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Protecting Our Children

What We Are Learning

David Shumate

**Developing an Effective Child
Protection Policy**

How Could It Ever Be for My Good?

Claudia Barba

Protecting Our Children



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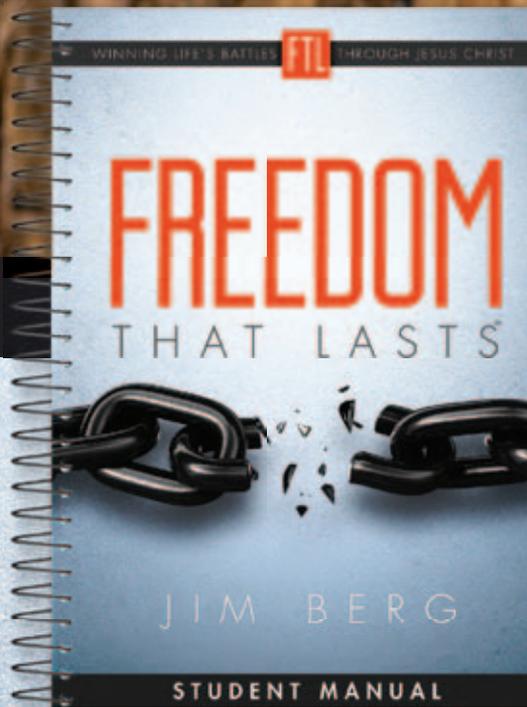
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Jim Berg is a well-known speaker, counselor, and author. His books on spiritual growth, including *Changed into His Image*, *Created for His Glory*, and *Essential Virtues*, have touched the lives of thousands of believers and spurred them on to a close walk with God. He lives with his wife, Patty, in Greenville, South Carolina, where he is a seminary professor at Bob Jones University.


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You may request that your letter not be published or that your name be withheld, but anonymous letters will not be accepted.

I . . . appreciate and enjoy *FrontLine* so very much! I have subscribed for nearly twenty years and it is always a tremendous blessing.

Gary Freel, Pastor
Clovis, CA

I have been reading the *FrontLine* the last couple of days. Thank you, Dr. Vaughn, for all of the research and hard work that went into that issue on the Chaplaincy. The Chaplaincy of the FBFI is prospering and blessed because of your diligence and the diligence of all Fundamentalists involved. Those two Chaplains [CH (MA) Mike Shellman and CH (COL) Joe Willis] we had at the [Central Regional Fellowship in Kansas] meeting were such a blessing.

Pastor Wilbur Schoneweis,
for Dr. Byford and all the folks, Clay Center, KS

Since reading the last issue of *FrontLine* ["Chaplaincy as an Extension of the Local Church Ministry"], God has allowed me much

liberty in the pulpit. Understanding [the military] chapel as an extension of the local church answered a lot of questions for me.

FBFI CH (CPT)
Bret Perkuchin
28th Combat
Support Hospital
Ft. Bragg, NC

My husband, Mike, and I started our church three-and-a-half years ago. One of the challenges of a church plant is developing a solid Wednesday night children's program that is flexible enough for a varying attendance and a limited number of workers. After researching several children's programs, we decided to give the *FrontLine* Clubs a try after seeing the ad in *FrontLine* magazine.

The response from our church families has been very positive and the children are so happy to now have a program designed just for them!

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As the journal of the FBFI, *FrontLine* Magazine provides a forum for God's people to reverently express a conservative Christian perspective on pertinent issues. In an effort to keep readers informed, quotes and references to many different individuals and organizations will appear. This does not imply the endorsement of the magazine or its board. Unsolicited manuscripts and artwork accepted for review.

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What We Are Learning

FRED IS THE SENIOR PASTOR OF SMALL CHURCH IN THE MIDWEST. One Sunday between Sunday school and church a teen Sunday school helper comes to Fred and says that she just walked into a classroom and saw a teacher alone with an eleven-year-old girl and that the teacher was fondling the girl's buttocks.



Fred's first reaction is incredulity—how could something like this happen here, in a Bible-believing church that encourages high standards of personal moral conduct and genuine love for the Lord? Moreover, the teacher in question has been an upstanding member of the church for several years. He's a family man and has an excellent reputation in the community. He isn't weird. You couldn't imagine this man hanging around playgrounds in a trench coat looking for child victims. Surely this must be just a misunderstanding.

With his stomach churning, Fred decides to talk to the teacher. In the interview the teacher at first says that they were "just playing" and that he is sorry for any embarrassment it might have caused. When Fred confronts him with more details about what the teen witness reported, the teacher begins to break down. He confesses that he had a "rough background," that as a boy he had been introduced to different kinds of sexual "experimentation" by an adult relative. Nevertheless he assures Fred that after he was saved and got married he had experienced real victory. Recently, though, he had become discouraged through some problems at work, and it just so happened that he was that very morning tempted when he found the girl alone in the room. He said that he touched her once, but that was all. He had been under conviction about what he was doing and was just about to stop when the teenager came in. He says that he would be glad to apologize to the girl and her family. He seems contrite.

Fred is vaguely aware that he may have a duty to report this to the authorities, but he wishes that he didn't have to. After all, the teacher hadn't "gone very far" with the child. It wasn't as serious as it could have been. Fred imagines the police showing up at the teacher's house and leading him away in handcuffs while his wife and children watch in horror and the local TV station films the whole thing. This is a conservative community, and the thought that there might be a pedophile in the church would destroy its ministry. Since the teacher is really sorry, perhaps it is something that could best be handled internally. . . .

In this hypothetical scenario Fred is laboring under some extremely grave misconceptions that virtually guarantee an improper response to a very serious situation.

Misconception 1: It can't happen here.

Fred knows that child sexual abuse happens, but he is ignorant of how widespread it is. Credible evidence indicates that perhaps as many as one in four girls and one in five boys have suffered some form of sexual abuse.* This is an evil of epidemic proportions. Not only that, but it has taken place in all kinds of institutions, public and private, including churches of every stripe. Many people have the idea that this is something that happens "somewhere else," in another socioeconomic demographic or in other kinds of belief systems but certainly not in Bible-believing churches. This false sense of security is very dangerous because it causes churches and leaders to drop their guard and fail to put commonsense policies in place that can help deter



PROTECTING THE FLOCK

... appropriate action includes implementing a prevention and response plan that has elements such as screening workers, setting and enforcing behavioral boundaries, and training people in the church to detect and respond appropriately to potential or suspected abuse.

abuse. Even though the many news stories about child sexual abuse show that it can happen anywhere, we still do not quite believe it can happen here.

Misconception 2: Acts that do not involve actual intercourse are not “so bad.”

Although the legal definition of child molestation varies from state to state, it is fair to say that in general a good definition of child sexual abuse is any act directed toward a child that is sexual in nature or has sexual intent. It is certainly true that some violations are more egregious than others. Nevertheless, child sexual abuse does not necessarily require touching but can involve exposing oneself to a child, showing pornography to a child, or other similar practices. Related to this misconception is the tendency to underestimate the harm done to victims of sexual abuse. Nevertheless, just because the emotional and spiritual scars that sexual abuse leaves are not visible, that does not mean that they are not long-lasting and deeply painful to the victim, who feels betrayed, unloved, and helpless. It is a profound evil and injustice that is done by those who have a responsibility to protect the weak and dependent ones but who instead perversely abuse them. The sense of injustice is magnified if those with the opportunity to take preventive and corrective action fail to do so.

Misconception 3: Child sexual abusers have a certain look about them—they’re “weirdoes.”

What may come as a surprise to many is the fact that, as some authorities have put it, child molesters “look just like us.” Apart from their being predominantly (although not exclusively) male, child molesters as a group reflect many of the demographic characteristics of the rest of the population. They come from all socio-economic backgrounds. They may be married and have families. They are also as likely as the general population to express a religious preference. In other words, there are not recognizable characteristics that can be discerned by the casual observer. Sexual abusers of children, therefore, often are able to gain access to potential victims by gaining the trust of parents and others who control that access. This leads to the consideration of another serious misconception.

Misconception 4: A professing believer who commits this kind of abuse must have just fallen in a moment of weakness.

The teacher in our opening illustration represented to his pastor that he had been saved from an earlier life of sexual sin but that since his conversion he had lived in victory until recent pressures caused a momentary partial relapse. The pastor must treat this claim with a great deal of skepticism. Although it is impossible to say that such a situation could never occur, those who deal regularly with abusers say that they are often very skilled in manipulation and deceit. Rather than just falling into it, many abusers plan out how they will gain access to potential victims. In the vast majority of cases, the victim knows the offender before the abuse occurs. Child molesters also typically offend multiple times over an extended period. In order to gain access to children and to keep from

getting caught, child molesters typically manipulate and deceive both their victims and the adults who watch over them. In addition, there are many cases in which child sexual abusers use religion to gain access to potential victims and to shield themselves from accountability.

Misconception 5: The requirement to report abuse interferes with the ministry of the church, and things are best handled internally, at least in the beginning.

Many churches and other institutions alike have made the mistake of investigating suspected abuse internally before deciding whether to call the authorities. This response at first may seem to make sense as a way of preventing a false report. Nevertheless, there are several things seriously wrong with approach.

First, it does not take into account the manipulative character of the average child sexual abuser and the vulnerability of the victim. Many abusers use shame, bribery, threats, and deceit to keep their victims from telling. The abuser may be a respected adult and may even be in authority in the church or other institution. On the other hand, victims are usually very reluctant to tell. They are often cowed by the offender and embarrassed to talk about what happened. Given these facts it is not realistic to expect that an untrained investigator will be able to get the entire truth.

Second, while for the purpose of church discipline the church should seek to discern the facts, abusive acts are not just sins; they are also crimes. God has delegated to the government the responsibility to bring evildoers to justice (Rom. 13:3, 4). Therefore believers must cooperate with law enforcement efforts.

The government has determined that suspected abuse should be investigated by trained law enforcement personnel or other state officials rather than private persons or institutions. This should actually come as a relief to churches, which have neither the mandate nor the tools to mete out justice. The church and the state have different roles in the situation. The church's job is to represent Jesus Christ by acting righteously and speaking the truth. It represents the forgiveness that is available in Christ, but it also must accurately represent the true nature of repentance, restitution, and restoration. The state's job is to determine guilt and to punish criminals. An internal investigation can interfere with proper justice. If the accused is warned of a potential criminal investigation, he or she may destroy evidence, intimidate witnesses, or even flee. Our desire to keep the initial investigation private may also reflect a serious misunderstanding concerning the testimony of the church. This is the next misconception.

Misconception 6: The testimony of the church will be destroyed if we acknowledge that abuse can occur or has occurred in our church.

This is both a spiritual and a practical error. It is a crucial spiritual error in that it confuses testimony with reputation. Our testimony is how we publicly represent Jesus Christ and His truth. Our reputation is what people think about us. We are responsible only for the former; the latter

is beyond our control. Jesus Christ suffered as an evildoer even though He never sinned and always properly represented the Father. The desire to protect our reputations can lead first to the denial of the potential for abuse in our ministry. This denial is fatal because we close our eyes to the danger and fail to prepare for it. A second consequence of this testimony/reputation inversion is that it can create a temptation to minimize, keep quiet about, or even actively cover up suspected or actual abuse.

There is also a very serious practical misunderstanding here. It has become increasingly well established that child sexual predators have been able to get into many different kinds of institutions. Although it is possible to reduce the risk, a case of abuse within a church does not necessarily mean that the church did anything wrong or that it "fostered a climate of abuse." Where institutions typically get into trouble is when they fail to act properly on what they know or reasonably suspect. Therefore, ignoring the potential problem and doing nothing to develop a prevention system is justly subject to censure. And failing to deal appropriately with suspected and known cases of abuse causes the very harm to a ministry's testimony that the leaders tried to avoid.

There are many other misconceptions that we could consider concerning child sexual abuse. However, we also must consider what should be done in response.

First Response: We must educate ourselves.

The misconceptions above and many others as well are correctible through information that is readily available. Many pastors and other ministry leaders should become better acquainted with the various aspects of this problem, including its scope and nature, the characteristics of child molesters, your state's reporting requirements, and the effects of abuse on victims. There are many resources now available on the Internet and elsewhere.

In addition, we must take advantage of the knowledge and skills of people within our congregations. One difficulty in many churches is that the pastor is expected to be the expert on everything. To the contrary, God's intention is that the body of Christ should benefit from the participation of all the members. Churches have members and leaders with valuable knowledge and experience, such as schoolteachers, law enforcement personnel, legal professionals, and private and public social service personnel. Many of these have had some sort of training in dealing with this issue and some members could be tasked with the responsibility on behalf of the church to do the necessary research and make recommendations to the church leadership about appropriate preventive measures.

Second Response: We must acknowledge and learn from past failures.

As in other ministry areas, a sober assessment of the crisis may also lead us to the conclusion that we mishandled certain situations in the past. A past decision about how to handle a situation, even if it was made in good faith, may now cause regret in light of the resulting consequences. If we have made mistakes, we should own them honestly, ask forgiveness for them where appropriate, and do what

we can to ameliorate their consequences. If we realize that we are currently dealing with a situation in the wrong way, then we must take rapid but thoughtful corrective action.

In addition to recognizing specific mistakes, we may have to acknowledge that we have failed to approach the overall problem with sufficient diligence or vigor. This is not to disregard those many individuals and ministries that have done good things in this area, including gathering information, instituting policies, reporting suspected abuse, and ministering to those injured by this sin. Nevertheless, the more we learn, the more many of us realize that we could have done better. The truth of the matter is that child sexual abuse touches virtually every institution in society. Moreover, as the news continues to demonstrate, many people and institutions with reputations for integrity have failed to respond rightly in this area. Nevertheless, for the Bible-believing church to say that it has not responded any worse than other institutions is itself an indictment of we who believe that God has called us to be salt and light in the world. Certain groups, institutions, and denominations have gotten out in front on this issue. Although we are not in a competition, this fact should mobilize us in Fundamental churches to redouble our efforts as well.

As we discuss what needs to be changed, we should be careful not to spend too much of our time dwelling on the failures of other individuals or institutions. This is not to say that we should not hold ourselves accountable and that we cannot learn from the past failures of others. Nevertheless, we must avoid the trap of thinking about child sexual abuse as though it were someone else's problem. Instead we must focus our principal energies in determining how our churches and other ministries can better protect children and in helping others do the same.

Third Response: We must implement appropriate prevention and response strategies.

Becoming better informed about child sexual abuse leads to some disturbing thoughts. Chief among these is the idea that a child molester could be in the pew next to us. Frankly, this is frightening. However, there is constructive fear and there is destructive fear. On the one hand, destructive, carnal fear can lead to denial, panic, and bad decisions. Sometimes it causes us to ignore a danger we are afraid to face. Other times it leads to seemingly self-protective behaviors that make matters worse. On the other hand, Biblical, constructive fear motivates us to deal with the problem. Noah obeyed God, being moved by reverent fear because he believed God's warning of pending judg-

ment (Heb. 11:7). The prudent person sees the disaster coming and "hideth himself" (Prov. 22:3). Constructive fear acknowledges the truth, assesses the danger, and takes appropriate action.

In this case, appropriate action includes implementing a prevention and response plan that has elements such as screening workers, setting and enforcing behavioral boundaries, and training people in the church to detect and respond appropriately to potential or suspected abuse. In addition we must be better prepared to minister to the many victims of child sexual abuse (both children and adults) and to confront and help bring to genuine repentance those who have committed such acts.

The Purpose of this Issue of FrontLine

All of this is a tall order, and understaffed churches and overwhelmed pastors are not likely to invest the necessary time or energy without a sense of the urgency and gravity of this evil. The interview with Rachel Mitchell in this issue of *FrontLine* should be very useful in this regard. She is the Chief of the Sex Crimes Bureau for the Maricopa County, Arizona, Attorney's Office and has taught extensively in this field. Her insights are extremely helpful for gaining an understanding of the true nature and seriousness of the threat to churches as well as for taking basic steps to protect our children and our ministries. In addition to this interview, there is a section in this issue giving advice and resources concerning the development of a child sexual abuse prevention policy in your church. Also, Dr. Jim Berg provides some important Biblical insights for helping people who have been victimized.

Some of the information and counsel offered here is well established among those who deal regularly with this subject. Other aspects of the problem need more investigation. We confess that the more we learn about this topic, the more we need to learn. The resources provided in this issue should be just the beginning of your investigation.

Jesus Christ commanded His disciples to allow the little children to come to Him. He also pronounced the severest of woes on those who put a stumbling block in their way. Let us purpose by the Lord's help that we will be those who obey the former instead of those who allow the latter.

Dr. David Shumate holds advanced degrees in law and theology. He has served as an associate pastor and seminary professor. He is currently the director of a mission agency located in Phoenix, Arizona.



* See the interview with Rachel Mitchell on the next page.



... we must focus our principal energies in determining how our churches and other ministries can better protect children and in helping others do the same.

Interview with Rachel Mitchell

Rachel Mitchell is the Sex Crimes Bureau Chief of the Maricopa County Attorney's Office in Phoenix, Arizona. She has extensive knowledge of the field of child sexual abuse in general as well as its impact on religious organizations. On November 3, 2011, Ms. Mitchell gave a lengthy telephone interview with *FrontLine* magazine. Below are extensive excerpts from that interview.

FrontLine: Thank you very much for speaking with us.

Rachel Mitchell: You're welcome. It is my pleasure.

FL: How long have you been with the Maricopa County Attorney's Office?

RM: Nineteen years.

FL: You are currently the Bureau Chief of the Sex Crimes Bureau. About what percentage of the Bureau's workload involves sexual offenses against children?

RM: I would say somewhere between sixty and seventy percent.

FL: What kinds of activities are you involved in to help with prevention?

RM: Individually I work with lots of different churches and denominations by educating them and raising their awareness. I have also taught organizations such as schools and churches on the Arizona mandatory reporting law. That is not necessarily just prevention but response too. We also go out as a bureau to educate parents and kids on safety issues, including online safety issues.

FL: Do you find that churches and other religious institutions are generally receptive to your message?

RM: It is a very individual thing. Some churches are very receptive to the teaching. With some churches you get the sense that people are there because they have to be. Usually, though, when they hear the information that we provide, they do respond positively. Some churches are not interested in it. It is a very individual thing.

FL: Do you think you can explain why some churches or other religious organizations might not be receptive to your message?

RM: I think the first level is that people have the mistaken beliefs that make it difficult for them to grasp that child sexual abuse can happen in a church. One of these is the idea that abuse is typically committed by strangers. Another misconception is that you can identify these people, that there is a look of sorts. That is one problem, not being aware that it could happen.

The second problem is that some churches are very

concerned about protecting their reputation, and so they do not want to acknowledge that they could be vulnerable. This is not unique to churches; it is common even in individuals. If we do not want to acknowledge that there is a possibility, then let's just ignore it. That is just not realistic. Unfortunately the wake-up call for a lot of organizations, not just churches, is a lawsuit. Typically when people get sued over this, it is not because there is a problem but because they find out about the problem and they ignore it.

FL: Apart from the age of their victims and nature of their crimes, are there significant differences between child sexual offenders and other kinds of offenders?

RM: I would say yes. A lot of crimes involve individuals acting out of very basic urges such as greed or even desperation, as in the case of addictions. These types of cases are fairly straightforward: they steal a car or they rob a business. There is no manipulation involved. On the other hand, child sexual offenders are typically very manipulative. Children are picked out because they are vulnerable. Typically there is a great deal of planning that goes into molesting a child. The offender is looking for a child who is first of all vulnerable in that they are not going to tell, or if they tell they are not going to be believed or appropriate actions are not going to be taken. That is a lot more planning and manipulation than the average criminal does.

FL: There seems to be a strong and growing consensus that child molestation is a very common and widespread evil. What is your sense as to the prevalence of the problem?

RM: Statistics often cited are that one in four girls and one in five boys have been sexually abused. Statistics can change depending on how you define sexual abuse, but I believe that there has been some pretty good research,

... people have the mistaken beliefs that make it difficult for them to grasp that child sexual abuse can happen in a church.

retrospectively interviewing people as to whether they were molested and whether they ever told. I think that has given us a pretty good picture that it is very prevalent, justifying in general terms those one-in-four and one-in-five numbers.

FL: Are there common misconceptions about sexual offenses and offenders against children? If so, what are some of the most significant?

RM: First, I would say the largest misconception is that "stranger danger" is the rule rather than the fairly rare exception. About 90–95% of victims know the person who is offending against them.

Second, a very common misconception relates to when

and how children tell. People think that children would tell right away and that they would tell everything that happened to them. In reality children often keep this secret for years, sometimes into their adulthood, sometimes forever. And they may or they may not tell everything. They may partially disclose to see how people are going to react to them. "I'll tell you the least embarrassing thing first, and I'm going to see whether you are going to get mad at me or whether you are going to help me. Then, if I get a positive response, I may tell some more."

Third, there is a perception that this happens in secret, but the reality is that it frequently happens with others present in the same house and often in the same room. There was a study where they interviewed offenders about this specific issue. What they found was that 54.9% had molested with another child present. It is an excellent "grooming" technique because it is telling the child watching, "This other child is being molested and is not telling and no one is helping that child, so when I molest you next you shouldn't tell, and nobody is going to help you either." Twenty-three point nine percent molested with another adult present, and that is effective because if the child thinks that the other adult is aware, whether or not the adult is aware of what is going on, then the child, depending on the parental education the child has received, may think that the behavior is OK or may think that no one is going to help them. Then 14.2% molested with both an adult and another child present. So it is a very common thing.

Fourth, another huge misconception that I see is that [sexual offenders do not consider] child pornography . . . [to be] that serious, and that some people do not see that as [representing] an actual victim. In reality child pornography, whether a picture or a video, is an image of a child being sexually abused. Also, even the mere possession of child pornography is highly correlated with a person acting out against a child. The Butner study talks about people who were sentenced for child pornography offenses alone, and after their cases were adjudicated and they were being treated, the number of hands-on victims was staggering. So it is highly correlated to hands-on offending. It is not a victimless crime. It is not uncommon for offenders to possess commercial pornography and create pornography themselves.

Fifth, it is important to understand that demographically sexual offenders are about the same as the general

population when it comes to having a religious preference. In fact they look like us. Demographically they are very similar to the general population. Economically, educationally, racially, religiously, they are demographically the same.

FL: A clinical psychologist who works with sex offenders commented that even after twenty years of study she cannot spot a child molester from casual observation.

RM: Right, because as part of their manipulation they manipulate those around them. It is not just the child that is manipulated; it is everybody around. And so what you're seeing in a sex offender is a façade, and you don't realize that.

FL: You have said that child molesters "use religion." Could you explain what you mean? How do they do this?

RM: They use religion in a number of different ways, and this goes back to the manipulative quality. [Church] is a good place to access children and to gain the trust of both the children and the parents. Oftentimes just gaining the trust of the parents is all you need to gain access to the children. The church is going to be more skeptical about any abuse reported because they trust the accused. Also, the community as a whole will trust a person more because they are a "good church-going person." There are more opportunities to isolate a child in a church because there are nooks and crannies in the facility where the offender can be alone with a child.

Sometimes offenders will use religion in a more direct way. I have seen them blame their religious upbringing for their being sexually deviant, saying, "I was brought up sexually repressed, and so this thing that I have done is an attempt to break free of that repression." They might blame God for their offenses, saying, "If I wasn't supposed to do



this, then why did God put this person in my pathway." I have seen some engage in more mysticism, where they will say that they have special powers or special knowledge and a special "in" with God, the hierarchy of the church, and that sort of thing. They will use that special "in" to intimidate or silence the victims.

Finally, if they do get caught, they will use churches to get character witnesses to testify on their behalf, to speak on their behalf at sentencing and that kind of thing.

FL: Do you think that it is possible through appropriate training to learn to spot a likely child molester? Why or why not?

RM: As I said before, there is not a "look" that identifies someone as potentially a child molester. However there are red flags. This is where churches need to rethink policies. I think that a lot of churches have policies, such as "do not be alone in a room with a child," that are designed to protect against false accusations. I think policies are very important to set boundaries, not primarily to prevent false accusations, although I think that they will have that side effect. Policies set boundaries. And when you have boundaries and people violate the boundaries, it gives you the authority to handle it. It is black and white: "You volunteered to work at the church. You read the policy and signed that you understood it. Every year we sign that we understand it, so that it is not just something that is in the past. And you were told that you were not to have sleepovers at your house. You violated that policy." The normal person is going to be horrified and chastened and is not going to do it again. When you start to see violations of other boundaries, it does not necessarily mean that something is going to happen, but it is a very big red flag. The policy gives you the authority to handle it. There is no argument about whether the worker understood that it was OK or not. It is black and white. So I think that policies are great to set boundaries.

One set of boundaries that needs to be set in this day and age involves technology. One place where trouble seems to happen is subgroups, for example where youth ministers start friending kids on their personal Facebook pages, and the kids list them on their Facebook pages. If you want to have a Bible study Facebook page where you talk as a Bible study group or you post announcements of activities and the church is aware of it and sanctions it, that is one thing, but if you have a subgroup of kids that kind of hang out with the Bible study teacher or youth minister, that is asking for trouble—both because this kind of situation increases the risk of false accusations and because it is an important boundary violation.

FL: Is it possible and advisable to train children to protect themselves?

RM: I do think that you have to teach children about how to protect themselves from strangers, such as to not go with a stranger. I think we are pretty good at doing the "stranger danger stuff," but how do you teach a child to be careful around everybody else that the child knows?



I think we are pretty good at doing the "stranger danger stuff," but how do you teach a child to be careful around everybody else that the child knows?

Instead you need to focus on teaching the child to tell you if something happens. First of all you teach a child the right name for body parts, because if the child cannot communicate what happened to him or her, they cannot report. You need to tell a child what their private parts are for and "if anyone touches you there, you need to tell me right away, and you are not going to be in any trouble, but I need to know. And if anybody makes you feel uncomfortable, even if they have not done that kind of thing, you need to tell me that they make you feel uncomfortable." If you cannot talk about it, neither can your child. It does not have to be done in a horrific or graphic way, but keeping quiet about it with your child is keeping your child vulnerable.

FL: What are the most important things that churches and other religious organizations can do to protect their children from sexual predators?

RM: (1) Have a policy that addresses boundaries and mandatory reporting law. Every state has a mandatory reporting law. Insist on compliance with that law. In the policy, make sure to include boundaries that relate to social networking and that kind of thing.

(2) Have background checks. Most sexual offenders that I handle do not have a criminal record of sex offending, but a background check does deter people who do have a record from applying. Background checks also send the signal that we are taking this seriously.

(3) Also, and this is the big one, educate as far as awareness that it happens and what is the appropriate response. You cannot prevent this from happening one hundred percent of the time, but you can respond appropriately so that it does not happen again.

FL: Among children's workers there seems to be a common anxiety about being falsely suspected or accused of being a child molester. Do you think that this fear is justified?

RM: I think it is a common fear, but I do not think it is a justifiable fear. False accusations are very rare. Also, a boundaries policy in the church does a double job: it alerts you to problems, but it also protects you from this. The reality is that the authorities, if they are brought in to investigate, can weed out false accusations, and the criminal justice system can do that. No one can be found guilty unless they plead guilty or are found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. It requires evidence. It would be wrong for me to say that no one has ever been arrested who wasn't guilty, but the reality is that if common-sense principles are followed, the likelihood of a false accusation even going to that point is very low.

FL: *What are some common mistakes people in general and churches in particular make in responding to suspicions of sexual abuse of children?*

RM: I think one of the big mistakes that they make is that they handle it internally. They "circle the wagons," and they conduct their own internal investigation. They notify the accused of the allegation. What that does is it thwarts a lot of opportunities for a thorough investigation that is done by trained authorities. It muddies the waters as far as people sharing information when it should be kept pristine as far as what people know and how they found out. When they notify the accused, if the accused is guilty, it gives him or her the opportunity to destroy evidence, influence witnesses, or flee. I guess the worst thing a church could do is to blame the victim or at least partially blame the victim, and then cover up. So those would be huge mistakes by the church.

FL: *Many recommend that the instant there is an accusation you need to immediately remove the accused from their ministries involving children. Is there any tension between the church's duty to do so and law enforcement's desire that the accused not be tipped off?*

RM: That can be tricky because law enforcement has to be cognizant that churches need to protect themselves by responding in an administratively appropriate manner. In those situations where the church is saying, "We can't let him walk back into that Bible study," for example, they need to advise law enforcement that the church needs to act quickly on this, giving law enforcement the chance to speed up their investigation. So that is going to require communication and cooperation between the church and law enforcement.

FL: *Would you recommend beforehand that churches should identify someone in law enforcement that they can contact if there is a problem?*

RM: I think it would be a really good idea to introduce yourself to the sergeant or lieutenant over child crimes in your jurisdiction and say, "We want to work with you."

FL: *From your perspective, do you think that it is possible for churches and church leaders inadvertently to send the wrong message to victims of childhood sexual abuse?*

RM: They need to view the victim as a victim. They should not treat the victim as co-responsible. That is not a fair way to look at the situation. Also, if it is wrongly judged as a sinful relationship on the victim's part, for example if the church teaches against homosexuality, and if it is a male-

on-male or a female-on-female offense, it would be inappropriate to reinforce in the mind of the victim that they have somehow done something wrong.

FL: *If there was one thing that you could tell church leaders on this subject, what would it be?*

RM: You can deal with this now by putting together a prevention and response strategy, or you can deal with it in a time of crisis when you are fighting a fire. The church needs to know that it can happen, and you need to deal with it now.



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Developing an Effective Child Protection Policy

Every church or other ministry ought to adopt a policy to help prevent child sexual abuse. Here are some ideas that can help with this process.

Tailoring a Policy for Your Ministry

Although there are many model policies available, it is important that a church develop a policy that it can implement effectively. In order to accomplish this you should invite key ministry leaders and workers to help in the process of crafting the policy. Their involvement is important for several reasons.

1. It helps achieve “buy in.” If the people of the church, and especially those who work with children, are not convinced of the need for and value of an effective policy, both the plan’s adoption and its implementation will be jeopardized. Remember that the plan is not simply “window dressing.” It will help to protect children from abuse only if it actually affects the way the church operates. If the key leaders are not enthusiastic, even a well-crafted plan will not be effective because it will not be fully carried out.
2. It helps ensure that the plan is actually workable in the regular functioning of the ministry. For the plan to work the church leaders and volunteers need to be able to work the plan. The policy must take into account the church’s size, the composition of the congregation, the layout of the facilities, and the structure of the children’s and youth ministries. A plan that is not followed is actually worse than no plan because it creates a false sense of security. Including representatives from different ministry areas, especially those who work with children, in the formulation of the policy, will ensure that the program is workable.
3. It provides a way to further develop and disciple church leaders and workers. Whenever God points out a ministry need, He is also providing an opportunity for His people to mature spiritually. Christ’s plan for His church is for it to grow by means of using the gifts of all the members. Many churches have individuals with specific training in this area, such as teachers, social workers, and police officers, to name a few. In addition, individuals who have organizational and other abilities could be involved as well. The working group should also have pastoral staff representation in order to maintain healthy spiritual direction and proper coordination with the ministry leadership.

Basic Elements of a Child Protection Policy

There is no universal standard for child abuse prevention policies. However, there are major elements that are regularly recommended by those who work in this area.

1. **Statement of purpose:** Here the church states its commitment to the protection of children and the prevention of child sexual abuse. Often this statement will refer to specific Biblical principles.
2. **Definitions:** Most sources recommend that the policy reproduce the definitions, including the definitions of different types of abuse, from state law where the ministry is located.
3. **This section indicates who is subject to the policies.** These usually include all paid staff as well as all volunteers who work with minors. In some cases this group may also include vendors and contractors, if their responsibilities bring them in close and regular contact with children.
4. **Worker selection:** This section addresses, among other things, qualifications for working with children, application and interview procedures, references, and background checks.

5. **Training:** Before working with children, staff and volunteers should be required to go through a specified initial training. In addition there is normally some form of periodic training and review requirements (such as yearly workers' in-service sessions and regular meetings).
6. **Boundary policies:** These are common-sense rules which all workers must agree to follow that set limits on their contact with children. They cover such matters as not being alone in private with a child, not having sleepovers at one's home, rules for social networking with children, and what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable physical contact.
7. **Supervision:** In addition to boundary policies, churches often put procedures in place for the oversight of children's ministries. Such procedures can include keeping unused rooms locked, maintaining clear sight-lines into all ministry spaces, setting a minimum ratio of workers to children, and providing for unannounced visits to classes and activities.
8. **Response:** This section sets forth the procedures for responding to suspected or alleged abuse. Such policies should establish reporting procedures and should include a reprinting of the state laws concerning mandatory and permissive reporters. In addition the policy should prohibit internal investigation and should provide rules for such things as the handling of information and protection of privacy, restriction from ministry involvement of the suspected abuser, and ministry to the victim and his or her family. This section needs to be especially well thought out, since responding to suspected abuse often involves significant legal, ethical, and spiritual responsibilities that are sometimes in tension with one another.
9. **Ministry to sex offenders:** If a church has the opportunity to minister to sex offenders, it should have a procedure that will ensure the safety of children in the ministry. Such policies should include, among other things, restrictions on the places where sex offenders can sit in the service or go within the facilities, an arrangement for trained chaperones to remain with the individual, and the prohibition of attendance if one of the offender's victims attends.
10. **Acknowledgment:** Every person subject to the policy should receive a copy of the policy and should acknowledge that he or she has read it and understands its terms. These written acknowledgments should be kept on file. This should be done before the person begins working with children and every year thereafter.

Helpful Resources and Information for Developing a Policy

There are many resources available for churches and other institutions to help them develop a child protection policy. Various websites contain model policies that can be adapted for the individual needs of a church. The following are some sources for information and model policies.

Several companies specialize in providing insurance coverage for churches. These companies have an interest in reducing potential claims against their clients. In addition, they have made policies and other resources available to the public through their websites. These policies are designed for churches. Three of these companies are

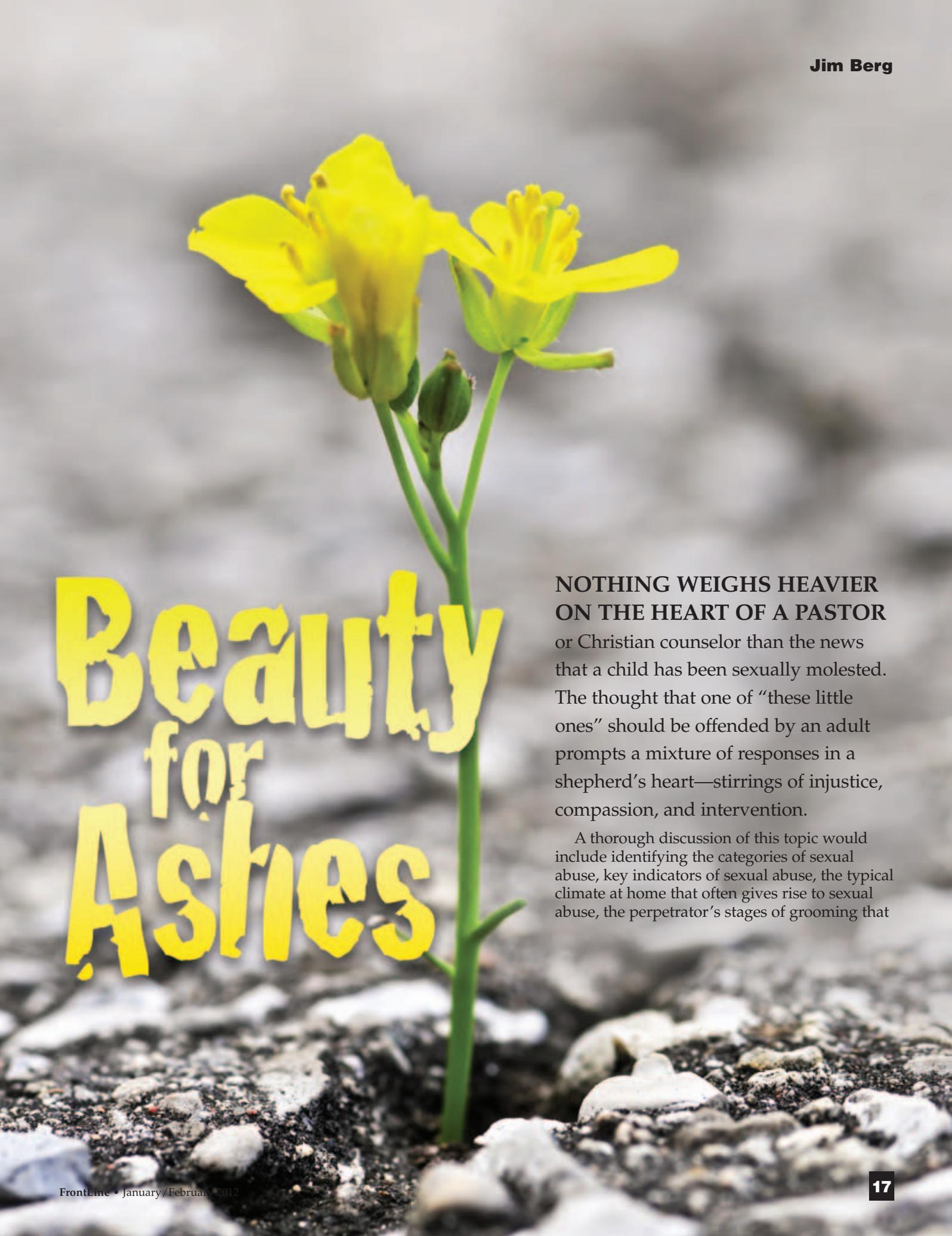
1. Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company: "Guidelines for Ministry Workers: Preventing Child Abuse in a Ministry Environment." This manual contains a sample policy as well as other forms and guidelines.
2. Church Mutual Insurance Company
3. Guide One Insurance Company

Various churches and other religious organizations have made policies available online.

1. The Baptist General Convention of Texas has developed a sample policy for Baptist churches.
2. The Catholic Diocese of Phoenix, Arizona, has written a policy manual with the cooperation of the Maricopa County Attorney's Bureau of Sex Crimes. The policy is very thorough. It is more complex, due to the diocese hierarchy, than would be necessary for independent churches or ministries. The policy is available in English and Spanish.
3. Reducing the Risk, a service of *Christianity Today*, provides various policy and training resources for purchase as well as free articles.
4. The Southern Baptist Convention website has a page of Local Church Resources. It includes a number of very helpful resources, including two presentations by Rachel Mitchell ("Creating a Safe Environment—An Arizona Convention Training Video for Church Leadership," Parts 1 and 2).

Many other churches and religious organizations have posted their child protection policies online. Other churches in your area may have policies that they would be willing for you to consult or to adapt for your ministry. Finally, you should consult one or two policies from secular organizations for comparison purposes.

Although it will involve planning and effort, developing a well-thought-out child protection policy that works for your church can help inform your congregation of the great need, provide significant protection for children in your congregation, and help grow spiritual leadership for the ministry.



Beauty for Ashes

NOTHING WEIGHS HEAVIER ON THE HEART OF A PASTOR or Christian counselor than the news that a child has been sexually molested. The thought that one of “these little ones” should be offended by an adult prompts a mixture of responses in a shepherd’s heart—stirrings of injustice, compassion, and intervention.

A thorough discussion of this topic would include identifying the categories of sexual abuse, key indicators of sexual abuse, the typical climate at home that often gives rise to sexual abuse, the perpetrator’s stages of grooming that

lead to abuse, and so forth. The focus of this discussion will be to unpack a Biblical model that presents the main effects of sexual abuse on the sufferer. Knowledge of those effects will point the way to strategies for helping the sufferer to face the challenges in front of her in the days, months, and years ahead.¹

Since the inspired Word of God claims to provide everything necessary to prepare every child of God for useful service and joyful relationship with God (2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Pet. 1:2, 3), we should expect a gracious God to provide a “corrective lens” to clarify our “vision” as we move toward a sufferer to offer help. We do, indeed, find such a lens in the extended account of Tamar’s rape by her half-brother Amnon in 2 Samuel 13:1–33.

God has given me the privilege to assist scores of young ladies (and the women counselors discipling them) in their journey to understand the impact of sexual abuse upon their own souls and to understand how to integrate these events into their story of God’s redemptive grace in their lives. Knowing from this passage of Scripture God’s perspective of the key issues they must face has given them a roadmap out of the hurt, anger, fear, and confusion.

Several factors determine the degree of impact upon the sufferer’s life: the amount of trust she had in the perpetrator, the amount of coercion and/or force used to obtain compliance, the number of incidences of the crime, the number of perpetrators involved, the response of adults when the abuse became known, and the extent of the offense itself (ranging from suggestive comments, exposing the child to pornography or lewd behavior, touching and fondling, intercourse, and exploitation—involving the child in live performances, including filming those acts, and prostitution).

In the interest of brevity, I will not recount the Biblical account in 2 Samuel 13, but only point out four God-highlighted effects of sexual abuse. Identifying them leads naturally to the divine remedies for countering them.

First, Tamar was *betrayed*; Amnon violated her *trust*.

Perpetrators of childhood sexual abuse are most often those the child should have been able to trust—her brother, uncle, cousin, father, neighbor, or staff member at church, school, or civic club. The perpetrator is a Judas, outwardly claiming to be a loyal member of the group but inwardly using that relationship for his own selfish ends. He is a betrayer.

Amnon betrayed Tamar by taking advantage of her kindness, her smaller strength, and her isolation. David, her father, betrayed her when he did not address the injustice, and Absalom, her real brother, betrayed her when he counseled her to keep the matter to herself and plotted revenge himself. Every one of the “protectors” in her life abandoned his duty.

Such betrayal breeds distrust in a girl’s heart. She can become suspicious and exhibit high demands for consistency (especially in leadership), a high degree of skepticism (determined never to be taken advantage of again), and a

high degree of self-consciousness (constantly aware of her own vulnerabilities, inadequacies, failures, and on high alert to any possible harm that could come her way).

The greatest danger for most girls, however, is the mistrust of God. The ultimate deceit from the Slanderer is that God is the abuser and cannot be trusted. After all, is He not the one who saw what was going on and did nothing about it?

This twisted—though understandable—line of thinking shows the craftiness of the evil mastermind behind her suffering!²

She must be shown the One who also suffered unjustly at the hands of wicked men—One who does not demonstrate His love in this dispensation of time by keeping us from calamity (or else no one would die, get cancer, be double-crossed in business, or be rejected by another), but demonstrates His love by being with us (Immanuel) and

sustaining us in the calamity (see Heb. 11:36ff). She must be assured that she can become “more than [a conqueror] through him that loved us” (Rom. 8:37).

Over time (often over many months of discipleship) a Spirit-taught knowledge of the love of God will be the remedy that will remove the torture of her fears (1 John 4:18) and restore her soul.

Paul’s admonition to people-helpers in 2 Timothy 2:24–26 is especially fitting. The castle walls she has built around her heart to keep intruders out also keep her heart confined to a very lonely prison. She will often not even verbalize many of her fears until the counselor has proven by months of consistent care for her that he/she is a safe person—a compassionate advocate and protector.

Secondly, Tamar was *overpowered*; Amnon violated her *personhood*.

Amnon treated Tamar as an object to be manipulated and forced to serve his own selfish, evil ends. She was helpless to resist his superior strength and position. (He commanded the servants to leave the room.)

The manipulative extent to which some predators will go is staggering. The grooming of their prey (treating her like “Daddy’s special girl”), the cunning emotional blackmail (“If you tell, I’ll deny it, and who would believe a little kid over a youth leader?” “If you tell, I’ll kill your kitten/mother/little sister, etc.” “If you tell, I’ll tell them all the things you did to me”—though he was the one who forced her to undress and perform unspeakable sexual tricks on him), and the threat of personal physical violence are unimaginable, but unfortunately, common.

The reactions vary widely with each sufferer, but two seem to be the most common. One is “I’ll never be overpowered again! No one will choose for me again. I will be

PERPETRATORS of childhood sexual abuse are most often those the child should have been able to trust—her brother, uncle, cousin, father, neighbor, or staff member at church, school, or civic club.

in control from now on. If no one is going to look out for me, I'll have to rely upon myself to do it."

Control becomes a recurring theme among sufferers. Their drivenness and ambition seem commendable. They make great employees, they expend enormous energy in their duties, and their heightened level of responsibility may even look like spiritual dedication rather than the self-protection that it is.

The other common response to abuse is *despair*. Not only do they feel helpless, but they feel hopeless. Anyone who understands her story can sympathize with her desire to give up.

Bearing her burdens will mean constant intercession before the Blessed Controller/Sovereign (1 Tim. 6:15)—the One who can take every action of the Evil One and of evil men and turn a covering of ashes into a covering of beauty (Isa. 61:1–3). Bearing her burdens will mean being willing to be there when her world and her head are spinning in order to give her some means of stability and direction.

Helping her gain God's broader perspective of life on a fallen planet through the lives of David, Joseph, and others will be the task in the days ahead. From these examples she will learn that we are not free always to choose our circumstances, but we are always free to choose our responses to those circumstances. Again, these truths will sound cruel and heartless unless they are offered within a caring, wise context of Biblical counseling.

Thirdly, Tamar was shamed; Amnon violated her honor.

Amnon took away Tamar's *personal* honor—her virginity. She was defiled, with little or no chances of marriage. Amnon also robbed her of her *public* honor—her reputation. Amnon sent her away as if she were in some way the perpetrator.

Shame is both an objective state of having been demoted in some way and a subjective emotion of humiliation. It is the exposure that says, "I have been seen," and the evaluation that says, "I have been found unacceptable." I have seen young ladies turn to self-destructive actions such as cutting and burning as ways to punish themselves.³ They reason, "I must have done something really bad for this to happen to me. I still feel bad so I must need to be punished more." I have seen others become extremely compliant because "bad things won't happen to good girls." Still others have disassociated themselves from the "bad little girl that was being punished by Daddy." Janet, at the hands of her father's abuse, may become "Sally"—a bad, imaginary friend—as the only way to make sense out of what is happening.

We cannot fault her with any of these strategies as a young girl. Paul said it is normal to think

like a child when we are children, but if we are to mature we must put away our childish thoughts and actions (1 Cor. 13:11). The stubbornness and self-protectiveness that allowed her to be a survivor will now stand in the way of her spiritual maturity if she will not see the issue and forsake it. This is a hard transition for her to make, but a crucial one in her spiritual journey.

In addition, worldly thinking characteristically reverses God's ways. It invites the sufferer to accentuate the shame, feel it deeply, and let it motivate to action and activism. God says, "Imitate My Son who despised the shame—who diminished it in His own eyes" (Heb. 12:2). The word "despise" is the same one used in Matthew 6:24; 18:10; 1 Timothy 4:12; and 2 Peter 2:10.

God instructs us that when the shame is a result of our own sin, we must confess it. When it is the result of the sins of others against us, we must despise it. Clearly the attitude of Jesus toward shame must shape ours. The Psalms, James, and 1 Peter have much to say about the right perspective on undeserved suffering and hurt.

Lastly, Tamar was confused; Amnon violated her sense of well-being.

Tamar's reactions—putting ashes on her head, tearing her royal garments, placing her hands on her head, and crying—show great grief. Furthermore, verse 20 states that she remained "desolate" in her brother Absalom's house. The word "desolate" means confused. Many questions raced through her mind. Loose ends dangled everywhere she turned. There didn't seem to be any way to make sense of what had happened nor of what options were hers now.

Often a young girl as she matures has many questions about her *past* ("Why did I still love my brother so much even though he was using me that way?" "Why did I eventually have some physical pleasure from this when it was my dad doing it?!"⁴ "Did I do something to deserve this?" "I thought I was keeping the marriage together because Dad said if he didn't do this he would have to leave the marriage because Mom wasn't meeting his needs."). The questions that arise in the mind of an adult sufferer looking back prompt much confusion.

There is often confusion about the *present*. What can she do about the nightmares and flashbacks she is still having? What about the mental craziness she feels sometimes? How can she free herself from the addictions, emotional numbness, abusive relationships, and poor relational styles that are so much a part of her right now?

She will also be confused about the *future*. "How can anyone want me in the future? I'm

Continued on page 38

TWO COMMON REACTIONS:

1. "I'll never be overpowered again!"

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2. Despair.

Not only do they feel helpless, but they feel hopeless. Anyone who understands her story can sympathize with her desire to give up.

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SOUND WORDS

HOLD FAST THE FORM OF SOUND WORDS—2 TIMOTHY 1:13

First Partaker

O Soul, Are You Weary and Troubled?

The new year has laid its irresistible hands upon us, and many of the Lord's servants cringe before it. They dare not speak their hearts, but they are tremblingly anticipating a vortex of troubles too swift, too dark to survive. How they can hold out for still another dreaded year, they can scarcely conceive.

Soul-deep discouragement paralyzes the faith of even God's most faithful ministers. Our high calling cocoons us in no sacred immunity from common trials. Actually, our very office requires our experiencing an extraordinarily high number and broad variety of troubles. These alone can equip us fully with the capability for comforting others *by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God* (2 Cor. 1:4).

Neither can we shed our frail, frayed humanity like an old skin. John Venn, an early nineteenth-century British pastor who in company with his friend, John Newton, was a founder of the Church Missionary Society, observed,

When a Minister, deeply impressed with the importance and difficulty of his work, looks into his own heart, to explore the resources with which he is furnished for so difficult a service; there, alas! he meets with little that does not serve to increase his sense of weakness and to confirm his fears. For it must be remembered, that he is a man of like passions with his flock, inheriting a body of corruption; that he is, perhaps, deficient in ability, perhaps unfortunate in the natural constitution of his mind; that, at all events, he has to struggle with infirmities, is exposed

to temptations, has more to accomplish than others, as well as greater difficulties to surmount; and that, whilst more will be expected from him, in himself he may have no resources above those of any of his congregation.

"The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits" (2 Tim. 2:6)

Ministers are also called to account by consciences whose sensitivities are heightened far more than ordinary because our God-ward calling confronts us morning, noon, and night with searching, sacred realities. Often our most glorious apprehensions of the Divine presence leave us stricken down in despair (Isa. 6). *I know myself to be laden with iniquity, to be defiled with all sorts of sin in my holiest things*, Spurgeon told his congregation one Lord's Day morning in May of 1866. *I am the subject of depressions of spirit so fearful that I hope none of you ever get to such extremes of wretchedness as I go to.*

And there is the Devil. In *The Christian Ministry* Charles Bridges observes that Satan's power over the tone of the minister's mind is most distressing. *Often indeed does he succeed in unhinging his spirit and paralyzing his exertions.* In *The Whole Armour of God* John Henry Jowett explains, *Spirit can work upon spirit; mind can lay pressure upon mind. There is a direct and immediate influence upon the secret life of man. That is the teaching of the Word of God, and I freely confess to you that there are phenomena in my own life, and in the lives of others which I cannot interpret in any other way.*

Taken altogether, *Our work, when earnestly undertaken, lays us open to attacks in the direction of depression*, noted C. H. Spurgeon. *Our position in the church will also conduce to this*, he continued.

A minister fully equipped for his work will usually be a spirit by himself, above, beyond, and apart from others. The most loving of his people cannot enter into his peculiar thoughts, cares, and temptations. . . . Like their Lord in Gethsemane, they look in

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vain for comfort to the disciples sleeping around them; they are shocked at the apathy of their little band of brethren, and return to their secret agony with all the heavier burden pressing upon them, because they have found their dearest companions slumbering (“The Minister’s Fainting Fits,” *Lectures to My Students*).

There is something better than understanding God, and that is trusting Him. He does not promise to explain Himself. He does promise to reveal Himself: but He never reveals Himself except to an absolute trust.

A Tonic

Over twenty years ago during a book-buying trip to Kregel’s gigantic used book store in Grand Rapids, I came across a title which interested me immediately: *In The Secret of His Presence* (1905), by G. H. Knight. Within a few days of returning home I read the first chapter and then wrote on the front flyleaf, *Opening chapter worth price of book*. That first chapter was so good that I read it twice more within the week. On its last page I find that I wrote, 7/2–3/1990—*read 3 times and was greatly blessed*.

Has secret communion with God come to be one of the lost arts of the Church? Knight begins.

Can it be the case, as it is often said to be, that comparatively few who name the Christian name spend more than five minutes of each day alone with God? If so, the weakness, and worldliness, and unfruitfulness of the professing Church are explained at once. . . . It may be one reason why sickness and sorrow are sent so frequently into our careless lives. God has something to say to us which, in the whirl of our earthly ambitions, we cannot hear: and He makes the noises of the outer world to cease that He may speak to the soul.

This last month I’ve been rereading *In The Secret of His Presence* a chapter at a time during my morning devotional time. It’s been soul-strengthening—so much so that I’ve determined to begin the book all over again as soon as I finish it. I’d love to lock many of Knight’s paragraphs in my long-term memory (what there is left of it) for comforting both myself and others on short notice. Last week my mind was especially calmed by his chapter entitled, “The Troubled Heart Comes Quickly to Quiet Rest When Alone with God.” It occurred to me that others might be similarly affected as they stand at the

threshold of a new year of almost certain troubles. With only minor grammatical editing, here it is in entirety.

A VERY beautiful name is given to Christ when He is called “The Lord of Peace.” He is the Great Peacemaker, for He has “made peace by the blood of His Cross;” and He is also the Great Peace giver, for He says, “My peace I give unto you.”

Bringing to us, first of all, peace of conscience, and teaching us how to look up to God without fear, He brings us, next, peace of heart, and teaches us how to look out upon the world without fear. By His Cross He makes us satisfied with God’s way of saving us. By His life He teaches us to be equally satisfied with God’s way of training us. He brings us into His own perfect calm by showing us how to live, as He Himself always did, with an absolutely unquestioning trust in a Heavenly Father’s love.

Those hours and even days of restless worry and anxiety about earthly things that so often come to us—how utterly unlike they are to the habitual feelings of Jesus Christ! Not one single instance can we find in which He sought to have His earthly lot changed from what His Father had appointed it to be, or complained because He could not change it, or made Himself miserable by anticipating the sorrows that were lying in front and ready to fall.

We are constantly criticizing God. Christ never did. Even though not actually criticizing Him, we are yet constantly imagining that things might, somehow, have been better arranged for us than they are. When any crushing sorrow falls upon us, the rebellious heart, if not the lips, will say, “I could have borne this if it had only come to me at some other time—if it had come alone, instead of being accompanied by so many other depressing circumstances—if it had been of a different kind, failure in my business instead of failure in my health, a stroke upon myself instead of upon my child, the loss of some other friend than just that one that was the best-beloved of all,” and so on through a hundred suppositions of what might have been better arranged. How seldom do we realize the faithlessness that is in such a mood of soul as this!

But we may come to realize it, and escape from it too, if, in the secret of His presence, alone with Him, we lay our burdens at His feet and listen for His words of peace. For, as we listen, He will tell us much. He will tell us that the whole explanation of the severity of the trial (in our view of it) is that our desires and His purposes are not moving in the same line. We have not the same idea of life that He has, otherwise there would be no disappointment in us with the pain that life may bring. If we are making it our chief aim in life just to have a prosperous time of self-indulgence, while His aim is to train us, all along life’s way, to holiness of character and heavenliness of spirit, there is sure to be collision everywhere between our wills and

His. Not till this collision ceases can we get the peace we long to know.

He will tell us, therefore, that what we need is not that the world should be changed to us, but that we should be changed to it. That, in all our plans and ambitions, we should no longer put first what He puts only second, and no longer put second what He puts first and wants us to put first as well. That it is a complete change of centre that is needed, and that where that change is made there will be an instant change all round the circumference too.

In the secret of His presence He will tell us more. He will tell us that if we rebel against our trials it is only because we do not see His planned issue of them in our greater good. That they are only a Great Refiner's fire for the purifying of His gold, a Great Vine-dresser's knife for increasing the fruitfulness of His vines. He will whisper to our crushed hearts in the secret place, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."

It is only the eye of the sculptor that can see beforehand the finished statue in the rough marble-block; but he does see it, and all the strokes of his tools are meant to bring out to the eyes of others what is already clear to his own. And the strokes of God's hand are only to produce the perfect beauty of the soul, and make that as visible to others as it now is to Himself. Nothing is more certain than that we will be perfectly satisfied with His work when we see it finished. Why should we not be satisfied now when He tells us what a glorious finish He will make, and leave to Him the choosing of the tools?

Very beautifully was this thought once pressed home on one who was in acute distress because of a long succession of calamities, when, happening to visit a ribbon-weaving factory, he was shown a new machine for producing fabrics finer than any seen before. He examined it carefully; but, skilled mechanic though he was, he could not understand how the work was done. Finding that all the movements of wheels and levers and threads were controlled by some arrangement in a central box kept closely shut, he asked to be allowed to look inside, but was told, "The master keeps the key." These simple words were like a flash of heavenly light into his darkened soul. "Here is my life," he thought, "full of what seems to me inextricable confusion; what the meaning of its cross-purposes may be I cannot tell: but if in me the Divinely perfect pattern is at last wrought out, I need not ask on what principle my God is fashioning me for His glory, 'My Master keeps the key.'"

Perhaps, if all were known, it would be found that the majority of trustful disciples in every age were made so by means of the heavy afflictions and sadnesses of life; God darkening the glory of this world to force them gently to look to a glory that is

not of this world at all. "Tears are our telescopes to let us see farther into heaven." God washes the eyes with tears till they can look undazzled on the land where tears are known no more.

Then, once again, the Lord will remind us in the secret place that exemption from suffering is not what He ever promised us, but only victory over it, and sanctification by it, and peace along with it. Therefore exemption from it would be a loss and not a gain, for as it is the water that dashes against the mill-wheel that keeps the mill in motion, the incessantly beating trials of life keep grace in the soul alive. It is said that migrating birds, preparing to wing their flight to summer climes, wait for a wind that blows against them, for that assists them to rise to the needed elevation. So the things of which we often say, "All these things are against me," are the things of which God says, "They are meant to help you to soar."

Perhaps, if all were known, it would be found that the majority of trustful disciples in every age were made so by means of the heavy afflictions and sadnesses of life; God darkening the glory of this world to force them gently to look to a glory that is not of this world at all. "Tears are our telescopes to let us see farther into heaven." God washes the eyes with tears till they can look undazzled on the land where tears are known no more.

The one universal heart's ease, therefore, is to let a loving God take His own wise way with us. Doing this willingly, we will no longer torment ourselves with speculations as to how our sorrows have come, or why they have been permitted to take the special form that makes them so hard to bear. Our only feeling will be the feeling of Christ Himself, whose peace we have come to share, "The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?"

Our gracious God promises us more than sympathy alone when we lay our sorrows at His feet. He promises us help as well. But we must leave to Him the way of helping us. Many a time we distress ourselves needlessly by refusing to rise above our fears till we see how the help is to come, and in what precise way we may look for an answer to our

prayers. We want God to explain to us the secrets of His working before we feel certain that He will make things go right. But there is something better than understanding God, and that is, trusting Him. He does not promise to explain Himself. He does promise to reveal Himself: but He never reveals Himself except to an absolute trust.

The first duty of a minister is to call on his hearers to turn to the Lord. “We have much to speak to you about. We have many duties to urge on you. We have much instruction to give you, but all will be thrown away till you have turned to the Lord.”

When a little child awakes at midnight, startled and crying because of sounds it knows not the meaning of, how is it comforted and pacified? Is it by a scientific explanation of the sounds? By a lesson in meteorology or natural history? Is it not rather by the mother taking her trembling little one into her arms, and soothing it there to sleep, till it thinks no more of the sounds that troubled it, or of any explanation of the sounds, but only of the mother in whose sheltering embrace it lies?

So God takes up each trembling child of His, and makes it feel safe simply because He is holding it: and what comforts it is not what it knows about its troubles, or about the way in which the trouble will be kept at bay, but what it knows about Him in whose strong and loving arms it lies enwrapped. In this there is infinite peace. It is just by drawing us to Himself in absolute trust that He changes our restlessness into rest, and the calming whispers of His love can be heard nowhere so distinctly as in the secret place of quiet fellowship, where we are alone with Him. The oftener we are there, the more of His peace we shall know.

Near to the Heart of God

Cleland B. McAfee was a Presbyterian minister in Parkville, Missouri, in 1903. When his brother, Howard, suffered the loss of his two infant daughters to diphtheria, Cleland struggled to find comfort for the family. His daughter relates,

The family and town were stricken with grief. My father often told us how he sat long and late thinking of what could be said in word and

song on the coming Sunday. . . . So he wrote the little song. The choir learned it at the regular Saturday night rehearsal, and afterward they went to Howard McAfee’s home and sang it as they stood under the sky outside the darkened, quarantined house.

There is a place of quiet rest,
near to the heart of God;
A place where sin cannot molest,
near to the heart of God.

There is a place of comfort sweet,
near to the heart of God;
A place where we our Savior meet,
near to the heart of God.

There is place a place of full release,
near to the heart of God;
A place where all is joy and peace,
near to the heart of God.

O Jesus, blest Redeemer,
sent from the heart of God,
Hold us who wait before thee
near to the heart of God.

Isaac Watts’s Testimony

After fifty years of gospel ministry in London, one of the church’s most beloved hymn writers, Isaac Watts, spent the last four years of his life sick, mentally distressed, and, as he put it, *waiting God’s leave to die*. In the last year of his life, he confessed, *Sometimes I have been ready to say within myself, “Why is my life prolonged in sorrow? Why are my days lengthened out to see further wretchedness?”*

A dear friend testified,

When he was almost worn out and broken down by his infirmities he observed that he remembered an aged minister used to say that the most learned and knowing Christians, when they come to die, have only the same plain promises of the gospel for their support as the common and unlearned. “And so,” said he, “I find it. They are plain promises of the gospel which are my support, and I bless God that they are plain promises, which do not require much labor or pains to understand. For I can do nothing now but look into my Bible for some promise to support me, and live upon that.”

What are some of God’s plain promises, as sure and unchangeable for preachers as for their people? At our annual church leadership retreat recently, one of our elders challenged us with the reality that we ought to begin every day happy in the Lord. *You can choose to do this*, he urged. *You can count your blessings until it changes your spirit.*

When upon life’s billows you are tempest-tossed,
When you are discouraged, thinking all is lost,
Count your many blessings, name them one by one,
And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done! ☞

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Bring . . . the Books

The Westminster Pulpit
of G. Campbell Morgan

Many a budding preacher has come to realize that the best way to learn to preach is just to preach. Like any discipline of life, preaching is also “perfected” with practice. But many a God-called minister has discovered that preaching can also be perfected by both listening to great pulpiteers and reading their sermons. A careful reading of sermons by great expositors enables one to gain careful insights into how to deal with Biblical texts as well as how to construct a sermon so that the listeners come face to face with a holy God. For me personally, the greatest benefit from reading the sermons of a great expositor—someone who has thoroughly exegeted the text I’m studying—is that it helps me to gain a more thorough understanding of the text I’m reading about. A sermon sourced in strong exegesis is like possessing a priceless commentary.

The *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, containing over 3500 of C. H. Spurgeon’s sermons, is probably the most well-known set of sermons in print and one which has influenced many preachers. Alexander Maclaren’s seventeen-volume *Expositions of Holy Scripture* has also yielded invaluable help to many. In recent years the *Kregel Classic Sermons Series*, compiled by Warren Wiersbe, has brought together in over thirty slim volumes sermons by multiple preachers on important Bible subjects. However, I want to commend to you *The Westminster Pulpit*, a five-volume set of over 250 sermons by the “Prince of Expositors,” G. Campbell Morgan.

For over forty years, beginning with the first decade of the twentieth century, the entire Christian world acknowledged G. Campbell Morgan to be the greatest Biblical expositor heard in the pulpits of England and America. Dr. James M. Gray, for many years president of Moody Bible Institute, remarked in 1930 that Dr. Morgan was “the most outstanding preacher” that America had heard during the previous thirty years. In his later years of ministry it was not uncommon for Morgan to preach on a Wednesday or Sunday evening and go immediately to the station to catch a train to another part of England where he would preach three or four times and be back in his own pulpit in London for the next speaking engagement. It is said that he crossed the Atlantic over fifty times to teach the Bible.

What caused Campbell Morgan to be so widely heard, so admirably appreciated and known to many as “a man of the Word”? While he possessed a native gift for teaching and a divine call to preach, Dr. Morgan himself revealed the secret of his ministry. He often told young ministers that the secret of his success was “work, hard work, work.” Jill Morgan records in her biography of her father-in-law, *A Man of the Word*, that while large audiences gathered to hear him preach, few saw him “in a circle of light at five o’clock in the morning with Bible and notebook spread before him.” He rose early and retired late, and his sermons were the fruit.

On several occasions D. L. Moody invited Dr. Morgan to speak at his Northfield Conferences in America. Those who lived near Morgan said that if he was speaking in the ten o’clock service “on a subject he had brilliantly unfolded twenty years before, and his message had even been in print for years, he could be seen at six o’clock in the morning bending over a table in the garden near his cottage, giving two more solid hours to meditation upon that text!”

In 1904, at the age of forty-one, Campbell Morgan began a thirteen-year ministry at Westminster Chapel in London. It was not long until the auditorium was filled for the first time in its history (it had a seating capacity of 2500). It was during those years that *The Westminster Pulpit* came into existence.

While Dr. Morgan preached twice on Sunday, only one sermon could be published weekly. As a result, Dr. Morgan would select each week the sermon most likely to be of interest and influence and would make it available in print at the close of the services on the following Sunday. In this way the Westminster Pulpit sermons were given a wide circulation and went into all parts of the world. At the close of each year (from 1906–16) a large number of these sermons were published in bound volumes. These volumes were the beginning of *The Westminster Pulpit* sermon series.

G. Campbell Morgan excelled in expository preaching. One biographer observed, “For sheer exposition Dr. Morgan stood above all his contemporaries.” It is this approach to a Biblical text, coupled with his reverential handling of the Word, that makes the sermons in *The Westminster Pulpit* invaluable. When I’m preaching on a particular text, I’ve made it a habit to check and see whether Morgan has a sermon on it. If he does, I know he’ll lead me to the heart of the subject of that text and then unlock its meaning for me. What a delight to still be able to sit at the feet of this master preacher.

To many preachers the idea of reading someone else’s sermon may sound dry and dusty. The sermons of G. Campbell Morgan do not fall into that class. Your problem with these sermons will be to refrain from preaching them as your own. If you are not familiar with Campbell Morgan, then let me invite you to meet him through his sermons. If you know this master expositor, then you already know the feast that awaits you. All who read *The Westminster Pulpit* sermons will find they echo “the vibrant faith of a preacher who had in him much of Paul the convert and John the Beloved.” ☞

“. . . when
thou comest,
bring with thee
. . . the books”
(2 Tim. 4:13)

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“Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.” Many have asserted that this statement cannot be from the pen of Moses because it would be a contradiction for a genuinely humble man to say this about himself. Nevertheless, understood in its context, this statement not only is appropriate but also provides important insight into the person and leadership of Moses.

The first point at issue is the meaning of the word translated “meek” (*ʾānāw*). The term is from a verbal root that gives the basic idea of being bowed down. Depending on the context *ʾānāw* can signify poor or afflicted (e.g., Pss. 9:18; 69:33; Isa. 11:4; 29:19; Amos 2:7) or humble (e.g., Pss. 25:9 [2x]; 37:11; Zeph. 2:3). The term also can convey the idea of faithful or pious (Ps. 149:4; Prov. 3:34).¹ In some cases it is difficult to determine which idea is in view (e.g., Pss. 22:26; 76:9). Although it is translated “meek” in the King James Version, the Hebrew word does not convey the idea of mild-mannered.²

Rogers argues that the context of this verse favors the translation “miserable” instead of “meek” and that Moses is describing his affliction because the whole nation, including his closest relatives, has turned against him.³ Rogers’s proposal, however, trades in one problem for a more serious one. While it seems improbable that Moses as a humble man would announce his own humility, it is even more improbable that, writing as the divinely inspired narrator, Moses would complain about his circumstances. As with most Old Testament narratives, the account is given from the point of view of an objective third-person narrator. The narrator has access to all pertinent knowledge, and any assessment he makes of the characters, including their thoughts and motives, is true and without bias or subjectivity. Therefore, although it is psychologically realistic to assume that Moses *felt* like the most oppressed person on earth, it is unlikely that the narrative intends to convey that he really was.

The fact of divine inspiration also helps explain how Moses could have written of his own humility. Since the Holy Spirit controlled the writing of the Scriptures, the statement of Moses’ humility is not a reflection of his ego, and thus a self-contradiction, but rather is the objective observation of God Himself.⁴

The argument from inspiration is only a partial answer to the problem, however. Although many times Moses demonstrates notable humility, he exhibits an angry and complaining spirit often enough to make one wonder whether he could genuinely be called the humblest or most pious man on earth.⁵

The context of Numbers 12:3 provides an additional refinement that helps resolve this dilemma. Miriam

and Aaron complain, “Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us?” They criticize Moses for taking too much authority in disregard of their prophetic offices.⁶ The reference to Moses’ humility explains why Moses says nothing in his own defense but lets the Lord rebuke Miriam and Aaron.⁷ The account also demonstrates Moses’ lack of desire for power. Contrary to their claims, Moses was not striving after position or prestige for himself but only held his position because the Lord had chosen him for it. Both in his call and in his subsequent career one gets the distinct impression that Moses never really wanted the job, and was not selfishly protective of his position of authority (Num. 11:27–29).

Freedom from personal ambition is a commendable and essential attitude in God’s service, but it does not guarantee a spiritual response to problems. As Moses’ complaining shows, at times he resented leadership as a burden unfairly placed upon his too-narrow shoulders. At the waters of Meribah, instead of trusting God to deal with the rebellion of the people, Moses castigates them himself, saying, “Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?” (Num. 20:10, emphasis added). Thus, Moses’ meekness and his failure have an important lesson for our leadership. Genuine spirituality is not just a low opinion of oneself and a right estimation of one’s inadequacies. Neither is it simply a lack of personal ambition. Genuine spirituality in leadership must include a willingness to allow God to use us however He sees fit and to genuinely leave the results with Him. ☞

“Rightly
dividing
the Word
of Truth”
(2 Tim. 2:15)

¹ See Jacob Milgrom, *The JPS Torah Commentary: Numbers*, ed. N. Sarna (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1990), p. 94. This relationship is not surprising given the theological connection between the fear of the Lord and humility (Prov. 15:33).

² Milgrom, 94.

³ “Moses: Meek or Miserable?” JETS 29 (1986): 257, 262–63. See also Ronald B. Allen, *Numbers*, in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, 2 (Grand Rapids: HarperCollins Publishers, Zondervan Publishing House, 1990), 798.

⁴ Gleason Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago: Moody, 1994), 268–69.

⁵ See Numbers 11 and 20. Note God’s assessment of Moses and Aaron’s actions: “ye rebelled against my word at the water of Meribah” (20:24).

⁶ This accusation is similar to that leveled by Dathan and Abiram: “Is it a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of a land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thyself altogether a prince over us?” (Num. 16:13).

⁷ Milgrom, 94; Timothy R. Ashley, *Numbers*, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament*, ed. R. K. Harrison, Robert L. Hubbard Jr. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1993), 224.

Windows

The Contrast between the Broad Way and the Narrow Way (Genesis 4:17–26)

The Bible is anthropology's best resource. A study of this source reveals two divergent paths that mankind has carved out for himself throughout history. The two ways are vastly different from each other and yield dissimilar results. Genesis 4:17–26 begins the exposure of these opposite ways which can be traced through Scripture. Close examination of the Bible discloses that man has a choice between which of these two ways he will go. That choice still confronts each individual today.

A Choice

In Genesis chapter 4 God communicates to the reader the choices that man had shortly after creation. Although Adam and Eve made a crucially bad decision to disobey God, Cain's notoriety is that he is the person who set the course for disobeying God's way. In contrast, Seth begins the lineage of those who demonstrate a consistent trust in God. This window into early humanity shows an example that has duplicated itself throughout human history. The same choices are replicated in modern society as well.

Genesis 4:17–24 give a sad commentary of Cain in his resistance against God. Cain did his own thing. There are numerous Scriptural examples of people doing their own thing which inevitably was contrary to God's direction. In Genesis 4:12 God tells Cain that he would be "a fugitive and a vagabond" in the earth. A few verses later (v. 17) we find Cain beginning to build a city. God had not said that city dwelling was something men should not do, but He had told Cain that he would not be able to do this as a consequence for killing his brother. Cain ignores God's word and presses on with what he wanted to do.

Lamech, of Cain's lineage, was defiant. The first poem written in the Bible is Lamech's hate song in defiance of God. Genesis 4:23, 24 states Lamech's spirit of vengeance which he will exact on whoever may try to harm him. He had killed someone who wounded him. If God will avenge Cain seven times then Lamech would avenge himself seventy-seven times without God's help. H. C. Leupold says that this is one of the most ungodly pieces of literature ever written (*Exposition of Genesis* [Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981], 1:224).

Contrast the way of Cain to that of Seth and you find a people who want to follow God's instruction. Seth is bold in calling on the Lord openly when Cain and others no doubt had made a different choice. Genesis 4:26 tells us that at the time of Enos, Seth's son, men began to call on the name of the Lord. There grew an outcry and outspokenness for God in the face of those who were not following God. Enoch, seven generations into human history and a descendent of Seth, was very bold in the face of his contemporary, Lamech of Cain's dynasty (Jude 14, 15). Noah demonstrated similar boldness as "a preacher of righteousness" (2 Pet. 2:5).

Boldness for God

This boldness for God is characteristic of some kings and most prophets in the Old Testament and of the apostles in the New Testament also. One of the descriptions in the Book of Acts of people who were filled with the Holy Spirit was a boldness for God (Acts 4:31). Closer to modern time is the familiar story of Martin Luther's defense for his beliefs.

In 1520 Pope Leo X issued a bull of excommunication against Martin Luther. Since the Imperial Diet was then in session at Worms, Luther was summoned to appear before it for examination. On the first day of his appearance, Luther was asked whether he acknowledged authorship of his own works piled up before him. A request for twenty-four hours to deliberate his response was granted. On the following day in the presence of the Emperor and church leaders he replied, "I stand convinced by the Scriptures, to which I have appealed, and my conscience it taken captive by God's Word. I cannot and will not recant anything. . . . On this I take my stand. I can do no other. God help me. Amen" (www.personal.ksu.edu/~lyman/english233/Luther-Diet-of-Worms.htm).

In the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 7:13, 14 our Lord was reminding His hearers how history divides mankind into two groups. Those who are on the path in opposition to God are on the "broad" way. People who are following God are on the "narrow" path.

Jesus gives other assessments of these choices, too. The broad way leads to ruin but is heavily occupied. The narrow path is the way to life yet has fewer travelers. Christ's description is not only accurate because Jesus said it, but a casual perusal of human history would bring one to the same conclusion.

Those who choose the broad way live by sight. They evaluate life by their own set of values and use their reason as a guide. Back in Genesis 4:15 God set a mark on Cain for his own protection. Whatever this mark was, everyone knew that God was protecting him. This, however, was not enough for Cain. He felt that he needed to build a city for his own protection.

Lamech also violated God's order when he took two wives. He knew how God had made man and woman in the beginning and could see the right example from those before him. Yet it made more sense to him to go his own way. History is filled with similar examples of people who make choices based on what makes the most sense to them at the time.

Those who choose the broad way often prosper.

"To every preacher of righteousness as well as to Noah, wisdom gives the command, 'A window shalt thou make in the ark.'"

Charles Spurgeon

Lamech's three sons are the originators of some very important human activities. Jabal initiates ranching, Jubal creates stringed and wind instruments, and Tubalcain instigates hammering out tools and weapons from iron and bronze.

History is filled with examples of individuals prospering who are boldly going contrary to God. The narrow way requires its occupants to live by faith. Faith is simply taking God at His word and acting on it in obedience even without evidence to support its validity. Living by faith is a theme running throughout the Bible. After the fall of man God could not allow man to see Him as Adam and Eve did in the garden (Exod. 33:20). God opted to reveal Himself through preincarnate bodies, angelic forms, dreams, and visions. In each of these cases His Word was the primary focus of the revelation and was to be acted on by faith.

Those on the narrow path often struggle. Why is this the case? The consequences of original sin must have something to do with this. The Scripture tells us, however, that the trying of one's faith is precious and very valuable (1 Pet. 1:7). This testing produces endurance (James 1:3). God delights in man believing His Word (Heb. 11:6).

Following or Falling Away?

The lesson of Genesis chapter 6 is that disaster occurs when those on the narrow path lose sight of God and merge with those on the broad way. The broad way was too attractive to resist. There are several of these sad times in history when there is a falling away from the faith. The result of the first falling away was unbridled wickedness to the point of God grieving over having made man (Gen. 6:6). When God's judgment fell there were few who were still following Him. Examples of this type of departure grieve not only the Lord but also those who are themselves wrestling with faith.

Julie was raised in a loving and conservative Christian home. Any time the church doors were open Julie and her family were there. Julie was a model Christian young lady—sweet, compliant, and involved. After graduating from a Christian university, Julie continued her studies at a liberal law school. There her peers urged her to “get out into the world” and “live a little.” At first Julie was strong and resisted the pull of her classmates. By the time she graduated with her advanced degree, Julie began to express doubts about her Christianity, and critique of the “harsh standards” under which she had been raised grew to overshadow any faith she had once nurtured. Julie cut all ties with her family and conservative background, sought the acceptance of her friends, fell into immorality, and began “enjoying life” on the broad way.

Both the Old and New Testaments reveal the struggle of man to live by faith. Asaph wrestled with the prosperity of the wicked and shares his struggle in Psalm 73. Habakkuk could not understand how God

could allow a wicked nation to prosper even against His own people. He concludes that “the just shall live by his faith” (Hab. 2:4). Paul had his Demas who forsook him “having loved this present world” (2 Tim. 4:10). Judas betrayed the Lord of Glory.

Luke 17:26 reminds us that “as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.” The prosperity and ease of those on the path to destruction will be too much to fight against. The broad way will be too attractive to resist.

The scenario is reminiscent of a bug zapper. Along comes a healthy insect minding his own business when he is distracted by this marvelous light. He is not crazy, because others are also compelled to the grandeur of the radiance. The attraction is too great to resist. All appears well and good until he gets drawn in too close and is zapped. Because others are leaving the narrow way and seem to prosper, it becomes more difficult for some to stay on the narrow path.

However, there will be those who will believe God and His Word no matter the struggle they may face. They will say with Job, “though he slay me, yet will I trust in him” (Job 13:15). History is filled with those who stood firm in the face of opposition.

The year was 1553, and the country of England was in turmoil. King Henry VIII's son, Edward VI, had just died, and the throne was open to succession by a Catholic, the future queen better known as “Bloody Mary.” Several powerful men hurriedly coerced a fifteen-year-old Protestant girl, Lady Jane Grey, to accept the crown. Over the next nine days, Lady Jane reluctantly sat as Queen of England until Mary gathered enough forces to take back the throne. Queen Mary sent Lady Jane to the Tower of London as a prisoner. For over a year Lady Jane waited in the Tower, not knowing what lay ahead.

Finally, the word came. Lady Jane would be put to death. Dr. Feckenham, a Catholic priest, visited Lady Jane to tell her that if she would recant her faith she would not only have her death sentence revoked but she would in all likelihood regain her freedom as well. When Lady Jane refused, Dr. Feckenham said, “Lady Jane, I am sorry for you, for I am certain we two shall never meet again after this life.”

“It is true that we shall never meet, Dr. Feckenham, unless God changes your heart. For I am sure that unless you repent and turn to Him, you are lost. I pray that in His mercy He will send you His Holy Spirit” (Deborah Meroff, *Coronation of Glory* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979], 267).

Although the Bible tells us about the two different ways it also compels people to choose the narrow way. God reveals the consequences of each path and invites all to join the difficult but right way. If we are weary of the narrow way, rejoice in the future approval from God. Stand like others of the past who believed God and His Word no matter what was going on around them. Continue boldly inviting others to the only true way. Eternal consequences are at stake. ☞

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How Could It Ever Be for My Good?

If you have been abused, you carry a heavy load. Lugging the past around is exhausting, but no matter what some say, you can't simply drop it. In the daylight, names and pictures, places and faces remind you of what you're desperately trying to forget, and after dark, awful memories haunt your sleep.

Especially if you were abused as a child, before you understood that what was happening was not normal, when you were too weak to defend yourself, too young and terrified to find a way of escape, your tender heart may have been numbed for a lifetime. Those who betrayed you—by committing or by enabling the abuse—may have made it hard for you to trust again. You may be suspicious of those who say they love you, or you may find it difficult to love at all.

You may even be distrustful of God, who saw what was happening and could have stopped or prevented it but didn't. You question why One who loved you would choose not to shield you. You memorize Romans 8:28 and try to believe it, but you wonder how any good could ever result from such evil, for you find no blessing in your memories, no escape from your heartache.

I can't answer all your questions or even fully understand your suffering, for I have not been where you are. But I can stand beside you as a friend. Let's move away from the bitter edge of your pain and look together for the good that can come from it. It's true that "all things work

Like Him, you suffered innocently. That's what the cross was all about. He "did no sin" (1 Pet. 2:22) but was tortured and left to bleed and die alone.

together for good." But the following verse explains what that good is: "to be conformed to the image of his Son" (Rom. 8:29). Few life experiences have as much power to move you toward that goal as experiencing abuse and handling it as He did.

Jesus knows what it means to suffer for others' wrongdoing. It doesn't seem fair that someone should hurt you so deeply and then leave you wounded by the road as he goes on his merry way through life with no signs of guilt or remorse, no desire to make things right or recompense you for your loss of innocence. The abuser did the sinning, but you have done the suffering.

You are not sinless like the Savior, but you did not cause, deserve, or desire your abuse. Like Him, you suffered innocently. That's what the cross was all about. He "did no sin" (1 Pet. 2:22) but was tortured and left to bleed and die alone. Multitudes still pass Him by—all the way into eternity—without caring or even noticing that it was their sin that caused His torment. And while the Son was being "wounded for our transgressions . . . bruised for our iniquities," the Father saw and allowed it to continue. "It pleased the Lord to bruise him" (Isa. 53:5, 10), not because He was cruel or unfeeling, but because He had a greater purpose in mind.

So when you come to Jesus with the anguish of abuse and your sense of separation from the Father, Jesus understands. Draw near to Him, knowing that He is "touched with the feeling of [your] infirmities" (Heb. 4:15). As you share in "the fellowship of his sufferings" (Phil. 3:10), you will gradually but surely grow into His likeness.

Jesus also knows what it means to forgive. If your abuser has asked you for forgiveness, you've already discovered how hard that is. Forgiving is expensive, for it requires forfeiting the right to retaliate. It also asks you to absolve guilt for something you



can never forget. Even the death of an unrepentant abuser is costly, for with him dies any possibility of reconciliation. Death removes the abuser but not the pain, leaving you with the need to show mercy in your spirit toward someone who showed no remorse.

But Colossians 3:13 makes Him our model for forgiving: "Even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." How does He forgive? Fully, immediately, and unconditionally. When by His grace and in His miraculous strength you are able to forgive like that, you do what is humanly impossible and take another giant step toward Christlikeness.

And as you grow into His image, you'll be able to help other hurting women with insight and credibility, for you sense and understand their trials, just as the One who took on human flesh understands yours. The One "who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble" (2 Cor. 1:4) will swing open new doors of ministry for you.

Your past may always be a heavy load, but you can lighten it by shifting your focus from what happened to you back then to what the Lord is doing in you right now. Abuse is not good, but growing into His likeness is good. It is very, very good.

Claudia Barba assists her husband, Dave, in Press On! Ministries (www.ipresson.com). They travel full time, helping to plant churches in the USA. She also enjoys speaking to women's groups and writing Bible studies, including *Refresh Your Heart* and *When Christ Was Here*, both published by BJU Press.





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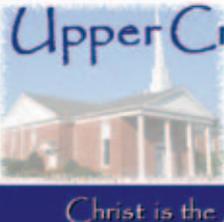
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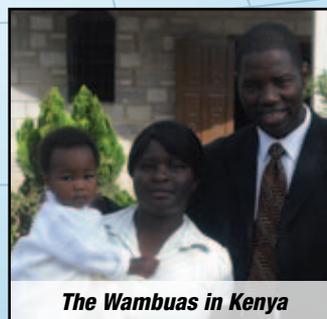


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The instant communication capabilities available through a personal computer have afforded pedophiles opportunities to establish networks. . . . In the hands of a pedophile . . . the personal computer has become a potent tool toward [sexual] exploitation.
—Paul Hartman, United States Postal Inspection Service

Ninety percent of 9–16 year-olds have viewed online pornography.
—David C. Gibbs Jr.

Every form of abuse is lust trying unsuccessfully to satisfy its selfish self by violating the will and personhood of another.
—David M. Atkinson

Pornography is the third largest source of revenue for organized crime in the United States. In 1960 hard-core pornography was a \$5 to \$10 million industry in the U.S.; [in 1997] it was an \$8.5 to \$10 billion industry.
—Calvary Contender

The main message of my interview [with serial killer Theodore Bundy] was a message to the American people about pornography.
—James Dobson

I am not surprised at the rampant sexual abuse of children as an outcome of a society that offers pornography on the shelves of the local convenience stores and on television through Playboy's pornographic channel on cable.
—Brenda MacKillop, former Playboy bunny

It is a mistake to look too far ahead. Only one link in the chain of destiny can be handled at a time.
—Winston Churchill

Citizens concerned about pornography in their community can establish and maintain effective community action organizations.
—Excerpt, the Report of the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography, 1986

It's a silly goose that comes to a fox's sermon.
—Anonymous

The gentleman is a Christian product.
—George H. Calvert

A handicapped golfer is a man who plays with his boss.
—Anonymous

Four hostile newspapers are more to be feared than a thousand bayonets.
—Napoleon Bonaparte

A fox should not be on the jury at a goose's trial.
—Thomas Fuller

Abuse is the weapon of the vulgar.
—Samuel Griswold Goodrich

A fault once denied is twice committed.
—Anonymous

How can anyone seriously ask why children in America are violent toward the things and people in their surroundings? A much more plausible question . . . must be: How can the level of retaliatory rage children accumulate in American society be so minimal in its expression as violence?
—Scott C. Guth

Regional Report

Doug Wright

Central Regional Meeting

Fundamentalism was the focus of the 2011 Central Regional Fellowship at Faith Baptist Church pastored by Dr. David Byford in Manhattan, Kansas, October 17–19, 2011. The regional conference followed the twenty-fifth anniversary of Faith Baptist Church, planted by Dr. Byford.

For twenty-five years Faith Baptist has ministered to our military men, women, and families who have deployed from Ft. Riley. Many of those who put their lives on the line daily appreciate a Biblical, no nonsense faith, expressed by FBFI's model of Fundamentalism.

The theme "We Walk by Faith" set the tone of the fellowship and harmonized continually with the preaching and discussion panels. The speakers—Dr. and Mrs. Wendell Heller, Dr. Bob Jones III, Dr. John Vaughn, and Chaplain (COL) Joe Willis—were joined by Chaplain (MAJ) Mike Shellman for the second panel discussion. Each speaker expressed by his or her life and personality the simple, consistent walk by faith produced by Biblical Fundamentalism.

The Hellers can't speak without emphasizing a simple (unmixed) walk of faith at home and church. Dr. Jones, as usual, related the obedient walk of faith to the academic area of life. As a compassionate, successful third-generation preacher, he has been involved in education and bridge building for Fundamentalists.

Dr. Vaughn, well-known pastor, family man, president of FBFI, and having recently completed his dissertation on the chaplaincy, added his usual breadth of knowledge, always centered on the touchstone of truth in its consistent nature.

Active military chaplains Joe Willis and Michael Shellman demonstrated the extension of the local church by way of the chaplaincy. CH (COL) Willis, who grew up spiritually at Faith Baptist Church, preached effectively against the folly of any walk other than that of faith and Biblical consistency. CH (MAJ) Shellman also demonstrated in the panel discussion the consistent, Biblical position of a soldier under the authority of Scripture, the

Constitution, and military code and tradition. He has consistently ministered to other soldiers with spiritual needs.

Dr. Vaughn's recent dissertation work was referenced often as a critical guideline for those wanting to understand and minister in the area of chaplaincy. Being Biblical, loving, consistent, compassionate, and honest all have their place in the life of the Fundamentalist. The recent *FrontLine* issue "Chaplaincy as an Extension of the Local Church Ministry" is a must-read for any pastor and those wanting more knowledge in the area of chaplaincy.

The members of Faith Baptist Church demonstrated the complete Christlike servanthood to attendees. They held the door when we entered and exited, fed us, kept the lights on and coffee hot both early and late. The many pastors and their families who attended, along with members of other churches, all obviously enjoyed themselves.

The 2011 Central Regional Fellowship was representative of the FBFI in its three areas of endeavor: fellowships (both nationally and regionally), *FrontLine* magazine, and the chaplaincy. Thanks to our Heavenly Father for the liberty He has given to His children. One of the speakers was overheard saying, "I can't speak like [the one] who goes before me. I have to be myself when I get up there." The liberty was given, and God's blessing was evident.



Presenting the Gospel

We read in Acts 8:35, "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." Here we have a classic example of how a man of God dealt with an individual concerning our Lord Jesus Christ.

First, Philip made himself available because he was sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Acts 8:29 says, "Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot." The reason many people never present the gospel to others is because they do not make themselves available to the leading of the Holy Spirit. When is the last time you prayed, "Lord, I pray that the Holy Spirit will lead me this day to be a witness for You"?

When I was a teenager in West Virginia, my pastor, Doug Rutherford, would take me soulwinning with him. Every time before we left he would pray that the Lord would direct us as we endeavored to tell others about the Lord Jesus Christ. If you will make yourself available to the Lord in being a witness, He will surely direct you to individuals, just as He did with Philip in Acts 8.

Second, Philip asked a question of the Ethiopian eunuch, who was reading from the Book of Isaiah. Philip asked him in Acts 8:30, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" It would be wise on our part to ask questions of people as we witness to them. I knew a man who would always ask this question before he began to share the gospel. He would say, "Do you believe the Bible is God's Word?" If the person said no, he would reply, "Then there is no sense in my talking to you." And then he would walk away. Now, this may seem harsh, but he felt you cannot reach someone who rejects the Scriptures.

Today, you could ask a person this question, "Have you ever tried to read the Bible but couldn't understand what you were reading?" Most likely they will respond by saying yes. You could tell them that there is a reason that that is so. Read to him 1 Corinthians 2:14: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because

they are spiritually discerned." You could also ask, "Would God ever confuse you on how to go to Heaven?" Then read 1 Corinthians 14:33: "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace." Or another question you could ask is, "Would God ever lie to a person?" Then read Titus 1:2: "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." Asking a question is giving someone a chance to voice what he thinks. And we should always respond with kindness and never belittle the answer he may give.

So Philip allowed the Holy Spirit to lead him. Then he asked the eunuch a question. Third, he presented unto him Jesus Christ. Acts 8:35 says, "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." In presenting the gospel, we must rely upon the power of the Word of God and the convicting work of the Holy Spirit to make a person realize his need of receiving Christ as his Savior. Remember, we are only a mouthpiece in presenting the gospel. First Corinthians 3:7 says, "So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." All we are to do is present the Lord Jesus Christ.

You may be the instrument of planting the seed of the gospel in someone's life. Or your witnessing may water what someone else has already planted in someone's life. But it is God who gives the increase. I would encourage a believer to always emphasize the main heart of the gospel, which the apostle Paul did, according to 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." His death and resurrection should always be declared to the lost. I trust that this week the Lord will use you to be His instrument in presenting our Savior to some lost soul.

Evangelist Jerry Sivnksty may be contacted at PO Box 141, Starr, SC 29684 or via e-mail at evangjsivn@aol.com.

Written and Compiled by Dr. Layton Talbert

PROVERBS: UNDERSTANDING HOW

It is true that one can enjoy and profit from music or literature without delving into all the techniques behind the art. Understanding something of the artistry, however, can significantly enhance your appreciation of its beauty and intricacy. It can also enable you to notice things that you wouldn't otherwise, fine-tuning the way you "hear" (that is, understand, interpret) even a familiar piece of music or literature. The same is true with one's study of the Bible. God could have given us a purely functional book of flat facts and perfunctory propositions. Instead He has inspired a masterpiece of multifaceted artistry. He has not only communicated truth; He has made it technically impressive and artistically beautiful. My purpose is not preoccupation with technicalities but showcasing some of the artistic technique that God Himself has crafted into His revelatory work of art.

Few books of Scripture are as versatile, practical, and accessible as Proverbs. And yet this seemingly acontextual compilation of assorted and solitary life-insights bristles with its share of interpretational challenges. The Book of Proverbs is more diverse and complex than it appears at first glance. This introductory column will explore some basic background issues that can spell the difference between understanding and misunderstanding one of the most popular books in the Bible.¹

Authorship

We're told that Solomon minted some 3000 proverbial sayings (1 Kings 4:32). Proverbs represents only one-fifth of that output. The reader might assume from 1:1 that he is embarking upon a collection of the writings of Solomon. But the reader bumps into other sages as well. Proverbs does not represent the wit and wisdom produced by one author at a single sitting. It is a self-described edited anthology of wisdom compiled by multiple editors (25:1) over time from multiple sources (1:1; 30:1; 31:1) into a unified collection. The primary source is well-known (Solomon); some are known by name only (Agur, Lemuel); and still others are completely anonymous (22:17 and 24:23 introduce collections of sayings from "the wise" [plural]). Indeed, Lemuel's famous contribution is actually credited to his mother (31:1).

Genre

Proverbs is identified as wisdom literature. But "wisdom literature" is an umbrella term that denotes diverse literary forms, not unlike the term "poetry." Some poetry rhymes, some does not; even when it does, rhyme schemes

differ widely; cadences may vary (iambic, trochaic, dactylic) or be nonexistent (free verse); and some poetry follows highly specialized forms (sonnet, haiku, limerick). Similarly, while wisdom literature has certain defining features, it can take multiple forms.

Two major kinds of wisdom literature are *discursive* (extended topical discourse) and *proverbial* (concise, pithy sayings). Both of these subdivide into more specialized subforms. But recognizing that the book of Proverbs features both kinds, *discursive* (Prov. 1–9) and *proverbial* (10–29), helps fence out inaccurate interpretation and application of some passages.

It's also important to realize that wisdom literature, including the proverb form, was not unique to Israel or to Biblical literature. All cultures, modern and ancient, from Appalachia to Akkadia, have their wisdom literature and even their proverbs. What differentiates them from each other—and especially Biblical from non-Biblical—is the worldview that shapes them and gives them birth. (More about that in the next column.)

Forms

Wisdom literature takes many shapes. Here are some of the more common ones, along with sample passages. (References are to Proverbs unless otherwise noted.)

- **Saying**—most basic wisdom form
 - **Slogan**—concise sentence or fragment
 - ◆ *Reputation slogan* (1 Sam. 18:7)
 - ◆ *Derision slogan* (1 Kings 20:11; Luke 4:23)
 - **Proverb**—short, artistically constructed ethical observation or teaching
 - ◆ *Observational*—describes human behavior without any overt evaluation (13:7; 18:16)
 - ◆ *Didactic*—describes human behavior with built-in moral judgments (13:6; 14:1)
- **Admonition**—command or prohibition in either discourse form (6:1–5) or proverbial form (16:3), though proverbial admonitions are actually quite rare. (*Note: Proverbs generally counsel rather than command.*)
- **Numerical Saying**—employs a numerical pattern, often a listing (30:18, 19, 21–23, 24–28)
- **Rhetorical Question** (30:4)
- **Wisdom Poem**—often in alphabetic acrostic (31:10–31)
- **Parental Exhortation**—discourse aimed at youth (chs. 1, 2, 3)

THEY'RE MADE AND HOW THEY WORK (PART 1)

- **Wisdom Appeal**—personification of wisdom (1:20–33; 8:1–36)
- **Example Story**—brief anecdote to drive home virtue teaching (7:6–27; 24:30–34)
- **Confession/Reflection** (4:3–9; 30:2–4)

Patterns

Just as poetry may employ different patterns of rhyme or meter, proverbial wisdom literature displays different poetic patterns as well. The terminology may seem technical, but the patterns are easy enough to recognize.

- **Monocolon**—single, short sentence (24:26)
- **Bicolon/Couplet/Distich**
 - **Parallelism** [aka *synonymous parallelism*]—twofold statement of a single idea with near-synonymous language in symmetrical fashion (16:28; 19:5)
 - **Progression** [aka *synthetic parallelism*]—second line supplements the first (17:8)
 - **Proverbial Merismus** [aka *antithetical parallelism*]—second line completes the first by looking at its opposite (10:1, 5; 15:9)
- **Tricolon/Triplet/Tristich**—synonymous or synthetic parallelism in all three lines (22:29; 25:13)
- **Quatrain**—complex and varied patterns (24:5, 6; 24:19, 20; 21:25, 26)
- **Pentad**—rare in the Biblical text (30:15, 16)
- **Hexad**—common in numerical sayings (30:29, 30)

Structure

Proverbs is topical by nature, definition, and design. We have already noted the major authorial divisions within the book. Beyond that level of organization, it may appear that these collections are a higgledy-piggledy hodge-podge of random maxims without reason or context. There is, however, far more structure and complexity than is often recognized. This, too, can significantly contribute to more accurate interpretation.

Proverbs are independent topical units, but that does not mean there are not contextual segments within Proverbs. Individual proverbs are often grouped into several different types of collections.

1. **Parallel**—proverbs grouped in A-B-A-B pattern (27:7–10)

- *sweet things*, vv. 7, 9
- *abandonment*, vv. 8, 10

2. **Chiastic**—proverbs grouped in A-B-B-A pattern
 - 10:1–5 (see below)
3. **Catchword**—group of proverbs containing a common catchword
 - *sluggard*, 26:13–16
4. **Thematic**—group of proverbs on a common theme
 - *mischief-making*, 26:17–22
5. **Inclusio**—group of proverbs bookended by similar proverbs
 - *fulfilled longing*, 13:12–19 (note vv. 12 and 19)

Let's work through a sample cluster of proverbs in Proverbs 10:1–5.²

- A ¹ A wise son makes a father glad,
But a foolish son is a grief to his mother.
- B ² Ill-gotten gains do not profit,
But righteousness delivers from death.
- C ³ The LORD will not allow the righteous to hunger,
But He will reject the craving of the wicked.
- B' ⁴ Poor is he who works with a negligent hand,
But the hand of the diligent makes rich.
- A' ⁵ He who gathers in summer is a son who acts wisely,
But he who sleeps in harvest is a son who acts shamefully.

The segment sounds like Solomon counseling his son on how to make a living in a way that blends human responsibility with reliance on God. The underlined terms reveal the overall focus on the mundane but necessary pursuit of procuring material goods. But there is a right way and a wrong way to do this. The chiasm also conveys a sense of progression on how, and how not, to make a living. At the center of life is Yahweh—and the assurance of God's provision and blessing on those who go about this business the right way.

- A *The wise son (and the otherwise)*
B *Illicit gain brings no security, but righteousness does*
C *God's faithful provision for the righteous*
B' *Indolence breeds indigence, but industry produces prosperity*
A' *The wise son (and the otherwise)*

Continued on next page

Audience

Although there is an undeniable universality of appeal and applicability to Proverbs, numerous references indicate that much of it was originally focused expressly toward the inexperienced young man. Occurrences of “my son” and “my sons/children”:

In Solomon’s Discourse

- 1:4, 8, 10, 15
- 2:1
- 3:1, 11, 21
- 4:1, 10, 20
- 5:1, 7, 20
- 6:1, 3, 20
- 7:1, 24
- 8:32

In Solomon’s Proverbs

- 19:27
- 23:15, 19, 26
- 24:13, 21
- 27:11

In Lemuel’s (Mother’s) Oracle

- 31:2

This recurring vocative suggests a king preparing his son to grow into a man and a king. Again, that does not mean it is inapplicable to a wider or more diverse audience. “Sons” implies a sage-king addressing his disciple-subjects at large, and even “son” could be interpreted generically. But it does suggest that Proverbs is a natural choice for certain teaching/preaching venues. Garrett observes:

Verses 2–6 describe the purpose of the book, that is, to teach wisdom to the reader. The primary purpose of Proverbs is the instruction of young people and those who have yet to learn wisdom (v. 4), but it is not only for children. Those who are already mature and learned (v. 5) also have a great deal to learn from this book, and they should not shun it as unworthy of their time.

The book gives every indication of having been composed with boys and young men in mind.

- the constant reference to the reader as “my son”
- the warning not to join gangs (1:10–19)
- the admonition to avoid prostitutes [and adultery] (chs. 5, 6, 7)

The principles involved, however, apply to girls and young women as well. The selfish pursuit of gain or gratification is always wrong and self-destructive. The penalties of folly and the rewards of wisdom are the same for women and men.³

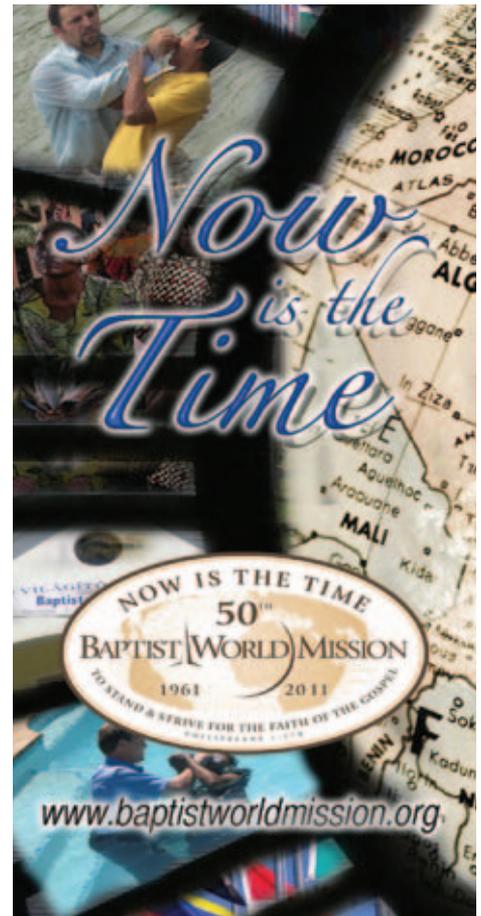
This also suggests that Proverbs provides the simplified (not to say simplistic) black-and-white lens through which to view and navigate life in Yahweh’s moral world. “Wisdom as taught here is God-centered, and even when it is most down-to-earth it consists in the shrewd and sound handling of one’s affairs in God’s world, in submission to His will.”⁴

¹ Much of the introductory material, including definitions of technical terms, is drawn from Duane Garrett’s excellent commentary on Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon in the New American Commentary series.

² Garrett labels this cluster as thematic, inclusio, but a good case can also be made for a chiasmic structure.

³ Garrett, 67.

⁴ Derek Kidner, *Proverbs*, 14.



Rev. Mark Robinson
Executive Director

Rev. Stan Rosenthal
Field Director

*To the Jew first,
and also to the Greek*

Rom. 1:16



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Truth-Free Training

After receiving complaints from CAIR (the Council on American Islamic Relations) and MPAC (the Muslim Public Affairs Council), the Obama administration has bowed to pressure to remove references in terrorism training material to Islam. Deputy US Attorney General James Coles confirmed the administration's policy plan: "I recently directed all components of the Department of Justice to re-evaluate their training efforts in a range of areas, from community outreach to national security."

Dwight Holton, a US Attorney in Oregon, made the following comments to reporters: "I want to be perfectly clear about this: training materials that portray Islam as a religion of violence or with a tendency towards violence are wrong, they are offensive, and contrary to everything that this president, the attorney general, and Department of Justice stands for. They will not be tolerated."

The irony is that CAIR has been identified incontrovertibly to be a front group for the Muslim Brotherhood in the 2004 Holy Land terror fundraising trial. An *LA Times* opinion column, written by Salam Al-Marayati, president of MPAC, can be referenced at <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/oct/19/opinion/la-oe-almarayati-fbi-20111019> that equates identifying Islam's clearly stated objectives as siding with

Al Qaeda, keeping the US at war with Islam.

This article can be referenced at <http://dailycaller.com/2011/10/21/obama-administration-pulls-references-to-islam-from-terror-training-materials-official-says>.

Non-Muslim Muslims

This article is a practical, non-inflammatory description of Islam from a former Muslim. I am highlighting a few quotes but would recommend that you read the article in its entirety.

"So while I understand that most Muslims are not at war with us, they've proven in their silence and inaction that they are not on the other side either...."

"Non-observant Muslims are not our problem, but neither are they the solution to our problem."

"While it is true that jihadists don't represent most Muslims, they do represent Islam."

"And while Muslims who blow themselves up in order to kill non-Muslims are a small minority, Muslims who would explicitly condemn them are even a smaller minority."

"Our problem is not 'Islamophobia', but 'Islamophilia.'"

This article can be referenced at <http://frontpagemag.com/2011/12/02/non-muslim-muslims-and-the-jihad-against-the-west>.

Adoptions in the Homosexual Community

According to a *New York Times* article, adoptions by homosexual couples have nearly tripled in recent his-

tory. This is a trend that is unlikely to be reversed.

At the date of the article, only two US states explicitly forbid homosexuals from adopting children. Several states have roadblocks to overcome, but nothing that cannot be circumvented. The main issue is that homosexuals still cannot marry in many states. The growing trends result from America's softening position on homosexuality and the still-growing number of children awaiting adoption. There are approximately 155,000 children in line for adoption in the US today. In 2009, 19 percent of homosexual "couples" adopted children.

This article can be referenced at <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/14/us/14adoption.html?pagewanted=all>.

The God Pocket

Bruce Wilkerson, popular author of *The Prayer of Jabez*, has released a new book on the subject of prayer. Instead of seeking God's personal blessings on the one praying, he hopes to direct people into being the person who will act as God's agent by answering the prayers of others. According to Wilkerson, the premise of the work is that God answers prayers through His people. Wilkerson and his wife keep a copy of the book with them, inserted with an undisclosed amount of cash. He and his wife then seek whom God wants them to serve as an answer that person's prayers. This article can be referenced

at <http://www.onenewsnow.com/Culture/Default.aspx?id=1509856>.

Girl Scouts Becoming Infamous

The Girl Scouts have been in the news quite a bit these days. First they made national news by initially denying a young boy's admittance to the club, then reversing the decision as wrong.

Recently, Girl Scout employee Renise Rodriguez found that accommodation apparently only goes one direction. Renise went to her place of employment for the Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona. Her arrival was during her off-hour time to pick up some of her personal items. When she arrived at the building she was told she would have to change her T-shirt if she was to remain on the premises. She was also given the option to turn it inside-out. Her shirt read, "Pray to End Abortion." After considering the reality of the exchange, she resigned her position as Girl Experience Associate.

This article can be referenced at <http://www.onenewsnow.com/Culture/Default.aspx?id=1512378>.

Disinvited

Bishop Katherine Jefferts Shori, the presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church in the United States, received an invitation to address Episcopal churches in Sudan but now has been disinvited. The reasoning is that the Episcopal churches in the United States have demonstrated "blatant disregard" for God's Word.

The particular issue regards the Episcopal Church's capitulation to homosexuality.

Until now, the Sudanese Episcopalians did not want to officially distance themselves from their erring church members, though they did criticize their false teachings. As of December 15, the rift has now become official. They did seek to reaffirm their relationship with conservative, "orthodox" Episcopal and Anglican churches here in the United States.

This article can be referenced at <http://capitolresource.org/stinging-rebuke-of-ecusa-head>.

The Church's Right to Hire or Fire

The United States Supreme Court ruled unanimously to overturn an earlier ruling by Sixth US Court of Appeals in favor of a Michigan church-school who fired an employee, by their testimony, on religious grounds.

Cheryl Perch, a teacher at Evangelical Lutheran Church and School, was released because of confrontational behavior and the threat of legal suit. That dismissal was upheld by the doctrine of "ministerial exception." The court wrote:

Requiring a church to accept or retain an unwanted minister, or punishing a church for failing to do so, intrudes upon more than a mere employment decision. Such action interferes with the internal governance of the church, depriving the church of control over the selection of those who will personify its beliefs. By imposing an unwanted minister, the state infringes the Free Exercise Clause, which protects a religious group's right to shape

NOTABLE QUOTES

Every thing that a man leans upon but God, will be a dart that will certainly pierce his heart through and through. He who leans only upon Christ, lives the highest, choicest, safest, and sweetest life.—Thomas Brooks

A dog barks when his master is attacked. I would be a coward if I saw that God's truth is attacked and yet would remain silent.—John Calvin

Like to hear a man dwell much on the same essentials of Christianity. For we have but one God, and one Christ, and one faith to preach; and I will not preach another Gospel to please men with variety, as if our Saviour and our Gospel had grown stale.—Richard Baxter

If a person is what the world calls an honest moral man, if he deals justly, and is now and then good natured, and gives to the poor, and receives the sacrament once or twice a year, and is outwardly sober and honest—the world looks upon such a man as a true Christian. There are many like this who go on in a round of duties and performances, who think they shall go to heaven. But if you examine them, you will find that though they have a "Christ in their heads," they have no "Christ in their hearts."—Jonathan Edwards

Christianity does not consist in any partial amendment of our lives, any particular moral virtues, but in an entire change of our natural temper, a life wholly devoted to God.—William Law

The Christian is a man who can be certain about the ultimate even when he is most uncertain about the immediate.—David Martyn Lloyd-Jones

If you take Christ out of Christianity, Christianity is dead. If you remove grace out of the gospel, the gospel is gone. If the people do not like the doctrine of grace, give them all the more of it.—Charles Haddon Spurgeon

We are called to see that the Church does not adapt its thinking to the horizons that modernity prescribes for it, but rather that it brings to those horizons, the powerful antidote of God's truth.—David Wells

Newsworthy is presented to inform believers. The people or sources mentioned do not necessarily carry the endorsement of the FBFI.

its own faith and mission through its appointments. According to the state the power to determine which individuals will minister to the faithful also violates the Establishment Clause, which prohibits government involvement in such ecclesiastical decisions.

The plaintiff insisted the action was a violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act. But the high court saw it differently.

This article can be referenced at <http://onenewsnow.com/Legal/Default.aspx?id=1513214>.

Reverse Pressure

TLC has created a cable network show called *All-American Muslim*. Christian and other conservative organizations decry the series as Muslim propaganda. Lowe's, a home-improvement chain, found itself embroiled in the controversy as well. Lowe's decided to pull its advertising from the program. Company officials were later met by a Baptist pastor, Russ Dean, and other pastors from a ministerial consortium with a 200,000-signature petition asking them to reconsider their actions.

Michael Sherrard, a member of an online community of progressive Christians wrote, "This promotion of anti-Muslim bigotry is not in keeping with our faith values.... We cannot stand by when a company bows to pressure from an extreme group and is complicit in discrimination against Muslims. Lowe's should change course and resume advertising on *All-American Muslim*."

This article can be referenced at <http://www.abpnews.com/content/view/7024/53>.

Compiled by Robert Condict, FBFI Executive Board member and pastor of Upper Cross Roads Baptist Church, Baldwin, Maryland.

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“I used to be super involved in visitation and other outreaches, but now I’m just a stay-at-home mom.”

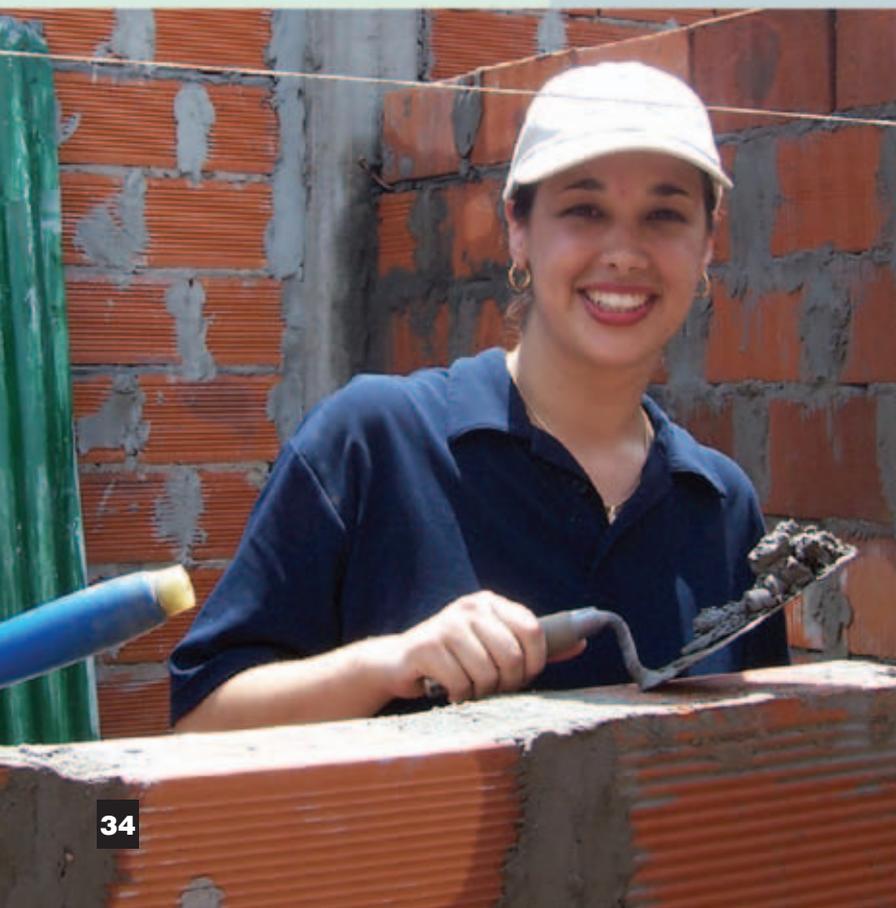
“I can’t wait until my kids are older so I can be more involved in church.”

Have you ever heard a young mother make any of these comments? Have you ever heard these words come out of your own mouth? I often hear mothers of young children express feelings of being handicapped in their service to the Lord because they now have children to care for. Yes, after caring for your husband, your children are, and should be, top priority. As mothers, our primary mission is to evangelize and then disciple the little heathens God places in our charge. *However, how will we raise servants of God if they do not see us serving? How will they learn to sacrifice for others*

if all we ever do is sacrifice for them all day? There are many creative ways you can teach your children to love and serve others while still maintaining your priorities in their proper order.

When our first two were little, any excursion out of the house was a welcome treat for this young mother. We enjoyed spending time with an elderly widow lady, keeping her company on shopping trips and helping her pull weeds in her garden. It was a mutual blessing those times when our car was out of commission and she needed someone to drive for her! During the week, our little ones had a ball playing in the nursery while I cleaned the church. Teaching VBS, children’s church, or youth Sunday school with a baby in my arms was not an uncommon sight. My toddlers “helped” me make Christmas cookies for our neighbors, doctors, and the local fire fighters. My husband and I pushed the double stroller while going on weekly door-to-door visitation. All these things were just a natural part of our family life.

Nevertheless, when our third child was born, it complicated things a bit. For some reason, God did not choose to give me a third arm when He gave me a third child! With a three-year-old, a just-turned-two-year-old, and a newborn, I found it difficult to go anywhere without some kind of incident. So I asked the Lord what I could do. He showed me that if I can’t go minister, then why not bring the min-



istry to my home? “Be not forgetful [do not neglect] to entertain strangers . . .” (Heb. 13:2). From then on, our front door became a revolving one. With the help and support of my husband, we had all kinds of people over at least once a week. We served them on everything from Dixie paper plates to our finest china, whether we were living in temporary housing with barely any furniture or a tiny duplex. My reward was not just an opportunity to serve, but to get to carry on a conversation with other adults!

Eight years later, I find myself in a different season of motherhood. This season does not involve scheduling my days around naptimes, feeding times, and diaper changes but rather homeschooling, piano lessons, art class, and soccer games. With this new season are new opportunities. We still invite people over quite often, but I can also take advantage of other moments. During soccer games, we mingle with the parents and work on building relationships. We take every opportunity to witness to the kids’ piano teacher. During art class I go with one of the other moms to a nearby coffee shop, and we do a Bible study

together. The other day, art class was cancelled, so our kids had a “play date” while we studied the Bible at the kitchen table. Believe it or not, even with seven children from age twelve to age two running through the kitchen every other minute, we had a sweet time of fellowship around God’s Word.

Despite what it may look like on paper, I’m no Supermom. I’m just an ordinary person who happens to love God and love my children.

“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15). Our mandate is to preach the gospel to *every creature*, whether great or small, young or old. So, whatever stage of life you find yourself in right now, I encourage you to prayerfully create opportunities for service.

Don’t look for excuses *not* to become engaged in others’ lives; look for excuses to show you care!

Amy Greenwood and her husband, James, are church-planting missionaries in Buenos Aires, Argentina. They have three children. You can read more about their ministry at www.IndependentBaptistArgentina.org.



Nevertheless, when our third child was born, it complicated things a bit. For some reason, God did not choose to give me a third arm when He gave me a third child!



A Third Career as a Police

Fred Henzler, as told to *FrontLine*



"I still have five more minutes," responded Dr. Fred Henzler to an inmate who had just sworn at him and told him to leave. Former marine, pastor, church planter, and field director with Baptist Church Planters, Fred (or "Doc" as he's affectionately known) says that becoming a police chaplain never crossed his mind during his forty-seven years of ministry.

Hearing of a troubled and discouraged police officer who had been involved in a shooting, Fred contacted the chief of police and offered to provide counseling to the officer. The chief interrupted him and said, "I'm looking for a chaplain right now." That was the beginning of a new ministry.

In an attempt to slow down in life, Fred had just moved from being field director to mission representative with Baptist Church Planters (BCP). He knew very little about law enforcement chaplaincy but did know that they were on call 24/7 and that they often were in dangerous places. Becoming a police chaplain was not his idea of "slowing down." However, when the vice president of BCP (who had served as a police chaplain) advised him to "get out of his comfort zone," Fred took that advice and has been out of his comfort zone ever since.

Fred told the chief of police that he would be willing to give it a try, and added, "As long as I was a pastor and in mission work, my wife was always at my side. I would



like her to work with me." The chief replied, "I only have one chaplain's badge." Henzler responded, "We don't need that, but if you get her one, I'll pay for it." They received not only a badge each but also uniforms and a wonderful opportunity to serve the Lord.

The Henzlers went to chaplains' school and received the required police officer standards and training certification and thus began a very fruitful ministry with the Perry, Georgia, Police Department. Fred and Marie went to roll

Chaplain

They are now responsible for the sheriff's offices in Warner Robbins and Perry. Both jails in the county and the 911 center, which serves four fire departments and three police departments, receive a lot of calls from the emergency medical services.

call several times a week, did "ride alongs" with the officers, and Fred counseled officers and was often asked to pray before the squad left the squad room. Two of the officers were saved, and several others who were already Christians began to really live for the Lord. His wife, Marie, helped her husband in the ministry, even though she was not an ordained chaplain, by ministering to the women officers.

Soon after the Henzlers started with the police department, they also started a jail ministry. Their ministry immediately grew from fifty people in the police department to five hundred inmates in the Houston County Detention Center, and then to 1500 people in the entire sheriff's office.

They are now responsible for the sheriff's offices in Warner Robbins and Perry. Both jails in the county and the 911 center, which serves four fire departments and three police departments, receive a lot of calls from the emergency medical services. The Henzlers serve all the death notifications that come in to 911 and interview anyone who is suicidal. As time permits, they still accompany officers on patrol.

Fred says most of their time is spent in the jail. They have an office and office hours for the men and women. Sunday services, weekday Bible studies, and giving out Bibles and books are a regular part of their weekly schedule. He also has the responsibility for clearing every clergy person and all volunteers from churches who visit for Sunday services and Bible studies. Everyone who participates in any ministry in the jail must personally meet with the Henzlers, attend the classes they teach, be fingerprinted, and have a background check.

The fact that the Henzlers have been happily married to each other for fifty-nine years opens doors for counseling and is a great example to the officers and staff.

"I was thinking at my age I ought to slow down," Fred says. "We've never been so busy." The Henzlers go wherever there is a need, even if it's behind bars, and God is changing lives through their service to Him.



damaged freight." "Am I destined to abuse *my* children?" "How much of this should my future husband know, and when must I tell him? What if my fiancé abandons me or tries to kill my brother once he finds out?"

The confusion persists, but patient Scriptural clarity can be brought into the picture in the discipleship process. She may be experiencing anger, guilt over subsequent wrong responses, fear, anxiety, and despair. The counselor can address these issues as they surface with compassionate application of God's truth to her troubled heart.

The greatest source of help is the Comforter—the One inside her assuring her of His presence, of the trustworthiness of God's truth, of the forgiveness for her own sin, and of the hopefulness of her own future in His hands. He will use the Word presented by compassionate brothers and sisters in Christ to mature her into the likeness of the One who suffered for her offenses and who is touched by the feelings of her suffering. My greatest delight is seeing many of these dear sisters now serving the Lord at the side of compassionate husbands as loving mothers, ministry wives, Christian school teachers, business women, and insightful counselors. Only our great God can give this kind of beauty for ashes!

Dr. Jim Berg is an author, speaker, and Biblical counselor who served as dean of students of Bob Jones University for twenty-nine years until he retired from that position to become a professor at the university's Seminary and Graduate School of Religion. He and his wife, Pat, have three married daughters and ten grandchildren. His ministry website is www.JimBerg.com.



¹ Though a growing number of childhood abuse sufferers are boys and young men, the majority of victims are girls and young women. In the interest of readability I will use "she" to refer to the sufferer and "he" to refer to the perpetrator, though there are a growing number of instances where the genders are reversed as well as many cases where prepubescent or adolescent boys are abused by men. In addition, I will generally refer to

the abused person as a "sufferer" rather than a victim to accentuate the ongoing burden the child bears even after the abuse has stopped. I will also address these issues as though the sufferer were a young child or young woman—though older women can be assaulted as well. I am also assuming that the sufferer is a born-again believer in Jesus Christ. An unregenerated person may receive comfort from discussing her suffering with a compassionate person, but she will not have the spiritual resources within herself to have a Christlike response and to grow spiritually through her pain. What she needs more than anything is to be introduced to the Gentle Savior, who bore her griefs and carried her sorrows.

² Resistance to this spiritual attack requires an acceptance and application of three key theological truths: first, God is just. Therefore He hates the sin that was perpetrated on the sufferer. He will forgive the offender who has genuinely put his faith in Christ, but God exacted (and Jesus willingly paid) the full payment of that sin at Calvary, and God demands genuine repentance from the sinner. Moreover, for all of God's mercy, He has never changed His attitude about sin. It is still hateful in His eyes. Second, God is sovereign. Therefore He is in control of everything that happens to us. This truth is essential because only a sovereign God has the ability to bring good in a sufferer's life in spite of the terrible thing that was done to her. Finally, God is good. In spite of the fact that He allows sin (including the grievous sin of child sexual abuse) to exist for a time in this world, He intends nothing but good for His children and ultimately for His universe. The relationship between these three truths is a great mystery and has been the basis of many attacks on God's existence and character. However, the counselor in kindness and patience must help the sufferer to yield to God's infinitely superior wisdom, power, and goodness and to trust Him in spite of her inability to understand the "why" of what happened to her.

³ Males, particularly those sexually abused by other males, may have other shame issues, such as doubts about their masculinity. Although the Biblical principles discussed here apply to them as well, a lot more work needs to be done on helping men and boys who were the victims of sexual abuse.

⁴ Physical pleasure is not the common experience of most but is present in enough situations for it to be a very real source of confusion.

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“Dad, We Need to Talk”

A Concerned Pastor and Father

“Dad, we need to talk.” In our family we had many conversations that began the same way. This time, this conversation would change everything. In the course of this conversation I learned that my child was the victim of one man’s perverted lusts. The perpetrator was not a relative or a neighbor but one of the most active and trusted members of our church.

This is a conversation that I never imagined having with one of my children. We homeschooled, we worked together in the ministry, and we sheltered them from worldly influences. In other words, we did all the things we thought parents were supposed to do to protect and shield our children.

I carefully questioned my child on the details of the abuse. The more my child revealed the more sick and angry I became. In the course of our conversation I found out that the abuse had been going on for some time but my child was afraid to tell us, fearing how this would affect us and our church. When I asked about times and places I learned that some incidents of the abuse had occurred at church, the place where every member of our family had invested much of our lives.

This news set in motion a whirlwind series of events that included local law enforcement, immediate steps to insure there were no other victims and that there would be no other victims, a face-to-face meeting with the abuser, church discipline, and seeking prayer and counsel from godly friends.

Going through this has revealed some disturbing yet common failures and naiveté. This is one of those sins we don’t talk about, but we should. The statistics are alarming. The officer helping us with the case warned us that churches are prime targets for child predators. Again, the officer in charge of our case informed us that our child was certainly not alone; one in three girls and one in six boys are victims of abuse. According to these statistics, it is likely that on any given Sunday morning we who are pastors look into the faces of both abusers and those who have suffered abuse.

The reason I wish to share some of our story is not so that I can give you a procedure to follow for dealing with these situations. There are plenty of resources and people more qualified for that than I am. I want to open your eyes to the very personal and painful side of this issue.

From the time my child first shared the news about the abuse to even now I still have a sense of “this couldn’t happen to my family.” But it did happen. One of the most painful questions I ask myself over and over is, “As a pastor and, more importantly, as a father, how could I let this happen?” This question opens the door for other questions. “Did I not have enough protections in place?” “Did I, in

some way, put my child in danger?” “Did I trust this person too much?” “What signs were there that I missed?” The questions could go on and on, and I think that is exactly what Satan wants. In essence every one of my questions strikes at the issue of God’s good, gracious, and sovereign control of all things.

My wife and I and our child, at the time and for some time after all that happened, received caring and godly counsel. My child is doing remarkably well, better than I do most of the time, having determined that God will use this for good and to glorify Himself. My child is convinced that there will be ministry opportunities that he or she would not have had otherwise.

There were times when we all had severe struggles. As you would expect, there have been battles with bitterness and distrust. One of the most difficult struggles for my child was when we found out that our local law enforcement decided not to press charges against the abuser. My child was willing to testify in order to protect other children from facing the same heartache. The authorities, though, did not want my child to become courtroom fodder. By not pressing charges my child was afraid that what had happened could happen to another child. Here was an opportunity for us all to learn a difficult lesson in trusting God to always do what is right and good.

It is what we all learned about our God through this that has made any of it bearable. We know God could have stopped the abuse. We know what happened isn’t “fair.” We know there will be memories that bring up more questions. We also know that we live in a fallen, sin-cursed world. We know that God will always love us. We know that God never does wrong. We know that God knows how all our lives can bring Him greatest glory. We know our loving, perfect, gracious God can be trusted.

Let me share just one more important lesson we learned. Listen to children. We knew our child was telling the truth, but some questioned that. We didn’t blame those who questioned but always felt uneasy with how easy it was for some to dismiss outright what our child was saying. This doubt is not unusual. We were told that, on average, a child will tell nine people about the abuse before he or she is believed.

Abuse is sometimes more a part of our lives than we are willing to admit. It happened to me a few decades ago. Half of the friends from whom I sought counsel had been abused as young people. We ought to be talking about this in our staff meetings and pastors’ fellowships. We ought to be preparing to effectively minister to those being abused and the abusers who are willing to get help.

“Dad, we need to talk.” I am so glad we did!

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