

THE AUSTRALIAN ANABAPTIST

God's solid foundation stands firm. 2 Tim. 2-19

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Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel,
but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in
the house.

Matthew 5:15

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For A Conservative Anabaptist Perspective

From The Editor's Desk

*When I was a child, I spake as a child,
I understood as a child,
I thought as a child:
But when I became a man,(adult) I put away childish things.
1 Corinthians 13:11*

At the end of this month there is a period called Easter.

The word Easter appears only once in the KJV in Acts 12:4, and has been sadly misinterpreted from the original Greek word *pascha* which according to Strong's concordance is of Chaldean origin meaning Passover, a time of special sacrifice in the time of Israel under the Old Testament dispensation.

As disciples of Christ in the new dispensation we recall the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on Calvary, it cost Him his life that we might have life eternal. For many who profess Christianity this period has great significance although the observance of it varies from culture to culture depending on one's ethnicity.

Reflecting back on my childhood and even into that period of time before submitting myself to Christ and being born again Easter was a time of rejoicing that Christ had risen and the way it was celebrated was much as we see it in the world today, Easter eggs, Easter bunnies and all that goes with that – we could say these were and are childish things.

We believed ourselves to be Christians and as those we mixed with were of similar persuasion and practice we gave no thought, or very little, to the true meaning of it all. Yes we were questioning some of the beliefs and practices of the church we were members of at that time and believe that the Lord graciously led us into the presence of true believers who read the Bible and it encouraged us to do the same.

As we read the Scripture and prayed for the truth to be revealed to us God answered those prayers in many ways through the input of others and by clarifying the meaning of scripture directives one of which was the verse quoted from 1 Corinthians 13:11.

Yes we were well into our adult years but it nevertheless applied because we were indeed very childlike in our understanding of God's word but praise be to God that no matter our age we can become mature and grow up in Christ Jesus and His ways. May it be so for you. J.v.L.



Lest I Be a Castaway
Message by Wayne Yoder
Amish Mennonite Ministers Meeting 2003

“But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.”

2 Peter 3:18

[**Note:** Whilst this message was directed at ordained brethren all believers have some form of leadership role at some time in their life and therefore can apply some if not all of these teachings to their own lives. *The Editor, Australian Anabaptist*]

The Word of God is something that we do not want to say is old, and I can truthfully say it is something that is new. Of course, I must be careful. It seems like my memory fails me and I have been quoted before saying, as I came across a certain Scripture, that I have never thought of that before that it was a new thought. We need to be careful what we say. Of course, I said it in all honesty, so we need to realize that we do fail, that we do forget and that we do make mistakes.

It is truly a blessing that we can be together and realize that all of us are made of the same stuff. All of us make mistakes and none of us are perfect. That helps me be able to stand in front of you with trembling, realizing the importance, and the seriousness of preaching. Of course, it makes me also comfortable that we know that there are many here who can correct, and remind us.

1 Corinthians 9:27 Paul says, “But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.” Some initial thoughts on this were how I act, the way I work, the way I administer and the many things that we have heard already preached to us, could cause others to be a castaway. However, as I looked and studied, and looked deeper into this, it opened my eyes. What is this talking about? That “I myself should be a castaway?” From the research that I have done, my first thoughts were not correct.

We could also say this, “Lest I myself should become unfit, or not stand the test, or be unapproved and rejected as a counterfeit. The meaning is

“something that can be cast aside.” Why is this written? Why did Paul write that “I might be a castaway?” or that “I (Paul) myself should be a castaway?” I believe it is something that is possible if we are not careful. In fact, if we look back we probably know of ministers, bishops, or those who preached the Word that were not sound. They did not keep the faith. They fell back and even left the church.

I do not know that I have experienced that in the churches that I have been in, but I know and have heard of others who have experienced that. It is possible that we can fall away. We are made of the same ingredients as our members, our brethren. That is a burden on my heart that we can fall away and we can be a castaway. We are a people who are taught. We know what to say at the right time. We know what is acceptable among us yet the whole time it could be that we are not inwardly what we should be. Therefore, it is something which we need to consider. Even though we are a minister, a bishop, or a deacon it does not mean that we are exempt from those things. They can happen to us.

What are some of the things that can cause us, or how can we find ourselves in that condition to be a castaway? As we preach, some people complement us. It can lead to pride. Pride is one thing that we as ministers need to work with. We know that pride was cast out of heaven and it will never return there. If we have pride, we will be a castaway. We will be rejected. We will be unapproved, as a counterfeit. There are probably many other things.

I do not know how you find it, but I have been tempted with the thought, even though I am a minister, there are some things in life that may be handy. It may be something which the church has disallowed. Temptation clicks in our mind, “You know, I can have that.” However, as we think of it, No, we cannot. “I cannot have that.” The devil plays in our minds. He puts things there to try to make us trip and fall, and to make us a castaway.

It is something serious. In fact, we can read in the New Testament of some who were a castaway. Paul rebuked them by letter and in person. We can read of those who put away their first love or caused others to fall. It was said that this was not of God, but of men. It is a serious thing that we consider ourselves and that we do not become a castaway because it will affect the people. The Word says, “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump” (Galatians 5:9). It can start in the pulpit (*and in any heart*)

(I) How do we avoid becoming a castaway? How do we avoid becoming a counterfeit?

1) *Have the love of God in our hearts.* Even in the Old Testament we can find some direction on how to avoid being a counterfeit. **Deuteronomy 6:5-6** says, “thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart.”

That is one way. It is important that we have the Lord God as our Master and that He is our Saviour. He must be the one who directs and leads us. He must be the one whom we love and cherish and work under

2) *We must guard the mind.* **Mark 12:30-31** says, “And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.”

We can see this is the way which we avoid becoming a counterfeit or being a castaway and rejected of God. Yes, we love God with all our strength, with all our soul, and with all our mind. Things start in our mind. We cannot keep things from coming into our mind.

You well know that we can travel the highways and there is much ungodliness, immorality, and so on. It seems like it is getting worse. How do we cleanse ourselves from this? How do we keep from indulging in these things? We need to be filled with the Word of God. We must have our mind stayed on Him. We must have our desire with Him, lest we be a castaway, lest we be side-tracked, lest we forget the things which we should be seeking and following after. This is talking to us as ministers. Paul wrote this thought so that we do not become rejected or as a counterfeit.

3) *Our minds must be clear.* In **Colossians 3:1-3**, “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”

Is that the way we find ourselves? That is the key and a way that we need to be to avoid being a castaway. Our minds must be clear from the filth of this world, and from the things that the world goes after. We walk in His will.

4) *The condition of our heart.* We can read in Psalm 51 where the writer

saw his need. **Psalm 51:7** “Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.” **Psalm 51:10** “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me” This needs to be our intention. This needs to be among the things we cultivate. The things that we entertain in our minds, or other things will take over and we will become candidates for castaways. **Psalm 51:16-17** “For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise”

That is the way that we need to be to be able to avoid being a castaway. We need to have a right spirit. Otherwise those other things will try to overtake and take us down.

Isaiah 6:5 says, “Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.” What do we think of ourselves? How do we think of ourselves? Do we think that we are somebody because we are a minister, deacon, or a bishop? God forbid that it would enter our minds or that we would think, “Give us allowances,” or that we were to entertain such thoughts. We are only men. We need to recognize that we are undone and that we are nothing of ourselves. We are only by the grace of God what we are.

5) *Being endued with the Scriptures or with authority.*

As I thought of authority, there are two different ways to look at authority. The Bible speaks about it. How does authority relate to being a castaway? One way is that I am a minister and I have the authority to rule. (*Or we may say I am the head of the home*) I hope we have a different concept of that. Let us look at the Scriptures and see what kind of authority we need to have.

Matthew 20:25–28 says, “Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

Here it speaks of how the gentiles exercise dominion over them and exercise great authority over them. Then, we see in verse 28 what the Lord

did. “Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” That should be our attitude as we work, labour, and keep ourselves. That is what this subject is about. It is about me, myself. Many times our thoughts are directed away. Many times we are thinking of the work that needs to be done and we forget about ourselves.

I heard a minister once say that he was preparing for a message and forgot to feed himself. I believe that is possible. The work can be so great that we forget to feed ourselves. Thereby we become a castaway. Are we working for the Lord? Or, why are we working for the Lord? Are we working with His direction or us working with an ambition in a good work to accomplish things that we have done, that I have done. There is a difference.

“The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” I like the song that quotes the Scripture where it says, “spend and be spent” (2 Corinthians 12:15). That is what we as ministers are for. It is necessary for us that we are willing to be spent for the cause of the Church, for the brotherhood, and for Christ. As we entertain or cultivate those thoughts then we can avoid being a castaway. We can keep Christ in mind.

Matthew 23:8–11 says, “But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.”

There are people who like to be called Rabbi. They like to be called pastors or “reverend.” I do not feel like that title fits me. I do not know how you feel about it. We are only brethren. We are only servants. We are only called

I feel as Paul says that he feels that he is “less than the least of all saints” (Ephesians 3:8). That is the way we should feel. I have experienced that. Sometimes we wonder why we were called to the ministry knowing our own faults, and so on. We know we are not perfect. We do not need to be perfect either. People will know our intent and our feelings. They will know how our spirits convey back and forth. They will pick up whether we are sincere or whether we are not.

Jesus said to the disciples at the last supper in John 13:13–17, “Ye call

me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

This is something that Jesus did with the disciples. He did not esteem Himself as higher, and we also do not want to esteem ourselves as higher. We were only called to more responsibility. We were called to teach.

2 Corinthians 3:6–10 says, "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth."

This speaks about how it was in the time of Moses. However, in this time we are living in the time of the Holy Spirit. It should be much more glorious and much more precious. This is the authority that we should be promoting, or working by.

Also, I was thinking of **2 Corinthians 4:1–2**. "Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."

Is this the way that we handle the Word of God? Is this the authority that we are using? Is this the way that we walk and talk? Have we renounced the hidden things of dishonesty.

Sometimes we need to consider other people. Sometimes we need to talk frankly and clear, and people appreciate that. If you are honest, tell the truth, and do not deviate from the truth, that is the authority that we need to use, the Word of God. It is not authority like we think of, like a policeman or an officer or such, but it is by the authority of God's Word. That is the authority that we need to have and use.

The Scripture continues in [2 Corinthians 4:3-10](#) “But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body”

That is the way that we should walk “Always bearing about in the body.” If we let ourselves be conditioned in this way, we will avoid being a cast-away. We will be found a faithful minister, and a faithful servant, “That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body,” and that He will be able to work His will through us.

[2 Corinthians 6:3-7](#) says, “Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed: But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned. By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left.” These are things that will keep us from being a castaway. These are things that we encounter and experience. These are the helps that we have from the Word of God that if we are endued with them, with the Spirit of God and the Word of God, it can cleanse us and keep us to where we are not a counterfeit or rejected as a counterfeit.

[2 Timothy 1:6-8](#) says, “Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God.” That is the way that we need to walk. That is the authority that we need to use as we discipline ourselves to walk

in a way that God can work through us, and such that His Word speaks.

Let us look in [2 Timothy 1:13-14](#) “Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.”

We need the Holy Ghost within us to keep those things. We need His leading and guidance. We need to ask for it. We need to feed upon it, lest we become a castaway, and thereby deceive many. We can read of some happenings of this in the Word of God.

We also want to recognize [Matthew 7:28-29](#) as we consider authority. “And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.”

I like that. As we consider the authority that Jesus used, do you think He used the words, “maybe, but, or possibly?” Do you think He left any question? Do you think He talked doubtfully? I do not believe He did. That is the authority I believe that we need to use. We need to be convinced. How will we be convinced unless it is in us? How will we convey it unless we are settled, and that is the way it is? People will pick that up, whether it is outside or within the church.

We do not really have any authority unless we are endued with the Word of God. As we are endued with the Word of God then we can use the word of God. We do not need to use our voice in an abnormal way or a high pitch, or in a disgusting way. We can use the Word of God. We believe it, we are confident it works and it will be conveyed to the people. Thereby, also if we are convinced and live by it, we will avoid being a castaway. We can be a child of God.

If we are a true child of God, sincere, and effective in the work of the Lord, we will have an effect on each other. I wish to share a writing that has been very touching and helpful to me. As a child of God, if I have my sights on God, we will affect each other possibly in the same way

A Child Who Gave His All

“’Twas a common congregation,
Not many rich nor poor,
And they settled back in their places,
When the sermon was at length o’er,

'Twas a missionary sermon
And the pastor tried indeed
To touch the hearts of his people,
For India's great need.
He asked for a large collection
To send the precious Word.
And he raised the mute petition,
Touch their pocketbooks O Lord!
But 'twas only a begging sermon.
One hears so many now.
And a look of saddened patience,
Stole over the preacher's brow.
As they gave their dimes and nickels
With a half to do it e'er.
Instead of the look of healthful joy,
God's people ought to wear,
Way down in front on the front seats
Sat a shabby little boy,
No mother's pet and plaything,
No father's pride and joy,
Poor child, he had no mother
And he was a drunkard's son,
Known to the congregation
As drunken Lacy's John.
Of course, he had no offering,
So the deacon passed him by,
'Let us ask a blessing on it,'
Said the pastor with a sigh.
'Oh, wait,' said the barefoot lad
As he started to his feet
'And ask one on my offering too,
The deacon passed my seat.'
So back went the good deacon
And his face wore a friendly smile
As he passed the box to the little lad
Who was standing all the while,
'I haven't much to give,

But I will give all I can.
I'll go out to India and preach
When I am a man.'
And from his ragged jacket
He drew his treasured pence
And carefully he counted them
Just twenty-seven cents.
'There, that is every bit I have'
Said the shabby little lad,
But I know that God will bless it,
Because I gave Him all I had.'
'Here deacon, pass that box again,'
Called honest farmer Doerr,
'We have not done the best we could
We want to give some more.'
And so the contribution box
Went around the church once more,
And dollars now went dropping in
Where nickels dropped before.
Men all unused to giving
Gave now and softly smiled
For now they gave to Jesus
Led by a little child.
And the pastor asked a blessing
On his sum that made him glad
And all because one little boy
Gave Jesus all he had."

We do make a difference as ministers. It does make a difference whether we are living truly for Him. It will rub off and influence others. My prayer is that we might be of those who are sincere — sincerely looking and working in His vineyard such that we do not become a castaway.

May the Lord bless.



WHY EASTER?

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" Romans 3:23. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinner" Romans 5:12.

Why Easter? In the above scriptures, the reason is stated: because men are sinful and God, in His perfection, cannot tolerate sin in heaven. So in His great love He made a way for us to be saved. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" John 3:16.

But man has to first see himself as sinful in order for Calvary to become a reality to him. He needs to totally come to an end with himself and his sin. Sin needs to weigh him down. For us to see ourselves as sinners, we need to see the holiness and purity of God.

Can we even begin to grasp what kind of love He has for us? Let's try to realize just a little bit of the cost of our salvation. We who are parents of sweet, innocent children should imagine sending our own son to a distant town where he would live among wicked people. But he could save them from certain death if only they would believe in him. Instead, they would reject him and mock him and finally kill him. Besides this, Jesus became willing in the Garden to take our sins upon Him, "Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done" Luke 22:42.

In His love, Jesus let them cruelly beat Him, spit on Him, mock Him, and nail Him to the cross when the very breath they breathed was given to them by Him. He could have, with a thought, taken the life of the soldier who swung the mallet that nailed Him to the cross.

Then on the cross, He took the sin of the whole world on His shoulders. Think of the billions of people who have lived and will live if there is time granted. All of our sin, from the proud or critical thoughts to the worst sin that is probably beyond our comprehension, rested on Him. All this was soiling God's own Son.

After that, Jesus' darkest moment I believe was when God, His Heavenly Father, it seems turned His back on Him. God would not and could not look on all that sin, the filthiness that Jesus our Redeemer took upon Himself.

Why did Jesus do this? Because of His love for us.

Is it a wonder that the earth was in darkness and the ground trembling when Satan, using mankind, was trying to destroy the Creator and Redeemer? And Jesus hung rejected by man and feeling forsaken by God Himself. Can we also see the reason why God made hell so terrible if we reject this great gift of love?

Then the resurrection came, when Christ triumphed over death and sin. No more would man have to live under condemnation, nor would he have to live in sin. But with the resurrection God gave grace to live above sin: "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" Romans 6:4.

The whole plan of salvation would not have been complete if Jesus would have stayed in the tomb. This gift is for everyone, and if we reject it or say that it's not for us, we are saying that the best Heaven had was not good enough for us. One day we will stand before God, but then this message of mercy and grace will have been taken away. Let us never take this priceless gift for granted.

Brother Chad



THE CROSSES OF CALVARY

"And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left" Luke 23:3).

Calvary, the "place of a skull," which is called in the Hebrew, Golgotha, was a place of execution by crucifixion. It was a place of death, a place by the side of the way where all could see, a place of mockery and ridicule. Spiritually speaking, to the penitent sinner and the Christian, it is a place of hope, of consolation, a place of redemption and forgiveness. It is the place where Jesus died for the whole world, bringing salvation to whosoever will believe. But why three crosses?

The three crosses are no mistake; the number is not something that just turned out that way. For one thing, it is a fulfillment of prophesy. "And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death" Isaiah 53:9. Matthew says, "Then were there two thieves crucified with him" Matthew

27:38. Also, we see the whole plan of salvation and of judgment on sin and the sinner in the three crosses of Calvary. Let us take a closer look at the crosses.

The three crosses have one thing in common, that is, death. Jesus and the two malefactors all died, each on his own cross. Two of the crosses held the promise of life: Jesus resurrected to life on the third day and the malefactor on His right (through redemption) to life in paradise with Christ. The third cross stands alone as a cross of death—everlasting death away from God. The middle cross (the cross of Jesus) stands supreme, and only Jesus could bear this cross. All of mankind will bear either one or the other of two crosses, the one on the left hand side, the other on the right hand, in the Judgment. Let us take another look at Calvary.

Cross number one, the middle cross, is the cross of redemption. In Gethsemane Jesus prayed, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground" Luke 22:42-44. Jesus accepted the cross.

The cross of redemption made the atonement with God for our sin. It was a cross of suffering and death, the Son of God bearing the sin of the whole world. "And they took Jesus, and led him away. And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called in the Hebrew Golgotha" (John 19:1-17).

On the cross Jesus said, "I thirst." His thirst may have come from the loss of blood from His many wounds. Drinking the cup of wrath against sin, Jesus cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He trod the winepress alone. Jesus was crucified about the sixth hour (John 19:14). "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour" Matthew 27:45. Jesus suffered and died in darkness. But the prophet Isaiah said, "He [God] shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied" Isaiah 53:11. And about the ninth hour, Jesus cried out with a loud voice and yielded up the ghost, Matthew 27:46-50, He died. The Light of the world, for a short time, was snuffed out. But for all mankind, the work of redemption was finished on the cross. "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" John 3:15-16. Oh, what love that paid the price of our redemption!

Cross number two is the cross of rejection. "And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us" Luke 23:39. The man on this cross openly rejected Jesus as the Son of God as Lord and Saviour. He died without hope. The world today bears this cross, as does anyone who rejects God and His plan. "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened... Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever" Romans 1:21-25. It is sad, but the prodigal and the disobedient and the lukewarm Christian will bear this cross in the Judgment. On the other hand, the cross of redemption and the grace of God are free to all. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" Matthew 11:28. Let us look and live.

Cross number three is the cross of acceptance. "But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss" Luke 23:40-41. This malefactor owned his sin and misdeeds and looked to the cross of redemption. He was accepted and forgiven. "To day shalt thou be with me in paradise." This man died, also, but first to self and the flesh. He was penitent, rebuked his sinful companion (Luke 23:40), confessing his own sin (v. 41). He declared Christ to be sinless (v. 41), exhibited wonderful faith (v. 42), and confessed Christ as his Lord (v. 42). He made a model prayer and received an immediate answer (v. 43). Penitents obtain acceptance upon confession, confession brings forgiveness, forgiveness makes a disciple, and a disciple has a reward.

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" Matthew 16:24. The Christian is that disciple, a cross-bearing disciple, bearing the cross of acceptance and self-denial. The cross of acceptance is the cross that will bridge the Jordan for all who believe. Let us not lay it aside nor stop to rest, but gladly bear it. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" Revelation 3:21. "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death" Philippians 3:10.

Let us pray for each other that we can all be faithful to the end. To hear those joyful words, "Enter into the joy of thy lord," the cross of acceptance is our cross to bear.

Brother Henry



[**Following** is the third article in a series on the evolutionist teaching by Bro. Sumner Loomis. —EDITOR]

HAVING PROPER RESPECT FOR OUR CREATOR

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" Romans 8:16.

If we are truly the children of God, then we should love His Word and seek to know Him more and more. Therein lays a beautiful relationship that reinforces our commitment and our faith in Him, especially as we mature in the Christian walk. God asks so little of us, and in return, we come to understand His love and His care for us. He is our redeemer, our righteousness, and our friend. Without belittling any of these aspects of our relationship with Him, it is important that we have the strongest possible reverence for the Provider of our hope and eternal blessings.

We do not have sufficient comprehension or words to describe His creation, much less the Creator Himself. We have powerful and sensitive microscopes that enable the observation of some of the mysteries in His creation, but we also know there is much beyond even this expanded vision that we cannot view. We also have powerful telescopes cruising in space that can be steered to distant vantage points to relay pictures back to earth, and we see sights that we cannot explain. Even then, we cannot even guess the size and value of what lies beyond our limited vision. To those who have had the opportunity to see some of these sights and have properly pondered them, it becomes apparent that we are permitted to view only a small portion of God's majesty and power.

If we misinterpret our position in this vast field of knowledge and take honor to ourselves by trumpeting our accomplishments, then we have failed in giving the reverence due to God. If we fail to love and forgive our neighbor or to have compassion on the needy, we have failed to show rev-

erence to the God who extends these graces to us in great measure. Insufficient reverence can limit the success and closeness of our relationship with God (many a scientist has proclaimed, "I cannot see God"). Since we cannot measure or even comprehend the righteousness and love of God, it follows that our reverence and respect for Him should have no limits. Only our smallness and humanness are limiting factors.

Imagine the love and humility when the Creator of this world (and universe, and galaxy, and ...) came to this earth as one of us. And He exposed Himself to the sin, shame, and suffering we have brought on ourselves. Imagine that He actually allowed Himself to be scoffed and crucified by the pride of this world. Imagine that He still loves us and has great plans for our future despite our miserable performance. Now imagine the great debt of reverence we owe Him! Imagine the irreverence that is daily manifested by those who refuse to accept His grace!

Many times the science of this world has proclaimed an accomplishment in understanding and manipulating God's creation. And many times this "victory" has later been shown to be far short of the goal that was claimed. An example is the paramecium, a tiny one-celled, microscopic creature that, under the microscope, appears almost completely transparent. Several times men have thought that they knew the full extent of its simple construction and placed it in the evolutionary scale as a major performer. And several times we have discovered that its small size contains many more complex functions than we ever imagined.

This species of microbe, incidentally, is extremely fertile in its reproductive cycle, and has a lifetime of only a few days. Therefore, since we have known of its existence (approximately since 1870), it has been through more than thirteen thousand generations of reproduction cycles, and no evolution has yet been observed. Also, we have discovered that its DNA (genetic system) is very complex and is basically not understood. Man has knowledge, but only partially.

We have all come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23) and in the proper reverence of the great Creator.

~ *Sumner S. Loomis* ~



A Refuge in the Storm or False Security?

*The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him,
And delivereth them.*

Psalm 34:7

"The Lord's our Rock, in Him we hide, a shelter in the time of storm" This Rock is a constant. No one is denied access to it. We must not allow the pressures of life to distract us from the Christian's only Refuge, and we must trust God through the storms of life.

One of the ultimate goals in life for the average person is security. Financial institutions and investment firms advertise that they are stable and solid like a rock. Some firms add, "Fully insured and bonded." People check ratings of hospitals, schools, doctors and contractors to minimize any risk they might take when they trust their body or belongings to these organizations. They may hire a lawyer as a refuge in case problems arise. This is surely not what the song writer had in mind when he penned these words, "Secure whatever ill betide" (Christian Hymnal, No. 515).

In life, we see that some individuals or families encounter more storms than most. Finally they hardly know where to turn for refuge. Where is God? Where is His great love for us? Why is it best that our loved one is taken? Where is truth? We also encounter those who when faced with similar circumstances have a certain calmness and serenity about them that defies human reasoning. We say, "These people have made God their refuge.

In Luke's gospel we have the account of Jesus calming the storm of wind and His disciples' amazement that He commanded even the winds and the waters. Surely with such power this is a person they could trust to keep them safe.

Let us read the account and then draw some observations and guidance from it for our own lives in a world that is increasingly looking more turbulent than a mere wind storm.

Luke 8:22-25 ²² Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth. ²³ But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled *with water*, and were in jeopardy. ²⁴ And they came to him, and

awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm. ²⁵ And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.

Note our Lord's words in verse 25 and keep them in focus as we read the following verses from Luke 21.

Luke 21:8-19 ⁸ And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am *Christ*; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them. ⁹ But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end *is* not by and by. ¹⁰ Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: ¹¹ And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven. ¹² But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute *you*, delivering *you* up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. ¹³ And it shall turn to you for a testimony. ¹⁴ Settle *it* therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: ¹⁵ For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. ¹⁶ And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and *some* of you shall they cause to be put to death. ¹⁷ And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake. ¹⁸ But there shall not an hair of your head perish. ¹⁹ In your patience possess ye your souls.

The Sea of Galilee is a fresh water lake thirteen miles long and eight miles wide. Being surrounded by hills and mountains, it is subject to sudden and violent storms. Jesus said, "Let us go over unto the other side of the lake." The narrative simply states, "And they launched forth." As fishermen, this crossing of the lake was probably a common occurrence. With a journey of this distance in a sailboat, there would be time for Jesus to get His rest. However, a wind storm disturbed their journey and made it hazardous. We would be inclined to think that with Jesus on the ship, the disciples should not have feared. After all, He was the very Creator of this lake and weather system. Could they not just have trusted their safekeeping to Him? The boat, however, filled with water, and they were in jeopardy. With the Mas-

ter in their midst, the disciples knew to whom to turn.

This incident is symbolic of our journey through life. When we have the Master in our boat on the calm sea, we can be assured of His presence in the storm. Our faith is increased when He rebukes the howling tempest and the raging waters and there is a great calm.

In the second setting in Luke 21 much later in Jesus' ministry, some were commenting on the beautiful ornamentation of the temple. Before this, Jesus had driven out the individuals who were turning the temple into a den of thieves (Luke 19:45-46). And now, lest the people would seek any comfort in this beautiful handiwork, Jesus had said it would be destroyed. Driven by curiosity, the people wanted to know when and how this would come about.

Jesus' first comment was, "Take heed that ye be not deceived" Luke 21:8. He wanted to emphasize that some false sources of refuge would claim to be the Christ.

Christ spoke of wars, commotions, fearful sights, and unusual happenings, but then said, "Be not terrified." The disciples had Christ's assurance that He would be their refuge. Even witnessing before kings and rulers and being persecuted should not be a concern of theirs. After all, this would all be for His name's sake, and they would not have to premeditate on how to answer their superiors. He promised to give them a mouth of wisdom. What a comfort that must have been when the disciples faced persecution, fire, and sword. Jesus always delivers what He promises. God's Word never fails.

Later in history many Christians gave their lives for the cause of Christ. They were hated by all men and tortured to the extreme. Where was God then? He was at the same place as when His only begotten Son hung on a cross to die—in heaven. Christ's only refuge was in God, as He lamentingly cried, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" Luke 23:46. So our martyr brethren also found refuge in time of death. They answered their interrogators wisely and fearlessly; in death they willingly gave their bodies for Christ's sake. In patience they possessed their souls. Their refuge was in Jesus Christ. He had kept them to this hour, and now they entrusted themselves to Him. "Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer" Romans 12:12

How do we trust God through a storm? How can we be assured a place of

refuge? What keeps us from fear and despair?

Let us consider the birds. When a storm approaches, the birds disappear. The wind howls and drives the rain relentlessly. After the storm passes and the sun again shines, casting the rainbow in the eastern sky, here come the birds. They flit around and drink at the pools of water created by the rain. They are singing, and life goes on as usual. But where were the birds during the tumult? Birds make their nests in protected areas in trees, shrubs, and buildings

An artist was asked to portray in a painting a scene of refuge, calmness, and serenity. He painted a picture of a wild storm which bent the trees to their limits. Debris was tossed here and there, and lightning rent the sky. In the shelter of the branches he painted a picture of a mother bird in her nest with her wings spread over her little ones. There was complete trust and safety in that nest. So, like the birds, we also need a place of refuge that we are, well acquainted with. After we have prayed we need to find a place of rest, a place of comfort for our hurts, a place where we know God dwells. We must cultivate this dependency on God and His keeping power for our lives and those of our loved ones. We must know where this place exists before the big storms of life hit us. It is important to cultivate this dependency in our youth. The Scriptures say much about the frailty of man and his need for a personal Savior. They speak of a need for faith in God. Parents can instill a sense of well-being and calmness in their small children by remaining calm in a crisis.

Instead of pacing the floor with their ears tuned to the weather monitor in times of severe weather, parents can call their family together and pray. The children hear their father praying to God, not to take the storm away, but simply to protect the family. When there is a financial loss, the children also catch Dad's complete dependency on God rather than hear of all the things that will now be denied them. They see Dad and Mom trust everything to God. This is true serenity and will have a calming effect on both children and youth.

In times of tests and disappointments, such children see their parent's devotion to God and their love to His church. When the church speaks on an issue, they know it is for their safety. There is no time more appropriate than now to prepare a place of refuge for the future.

When we have learned to weather the storms we are in a better position to help those in need. We do not need to look far to see people who are hurting. As we see their need and their hurt we can assure them of God's love and care. We can lend comfort from the Scripture by explaining how God even notices the fall of a sparrow. God has never promised us a life without storms, but He has promised to be our "refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" [Psalm 46:1](#).

Let us be faithful in lifting up Christ to the world as the answer to their problems. Let us be faithful in encouraging one another to faithfulness and trust. If we trust God, we are safe. May we always have a heart of compassion to help a soul tossed about by the storms of life. Some day one of us might be that storm-tossed soul.

In the foregoing we have spoken of the various trials and tribulations that can and do confront us in this life and the fact that those who have committed themselves to Jesus Christ do have a secure place of refuge. David expresses that in words which we could well emulate in [2 Samuel 22:1-7](#):

¹ And David spake unto the LORD the words of this song in the day *that* the LORD had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul: ² And he said, The LORD *is* my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; ³ The God of my rock; in him will I trust: *he is* my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence. ⁴ I will call on the LORD, *who is* worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies. ⁵ When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly men made me afraid; ⁶ The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me; ⁷ In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried to my God: and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry *did enter* into his ears.

David knew where his security, his refuge, in the storm lay.

False security is no security, [Proverbs 11:28](#) says: He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch,

Why then are we attracted to that which is false? The deceitfulness of our hearts has cast a veil over our eyes. We are inclined to think if we are strong enough or big enough, we can replace the uncertainties of this life with some form of security. Years ago the wise man observed, [Proverbs 18:11](#). "The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as an high wall in his

own conceit"

The disciples were astonished at Jesus' statement about how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God ([Mark 10:23-24](#)). The nature of our existence tends to cause our eyes to be drawn to the earthly realm of time and matter. Time and material are gifts of God to His creation, but they can also become enslaving masters. We are truly secure only by faith in God's providence. Without faith the reasoning of the carnal mind causes us to seek security in our own efforts. How ironic—security through our own efforts seems to be so very real, yet is so very false!

We have seen in the earlier part of the message where our place of true refuge is but Jesus also teaches us that we must beware of seeking refuge in areas which whilst they make look attractive and appear to offer security, refuge, in this life from what is happening around us they are areas that lead us away from our true refuge and defence, for the LORD is my defence; and my God *is* the rock of my refuge. [Psalm 94:22](#)

Here is what Jesus has to say about those things which offer false security: [Luke 12:13-31](#) And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. ¹⁴ And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you? ¹⁵ And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. ¹⁶ And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: ¹⁷ And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? ¹⁸ And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. ¹⁹ And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry. ²⁰ But God said unto him, *Thou* fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? ²¹ So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God. ²² And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. ²³ The life is more than meat, and the body *is more* than raiment. ²⁴ Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?

²⁵ And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?
²⁶ If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? ²⁷ Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ²⁸ If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and tomorrow is cast into the oven; how much more *will he clothe* you, O ye of little faith? ²⁹ And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. ³⁰ For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. ³¹ But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.

What can we learn from this parable of the rich fool? It contains an important but elusive principle. Creation made man a physical being with his needs being supplied in harmony with his setting. Sin drastically altered this setting. The lesson of the parable is that a man's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses. The parable does not tell us that material possessions are of no importance. Because of the curse, they are a necessary part of life. Man lives of the abundance of the things in his possession, but his life is not made up by them, no matter how great or small his possessions may be.

Because of our sinful nature, we need to be warned about the danger of covetousness. The words that precede and the verse that follows the parable (vv.15 and 21) speak in the present tense. They apply to the meaning of the lesson in the parable. This lesson is for us today.

After Jesus' instruction on the folly of anxious care and on being ready for the Lord's return, Peter asked Him, "Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us or even to all?" [Luke 12:41](#). Jesus then spoke of the example of a lord and his stewards, ending his comments with one of the laws of God: "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required" (v. 48). This seems to be the conclusion of the topic. The more we have been given, spiritually and materially, the greater is our responsibility. Jesus instructs us not to worry about what we shall eat or drink and not to be of a doubtful mind.

The worldling's eyes are fascinated by what this world has to offer, but

the believer recognizes his inner need. We are instructed by our Saviour to consider the birds of the air and wild flowers of the field. The beauty of the kingdom of God is exemplified by the harmony, balance, and exquisite radiance of nature. The birds are not anxious about their food supply. They make no stockpiles. The wild flowers bloom in more glory than Solomon surrounded himself with.

If we will only take the time to consider and meditate upon the truth of God's word, we will understand that the most difficult things for us to accomplish or change are small things for Him. There is comfort in His blessing. There is also comfort in His chastisement. There is comfort even in the hardships He allows us to experience.

The securities offered by the world are so fleeting and valueless. When we believe it is His pleasure to give to us the glorious, peaceful, and radiant kingdom of light, we may rest securely in His care. Moreover, He adds to the beauties of His kingdom the things needed for our earthly life. "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger" *Psalm 8:1-2*

Materialism is a scourge that is encouraged by our capitalistic economic system and probably the one that affects most if not all of us in some way or other. Many people believe that in an abundance of material goods there is security and happiness. This is simply not true, although the impression may be there. Material things give us no more than mystical peace of mind and ephemeral happiness. Security seems to be always just around the corner, but it always remains out of reach. Free enterprise in a competitive system creates opportunity for increase far beyond necessity. Goods are rapidly and readily available.

Human nature finds it hard to resist the lure of giving undue importance to material possessions. To be housed and fed well is not a sin. But the temptation is in placing undue emphasis on material things. Great danger to our faith lies in desiring an abundance of material things and then being able to acquire them. Because we are trapped in the pressures of the environment about us, we want to keep pace with our surroundings. When we succeed, we are still not satisfied. There is a constant pressure to believe

that happiness and contentment is found in possession and prosperity. This is false, but does not appear to be so when we are blinded by materialism.

By this deception our focus has been shifted from serving God and the church to serving self in the pursuit of possessions. Once this thought is in the heart our hands and the feet move accordingly. This desire for wealth comes upon us so subtly that we are not aware of it. We may become aware of it only when materialism has already fastened itself upon us and we recognize its effects. No wonder Jesus said, "Take heed and beware." Can the course be changed? Can we dislodge the hook of the lure? The pain of having the hook removed and being set free in truly secure waters may be a necessary experience. We will need to lie still in the hands of the Saviour. "For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength" [Isaiah 30:15](#).

How do we determine if we are placing undue importance in material things? The gospel standard is clearly expressed in the words, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" [Luke 12:34](#). "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" [Colossians 3:2](#). Taken at face value Jesus' words be considered radical in today's economic climate but returning to the gospel standard will bring lasting rest and true security. A sense of security in material possessions does not satisfy the soul in its never-dying existence. Earthly possessions will not be transformed into treasures in heaven!

Fear and despair are the enemies of trust. Can they in reality always be avoided? How can I truthfully sing, "God's way is best for me," when all indications point otherwise? Can we find refuge in one another, or is our refuge always in Christ?

With these words from the psalmist let us be encouraged to always seek the place of true refuge in the storms of life and not trust in the false surety that this world offers.

[Psalm 62:6-8](#) "He only *is* my rock and my salvation: *he is* my defence; I shall not be moved. In God *is* my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, *and* my refuge, *is* in God. Trust in him at all times; *ye* people, pour out your heart before him: God *is* a refuge for us. Selah"



Prayer For Daily Needs

From: A Collection of Puritan Prayers

O God the author of all good, I come to Thee for the grace another day will require for its duties and events. I step out into a wicked world; I carry about with me an evil heart. I know that without Thee I can do nothing, that everything with which I shall be concerned, however harmless in itself, may prove an occasion of sin or folly, unless I am kept by Thy power. Hold Thou me up and I shall be safe.

Preserve my understanding from subtilty of error, my affections from love of idols, my character from stain of vice, my profession from every form of evil. May I engage in nothing in which I cannot implore Thy blessing, and in which I cannot invite Thy inspection. Prosper me in all lawful undertakings, or prepare me for disappointments. Give me neither poverty nor riches. Feed me with food convenient for me, lest I be full and deny Thee and say, Who is the Lord? or be poor, and steal, and take Thy name in vain.

May every creature be made good to me by prayer and Thy will. Teach me how to use the world and not abuse it, to improve my talents, to redeem my time, to walk in wisdom toward those without, and in kindness to those within, to do good to all men, and especially to my fellow Christians. And to Thee be the glory. Amen



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