

Hard Times

By Gary Henry

“For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, that flow out of valleys and hills . . . a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing . . . When you have eaten and are full . . . beware that you do not forget the Lord your God” (Deut. 8:7-11).

Poverty is not an easy experience, but if we stop to think about it, it's obvious that wealth has its difficulties too. When we speak of “hard times,” we need to be careful. For all the hardship we face when we suffer a shortage of life's necessities, we face an even greater challenge when we suffer a surplus.

The challenge of prosperity is greater because it challenges us at the level of our character. Poverty's hardship is mostly physical or outward, but affluence presents a host of harder problems that are spiritual in nature. Granted, there are some spiritual issues that must be dealt with when we're poor, but most people who've been poor would report that they found their inward characters growing in positive ways during that experience. By contrast, most people would have to say that their characters tend to weaken when life is completely comfortable. Indeed, it's all we can do to keep from *dying* in the

suffocating atmosphere of affluence.

Paul made an interesting statement in **Philippians 4:11-12**: “I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.” It takes some “know how” to be full and to abound without losing our souls! When we're wealthy, our spiritual survival is anything but automatic. In fact, according to Jesus, the odds are quite against it: “And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God” (Matthew 19:24).

These truths have sobering implications for those of us who live in one of the wealthy nations, particularly the United States of America. We face some spiritual hardships that our brethren in poorer cultures don't have to deal with, and frankly, we're not handling our abundance conspicuously well. We're “full,” but in all too many cases, we're letting our spirits starve to death.

“If adversity hath killed his thousands, prosperity hath killed his ten thousands” (Robert Burton).



Classes This Week

Sunday 5:15 Kid's Class at the building	Tuesday 8 PM Truth Seekers in Room 2222 Student Center	Thursday 8 PM Prayer Study at Stefan Richardson's
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Sick

Sam Cox (Friend of Anna Stallings)	Owen Mauldin (Seth and Summer Mauldin's Son)	Frank Hand (Laura Humphrey's dad)	Sandlyn Fultz (Davis Fultz's Sister)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father)	Joan Parker (Aurie Adams Grandmother)
Emma Hettinger (William Herd's Mother)	Neal May (Manna Jones' Mother)	Roger Whatley (Daphne Whatley's son)	Andrew Hagewood (Friend of Sarah Norman)
Betty Bradford	Quinton Addison (April Jerkins Grandfather)	Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother)	Hannah Wilson (Friend of Mason Chandler)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Don Meadows (Ashley Miller's step-father)	Emily Stallings (Anna's sister)	Madi Wise (Friend of the Roberts')
Marty Meeks, Russell Dickerson (Toni Herd's Nephews)	Kathy Johnson (Erica Seymore's Aunt)	Toni and William Herd	Ann Scaff (Hannah Morris' grandmother)

March Birthdays

- 2 - Maddie Norman
- 2 - Angela Fowler
- 2 - Chase Harrison
- 3 - Shaun Oliver
- 5 - Amanda Barnes
- 7 - Josh Pender
- 8 - Carmen Herd
- 10 - Parker Godwin
- 10 - Pepper Humphrey
- 11 - Becky Harris
- 12 - Brad Hartsell
- 14 - Tyler Claxton
- 16 - Drew Martin
- 17 - Susan Sullivanne
- 18 - MaKenzie Anderson
- 20 - Jimmy Roberts
- 21 - Carter Hunt
- 24 - Jordon Toombs
- 26 - Jared Burton
- 28 - Shelby Freeman
- 29 - Rachel Simpson
- 30 - Amanda Stephens
- 30 - York Smith

News and Notes

- ☒ - Joel Black fell last week and broke his collarbone. Let us pray for and help our brother.
- ☒ - We will have a congregational meeting at 3:30 this afternoon.
- ☒ - Plans are being made to conduct a VBS on June 24-27 on the life of Joseph.
- ☒ - There are occasional special benevolent needs that we take care of as individuals. If you would like to help please contact Jeff Jerkins for further information.
- ☒ - Let us remember our expectant mother, Nicole Pender, in our prayers.
- ☒ - Let us continue to pray for Glenn Weeks.

The Auburn Beacon



Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

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These Things Became Our Examples

By Terry Benton

- did not sin
- spoke kind words
- not vengeful
- did not threaten
- judged righteously
- bore our burdens

Thoughts to Ponder

Facts are facts and will not disappear on account of your likes.

Elders
Walker Davis
(334) 703-0050
Larry Rouse
(334) 734-2133

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES
Sunday

Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday
Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

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Larry Rouse
Evangelist and Editor

So much talk about “examples are not binding” is really not helping brethren understand the reason why examples are very important. It did not matter to Paul about whether the Old Testament contained “narrative” or “story” (who would ever dispute that?). Yet, as he read the stories embedded in the Old Testament, he found things that “became our examples”

(1 Cor.10:6). The mistakes of Israel were examples NOT to follow in the church. He said “they happened to them as examples and they were written for our learning” (v.11). Get this! Christians are to learn from the examples embedded in the stories of the Old Testament. That would especially be so in the New Testament as well. From examples we learn what is NOT acceptable to the Lord, and from other examples we learn what IS acceptable to the Lord.

By the same token, if Paul

When the church at Corinth got off track with the Lord's Supper and made it into a meal to feed their appetite, Paul reminded them of the example of what Jesus did the night of His betrayal when He showed what He wanted done (1 Cor.11:23).

“ordained” things in “all the churches” (1 Cor.7:17), one of which was to learn from examples, then what we see in the uniform practices of the early churches would be examples for us to follow. Paul urged the Corinthians “not to think beyond what is written” (4:6). That means to get all your ideas and information from this source and don't even desire to listen to something if it is beyond what is written.

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One thing that is written is “imitate” (follow the example of) Paul (**1 Cor.4:16**), and let yourself be reminded of his “ways in Christ” (which includes his approved examples) (**v.17**). The reason we can follow the apostles “ways in Christ” is because they had “the mind of Christ” (**2:16**). The wisdom of God was revealed to them by the Spirit (**2:10**). These men were led by the Spirit and they were “ministers of the new covenant” (**2 Cor.3**). The Old Testament had been a ministration of death, but the New Testament was a ministry of the Spirit and of life. As we follow the examples of the apostles we learn things that we can “prove are acceptable to the Lord” (**Rom.12:1-3; Eph.5:11; 1 Thess.5:21**). What Paul taught in one church, he also taught “everywhere in every church” (**1 Cor.4:17**).

When the church at Corinth got off track with the Lord’s Supper and made it into a meal to feed their appetite, Paul reminded them of the example of what Jesus did the night of His betrayal when He showed what He wanted done (**1 Cor.11:23**). Jesus showed them what He wanted (example to follow), and He told them what He wanted (command). “Do this in remembrance of Me”. From the command and example Paul also drew some necessary inferences: 1) When you partake of the Lord’s Supper you are “proclaiming His death till He comes”, and 2) when you do not take it with the focus on the body and blood, you do it in an unworthy manner and therefore are guilty of the body and blood. (**v.26,27**).

When did the early disciples come together and partake of the Lord’s Supper?

We learn from the examples in **Acts 2:42** and **Acts 20:7**, that they did it “on the first day of the week”. Nobody questions but what that is “acceptable to the Lord”. The same thing done in one church with apostolic approval is what all churches did. Those who follow that same example are no doubt doing what is acceptable to the Lord. But, what of those who want to do it on Thursday? They cannot “prove it is acceptable”. They have no statement or example after the Lord “drank it new in the kingdom” except the examples of doing it on the first day of the week. Thus, if you cannot “prove it is acceptable” you have no business doing it. It should be that simple since even the uniform practice of the early disciples “became our examples” and are written for our learning. The apostles showed us things that were acceptable to the Lord as well as told us. They even showed us how they reasoned from examples and came to the necessary inference that Gentiles do not have to be circumcised (**Acts 15**). That gave us an example of how to use statements and examples and come to the “necessary conclusion” or judgment of what the will of the Lord is. Using the model of settling issues and questions by this process shows us how to go about “proving what is acceptable to the Lord”. These things also became our examples in how to “test all things, hold fast what is good” (**1 Thess.5:21**). Some examples are incidental and do not form a uniform pattern. But, some examples clearly show us what we can prove is right and cannot be wrong, and those examples ought not be dismissed in favor of something you cannot prove. The stories and narratives of scripture are to show us examples of what we can safely follow and of things we should avoid.



The Relationship Between Truth and Emotion

By Bryan Gibson

Seemed like a good time to write this article, seeing that more and more people seem to think that emotions trump truth. Let’s explore the relationship a little closer, from a Scriptural standpoint, and then issue a couple warnings.

The truth, provided we have a good understanding of it, will produce a wide array of genuine emotions—fear, sorrow, compassion, joy, gratitude, etc. Jesus certainly experienced a range of emotions (**Mark 3:5; 11:15-17; Luke 7:13; 10:21; 19:41; Hebrews 5:7**), and so did Paul (**Acts 20:19, 31; Romans 9:2; 2 Corinthians 2:4; 7:7, 13; 11:29; Philippians 3:18**). No need to ever be ashamed of the emotions which spring from an understanding of truth.

The truth will also regulate our emotions, in several ways. 1) Emotions can be pretty fickle—we feel one way one moment and entirely different the next (e.g. **Acts 14:8-19; Galatians 4:14-16**). Truth is the great moderator—it can prevent these wild swings of emotion. 2) Emotions can also be misdirected—we feel one way when we should feel another. At Mt. Sinai, the Israelites “rejoiced in the works of their own hands” (**Acts 7:41**)—in short, they rejoiced in iniquity (see **1 Corinthians 13:6**). We’ve got too many people asking, “How can this be so wrong when it feels so good?” Yet, to his worldly minded readers, James wrote, “Let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to gloom” (**James 4:9**). The truth, properly understood, will direct our emotions in keeping with the truth (see **3 John 1:4**). 3) Emotions can also easily get out of control, which is often the case with anger (“outbursts of wrath—**Galatians 5:20**). There’s

First, resist any and all efforts to change God’s plan—for any reason, including the desire to generate more emotion. More than anything else, we want people to have conviction, which will in turn produce the genuine emotions we spoke of earlier.

no better anger management course in the world than the one found in the truth of God’s word. 4) Not that there won’t be occasional outpourings of emotion, but the truth also produces more settled emotions—the kind that produce steadfast, immovable Christians (**1 Corinthians 15:58**)—a joy that remains with us, even in times of sorrow (**John 15:11; 2 Corinthians 6:10**); a gratitude that

enables us to “give thanks always” (**Ephesians 5:20**); a fear that will consistently steer us away from “evil” and the “snares of death” (**Proverbs 8:13; 14:26-27**); etc.

Finally, the truth will root out certain emotions, ones that have no place in the life of a Christian. Self-pity comes way too easily for way too many people, but the truth simply won’t allow it, not with its emphasis on self-denial (**Matthew 16:24; Luke 14:26; Philippians 2:3-8**).

Now, for a couple much needed warnings. First, resist any and all efforts to change God’s plan—for any reason, including the desire to generate more emotion. More than anything else, we want people to have conviction, which will in turn produce the genuine emotions we spoke of earlier.

Secondly, don’t judge others to be unemotional or lacking in spirituality, simply because they show very few outward displays of emotion. There’s a far better way to judge the depth of one’s faith and love, and their spirituality in general, and that’s by consistent service to the Lord.

