles/read/miracles) <http://www.christiancourier.com/articles/read/miracles>).

In response to Jesus' challenge, the father cried out, with the sort of agony that only a parent could know: "I believe; help my unbelief" (9:24). What a strange statement. Does it not contain what appears to be a contradiction? "I believe; help my unbelief." Jesus did not so view the matter; rather, he immediately rebuked the unclean spirit and commanded it to leave the boy—never to enter him again (9:25).

The spiritual confusion of this father is so typical of the intellectual and emotional turmoil that can plague any of us

at a given moment in our lives. No one is characterized by a "red-hot" faith around the clock.

We know there is a God who made us. The evidence is so utterly overwhelming that only a foolish person can deny it (Psalm 14:1; cf. Romans 1:20-23). Furthermore, intellectually we know that our Heavenly Father cares for us. The historical fact which demonstrates that he gave his precious Son for us is ample evidence of his boundless love. Nobody can argue that God doesn't care—in the face of the cross! "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:32).

Be that as it may, sometimes, when we are hurting so badly (and pain can generate confusion), our hearts may overpower our heads. By that we mean this: our agony forces clear logic to the side, and we begin to "think" with our feelings. We still believe, but we are angry. We feel neglected; we don't understand why the Lord doesn't rush to our beckon call. Sometimes we pout. We refuse to talk to him (i.e., we don't pray). We think we will punish him by refusing to assemble with other Christians for worship. We may even say harsh and thoughtless things to him, almost literally shaking our fist in his face.

At times like these we need to get hold of ourselves and give ourselves a good shaking. We need to cry out, "Lord, help my unbelief!" We need to ask for his patience. We need to weep before him. We ought to analyze our situation and attempt to determine if we have contributed to our own problems; and if so, is there anything we can do to help remedy the circumstance. What we absolutely must not do is give in to our frustration. Once we cease struggling with our faith, and let it slide, we are headed down a slippery slope that may lead to eternal ruin. What a horrible thought to contemplate. Lord, I believe; but help me in my times of unbelief! ■

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MATTHEW 24 (Part 5)

by Rex Banks

“At that time if anyone says to you, ‘look, here is the Christ!’ or, ‘There he is!’ do not believe it. 24 For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect—if that were possible. 25 See, I have told you ahead of time. 26 “So if anyone tells you, ‘There he is, out in the desert,’ do not go out; or, ‘Here he is, in the inner rooms,’ do not believe it. 27 For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. 28 Wherever there is a carcass, there the vultures will gather” (NIV).

a. “At that time” (NIV) “Then” (KJV, NASV) connects the appearance of false Christs and false prophets with the time of the siege. At the time of the *first destruction* of Jerusalem, impostors had promised divine protection to the faithless people, and Jeremiah had warned:

“This is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘Do not listen to what the prophets are prophesying to you; they fill you with false hopes. They speak visions from their own minds, not from the mouth of the LORD. They keep saying to those who despise me, ‘The LORD says: You will have peace.’ And to all who follow the stubbornness of their hearts they say, ‘No harm will come to you.’” (Jer 23:16, 17).

b. Similarly Jesus warns His people “in advance” (v 25) not to be misled by impostors claiming that the Christ had appeared in order to deliver the nation from the Romans. They are not to be taken in by claims that the Christ has returned, (v 23) and that He is to be found “in the wilderness,” or hidden

away in some secret place known only to insiders (v 26). **Josephus** tells us that even as the city was being destroyed by the Romans, the people were being misled by promises of salvation.

“The soldiers also came to the rest of the cloisters that were in the outer [court of the] temple ... A false prophet was the occasion of these people’s destruction, who had made a public proclamation in the city that very day, that God commanded them to get upon the temple, and that there they should receive miraculous signs of their deliverance. Now there was then a great number of false prophets suborned by the tyrants to impose on the people, who denounced this to them, that they should wait for deliverance from God; and this was in order to keep them from deserting, and that they might be buoyed up above fear and care by such hopes” (**Wars** Bk 6, chpt 5, 2).

c. Far from being secret, the coming of the “Son of Man” will be visible to all, just like lightning which flashes over the whole sky from east to west (v 27). His coming will be public, it will not be an event about which only a few have knowledge. What is the “coming” of v 27?

■ Jesus *may* be saying: “Do not take the siege of Jerusalem as a sign that the Christ is returning to deliver His people and punish His enemies. When the Christ *does* return to carry out this work, His return will be public, visible and unmistakable.

■ More likely in v 27 “the

‘coming’ is a presence, as in verse 24:3, denoting Jesus’ divine visitation, which was fulfilled in the approach of the swift demonstration of power, pointing to the suddenness of events prior to Jerusalem’s destruction” (Stanley Paher, **Matthew 24: First Century Fulfillment or end time Expectation?**).

d. The fact that the lightning flashing “from the east ... even to the west” may not be significant, but Clarke says:

“It is worthy of remark that our Lord, in the most particular manner, points out the very march of the Roman army: they entered into Judea on the East, and carried on their conquest Westward, as if not only the extensiveness of the ruin, but the very route which the army would take, were intended in the comparison of the lightning issuing from the east, and shining to the west.”

e. “Wherever there is a carcass, there the vultures will gather.” KJV has “eagles” instead of “vultures,” and Jews and Greeks used a general term for both. KJV also connects vv 27 and 28 with the word “For” (“*For* where so ever the carcass is...”). Barnes has:

“This verse is connected with the preceding by the word ‘for,’ implying that this is a reason for what is said there - that the Son of man would certainly come to destroy the city, and that he would come suddenly... by means of the Roman armies, as certainly, as suddenly, and as

unexpectedly as whole flocks of vultures and eagles, though unseen before, see their prey at a great distance and suddenly gather in multitudes around it ...”

main from the books of Isaiah and Daniel, but also from other prophets.” Terry draws our attention to various Old Testament passages including the following, which refer to the destruction of Babylon (Isa 13:1) and Edom (Isa 34: 5) respectively:

“For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine” (Isa. 13:10)

“And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine and as a falling fig from the fig tree” (Isa. 34:4)

Similarly, Daniel describes the destruction of the Jews by Antioch Epiphanes in terms of the casting down of some of the “host of heaven,” and the “stars” to the ground, (8:10cf 12:3) while the Lord says to Pharaoh, king of Egypt (Ezek 32:1):

“And when I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light. All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee, and set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord God” (Ezek 32:7, 8).

c. In these and other Old Testament passages describing local destructions (e.g. Isa 24:23; 50:3; Jer 4:23, 24; Ezek 32:7, 8; Joel 2:1, 2; Amos 8:9; Nahum 1:4-8) the figurative language is virtually identical to that of Matt 24: 29, and in light of this Terry asks, quite reasonably:

“But with what show of reason, or on what principle of “interpreting Scripture by Scripture,” can it be maintained that the language of Isaiah, Joel, and Daniel, allowed by all the best exegetes to be metaphorical when employed in the Hebrew Scriptures, must be literally understood when appropriated by Jesus or his apostles?” (ibid).

d. This is an important point. Since the colourful language in Matthew 24 is virtually identical to the metaphorical language employed by the Old Testament prophets to speak of *local destructions and judgments*, why do some insist that Jesus’ words cannot refer to the destruction of Jerusalem? Again and again in scripture we find that events connected with the *heavenly sphere* depict divine activity upon *the earth*. The **New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis** has:

“Wonders. God judges by covering (pi. kasah) the heavens, by darkening (qadar) their stars (Ezek 32:7), and the shining lights (32:8), and by clothing (labash) the sky with darkness qaderut (Isa 50:3)... The sky trembles (ra`ash1) like the earth (Joel 2:10), will vanish (ni. Malach1) like smoke (Isa 51: 6), and rolls up (ni. galal1) like a scroll (Isa 34:4).”

e. Thus when Jesus says that the “sign of the Son of Man will appear in the *sky*” (v 30) or “heaven” (KJV) He is telling us that the destruction of Jerusalem is “a remarkable instance of divine vengeance ... a signal manifestation of Christ’s power and glory” (**Clarke**). The *earthly* destruction was a *heavenly* sign. Similarly the prophecy concerning the destruction of Edom (“And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as

Matthew 24:29, 30

Matt 24:29-30 “But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken, and then the sign of the Son of man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the son of man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory.”

a. Jesus has described the destruction of Jerusalem as “a great tribulation,” (v 21) and now He speaks of events which occur “*immediately after* “the tribulation of those days” (v 29). Clearly the words “immediately after” indicate that there is no great interval of time here, and that the colourful language which follows does *not* relate to some distant future. The destruction of Jerusalem is still under discussion here, rather than the Lord’s second coming at the end of time.

b. In his **Biblical Apocalypics**, Milton Terry points out that in these verses “The language is appropriated in the

a scroll etc”) is followed by the Lord’s declaration: “My sword has drunk its fill *in the heavens*; (emphasis added) see, it descends in judgment on Edom, the people I have totally destroyed” (Isa 34:5). Again the *earthly* destruction of Edom has a *heavenly* significance.

f. When the sign of the Son of Man appears, (i.e. the destruction of Jerusalem) “all the tribes of the earth will mourn.” Again this language has convinced some that the Lord is speaking of more than simply the destruction of Jerusalem, since it appears that the *whole world* is affected. NIV’s “all the nations of the earth will mourn” suggests an event which has a world-wide impact. However:

- The word translated “earth” can also be translated “country” or “land” and Jesus may simply be speaking of the inhabitants of Judea.
- Micah prefaces his announcement of judgment upon Samaria and Jerusalem with the following words: “Hear, *O peoples, all of you, listen, O earth and all who are in it*, that the Sovereign LORD may witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple” (emphasis added). Clearly, then mention of all *who are in the earth* does not signify that universal destruction is under discussion.
- Perhaps too it is relevant that at the time of Jerusalem’s destruction in 70 AD, the Jewish people were scattered widely throughout the earth.

Anyway it is not true that this language could not speak of the destruction of Jerusalem (**Part 6** will conclude this series). ■

SHORT ARTICLES

by Hugo McCord

A Heavenly Homeland

He who knows “the end from the beginning” (Isaiah 46:10) knew that man, created as free to make his own choices, would sin. “God is love” (1 John 4:8), but love could not ignore that which is the opposite of the One who is “righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works” (Psalm 145:17). Sin-offerings of animals, even burnt sacrifices, would not remove man’s guilt. What could be done?

One envisions a heavenly conference back in eternity producing the “plan of the ages” (prothesin ton aionon, Ephesians 3:11) in which not an animal but a human sacrifice was suggested, and God asked: “Whom shall I send, and who shall go for us?” (cf. Isaiah 6:8). The One afterward called “Jesus” volunteered, saying, “Look! I come” (cf. Psalm 40:7).

God made it clear that Jesus did not have to go to the earth and become a human sacrifice, and Jesus responded, “I delight to do your will, O my God, and your law is within my heart” (cf. Psalm 40:8). That statement pleased the Father, and, down on the earth, Jesus said,

The Father loves me, because I lay down my life to take it again. No one takes it from me. I myself lay it down. I have authority both to lay it down and to take it again. This commandment I received from my Father (John 10: 17-18).

As the time drew near for Jesus to lay down his life, he underwent a mental struggle! Was there any other way to save sinners than by suffering, than by being nailed to a cross? Long before day, during the night of Thursday, April 6. A.D. 30, Jesus in Gethsemane was in mental agony! He “fell on his face” (Matthew 26:39) and was praying. The night was cool (cf. John 18: 18), yet Jesus’ sweat was like “great drops of blood falling down on the ground” (Luke 22:44). He prayed, “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup [of suffering in death] pass away from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will” (Matthew 26:39).

Thus the greatest preacher who ever lived solved every problem by being determined to do God’s will. So I can do no less and be comfortable. David prayed, “Teach me to do

your will, for you are my God” (Psalm 143: 10). Jesus affirmed, “I have not come down from heaven to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me” (John 6:38).

A Mental Struggle

The descendants of Abraham “confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. They who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they were remembering the land which they had left [Chaldea, Genesis 11:28], they would have had an opportunity to return. But they longed for a better—that is, a heavenly—homeland. God was not ashamed to be called their God, and he has prepared for them a city” (Hebrews 11:13-16).

Jesus said that “In my Father’s house are many dwelling places; ...I go to prepare a place for” those who believe “in me” (John 14:1-2). “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to myself, that where I am, there you may be also” (John 14:3). When he fulfills his promise to “come again,” “every eye will see him” (Revelation 1:7).

In the meantime, when those who believe in Jesus are baptized, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit come invisibly to dwell in their “bodies” (John 14:23; Acts 2:38; 5:32; 1 Corinthians 6:15). Accordingly, since they “have been bought with a price,” they are exhorted to “glorify God in” their bodies (1 Corinthians 6:20). “Also, I assure you” (said Jesus), “that many will come from the east and west and sit with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in heaven’s kingdom” (Matthew 8:11).

Hugo McCord (1911-2004) was a preacher and biblical scholar within the churches of Christ in America. He produced his own translation of the New Testament (and Genesis, Psalms and Proverbs), titled The Everlasting Gospel, which he affectionately called the Freed-Hardeman Version (FHV).

McCord attended a number of schools: Freed Hardeman College (now Freed-Hardeman University), the University of Illinois, the University of Tulsa, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. —Source: Wikipedia

FEMINISM (PART 1)

by Dave Bell

The study of feminism is by its nature a substantial undertaking therefore this brief work will in no way touch all the bases or philosophies that feminism embraces and teaches. What I will endeavour to do in this series is touch on some of the theories that have been propounded by feminism and try to tie it together with the Biblical view of woman and her role in family and church.

To begin with, the feminist mindset appears to believe—at least as far as the Bible is concerned—that women are given nothing more than a *borrowed identity*. This in turn can only lead to an uncomfortable identity crisis as well as a mindset based on confusion. This only leads to a psyche that has in it an innate anger, the type of anger we see in the militant feminist groups. I also would add to this that when the Biblical account of woman is ignored or written out of feminine history, it necessarily forces them to look for a *different past* which in turn forces them to look for and try to form a different future than scripture has for them.

As Christians, at the outset, this highlights for us the problem with all such philosophies and that is this: When God is deleted by either philosophy or science then of necessity the human soul is also deleted. When this occurs what are we left with? Surely it can be nothing other than a harsh, cold, and hostile environment which has neither purpose nor goal. This raises another question: What happens to moral and ethical responsibility in this type of climate? Surely we can see that when reason is relegated to mere self interest devoid of Biblical empathy, and appropriate emotional response—then the proper use of reason is necessarily destroyed.

Feminist thinking, as with all other thinking of this type, uses past concepts. This is especially the case when it deals with text based traditional concepts like the Bible. This is why critical feminism engages in a *re-interpretation* of scripture. This is a war with God and Christians and like any war of this sort—the first casualty is always truth and Biblical truth here is relegated in order to accommodate alternative feminist thought.

What then has this really done for women? I would suggest that it has not been helpful at all. Why? Because by simply rearranging ideas to suit such a mindset and then removing Biblical truth regarding woman—feminism has done nothing other than obliterate the truth about women. What they have done is to engage in attempting to write kinds of *Biblical sequels to the given truths*. These, however, do not in any way create a new or different beginning for women. In reality only create setbacks that women must overcome and the ultimate prize that is lost is the eternal home in heaven for any woman who follows such thinking. Therefore as Christians when we confront feminism we must ever be “people of the book” giving the true view from God’s perspective on such matters.

Part of that truth is the fact that whether we be man or woman, we are all tripartite beings consisting of body, soul, and spirit (I Thessalonians 5:23). Within this framework there is contained the mind and the mind was designed by the Creator to interact with other minds including that of the Creator Himself through His word. From this we can see that we come to know Him by the renewing of our own “mindsets” (Romans 12:1-2). Thus it is not a product of blind evolutionary chance, natural selection, human philosophy or suchlike. It is God ordained creation law as is male and female. Feminism is not based as such—it seems to me to be based rather on the principle of “survival of the loudest” but to be fair it came also as a response against those men who have themselves abandoned the spiritual mindset and Biblical truth and who use women as mere play things and slaves. Even though this is true, it does not give one the right to change what God has put in place.

Many feminists have the mindset that they must absolutely break what they call the “*virtues*” of misogyny. Yet if you really think about that as a Christian, you find that there are no virtues to misogyny and the Bible in no way endorses it (Ephesians 5:28, Titus 2:3-6, I Peter 3:7). Yet from this mindset we can see that feminism is about challenge and rebellion against any and all power

structures, conventions and laws (including of course Biblical law). These laws are perceived by feminists as keeping women enslaved, subjugated, and subordinate to male power. This type of feminism is seen by such women as women consciously working as a group for their “rights” as well as challenging all structures (the church included) which put men in charge in any public way.

From such a standpoint, feminism could be said to have started as soon as women became conscious of this problem, organised themselves on a scale that was effective enough to help them change their *perceived situation*. This mindset also seems to carry with it another implication being that women with very little power can understand the past better than those who have power. If this is true then we must ask where then do men with little power fit in to this? The Bible actually says that it was Eve who was deceived (II Corinthians 11:3), in fact in I Timothy 2:15 it states that Eve was “quite deceived.” Which raises another question: What was the effect that this had on both men and women?

It would appear then that too many feminist philosophers have made too many illegitimate moves away from the true intent of the Biblical record by trying to make it just another philosophy and history book at best or a pseudoscience at worst rather than taking it for what it is: the creation of, fall, and salvation (or the way back) for humankind. This type of thinking only leads one into epistemological uncertainty and thus insecurity. In short it is simply epistemological nihilism. This is always the end result of deleting Biblical truth, knowledge, and history. Therefore as Christians we must prepare ourselves through study to answer these feminist sceptics as well as science and evolution, all of which claim to preserve knowledge and defend truth. Never before in history is this as imperative as it is now in our post-modern, post-Christian era. The feminist mindset in some ways can be likened to a mirror that reflects but one that reflects only its own imperfections and thus by doing so, it is actually distorting reality. This is a mirror that can only be adjusted by the truth of scripture so that it can give a clear view of the objects it reflects. As we have said earlier, this is the scriptural objective (Romans 12:1-2).

One of the first modern women to challenge the masculine worldview was Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-97). She faced the obstacles of being an independent

woman who was struggling to earn her own living and educate herself. In 1783, she raised enough money to open a girl’s school in London. Her main opposition came from the neighbouring Baptists, Presbyterian and Independents who had been banned from either civil or municipal government as well as the Universities. These had formed their own dissenting academies.

At this time the Enlightenment philosophy was flourishing – this was a philosophy which challenged feudal society and its ideas. These ideas were based around the inherited privileges of church, kings and nobles. The Enlightenment thinkers came up with “The Rights of Man” which was in opposition to “The Divine Right of Kings”.

One of the enlightenment philosophers Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-78) attacked social injustices in this period but he overlooked one and that was the one Mary Wollstonecraft latched on to. In his book “Emile” written in 1762 Rousseau said this: “Men and women are made for each other, but their mutual dependence is **not equal**. We (men) could survive better without them (women) than they could without us. They are dependent on **our feelings**, on the price **we put on their merits**, on the value **we set on their attractions and on their virtues**. Thus women’s entire education should be planned in relation to men, to please men, to be useful to them, to win their love and respect, to raise them as children, to care for them as adults, counsel and console them, and make their lives sweet and present.”

Now that is patronising and arrogant and I can see why a woman would rail against such an attitude but as we have said that is not how the Bible instructs a man to look at a woman at all. However, it was against such a mindset that Mary Wollstonecraft wrote her book “A vindication of the rights of women” in 1792. She was the first one to apply Enlightenment ideas to a woman’s situation and it was this work that was the foundation of modern feminism. She identified in her work the chief point that had denied women from taking action which would in her view achieve equality. This was in her view “*domestic tyranny*,” denial of political rights, education, and equal work opportunities. She also described woman’s financial dependence on a man in marriage as “**legalised prostitution**.”

This of course not only demeans the Biblical concept of marriage, it is also a very false view but one that has persisted right up to the present day in some feminist thinking. The basic tenet of her book is a demand for the end of the double standards of male and female behaviour and for women's right to independent work, education, civil and political life. All of these still form the basis for modern feminism. They are not wrong per se but the ideology behind them is flawed and unbiblical.

Wollstonecraft also argued that femininity was a *construct*. Women are actually born equal but are then subsequently taught to be subordinate, weak and unintelligent. "She is brought up to be the toy of a man and must rattle and jingle in his ears whenever by dismissing reason he chooses to be amused confined in cages like a feathered race. It is true that they are provided with food and raiment for which they neither toil nor spin; but health, liberty, and virtue are given in exchange." She also declared: "I do earnestly wish to see the distinction of sex abolished altogether save where love is concerned."

Now I can see why Mary was "ticked off" and rightly so but as I said, her logic is flawed and worldly and it is this that has led so many feminists into the rabbit warrens of speculative unbiblical philosophical and epistemological nihilism—not to mention the loss of so many of our women's souls.

By the time of the mid 19th century the British Empire had accumulated a lot of wealth and that coupled with the height of the industrial revolution had made many classes of working women. These included farm workers or land girls, servant women, mill workers, seamstresses, governesses, and many more like classes. It was during this period from around 1850-1914 that the groundswell of the British Women's Movement became prevalent. The factory girls of the then newly formed mill towns of Lancashire and Yorkshire were probably the most independent of all the working girls of that time. They got their own pay in their own hands, they all worked and often lodged together, and they were now free from the restrictive parental hands that they were formerly tied to. Even so they were in the minority since most working women of that time were in fact domestic servants who were rigidly controlled by their employers. They also worked longer hours for less pay than their factory women counterparts.

On the other side of this, married women were virtual prisoners and whatever money they had saved or property they owned was forfeited when they married and became the property of the husbands alone. So since Mary Wollstonecraft's time, feminists had believed that it was neither lawful, natural, nor inevitable that women should be subordinate to men. However, they did not have any evidence to argue against the prevailing religious view of the day (however wrongly used) which was that God had created women as an inferior and therefore secondary creature out of the rib of Adam.

Enter Charles Darwin. Now if you think that evolutionary theory simply touched on our animal ancestry then think again. Feminists used it plus the fledgling science of anthropology to glean some other implications from Darwin's theory. When they did this they had what they thought explained for the first time *how* women had become subordinate to men. Of course it had nothing to do with creation law, the fall, or gender roles as the Bible laid them down. It was about power structures, constructs, history. Survival of the fittest and suchlike.

These ideas led some feminists to embrace Marxism and Historical Materialism to further their cause. The Marxist theory of politics offered the Marxist feminists an analysis of class that promised to liberate them from those forces (including God, Bible, and church) that oppressed them. The idea was that women should first declare themselves as a *separate class of people* or a constituted class and then makes the transition from capitalism to socialism and finally to become communists which was equal to full community and complete freedom (*from all restraints*).

This gave Marxist feminists the freedom to not only do what they wished but also the power to *be whatever they wanted* and this was because according to Marx, they now had the power to structure the system that would shape them and their thought or philosophy.

So then we see that Darwinism, Anthropology, and Marxism were three of the forces that helped to shape modern feminist thought. Darwin got women away from the Bible and creation.

Anthropology when combined with Darwinism gave them the *how* of women's subjugation, and Marx gave them the idea of a class war that would liberate them from God, Bible, church, and men since women now

had the power to structure their thought and therefore reshape the systems that had previously held them captive.

One of the manuals for this type of feminism was written by Marx's cohort Friedrich Engels for in 1845 he wrote "The Origin of Family, Private Property, and the State." In this work he claimed to use historical evidence that showed that women's social status had not always been inferior to men's. Notably, however, he never used the Bible as a resource for his thesis. Rather he says that women's subjugation to men had become "enforced with the origins of private property." Engels also mooted the idea that marriage was merely a *social institution (and it) had nothing to do with love* (or God) but everything to do with private property. Thus he endorsed Mary Wollstonecraft's view that marriage was legalised prostitution and not God ordained. Therefore as far as Engels was concerned, if wives were to be emancipated from their husbands then they must first become *economically independent from them*. Thus his first presupposition for the so-called emancipation for women was the re-introduction of *the entire female sex into public industry*. This has happened to a great extent in our times with many women having corporate careers and suchlike.

However women have suffered to some extent in that it is them who must work longer hours and have to balance family and career. Engels did anticipate this by saying that childrearing and housework should be *socialised*. Well it did create crèche work and such and put children into the hands of others but the question must be asked: How has any of this actually enhanced women, children, and modern marriage let alone honoured God? Rather all it has done is contravene God's purpose for the home and cheapened His ideal of marriage as well as contravening creation law and God's explicit role for both men and women. ■

THE HUMAN EYE

by Hugo McCord

It is refreshing, after one has become despirited with the pessimism of blind evolution, to examine the positive, optimistic, thoughtful design seen in the human eye.

First, the chemical elements making up the eye had to have a cause for their being in existence. Second, that those elements are arranged to form an optic nerve, a retina, lens, pupil, iris, and cornea means there was an arranger. Third, that all the caused

and arranged parts cooperate to give sight appears to be the purpose of the designer. For nine months the parts being made and arranged in a dungeon are useless. Then, all of a sudden, the design is obvious, which design had to precede the making and the arranging of the multiple parts, and design reflects intelligence. An intelligence capable of producing sight cannot himself be blind: "He who forms the eye, can he not see?" (Psalm 94:9).

"In order to keep the eye moist and clean (which qualities are necessary to its brightness and its use), a wash is constantly supplied by a secretion for the purpose; and the superfluous brine is conveyed to the nose through a perforation in the bone as large as a goose-quill; or, more properly speaking, along two capillary tubes, one from either eyelid, which enter a duct, lodged in a canal passing through the bone. When once the fluid has entered the nose, it spreads itself upon the inside of the nostril, and is evaporated by the current of warm air which, in the course of respiration, is continually passing over it. Can any pipe or distillery be more mechanical than this is? It is easily perceived that the eye must want moisture; but can the want of the eye generate the gland which produces the tear, or bore the hole by which it is discharged--a hole through a bone?" (William Paley, *apud* Irwin H. Linton, *A Lawyer Examines the Bible*, p. 119).

Charles Hodge wrote that the eye "was fashioned in the darkness of the womb, with a self-evident reference to the nature and properties of light, of which the creature for whose use it was fashioned had neither knowledge or experience" (*Systematic Theology* I, 218). A "blind and unconscious adaptation of means to an end is inconceivable," wrote Hodge, but evolution is a blind and unconscious adaptation of means to an end.

John Stuart Mill was no friend of theism, but he was fair to make the following acknowledgements: "The particular combination of organic elements called the eye had, in every instance, a beginning in time, and must therefore have been brought together by a cause or causes." Further, "inasmuch as the elements agree in the single circumstance of conspiring to produce sight, there must be some . . . causation between the cause which brought the elements together and the fact of sight . . . Not sight itself, but an antecedent idea of it must be the efficient cause. But this at once marks the origin as proceeding from an intelligent will" (*apud* G. Frederick Wright, *The Logic of Christian Evidences*, pp. 85-86).

Skeptical David Hume also was fair to write: "Anatomize the eye: survey its structure and contrivance; and tell me, from your own feeling, if the idea of a contriver does not immediately flow in upon you with a force like that of sensation. The most obvious conclusion surely is in favour of design (*Hume Selections*, p. 316).

