



For Such a Time as This

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The Founders Journal



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The Founders Journal is a quarterly publication which takes as its theological framework the first recognized confession of faith that Southern Baptists produced, [*The Abstract of Principles*](#).

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For Such a Time as This

Tom Ascol

The theme of the 1993 Southern Baptist Convention which met in Houston was "For Such a Time as This." The phrase, taken from the account of Esther's life after she wed Ahasuerus and became Queen of Persia, is a call to duty-duty born of a profound awareness of God's providence. It reminds us that God is a God of purpose. He will get glory for Himself in time and eternity. Furthermore, it is to that end that working out all His plans and promises on the contemporary scene.

In the daily press of Christian life and ministry it becomes easy to lose sight of the larger picture. Our own peculiar worlds offer more than enough challenges to demand full attention. The effort required to fulfill one's normal, ongoing responsibilities tends to leave little energy for gazing beyond the immediate horizon. Yet, a living faith in Christ continuously stretches our vision beyond the seen into the unseen world

Time and again God's Word calls us to recognize the divine purpose at work behind the scenes. Failure to stop and reflect upon the larger purpose of God and its progressive historical fulfillment inevitably produces spiritual myopia. Such short-sightedness inhibits encouragement, invites self-absorption, and fosters spiritual lethargy.

Conversely, conscious awareness of the providential outworking of God's eternal plan builds hope, broadens vision, and gives real strength for kingdom service. Is this not the prophet's contention and aim in Isaiah 40?

In the midst of trial and sorrow, Isaiah announces comfort by directing attention beyond the visible and obvious to eternal, unchanging realities that are rooted in God's character and involvement in the world. This change in perspective causes the immediate to be viewed in the context of the historical and eternal.

Though we cannot precisely determine beforehand exactly where we are on God's eschatological time-table (despite many foolish attempts to do so), we must not forget that He has one. Soldiers fight more courageously when they know that victory is assured. By remembering that God has already given us the victory in Christ, and that He is persistently working out the final revelation of that fact, Christians are similarly enabled to be "steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:57-58).

"Behold your God!" is Isaiah's call to his discouraged countrymen (Isa. 40:9). With rhetorical questions and dramatic descriptions the prophet leads them to remember that God, their God, is the Sovereign of the universe. As our Lord has created all things, so He reigns over all things. He is sovereign over nations and rulers, nature and history. He is the God of providence. He gives strength and power to those who are weak (v. 29), to those who wait upon Him (v. 31), thereby demonstrating that He is also sovereign in grace and mercy.

We must never forget that our great and glorious God is presently and continuously working out His eternal purposes for this world. As servants in His kingdom, we clearly have roles to fulfill in the plan. It is precisely this point which Mordecai tries to convey to Esther by asking, "Who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" His question was designed to move Esther to see herself as having been placed by God in that precise position at that precise moment for the fulfillment of His all encompassing will.

"For such a time as this." It was a propitious moment; an opportune season; a time of great potential It was a

opportunity which, in the providence of God, called for boldly moving forward in the performance of duty. Gripped by these realities, Esther ventured forth with abandoned resolve, reasoning, "if I perish, I perish!"

Through her faithful actions God reversed the plans of His enemies and brought about a great salvation for His people.

At this point in the history of our convention we can learn much from the lessons of Esther. We are in the midst of crucial days. The significant changes that the SBC has experienced, especially during the last few years, should cause every serious Southern Baptist reverently to ask, "What is our Lord doing?"

It has become widely accepted that unashamed submission to the non-negotiable authority of God's written Word is an appropriate expression of one's commitment to the Incarnate Word. Moreover, with growing frequency strategic leaders are expressing the need not only to reaffirm the Bible's truthfulness but also to restudy its content.

At the same time there is a growing recognition and appreciation in our ranks of the Reformed tradition which looms large in our denomination's heritage. Books and articles which reflect this heritage and explore its contemporary relevance are more prevalent now than at any time in the previous 50 years. It is proper to ask, "Why is all of this happening now?"

As we move toward the celebration of our 150th anniversary the convention seems ripe for an even deeper, more thorough renewal than that which we have witnessed thus far. The closer we draw to the sesqui-centennial milestone, the more we will hear references to our Southern Baptist history and heritage. What better time to pray and labor for a return to our spiritual and doctrinal moorings as Southern Baptists? Could it be, in light of all that God is doing in our ranks, that we stand poised for a great reviving work of God—a work which will leave neither doctrine nor life unaffected?

Certainly that is our great need. Is it presumptuous to hope that this is what God is preparing us for? With full acknowledgment of His sovereign prerogatives, I think not. One thing is certain: you and I have been brought into God's kingdom "for such a time as this." He has "determined [our] preappointed times and the boundaries of [our] habitation" (Acts. 17:26). It is by the wise providence of God that we find ourselves serving Him here and now.

What we need, then, is the resolve of Esther! O, that God would kindle in us faith like that which was found in Paul, Barnabas, and Epaphroditus—that we, like they, would risk our lives "for the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 15:26; cf. Philip. 2:30). Regardless of your circumstances, by God's grace you can become an instrument of great good in the faithful discharge of your providentially ordered duties.

Look beyond your own horizons. Stop and consider what God is doing. Recognize His providential ordering of your life and ministry. Remember His sovereign lordship over history in the fulfillment of His good and glorious purposes.

Labor to see the old, unchanging, God-centered gospel proclaimed in your own sphere of influence and beyond. Give to support the ministry of the gospel. Pray! Pray for pastors, teachers, churches, professors, denominational servants. Pray for the good, solid, biblical literature that has been and is being distributed.

Pray for the ongoing ministry of the *Founders Journal* in these days. Pray for Mission 150. As you are able, financially support it. That one project has tremendous potential to introduce thousands of Southern Baptist pastors

to those doctrines of grace which once flourished in our convention.

Do not let these opportunity-filled days pass without abandoning yourself wholly to the service of Christ, confident that He has brought you to the kingdom "for such a time as this."



Lordship and Regeneration

[Ernest Reisinger](#)

[This is the seventh in a series on the Lordship controversy. The first six articles are: "Behind the Lordship Controversy" - FJ 6, "Lordship, Experience and Interpretation" - FJ 7, "Lordship, Non-Lordship and Dispensationalism" - FJ 8, "The History of Dispensationalism in America" - FJ 9, "Lordship and The Nature of Saving Faith" - FJ 10, "The Nature of Saving Faith (continued)" - FJ 11. Previous issues of the journal are available at \$2.50 each.]

In the first study I pointed out that every major doctrine of the Christian faith is affected by and inseparably related to the Lordship controversy. In this study I wish to address the difference between the Lordship and Non-Lordship views in respect to the doctrine of regeneration. We will see that they are poles apart and the differences are not a few.

There is no question that the best adherents of both views would agree that regeneration is absolutely essential in order for a sinner to be saved-no regeneration, no spiritual life. However, they do not agree on what regeneration is, or what it always produces in one's life.

Regeneration is the key that opens the door of salvation and, therefore, translates the sinner out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light.

Non-Lordship teachers teach a regeneration that does not necessarily transform. Consequently, discipleship and obedience are optional and the biblical fruit of regeneration may or may not be evident. This means that regeneration does not necessarily regenerate, that is, it does not necessarily transform and produce a new creature (2 Cor. 5:17).

Lordship teaching, on the other hand calls for a regeneration that transforms the whole man-his mind, his affections and his will. This transformation is produced by regeneration (new birth). It involves a divine miracle. The new birth is a divine miracle and always produces a change in conduct, not merely a change of mind. It opens spiritually blinded eyes. It unstops spiritually deafened ears. It raises the spiritually dead.

This supernatural change includes revelation. Paul could say, "When it pleased God to reveal His Son in me" (Gal. 1:15,16). It produces repentance, faith, humility and submission. The great apostle described it in 2 Cor. 5:17: "Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature [creation] old things pass away; behold all things become new."

Regeneration in the Non-Lordship scheme does not necessarily result in the experience described in 2 Cor. 5:17 (a "new creation").

Since 2 Cor. 5:17 so vividly describes the results of regeneration it may be profitable to camp here for some exposition of this vivid and wonderful description of a true Christian.

"In Christ"

First, note the expression "in Christ." This expression is used 240 times in the New Testament, and is the shortest definition of a Christian in the Bible. Indeed, it is the essence of true religion. If I could only ask one question to help a person to determine his relationship to his Maker, this would be my question: ARE YOU IN CHRIST? Everything God has for you is IN CHRIST!

"But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption" (1 Cor. 1:30).

- In Christ is our justification.
- In Christ is our sanctification.
- In Christ is our adoption.
- In Christ is our wisdom.
- In Christ is our righteousness.

"In Christ" signifies a personal relationship. It expresses the most exalted relationship that can exist-an inseparable relationship, an indestructible relationship, an unspeakable relationship that cannot be defined in word only.

Effects of Regeneration

The second important truth found in this little verse concerns the effects of regeneration: "new creation." Regeneration, (new creation) is the powerful, supernatural work of the Triune God. God the Father planned our redemption; God the Son prayed for it (John 17) and purchased it; God the Spirit effectually applies it in regeneration.

We can explain *what* the Spirit does, but *how* He does it let no man pretend to know. "The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8). So it is with regeneration.

Evidence of Regeneration

The third important truth found in this precious little verse is the evidence of regeneration: "Old things have passed away; behold all things have become new."

How does one know if he is regenerate? Regeneration is known by its effects. I have never known a Non-Lordship teacher to teach this about regeneration. Nevertheless, true religion cannot be less than:

1. Right thinking in relationship to God-it touches the mind.
2. Right feeling in relationship to God-it touches the affections.
3. Right acting in relationship to God-it touches the will.

Regeneration always includes: (1) the enlightening of the mind, (2) the convicting of the conscience, and (3) the renewing of the will. It is by the work of the Spirit that (1) the natural blindness is removed, (2) the natural enmity is subdued, and (3) the natural man becomes a new creature in all his views, feelings, desires, affections, aims, habits, and hopes, (although not perfectly in any one of these areas).

Lordship View Is Historic

Because of the popularity of the Scofield Bible and Dispensational teaching the Scriptural Lordship doctrine has fallen upon hard times, having been largely forgotten by the majority of fundamentalist churches. However, we must never forget that Lordship salvation has been espoused by all the historic creeds and confessions, and by such noteworthy theological giants as John Calvin, John Owen, John Bunyan, John Brown, John Murray, and thank God, embraced by many respected recent scholars and theologians, such as, Louis Berkhof, James M. Boise, John Gertsner, R. B. Kuiper, James I. Packer, A. W. Pink, R. C. Sproul and the late Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones.

A. W. Pink, in his straight-forward manner never learned how to put round corners on the square edges of divine truth. Pussyfooting was not Pink's style. He pointed out the grave dangers of the Non-Lordship teaching. He said, "In most instances the modern "evangelist" assures his congregation that all any sinner has to do in order to escape hell and make sure of heaven is to receive Christ as his personal Savior. But such teaching is utterly misleading. No one can receive Christ as his Savior while he rejects Him as Lord. Therefore, those who have not bowed to Christ's scepter and enthroned Him in their hearts and lives, and yet imagine that they are trusting Him as Savior, are deceived" (*Studies on Saving Faith*, pp. 12, 13).

Confusion of Natures

The Non-Lordship teaching on regeneration does not reflect the experience described in 2 Cor. 5:17: "Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature old things pass away; behold all things become new." The change is "new creature," "new creation."

The Non-Lordship view teaches that a new, sinless self is implanted in the soul. This is something less than regeneration, it is not a new birth, or a rebirth of the old nature. It is the introduction of a new person altogether, a distinct psychological entity. This teaching does not make the regeneration experience a rebirth of the old soul, but rather, the making of a new, different soul. This new creature appears to be a part of the divine nature and is implanted in the soul. The result is two distinct natures in the Christian. Thus, nothing actually happens to the old nature at all. Rather, now you have two persons-one placed along side of the other.

The Lordship teachers hold that in regeneration a new disposition is implanted in the old ego, and thus the Christian is one person with two struggling principles, but not two persons in one, not two distinct natures, or selves.

In the Non-Lordship view the old nature is never changed, never sanctified at all. One question the Non-Lordship teachers do not answer is, How can the old, unchanged, depraved nature on its own exercise faith in Christ? This error of the doctrine of regeneration has a profound effect on the biblical doctrine of progressive sanctification. How can this old, completely unchanged, nature yield to the Holy Spirit and become spiritual? The Non-Lordship teachers have a real problem here. How can the old nature, which is really the person, yield to the new nature? The old nature cannot do it because it remains untouched. The new nature need not yield to itself for it is altogether spiritual. This false reasoning leads to a stand-off and it undermines progressive sanctification. This would mean that a third party, a "third nature" is necessary to act as a mediator between the old and the new natures, thus making the critical choices to yield or not to yield to the new nature.

A regeneration that does not regenerate, but which only transplants into a person a so-called "new creature" which is not really the person and which is always separate from what the person is-this is not regeneration at all.

The Non-Lordship teachers insist on the necessity of yielding to the Spirit without any real recognition of this problem and their theological dilemma.

The Non-Lordship teachers fail to explain how a totally carnal, unregenerate will can choose to yield.

This is just one example of what I stated in our first study, that is, the Lordship-Non-Lordship issue does not stand alone but affects every major doctrine of Christianity: regeneration, repentance and faith, justification, sanctification and, assurance and our view of the Ten Commandments and their relationship to the gospel.

Old Testament Saints

The Non-Lordship teachers have a great difference among themselves with regeneration and the Old Testament saints. One of their teachers, Dwight Pentecost, taught that "the fact of the new birth (regeneration) had not been revealed in the Old Testament (*The Words and Work of Jesus Christ*, p. 126).

I do not know how Dr. Pentecost would interpret passages like Deut. 30:6: "And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live." or Ezek. 36:26, 27: "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them." (Chafer and Walvoord did not agree with Pentecost. See their *Major Bible Themes*, p. 234.)

Of course the biblical view of regeneration is the supernatural implanting of a new principle, which in turn produces a new principle of conduct which transforms a person and translates him from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light without any intermediate steps. (For Chafer's view see his *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 6, p. 106.) The dispensational view of regeneration has a profound effect on one's understanding of justification and sanctification and their relationship to each other.

Summary

Let me make some summary statements as to the differences between Non-Lordship teaching and Lordship teaching on the doctrine of regeneration.

These summary statements may not represent every Non-Lordship teacher because they differ among themselves on some details. Many of the best Non-Lordship teachers are now in print and what they are saying in their books cannot easily be denied. Four of the books that I have read in connection with these studies are: *Balancing the Christian Life* and *So Great Salvation*, by Charles Ryrie; *Absolutely Free*, by Zane Hodges and *Sin, the Savior and Salvation*, by Robert P. Lightner. Lightner's book is by far the best of the four. It is the most scholarly of the four.

In his book, *Essential Truths of the Christian Faith*, R. C. Sproul offers this definition:

Regeneration is the theological term used to describe rebirth. It refers to a new generating, a new genesis, a new beginning. It is more than "turning over a new leaf"; it marks the beginning of a new life in a radically renewed person.

Regeneration is the work of the Holy Spirit upon those who are spiritually dead (see Ephesians 2:1-10). The Spirit recreates the human heart, quickening it from spiritual death to spiritual life. Regenerate people are new creations.

Regeneration is not to be confused with the full experience of conversion. Just as birth is our initiation, our first entrance into life outside the womb, so our spiritual rebirth is the starting point of our spiritual life. It occurs by God's divine initiative and is an act that is sovereign, immediate, and instantaneous. An awareness of our conversion may be gradual. Yet rebirth itself is instantaneous. No one can be partially reborn any more than a woman can be partially pregnant.

Regeneration is not the fruit or result of faith. Rather, regeneration precedes faith as the necessary condition for faith. We also do not in any way dispose ourselves toward regeneration or cooperate as co-workers with the Holy Spirit to bring it to pass. We do not decide or choose to be regenerated. God chooses to regenerate us before we will ever choose to embrace Him. To be sure, after we have been regenerated by the sovereign grace of God, we do choose, act, cooperate, and believe in Christ.

Non-Lordship preachers teach that one can experience the new birth (regeneration) and not be transformed. The sinner may turn from his sin or he may not. He may change the direction of his life-style or he may not. He may be a disciple or he may not. He may love God and hate sin or he may not.

The Lordship view of regeneration is that regeneration is the supernatural work of God, whereby the sinner is transformed by the giving of new life in Christ. As a result of this new life there will also be certain changes in the sinner's life. There will be deliverance from the dominion of sin as well as a desire and a power to live a godly life. It would be impossible for one to experience regeneration and remain unchanged. Transformation is the clearest evidence of regeneration.

True conversion will result in a life that seeks after new obedience and good works. It is incredible to think that one can experience the powerful, supernatural work of regeneration and still have a rebel's heart and live a rebel's life. Certainly the new convert needs to grow in grace and knowledge and there will be a sincere desire to know and grow. His affections will be fixed on Jesus-not perfectly but purposefully. Since his will is changed in regeneration he will now have a desire to do the will of God despite of many failures. His prayer will be "Thy will be done." He will not fall into the ditch of presumption because in front of the ditch of presumption there is a hedge row of God's precepts. Nor will he fall into the ditch of despair because in front of the ditch of despair there is a hedge row of God's promises.

Yes, Christians can and do sin and sometimes grievously. Christians can stumble and fall and they make many crooked steps on their way to the Celestial City. Yes, they can grow cold and they do. Yes, there are failures and sometimes serious failures. Though the winds of temptation and weakness may blow their little ship off course, nevertheless, when the storm subsides they will always get on course again.

The Non-Lordship teaching on regeneration would hold that it is the supernatural work of God whereby the sinner is imparted new life, but not necessarily the transformation of life. Changes may or may not take place in the life of the supposed convert. There may be the power of deliverance over authority and dominion of sin or there may not be. There may be the power to live a godly life or there may not be. It could be possible to experience regeneration and remain unchanged. Transformation is not necessarily the evidence of salvation.

It must be emphasized that the differences in these two views are not minor. The doctrine of salvation is involved.

The two views are as opposite as black and white, as incompatible as oil and water—a fact acknowledged on both sides of the debate. Both camps are evangelical and convinced that their position is Scriptural. One thing is clear—they cannot both be correct interpretations of the Bible.

One of the fundamental differences between the Lordship teaching and the Non-Lordship teaching is just where they place regeneration in their *ordo salutis* (order of salvation).

The Lordship teaching puts the order of salvation as follows: 1) Regeneration, 2) Faith (which includes repentance), 3) Justification, 4) Sanctification (distinct from but always joined to justification), and 5) Glorification.

The Non-Lordship teachers have much disagreement among themselves on the order of salvation; however, I do not know of one of their leading teachers who agree with the Lordship view. For further insight into the work of regeneration consult these Baptist sources: James P. Boyce's *Abstract of Systematic Theology*, pp. 373ff, and John L. Dagg's *Manual of Theology*, pp. 277ff.



The Biblical Evangelist

[Cary G. Kimbrell](#)

The word "evangelist" is so frequently used today it is surprising to learn that the term is rarely defined in evangelistic literature. An investigation into the scriptural usage of the word reveals that it is employed only 3 times in the New Testament (Acts 21:8; Eph. 4:11; 2 Tim. 4:5). A study of those passages is essential to any biblical understanding of the nature and work of evangelists in the life of the early Church.[\[1\]](#)

In all three biblical occurrences, the evangelist was subordinate to the apostles. Philip (Acts 21:8) was under the authority of the apostles as one of the seven (cf. Acts 6:1-6). In Eph. 4:11 the evangelists were only mentioned after the apostles and prophets. Timothy (2 Tim. 2:5) was a pupil of Paul, and not an apostle.

The assertion of Adolf Harnack that any distinction in the early church between the apostles and the evangelists was rare is not supported by the subordination of the evangelists to the apostles which is reflected in the biblical material.[\[2\]](#) The biblical material indicates that "evangelist" was probably a technical title for some sort of minister in the New Testament other than the apostles, as the prophets and pastor-teachers were.

In the space available it would be impossible to give a detailed exegesis of Acts 21:8; Eph 4:11; and Tim 4:5. This section, therefore, will consist of a brief overview of these verses and a summary of the comments which were discovered in commentary material.

Acts 21:8

First, in Acts 21:8, reference is made to "Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven." This title comes upon the reader without warning and with no explanation. There is no hint in the context as to why or how Philip acquired the title of evangelist. One can only theorize at this point.

F. J. Foakes-Jackson in his commentary on Acts writes, "Philip seems to have gained the title by having been the earliest recorded preacher of the gospel outside Jerusalem."[\[3\]](#) Others believed that the title was given simply to distinguish him from Philip the apostle. Whether or not there is any validity to these speculations, in the final analysis it must be said that Acts 21:8 does not advance our understanding of the nature and function of an evangelist. The only definitive information from the passage is that the term was applied to Philip.

Ephesians 4:11

Second, in Eph 4:11 the evangelist is listed with other titles which are commonly held to be offices in the church. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the evangelist may also have been an office. Though this association is somewhat helpful to our understanding, there is not one word in the context which describes the nature or function of an evangelist. All that can be concluded thus far is that "evangelist" is the title of an office and that Philip held it.

2 Timothy 4:5

Third, at 2 Tim 4:5 Paul exhorts Timothy to "do the work of an evangelist." The absence of the article is deemed significant by some of commentators while being ignored altogether by others. Homer Kent writes, "In this charge to Timothy, the absence of an article before 'evangelist' indicates the type or quality of work is being stressed, rather than some official position."[\[4\]](#) If one follows Kent's reasoning, the phrase would be better translated, "do evangelistic work." Why not use

euaggelizomai as he did so often in his writing? Why go to such a rare word to express such a common idea? If "do the work of an evangelist" is simply a way for Paul to tell Timothy to "do evangelistic work," then why did Paul only employ this terminology with Timothy. The rare use of *euaggelistes* in the Pauline vocabulary would suggest a technical use. Therefore, it is probably a reference to an office, or at least, to a special function.

Summary of New Testament Teaching

From the biblical material, we can surmise that "evangelist" is the title of an office which Philip and Timothy held. Both men were subordinate to the Apostles. Although in Acts eight, Philip preceded the Apostles into Samaria, he had to await the arrival of the Apostles Peter and John before his hearers could receive the Holy Spirit. Timothy was sent back to the churches already established by the Apostle Paul. Timothy was given his charge by the Apostle Paul and took his directions from him.

With this in mind, the evangelist may have been a special office that was exclusively used by the apostles either to begin new churches or to ground churches already established by the apostles. If this is true, then the evangelists' perpetuity would be inextricably linked to that of the apostles themselves.

Scholarly Opinion

I have examined hundreds of commentaries on this subject. Of these, only ninety-five make statements concerning the nature of the biblical evangelist. These commentaries consulted include both scholarly and devotional works, and their publication dates range from 1677 to 1986. Thirty-eight of the writers claim the evangelist was a missionary much like the missionaries of today. Surprisingly, the second most popular view (twenty-two) among the commentators is that the evangelists were assistants to the apostles and, therefore, the office was extraordinary and temporary. Fourteen commentators see the term in a basic sense as simply a preacher of the gospel. Six see it as a reference to an itinerant preacher, five in a more contemporary light of a revival preacher, five tie it to Philip, three see it as an employment rather than an office, one views it as impossible to define, and one considers the evangelist as a writer of the gospel.

As this survey illustrates, there is very little agreement on the nature and function of the biblical evangelist. The most significant point in all this is how few of the commentators interpret the concept of evangelist as it is most often used today—one who holds an office which specializes in converting persons to initial faith in Christ usually through "revival meetings."

Roy Fish, professor of evangelism at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary asserts that his extensive study of commentaries has led him to conclude that the evangelist in the New Testament is what "we usually consider it in our denomination and our churches today . . . an itinerant preacher of the gospel, whose primary purpose is going in to win people to initial conversion to the Christian faith."^[5] Fish's findings, as reported, differ from the findings in this article. The difference may be explained in Dr. Fish's definition. His definition seems to suggest a missionary function, not a contemporary evangelist.

I have demonstrated that most of the commentators see the evangelist as a missionary. It is, however, a far stretch to say that these men were describing the contemporary evangelist. The contemporary evangelist usually goes into areas where the gospel already is established. These areas already have a continuous gospel witness and many established churches.

Some of the commentators expressly state that the New Testament evangelist is not the "evangelist" of the modern day. William O. Carver writes, "He [the evangelist] was nearly what we call a home missionary, or a city missionary, not at all corresponding to our professional 'evangelist'."^[6] H. E. Dana adds,

[Paul] did not instruct Timothy to make occasional trips out into the providence of Asia for a two week revival meeting, but to devote some time to pioneer missionary work, pressing the boundaries of the gospel

propagation into new territory.[\[7\]](#)

Space will not permit a thorough discussion of each of the opinions expressed in the commentaries. However, it is informative to see how few of the commentators describe the evangelist in modern terms, and how many of the commentators claim that the office of the evangelist no longer exists. In viewing the office as temporary, many of these men followed John Owen's reasoning.[\[8\]](#) The strongest argument in favor of Owen's opinion is the fact that no biblical qualifications for the evangelist exist. The strongest ecclesiastical support for this argument is that the confessions, when speaking of permanent ecclesiastical offices, do not include the evangelist.

Conclusion

In summary one can only approximate the concept of the biblical evangelist. The paucity of biblical material and the wide differences in scholarly opinion militate against dogmatic conclusions in this area. However, some things can be affirmed.

First, the evangelist is listed with other offices at Eph. 4:11. Second, Philip and Timothy had this title ascribed to them. Third, both of these men were subordinate to the apostles and seemed to assist them in their missionary efforts: Philip going before the apostles to establish a church, and Timothy coming after the apostles to ground a church in doctrine. Fourth, no qualifications for this office were given in the Scripture. The lack of biblical qualifications casts a shadow over the perpetuity of the office in the ecclesiastical order of the post-apostolic church. Fifth, most of the scholarship refuses to identify the biblical evangelist with the modern concept, and much of the scholarship affirms the temporariness of the office. With these facts in mind, it is highly probably that the evangelist described in the Bible may not exist today, and if he does, he is probably functioning as a missionary rather than a "revival meeting" preacher.



Calvin on God's Providence

"The whole world is governed by God for our salvation . . . that those whom he has elected may be saved."

"God embraces us so lovingly in Christ that he turns to our advantage and welfare everything that befalls us."

"Nothing will more effectually preserve us in a straight and undeviating course, than a firm persuasion that all events are in the hand of God, and that he is as merciful as he is mighty."

"Ignorance of the providence of God is the cause of all impatience."



¹This article is taken from the first chapter of the author's dissertation entitled, "The Changing Concepts of an Evangelist in Christian Thought and Practise." Ph.D. diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1992.

²Adolf Harnack, *The Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries*, trans. and ed. James Moffatt (New York: Williams and Norgate, 1904), 1:437 n. 1.

³F. J. Foakes-Jackson, *The Acts of the Apostles* (New York and London: Harper and Brother Publishers, 1931), 194.

⁴Homer A. Kent, *The Pastoral Epistles: Studies in I and II Timothy and Titus* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1958), 295.

⁵Toby Druin, "Roy Fish: Evangelist's Call Is Legitimate," *Baptist Standard*, January 23, 1991: 12-13.

⁶William Owen Carver, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1916), 208-09.

⁷H. E. Dana, *A Manuel of Ecclesiology* (Kansas City, Kansas: Central Seminary Press, 1944), 252.

⁸*The Works of John Owen*, ed. William H. Goold, vol. 4, *The Work of the Spirit* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1967), 438-453.



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An Encouragement to Use Catechisms (Part 3)

[Tom J. Nettles](#)

[\[Part 1 | Part 2\]](#)

(Two earlier articles on this theme have appeared in FJ 10 and 12 and consist, respectively, of historical and biblical testimony to the usefulness of catechetical instruction for believers. This is the final installment on the subject.)

Catechizing is Practical

The practicality of such an exercise can be demonstrated at several points. First, catechizing forces one to redeem the time. There are many good and helpful ways for parents and children to spend time together. Many parents struggle, however, with finding a means of creating spiritual and biblical discussions with their children. The discipline of catechizing draws parent and child, student and teacher, together in the most helpful and edifying of all activities--the submission of heart and mind to the teachings of the Bible. Other activities may draw the parties together, but time could not be so well spent in any other endeavor. As Matthew Henry affirms, "Your being catechized obliges you to spend at least some part of your time well, and so as you may afterwards reflect upon it with comfort and satisfaction above many other, perhaps above any other, of your precious moments."

Second, catechizing gives the building blocks from which all Scripture can be comprehended. I considered this idea briefly when considering how a catechism is in conformity with the purpose of Scripture. One of the church's most influential and, from a teaching standpoint, successful theologians, John Calvin, saw the truth of this principle and employed it brilliantly. He wrote a catechism to be used in all the homes in Geneva and explains his commitment to this idea in the preface to his 1545 French edition of the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. He spoke of the benefits to the church of having in writing a treatment "in succession of the principal matters" which comprise Christian truth. Those who took advantage of this benefit will "be prepared to make more progress in the school of God in one day than any other person in three months" since he knows "to what he should refer each sentence and has a rule by which to test whatever is presented to him."

Marion Snapper calls this the Lodestar hypothesis. In the absence of sophisticated electronic equipment, a maritime navigator must focus on several brilliant and pivotal stars out of the vast and dazzling array of heavenly splendors. The catechism provides these guiding lights. An artist begins learning his gift by observing the forms of circles, triangles, ellipses, squares, and adds understanding of shading, symmetry, and depth. He then combines these into beautiful creations by the skillful addition of detail. A theologian begins with the first basic principles of faith, which if learned well provide the immovable stones which support massive and comprehensive treatments of all the revealed counsels of God.

Though a catechism cannot contain all the beauty of the Scriptures, it may contain "the essentials of religion, the foundations and main pillars" upon which the rest stands. Matthew Henry compares a catechism to a "map of the land of promise, by the help of which we may travel it over with our eye in a little time." A catechism can no more replace the Bible than a map can replace travel. Though a map does not render the smell of flowers, the heat of the sun, the refreshment of a breeze, or the height of a mountain, the serious traveler would never want to be without one. Traveling from Cuckfield to Canterbury or from Gary, Indiana, to Soddy Daisy, Tennessee, a trip can turn into

quite a disaster without a good map for guidance. The terrain is not altered to fit the map; rather, the map is carefully designed to show what the terrain is like. Nor does one sit at home admiring the wonderful map, thinking that he has seen the world because he has studied the map. No, the map aids in my travel and even encourages one to it. One gets an overall view of where one is going from the map, and, conversely, the journey even helps one understand the map better. Even so is a catechism to Scripture.

Third, a catechized congregation makes better sermons and better preachers. Thomas Watson says, "To preach and not to catechize is to build without foundation." The writer of Hebrews labored under some debilitating difficulties because his readers were inadequately grounded in foundational theological principles (Heb. 5:11-14). What might the writer have told us about the priesthood of Christ had his addressees been mature doctrinally and well catechized? Even so, if a significant portion of one's regular congregation sees clearly the lodestars of the Faith, more detailed textual exposition becomes possible, if not necessary. Thus, the people are in a position to feed on the sincere milk of the word and the pastoral dimension of feeding the flock of God takes on new and highly challenging dimensions.

Two dangers in this advantage are to be avoided. One, maturity of understanding in a portion of the congregation must not force one into a weekly display of esoteric interests. While every message must have something to stretch and challenge the mature, it must also speak plainly to the children and the uncatechized. Two, one must avoid the spirit of novelty. A strong foundation must not be interpreted to grant one license to produce cute little doctrinal embellishments of one's own whims derived from hermeneutical oddities and hidden meanings. Such enterprises, in reality, produce only disproportionate, grotesque monstrosities composed of wood, hay, and stubble to be consumed, for they have no coherence or harmony with the foundation, which is Christ. In fact the tendency of the preacher involved in catechetical training with his congregation would be to emphasize the great central truths of the gospel: sin, the cross, atonement, regeneration, repentance unto life, saving faith, justification, the person and work of Christ, the covenantal working of the Triune God in the salvation of sinners.

The fourth practical use of a catechism is its witness to our belief that Scripture is consistent, clear, and can be taught systematically. Popular scepticism towards the possibility of revealed truth produces raised eyebrows and dropped jaws at the mention of "systematic" theology or catechisms of Bible doctrine. Such materials presuppose that the Bible's teachings on any number of subjects can be arranged in such a manner as to present a consistent, non-contradictory picture of that subject. Catechisms may present real problems to those who feel uncomfortable affirming full biblical truthfulness and consistency; but, for those who accept that position as necessary for the Christian faith, catechisms should be not only welcomed but aggressively sought.

Fifth, arising from the Christian's commitment to truthfulness, which includes coherence and non-contradiction, the catechism aids in producing minds which are congenial to logic and analysis. A well-constructed catechism weaves itself into a tapestry of truth. All parts depend upon and are informed by all others. The learner does not see items of information as meaningless and disconnected from reality as a whole. Instead, without eliminating the sense of mystery and intruding on things hidden from our view by God himself, a confidence in the coherence of truth is paramount. Everything begins with God as creator, subsists and maintains its being through divine providence, and ultimately is consumed in the divine purpose to God's glory.

Not only is the created order meaningful, but history is meaningful, *and* the words used to describe creation and history are meaningful. The God who *spoke* the world into existence and maintains it by the *word* of his power, has by those acts vested in written language the possibility, in fact the necessity, of accurate communication. Observe theological procession and analytical integrity of the following series of exchanges.

Q. (20) Into what estate did the fall bring mankind?

A. The fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery (Rom. v. 1,2).

Q. (21) Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?

A. The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called original sin; together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it (Rom. v.12, to the end; Eph. ii. 1,2,3; James i. 14,15; Matt. xv. 19).

Q. (22) Wherin consists the misery of that estate whereunto man fell?

A. All mankind by this fall lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse and so made liable to all miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever.

Q. (23) Did God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery?

A. God having out of his mere good pleasure, from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life (Eph. i. 4,5), did enter into a covenant of grace, to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into an estate of salvation by a Redeemer (Rom. iii. 20-22; Gal. iii., 21,22).

The fall leads to an estate of Sin and Misery. The two estates are defined and their several parts delineated, and deliverance from sin and misery is introduced. This, of course, leads to a section describing the person and work of the Redeemer. These responses are from the *Baptist Catechism* used by London Particular Baptists, the Philadelphia Association and the Charleston Association. It is based on *The Westminster Shorter Catechism*, a cut above most other catechisms, but the advantage under discussion still stands for any well-organized catechism.

Sixth, Godly catechizing may serve to bolster faith in man's conflict with the world, the flesh, and the devil. In 1630, Hugh Peters encouraged parents to catechize their children by reminding them "if ever your poore Infants bee driven to wilderness, to hollow caves, to Fagot and Fire, or to sorrowes of any kinde, they will thank God and you, they were well catechized.' Marion Snapper characterizes this as the "Prison Camp hypothesis." His judgment is that this is about as realistic as "arguing for obesity in anticipation of landing in a Vietnamese prison camp; it is simply too far removed from the realities of life."

Though wildernesses, Fagot and Fire may not be a present threat, persecution and opposition of a different sort is just as real and perhaps more subtly destructive. Biblical views of both God and man undergo incessant bombardment in the educational structure of modern society.

What Christian young person hasn't found himself in the wilderness of a university classroom, or high school room for that matter, wishing he knew concretely the argument for a belief that his parents and his pastor hold dearly. And how many who have only vague impressions of doctrine but no lively and coherent apprehension of them find themselves overwhelmed by the apparent massive scholarship and acute philosophical insights of an unbelieving teacher?

Such an experience tends to isolate "religious" ideas to a corner of knowledge merely mystical and devotional, tangent to reality only at the point of personal value judgments but not considered worthy of the status of absolutes in any sense. Christianity becomes only a matter of private opinion, but certainly not a case to be argued. Catechizing from an early age sensitizes and conditions the person to consider God and his attributes as an essential part of knowledge, indeed foundational for all true learning. In addition, one learns to evaluate man properly both as to his dignity from creation and his intellectual/moral capabilities as modified by the fall.

Seventh, catechisms provide the theological foundation to bring reformation, prepare for revival, and avoid fanatical enthusiasm. Reformation is the recovery and propagation of central gospel truth and the ordering of the church--worship, ordinances, officers, and preaching--in its light. Revival is the recovery of love for God and man and results in the establishing of priorities in life on the basis of that love. Enthusiasm, the teaching that special leading and the revelation of truth are given privately to individuals, has been the source of divisive and dangerous error. Catechizing provides a doctrinal and biblical foundation which disarms and disciplines the tendency toward privatization of religious truth.

Spurgeon sums up the matter as pungently as any advocate of catechisms.

In matters of doctrine you will find orthodox congregations frequently changed to heterodoxy in the course of thirty or forty years, and that is because, too often, there has been no catechizing of the children in the essential doctrines of the Gospel. For my part, I am more and more persuaded that the study of a good Scriptural catechism is of infinite value to our children. . . . Even if the youngsters do not understand all the questions and answers . . . yet, abiding in their memories, it will be infinite service when the time of understanding comes, to have known these very excellent, wise and judicious definitions of the things of God. . . . It will be a blessing to them--the greatest of all blessing . . . a blessing in life and death, in time and eternity, the best of blessings God Himself can give.

Those who concur and practice in accordance with such a judgment will find themselves standing in good company and involved in a holy enterprise.



One Essential Article

"Do I address one here who imagines that an orthodox creed will save him? I suppose that no one is more orthodox than the devil, yet no one is more surely lost than he is. You may get a clear head, but if you have not a clean heart, it will not avail you at the last. You may know the Westminster Assembly's Catechism by heart, but unless you are born again, it will not benefit you. Did you say that you believe the thirty-nine articles? There is one article that is essential--'You must be born again' (John 3:7). And woe to that man who has not passed through that all-important change."

Charles H. Spurgeon



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Preachers: "Persevere!"

Charles H. Spurgeon

"He that endureth to the end shall be saved."

Matthew 10:22

This particular text was originally addressed *to the apostles* when they were sent to teach and preach in the name of the Lord Jesus. Perhaps bright visions floated before their minds, of honour and esteem among men. It was no mean dignity to be among the twelve first heralds of salvation to the sons of Adam. Was a check needed to their high hopes? Perhaps so. Lest they should enter upon their work without having counted its cost, Christ gives them a very full description of the treatment which they might expect to receive, and reminds them that it was not the commencement of their ministry which would win them their reward, but "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved."

It would be well if every youthful aspirant to the gospel ministry would remember this. If merely to put our hand to the plough proved us to be called of God, how many would be found so; but alas, too many look back and prove unworthy of the kingdom. The charge of Paul to Timothy, is a very necessary exhortation to every young minister: "Be thou faithful unto death." It is not to be faithful for a time, but to be "faithful *unto death*," which will enable a man to say, "I have fought a good fight."

How many dangers surround the Christian minister! As officers in an army are the chosen targets of the sharpshooters, so are the ministers of Christ. The king of Syria said to his servants, "fight neither with small nor great, save only with the king of Israel;" even so the arch-fiend makes his main attack upon the ministers of God.

From the first moment of his call to the work, the preacher of the Word will be familiar with temptation. While he is yet in his youth, there are multitudes of the softer temptations to turn the head and trip the feet of the youthful herald of the cross; and when the blandishments of early popularity have passed away, as soon they must, the harsh croak of slander, and the adder's tongue of ingratitude assail him, he finds himself stale and flat where once he was flattered and admired; nay, the venom of malice succeeds to the honeyed morsels of adulation.

Now, let him gird his loins and fight the good fight of faith. In his after days, to provide fresh matter Sabbath after Sabbath, to rule as in the sight of God, to watch over the souls of men, to weep with them who weep, to rejoice with those who do rejoice, to be a nursing father unto young converts, sternly to rebuke hypocrites, to deal faithfully with backsliders, to speak with solemn authority and paternal pathos to those who are in the first stages of spiritual decline, to carry about with the care of the souls of hundreds, is enough to make him grow old while he is yet young, and to mar his visage with the lines of grief, till, like the Saviour, at the age of thirty years, men shall count him nearly fifty. "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast seen Abraham?" said the adversaries of Christ to him when he was but thirty-two.

If the minister should fall, my brethren; if, set upon a pinnacle, he should be cast down; if, standing in slippery places, he should falter; if the standard-bearer fall, as fall full well he may, what mischief is done to the Church, what shouts are heard among the adversaries, what dancings are seen among the daughters of Philistia! How hath God's banner been stained in the dust, and the name of Jesus cast into the mire! When the minister of Christ turns traitor, it is as if the pillars of the house did tremble; every stone in the structure feels the shock. If Satan can succeed in overturning the preachers of the Word, it is as if yon broad-spreading tree should suddenly fall beneath the axe;

prone in the dust it lies to wither and to rot; but where are the birds of the air which made their nests among its boughs, and whither fly those beasts of the field which found a happy shadow beneath its branches? Dismay hath seized them, and they flee in affright. All who were comforted by the preacher's word, strengthened by his example, and edified by his teaching, are filled with humiliation and grief, crying, "Alas! my brother." By these our manifold dangers and weighty responsibilities, we may very justly appeal to you who feed under our ministry, and beseech you, "Brethren, pray for us." Well, we know that though our ministry be received of the Lord Jesus, if hitherto we have been kept faithful by the power of the Holy Ghost, yet it is only he who endureth to the end who shall be saved.



Seventh Annual Southern Baptist Founders Youth Conference

Bill Ascol

On June 21st approximately 365 youth campers and adult counselors from twelve different states gathered in Panama City Beach, Florida for a week of Bible study and beach recreation. In

past years we have known the protective mercies and manifold blessings of God, and this year we experienced plenty of both.

The conference theme was "Heaven and Hell." The young people (seventh through twelfth graders) in attendance were asked the question, "Where are you going?" Each day included a time of personal Bible study, daily readings through the book of Hebrews, morning seminars, morning expositions by Dr. Cary Kimbrell, afternoon games and activities, evening expositions by Evangelist R. F. Gates, and late evening small group Bible studies.

Dr. Kimbrell, the pastor of the Trinity Baptist Church in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, challenged the conference attendants to cultivate strong convictions regarding the reality of the existence of both heaven and hell. On Thursday morning we were unusually gripped as Dr. Kimbrell took us on a "tour of the pit of the damned." Something of the spirit of Jonathan Edwards and John Bunyan rested upon him as he preached.

Mr. Gates is an itinerant evangelist and my fellow elder at the Heritage Baptist Church in Shreveport, Louisiana. His evening expositions complemented the morning expositions very marvelously as he set before the assembly some pointed lessons from the lives of five persons in the ministry of Jesus who faced eternity. He encouraged us that our God delights in showing mercy, and stated over and over again that all that is necessary for a person to go to hell is for that person to do nothing. Mr. Gates' preaching was described by one counselor as the bittersweet experience of watching a man pray for your very soul for approximately an hour.

The morning seminars were led by four very capable pastors. Dr. Fred Malone (First Baptist Church in Clinton, LA) spoke to the groups regarding "The Eternal Implications of Repentance and Faith." Mr. Steve Martin (Heritage Baptist Community Church in Fayetteville, GA) discussed "The Eternal Implications of Time Management." Mr. Tim Seal (Grace Baptist Church in Jonesville, LA) challenged the young people with "The Eternal Implications of Promiscuity." Mr. Hal Wynn (Northside Baptist Church in North Ft. Myers, FL) dealt with "The Eternal Implications of Submission to Authority."

By week's end several young people had confessed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior. Word has come to us that several more were savingly brought to Christ as they returned to their homes. We are very thankful unto God that He gave us such an opportunity, such an audience, and such dedicated gospel ministers who handled a very difficult subject with integrity and compassion. (Tapes from the conference may be ordered from the address listed below).

From the moment we arrived on the conference grounds we knew we were in for a time of tremendous spiritual warfare. Until Dr. Kimbrell's Thursday morning exposition regarding "The Essence of Hell" we truly wrestled with principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high places. It seems that the subject matter under discussion

had an unusually unsettling effect upon the forces of darkness. Praise God, however, that He overruled every satanic distraction for the glory of Jesus Christ and the spiritual good of many souls.

Next year's YOUTH Conference is scheduled for June 27th through July 1st. Theme, location, and prices will be announced in a future issue of the Journal. For more information you may contact us at the following address : SBFYC, P.O. Box 5321, Shreveport, LA 71135; or call 318-798-7088.

"The devil's war is better than the devil's peace. Suspect dumb holiness. When the dog is kept out of doors he howls to be let in again."

Samuel Rutherford



News

New Southern Baptist Magazine

At the 1993 Southern Baptist Convention which convened in Houston Texas a new denominational periodical was unveiled. SBC Life is published by the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee 10 times each year. Dr. Mark Coppenger is the editor. Subscription price is \$10.00. The premier issue suggests that the magazine will follow a "USA Today approach" to news and human interest stories. Particularly encouraging is the colorful insert which is included. Entitled, "We Thought You'd Like to Know," on one side is found a compilation of "Quick Facts" about the convention. The other side is entitled, "A Bible Heritage" which includes photographs and quotes from such noted SBC leaders as John Dagg, James, Boyce, Basil Manly, John Broadus, B. H. Carroll, and J. M. Frost, among others.

Introducing these historical vignettes are the following words: "We invite you to consider the convictions of these Southern Baptists. Their stand on Scripture and its treatment in our schools and lives is uncompromising. As we remember the way in which God has blessed the Convention through the years, we should keep her scriptural commitments in mind."

Subscriptions, as well as copies of the inserts, may be ordered from:

Executive Committee
901 Commerce Street, Suite 750
Nashville, TN 37203

President Clinton Hears Bruce Milne

During the Canadian summit meetings with President Boris Yeltsin last April, President Bill Clinton attended the Sunday morning worship service of First Baptist Church, Vancouver. Dr. Bruce Milne, author of *Know the Truth* and former lecturer in theology in Spurgeon's College, is the Pastor. Dr. Milne prayed for the success of the summit, the visit of Mrs. Clinton to her dying father, and for the dignified protest of pro-life demonstrators who stood outside the church protesting President Clinton's pro-abortion policies. He then preached from John 12 on the Kingship of Jesus Christ.

Theological Study Committee Issues Preliminary Report

The Theological Study Committee which President Ed Young appointed last year has submitted the first draft of its report. "Constructive critique and additional counsel" are invited and may be directed to Dr. Timothy George of Beeson Divinity School or Dr. Roy Honeycutt of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The report begins with this sober yet astute realization: "In every generation, the people of God face the decision either to reaffirm 'the faith once delivered unto the saints' (dude 3) or to lapse into theological unbelief. Precisely such a challenge now confronts that people of God called Southern Baptists." Articles are included on Scripture, God, Christ, the Church, and Last Things. While declining to recommend a new confession, the report reaffirms the *Baptist Faith and Message*, as adopted by the SBC in 1963.



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Book Reviews

Discourses and Sayings of Our Lord, 3 vols. John Brown; 1990 (reprinted from 1852), 3 vols. 1537pp. Banner of Truth, \$74.95.

Reviewed by [Tom Ascol](#)

Twelve years ago I secured a one-volume reprint edition of John Brown's *Discourses and Sayings of Our Lord*. The print was tiny and the Table of Contents virtually useless, consisting of nothing more than a numeric ordering of the expositions followed by a page number ("Exposition XV . . . 343"). In the absence of an index, locating Brown's comments on particular passages proved to be an exercise in patient searching. The rewards, however, were well worth the effort.

Now, with the reissuing of the 3 vol. edition (Banner first reprinted this work in 1967), with its extensive, annotated Table of Contents, I have found Brown's *Discourses* far more accessible.

Brown's insights into the teaching of Christ are a rare mix of theological depth and pastoral sensitivity. Consider his explanation of "Judge not lest ye be judged" (Mt. 7:2). After demonstrating that these words cannot be a prohibition bind us from making any judgments of others, Brown warns against being "officious, rash, presumptuous, severe, or partial in forming" them (288). Neither would Christ have us be hasty in declaring our judgments: "What I hastily condemn, if I knew all, I might only pity, perhaps approve" (289).

This work contains 25 expositions, the last of which, on John 14:16, is divided into 22 chapters and fills the whole third volume. Other segments of the 4 Gospels which he expositors are: John 3-6, 7-8, 10, 12, 13; Matthew 5-7, 15; Mark 7; and Luke 11-12. His treatment of the Sermon on the Mount was relied upon heavily by A. W. Pink in the latter's exposition of that passage.

Spurgeon (who was 24 years old when Brown died) made this assessment of this 3 volume set: "Of the noblest order of exposition. Procure it."

Missing From Action Weldon M. Hardenbrook; 1987, 192 pp. Thomas Nelson, \$9.99.

Reviewed by [Tom Ascol](#)

A recent Time magazine cover story chronicled the disintegration of fatherhood in American culture. Citing overwhelming statistical evidence, the article demonstrated the personal and societal devastation that results from the absence of a father in the home.

Weldon Hardenbrook has been speaking out against this trend for years. As senior pastor at St. Peter and St. Paul's Orthodox Church in Santa Cruz, California, he has become well-known as an crusader for renewal among Christian men.

Hardenbrook contends, and argues convincingly, that, in the midst of a heated cultural war, Christian men in our society have largely gone AWOL. Hence the title of his book.

The author attributes vanishing manhood in our nation to the feminization of the American male. We have shifted from a patriarchal society where Dad was not only involved in the home but was its undeniable leader, to a matriarchal one where little boys often grow up with little proper masculine influence and no role models of biblically defined manliness.

One of the more provocative elements in the book is the author's use of the Trinitarian relationships of God as a guide for men to follow. This generation has lived through renewal movements which emphasized the Son and the Spirit. Perhaps, Hardenbrook argues, it is time that we begin to think more deeply about God the Father.

This is not a book that denigrates women. Rather, it challenges men to examine biblical manhood and to repent of their abdication of God-given roles and responsibilities.

If some of the statements are at times extreme, they do not significantly detract from the overall value of this book. It would make an excellent resource for a men's retreat

Calvin's Wisdom edited by Graham Miller; 1992, 424 pp. Banner of Truth, \$35.95.

Reviewed by [Ernest C. Reisinger](#)

This book will be a time-saving friend to all preachers, teachers and serious students of the Bible. It is subtitled, *An Anthology Arranged*

Alphabetically. Really, it is a virtual dictionary of Calvin's thoughts and almost an encyclopedia of his theology.

Graham Miller has accumulated "bite-size" excerpts from Calvin's writings (his commentaries, three volumes of tracts, and the *Institutes*). On some 170 biblical subjects the editor gives numerous quotes and references from Calvin's works.

The subjects covered include Adoption, Afflictions, Backsliding, Burial, Conscience, Controversy, Death, Difficulties in the Scriptures, Egotism, Envy, False Prophets, Fasting, Flattery, Government, Guidance, Heaven, Hell, Humanity of Christ, Humility, Immortality, Jews, Judgment, Kingly Rule of Christ, Laziness, Liberty, Marriage Mass, Ministry, Numbers in Scripture, Old Age, Prayer, Preaching, Pride, Revival, Roman Catholicism, Sabbath, Satan, Schism, Second Advent, Sorrow, Superstition, Temptation, Union with Christ, Unity, War, Wealth, Wisdom, and Works of the Believer.

Thomas More said, "Sell your bed and buy a book." I will not go that far-but I will say, "Buy this book!"



Election

"Election does not mean that God instituted a general plan of salvation and decreed that whosoever would should be saved and, therefore, the man who wills to be saved is elected in that he brings himself within the scope of God's plan. It is true that God has decreed that whosoever will shall be saved; but election is something more specific and personal than that. It means that God decreed to bring some, upon whom his heart has been eternally set, who are the objects of his eternal love, to faith in Jesus as Saviour."

W. T. Conner (1877-1952)

for 39 years professor of theology at Southwestern



Mission 150

a cooperative effort among churches and individuals to send a special sesquicentennial issue of the Founders Journal to every Pastor in the Southern Baptist Convention

1995 marks the 150th anniversary of the the Southern Baptist Convention. In recognition of this historic milestone, the *Founders Journal* is planning a special, double issue to be published in the Fall of 1994. Through your support of Mission 150, a copy of this special issue will be mailed free of charge to the nearly 40,000 Pastors in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Your help is needed for this ambitious undertaking. If this journal has been an encouragement to you, and you would like to have a part in introducing it to Pastors across the SBC, make Mission 150 a regular subject of your prayers. Consider making a financial contribution to this effort. The total amount needed is \$50,000. Currently \$22,()00 has been given or pledged. It will cost approximately \$1.25 to produce and send one journal to one Pastor. Will you consider contributing to the expense of this effort?

For more information call or write:

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Mission 150
P. O. Box 150931
Cape Coral, Florida 33915
Phone 813-772-1400 FAX 813-772-1140

