

Does This Describe You?

FROM Ordinary: Sustainable Faith in a Radical, Restless World by Michael S. Horton ---

By Warren Berkley

American Christianity is a story of perpetual upheavals in churches and individual lives. Starting with the extraordinary conversion experience, our lives are motivated by a constant expectation for The Next Big Thing. We're growing bored with the ordinary means of God's grace, attending church week in and week out.

"We've become accustomed to looking around restlessly for something new, the latest and greatest, that idea or product or person or experience that will solve our problems, give us some purpose, and change the world. Although we might be a little jaded by the ads, we're eager to take whatever it is 'to a whole new level.'

Sometimes, chasing your dreams can be 'easier' than just being who we are, where God has placed you, with the gifts he has given to you.

Doctrines and disciplines that have shaped faithful Christian witness in the past are often marginalized or substituted with newer fashions or methods. The new and improved may dazzle us for the moment, but soon they have become 'so last year'."



Classes This Week

Sunday 5:15 PM Kid's Class at the Building	Monday 7:30 PM Evangelism Class with Ryan Hasty in college classroom	Tuesday 8 PM Truth-seekers in Student Center Rm 2225	Thursday 7 PM Ladies Class "Timeline of the Bible" taught by Jane Bragwell at the bid.
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Sick

Brad Marshall (Allie Hosey's Cousin)	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)	Kate Miller (Daughter of Brandon and Erin Miller)
Donna Pridmore (Erin Miller's Mom)	Neal May (Manna Jones' Mother)	Mark Dean (Father of Logan Dean)	Jerry Foropoulos (Anna Jean's Uncle)
Jon Jon Henderson (Suzanne Stagner's cousin)	Quinton Addison (April Jerkins Grandfather)	Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother)	Bob Cannon (Friend of Holly Law)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Eli Williams	Emily Stallings (Anna's sister)	Ted Nelson (Sheryl Fowler's Cousin)
Lisa Carter (Josh and Luke Carter's mother)	Joe Perkins (Scott Perkin's Dad)	Toni and William Herd	Tom Davis (Walker Davis' Uncle)

October Birthdays

- 1 - Aiden Hahn
- 2 - Suzanne Stagner
- 3 - James Malloy
- 3 - Jennifer Hasty
- 4 - Jordan Corneil
- 6 - Jessica Anderson
- 7 - Molly Borden
- 8 - Kelsey Parsons
- 8 - Heath Fowler
- 8 - Coleman Padgett
- 11 - Mason Chandler
- 12 - Stacy Norman
- 14 - Grant Smith
- 15 - Ashton Guy
- 17 - Abbie Buchanan
- 20 - Evan Pender
- 20 - Keith Bailey
- 22 - Christopher White
- 22 - Meredith Bragwell
- 24 - Suzanna Roberts
- 24 - Sarabeth Roberts
- 25 - Bethany Bradford
- 26 - Palmer Daniels
- 29 - Belle Johnson
- 29 - Matt Hall
- 31 - Kitty Tam

News and Notes

- ☒ - Lets keep in our prayers our expectant mothers, Brittany Bagent, Shang Li and Jana Hall!
- ☒ - Continue to remember Belinda Hartsell in your prayers as she continues to recover from a stroke.
- ☒ - Remember Tim Morton and also Matthew Cavender, in your prayers as both are deployed to Afghanistan.
- ☒ - Cameron Abernathy's great-grandfather, Reuben Burns, passed away on Thursday.
- ☒ - Remember Michael Bassie's sister, Yolanda Stewart, in your prayers as she is recovering from the removal of a Brain Tumor.
- ☒ - Pray for Will Harris' great-grandmother, Bernice Martin, she is in critical care in an Athens hospital.
- ☒ - Prayers are appreciated for newborn, Easton Andrew, born to Bryan and Alyse Nash at 32 weeks.

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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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Troubled Over Immorality

By Connie Adams



Thoughts to Ponder

Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.

(1 Corinthians 6:18)

Nothing can create more havoc in a home or a congregation than immoral behavior on the part of Christians or their children. Webster defines immoral as "Inconsistent with purity or good morals." Immorality is defined by Webster as "the quality or state of being immoral: wickedness, esp. unchastity." It is immoral to steal, lie, cheat and a host of other things opposed to righteousness. But the term is often used of illicit sexual intercourse, including incest (1 Cor. 5:1), adultery (Matt. 5:32; 19:9), homosexuality (Jude 7), and cohabitation of the unmarried (1 Cor. 7:2).

Immorality was a common problem in the first century, especially among Gentiles. "For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revelings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries" (1 Pet. 4:3). This had been a pattern of life among some of the Corinthians before their conversion. "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:9-11).

Our bodies belong to God who made us, "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 6:19,20). Paul said that sin is not to rule over us. "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lust thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Rom. 6:12,13).

Troubled Over Immoral Mates: -- Jesus said that fornication is the only reason one can put away a spouse and marry another (Matt. 19:9). It is the ultimate betrayal of trust and vows made before God and man. The husband's body belongs to his wife and to nobody else. The wife's body belongs to her husband and only to him (1 Cor. 7:3,4). How many hearts have been broken and how many tears have been shed over this sin? This immoral act causes great trouble for the innocent party in the marriage. Even if the guilty is penitent, it is a fact that trust has been betrayed and the question arises as to whether you can ever fully trust again. The problem is compounded when there are children involved and agony arises over what is best for them.

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Elders

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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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But there is also trouble for the guilty one. Should the innocent exercise his/her right to put that one away, then the guilty has now forfeited the right to marriage. Some think that is too heavy a price to pay. But the Lord said, "Whosoever marrieth her that is put away commiteth adultery" (**Matt. 5:32; 19:9**). The worst problem of all is that God is offended. A soul is at stake. God made His marriage laws strict on purpose. Marriage is ordained of God for the good of the human family. It is the basic unit of all orderly society. While present culture tends to treat adultery as a normal (even expected) thing, God does not view it so. And neither should we.

But must the innocent exercise the right to put away the guilty when repentance is evident? Some think that unless the innocent remains in this marriage, now betrayed by fornication, that forgiveness has not been granted. Of course, unless we forgive those who sin against us, we cannot expect God to forgive us either (**Matt. 6:14,15**). But actions have consequences. It is God's law that the innocent may put away the guilty. Some are able to reestablish the relationship and make the best of it. Others have difficulty. Those on the outside do not know how many times the innocent has been wronged. Was it a one-time fling? Or a part of a pattern of infidelity? It does not take long to betray your vows, but it might take a long time to restore trust and rebuild credibility. What trouble would be avoided if people would just do right.

Troubled Over Pornography: -- This is an age old problem. It is rampant in our culture in recent years. The viewing of pictures and images of people engaged in every form of sexual activity has spawned a huge industry in this country and around the world. "Adult" bookstores and video houses are springing up, not only in seedy neighborhoods, but up and down the interstate highways. The computer age has brought it into homes all across the world. Businessmen and women, housewives, husbands who stay up late and surf the web, children in their own bedrooms, or at the family computer when they are unsupervised, and sometimes preachers have been caught up in this immoral trade. Homes have been broken up because of it.

The works of the flesh include "fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness" (**Gal. 5:19,20**). Peter described those who have "eyes full of adultery" (**2 Pet. 2:14**). Can there be a more accurate description of this sin? Jude describes them as "filthy dreamers" (**Jude 8**). Jude also said, "But beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of

our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own lusts. These be that who separate themselves sensual, having not the Spirit" (**Jude 17-19**). Paul warned Titus of those to whom nothing is pure "but even their mind and conscience is defiled" (**Titus 1:15,16**).

If we could keep our minds thinking on the kind of things Paul mentioned in **Phil. 4:8**, there would be no room or taste for pornography. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true...honest...just...pure...lovely...of good report...of virtue..." and worthy of "praise"; then he added, "Think on these things."

In addition to violating what is taught in the foregoing passages, the trouble with pornography is that it arouses passion, distorts reality, creates false and unreasonable expectations in marriage, causes women to be seen as objects rather than persons of worth, and reduces people to the level of the brute. When you purchase such material, you help subsidize an evil which is contributing to the downfall of souls and our nation as well.

When a husband (or wife) is found to have such an attraction for pornography, it is time to sit down and have some soul searching talks. It is not a time to scream and yell and sharpen sarcastic tongues. Talk frankly about your sexual life. It may be that one has unrealistic expectations. Or that one has not been satisfying the other. The pressures of daily work and life may contribute to it. One may tend to be cold, prudish, or unresponsive. And sometimes there are much deeper problems. Some are just given to sensuality. They have allowed their minds and hearts to be corrupted.

When children are found to be caught up in this sin, it is time to have some no-nonsense education about sexuality, keeping it within the bounds of dignity and casting it in a context of what the Bible teaches on the subject. Children caught in this snare may have a hard time ever being realistic about their own expectations in marriage. Parents need to supervise what movies are seen, what television shows are watched and the use of computers must be monitored. Again, yelling will not solve the problem.

Like Job, we need to "make a covenant with mine (our) eyes" (**Job 31:1**). "The lust of the eye" (**1 Jn. 2:15-17**) is a powerful force leading us in the wrong direction. The images we see have a direct influence on what we think, and "as he thinketh in his heart, so is he." Pornography corrupts the heart and so corrupts the person, preventing him from being fashioned in the image of Christ.



Beatitudes: the Character of Kingdom Citizens

By Paul Earnhart

Jesus opens his momentous sermon with a series of eight pungent and largely paradoxical statements known traditionally as the "beatitudes" (**Mt 5:2-12**). They must have fallen like thunderbolts upon those first century Jewish ears. A more likely formula for success could hardly have been imagined. They assaulted every maxim of conventional wisdom and left the hearer startled and perplexed. In this way Jesus gains the attention of his audience and drives home the essential character of the kingdom of God and its citizens,

The whole world, then as now, was in earnest pursuit of happiness and had just as little conception as men today of how to obtain it. There was no surprise in the announcement that there was true blessedness in the kingdom. The shock came in the kind of people who were destined to obtain it.

The beatitudes speak exclusively of spiritual qualities. The historic concerns of men—material wealth, social status and worldly wisdom—do not simply receive little attention, they receive none at all. Jesus is clearly outlining a kingdom not of this world (**Jn 18:36**), a kingdom whose borders pass not through lands and cities but through human hearts (**Lk 17:20-24**). This altogether unlikely kingdom arrived as announced in the first century (**Mk 9:1; Col 1:13; Rev 1:9**) but most were unprepared to recognize and receive it even as they are now.

It must be further noted that not only were the qualities of the kingdom citizen spiritual but they are qualities which would not come to men naturally. They are not the product of heredity or environment but of choice. No one will ever "fall into" these categories. They not only do not occur in men naturally, but are in fact distinctly contrary to the "second nature" which pride and lust have caused to prevail in the hearts of all humanity.

Perhaps there is no more important truth to be recognized about the beatitudes than the fact that they are not independent proverbs which apply to eight different groups of men, but are a composite description of every citizen in the kingdom of God. These qualities are so interwoven in one spiritual fabric that they are inseparable. To possess one is to possess them all, and to lack one is to lack them all. And as all Christians must possess all these qualities of kingdom life, they are also destined to receive all its blessings — blessings which, like its qualities, are but components of one reward—one body called to one hope (**Eph 4:4**). In sum, then,

the beatitudes do not contain a promise of blessing upon men in their natural state (all men mourn but all will certainly not be comforted, **5:4**) nor do they offer hope to those who seem to fall into one category or another. They are a composite picture of what every kingdom citizen, not just a few super disciples, must be. They mark off the radical difference between the kingdom of heaven and the world of other men. The son of the kingdom is different in what he admires and values, different in what he thinks and feels different in what he seeks and does. Clearly, there has never been a kingdom like this before.

A Kingdom for the Sinful and Lowly

There have been many approaches to the specific content of the beatitudes. Many feel that there is a progression of thought moving through them which begins with a new attitude toward self and God, leads to a new attitude toward others, and culminates with the world's reaction to this radical change. There is some merit to this analysis, and whether or not such a neat format always coincides with the actual order of the beatitudes, the ideas are certainly there. To a society governed by some serious misconceptions of the kingdom of God, the beatitudes make two basic statements. First, that the kingdom is not open to the self-righteous and self-assured, but to the supplicant sinner who comes seeking out of his emptiness. And, secondly, that the kingdom is not to be had by the "mighty" who obtain their desires by wealth or violence, but by a company of patient men who yield not only their wants but even their "rights" to the needs of others.

Though not explicitly stated (Jesus was not to speak clearly of His death until a year later, **Mt 16:21**) there is nothing quite so obvious in this sermon as the central gospel truth that salvation is by the grace of God. Here the dispensational premillennialist is palpably wrong. How could men and women so hungry for righteousness (**5:6**) and so much in need of mercy (**5:7**) find a place in a kingdom governed by a system of law alone? And who could imagine that citizens in the earthly kingdom envisioned by the dispensationalists would ever suffer persecution (**5:10-12**)? The righteousness of the kingdom does not rest on a system of law but upon a system of grace. Its holy standards are attainable by sinful men (**5:48**). Otherwise, the Sermon on the Mount would be the source of greater despair than the law of Moses (**Rom 7:25**).

