

Don't Get Smacked Upside the Head!

For today — **Proverbs 19:25:**

By Cloyce Sutton II

Strike a scoffer and the naive may become shrewd, But reprove one who has understanding and he will gain knowledge.

This intriguing proverb has as its main point the effects of corrective discipline upon different people. Three types of people are contrasted — the scoffer (one who mocks or scorns), the naive (the simpleton, the gullible), and the one with understanding. Two types of corrective discipline are also contrasted — corporal punishment for the scoffer and reproof for the wise.

How does each person respond? First, the scoffer learns nothing. The proverb begins by observing punishment inflicted on the scoffer, but then it says nothing about the effects upon him. This implies that there are none. In other words, some people, no matter how severely punished do not learn from their mistakes. They will pursue their stubborn course no matter what. Elsewhere in Proverbs, the scoffer is presented in just this way — **Proverbs 9:7-8; 15:12; 21:24.**

Second, the naive learns from the scoffer's punishment. Here, someone who is inexperienced and perhaps even gullible learns, not from the mistakes of others, but from the punishment of others. He becomes

"shrewd" (sensible, prudent; ie, he will learn the lesson). He reasons

that if others are slack and get punished, he will be punished if he is slack in his own work.

Third, the man who is wise and understanding will learn from mere reproof (rebuke, reasoning, argumentation). He doesn't need to be beaten. A simple word of advice will create the necessary correction. As we would say, "A word to the wise is sufficient."

There are two things that impress me about this proverb. First, that punishment DOES HAVE a corrective or deterrent effect on others. In our culture punitive discipline is frowned upon in favor of rehabilitation. This proverb reminds us that sometimes punishment of one offender can deter another person from making the same mistake.

Second, the truly wise person is humble enough to be corrected. If a problem is pointed out, he willingly changes. If he sees others making mistakes, he learns from it. Not everyone has this kind of humility, which simply says that not everyone is this wise.

For today, learn from the mistakes you see.

Have a Godward day!



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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Calvinism

By Edward O. Bragwell, Jr.



Thoughts to Ponder

The chief mark of counterfeit holiness is its lack of humility. Every seeker after holiness needs to be on his guard, lest pride creep in where its presence is least expected.

When we talk about Calvinism, we are talking about a theological system formulated by John Calvin. John Calvin (1509-1564) was a key figure in the Reformation. While his followers developed into what we now know as the Presbyterian church, very few Christian denominations have not been influenced by his teachings. Calvin's teachings were by no means completely original. He borrowed much from Augustine, Martin Luther, and others. But he was able to put the teachings of all those before him into a concise theological system. While Calvin's teachings entailed much, they can be summarized into five tenants (often called "Calvin's TULIP"): (1) Total Depravity; (2) Unconditional Election; (3) Limited Atonement; (4) Irresistible Grace; and (5) Perseverance of the Saints. We want to look at each of these closer:

Total Depravity

Calvin taught that we all have inherited sin from Adam and are therefore sinful in nature from birth so that we are completely inclined to do evil. One cannot do good even if he wants to because of his depraved nature which he inherited from Adam. This doctrine, however, raises several questions:

(1) If man is totally depraved, how is it possible for him to get worse? To be totally depraved does not leave man any room to get any worse. Yet the Bible says that it is possible for some men to "grow worse and worse." **(2 Tim. 3:13).**

(2) How is it possible for an infant to be saved? If a baby is depraved and evil, then there is really no hope for them under this

doctrine. Of course some Calvinist get around this by saying that a baby is regenerated at death, even though he has no chance to "accept Christ as Savior" or to be called by God as one of his Elect. Of course, it was this kind of thinking that gave rise to infant baptism. Christ, however, taught that little children were the kind of people in the kingdom ("totally depraved?"). **(Luke 18:15-16).**

(3) Can sin really be transmitted from parent to child? Now no one will deny that the consequences of a sin might be passed on, but not the guilt. For example, the child of the drunkard may suffer consequences because of his father's sin, but he himself is not guilty unless he too participates in the sin. We all suffer the consequences of Adam's sin, but not the guilt. **(Rom. 5:12).**

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| Sick | | | | December Birthdays | News and Notes |
|--|---|---|--|--------------------|----------------|
| Joey Stephens (Anna Stalling's Uncle) | 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) | Jeffery Miller (Friend of Walker Davis) | | |
| Emma Hettinger (William Herd's Mother) | Neal May (Manna Jones' Mother) | Roger Whatley (Daphne Whatley's son) | Andrew Hagewood (Friend of Sarah Norman) | | |
| Pat Webb (Friend of Jared Johnson) | Quinton Addison (April Jerkins Grandfather) | Diane Hudson (Josh Hudson's grandmother) | Arline Harkrider (Nichole Pender's Grandmother) | | |
| 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 Robert's) | | |
| Marty Meeks, Russell Dickerson (Toni Herd's Nephews) | Frances Fultz (Davis Fultz's grandmother) | Judy Nichols (Suzanne's Mother) | Ann Scalf (Hannah Morris' grandmother) | | |

- 2 - Brady Peek
- 4 - Justin Padgett
- 5 - Rusty Weldon
- 10 - Kyle Gibson
- 11 - Will Holcomb
- 13 - John Mark Henderson
- 18 - Tin-Yau Tam
- 20 - Chris Zeanah
- 21 - Manna Jones
- 21 - Holly Johnson
- 22 - William Herd
- 22 - Laura Abell
- 24 - Jessica Yates
- 25 - Dustin Marsh
- 28 - Turner Stephens
- 29 - Joel Dembowski
- 29 - Christian McGee
- 30 - Holly Law
- 30 - Antony Nelms

- ☒ - Please remember Glenn Weeks, Caralise Hunt's father, in your prayers.
- ☒ - David Hartsell is undergoing rehab after his surgery.
- ☒ - Bob Simpson had successful surgery and is recovering at home.
- ☒ - Our new quarter begins next Sunday!
- ☒ - The annual weekend student study will be on January 11-12. All are invited to participate.
- ☒ - Our meeting with Bob Buchanan will be January 13-16.

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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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that the only sin one is held guilty of is his own. I will be punished for my sin, not of my parents or of Adam. (**Ezek. 18:20**). I came from God sinless, but have departed from Him when I sinned. (**Eccl. 7:29; Ezek. 28:15**). I sinned when I transgressed God's law, not when Adam transgressed. (**1 John 3:4**)

(4) Does man have any choice in the matter? The Calvinist says no. According to this doctrine man is engulfed in a "carnal nature" which makes it impossible for him to anything but sin. But the Scriptures do not teach so. The Scriptures teach that we can choose whether we want to follow the "carnal mind" ruled by Satan, or the "spiritual mind" ruled by God. (**Rom. 8:5-14; Rom. 6:12-13**)

Unconditional Election

From the idea of total depravity springs another idea. Since man is totally depraved and can't do good if he wants to, then God must step in and save him. So God has determined who is going to be saved and who is not and there is nothing anyone can do about it. Since one is depraved God cannot expect one to meet any conditions for election. Man therefore is saved without any action being expected on his part whatsoever. There are several objections that we might offer to this doctrine.

(1) This makes God a respecter of persons, unless He saves everyone. But the Bible tells us that this is not so. That God is "no respecter of persons." (**Acts 10:34-35**).

(2) This takes away man's part completely in obtaining his salvation. But the Bible teaches that we can obtain salvation by doing what God says. We can effect our own salvation. (**Phil. 2:12; Acts 2:40**) We are told that there are conditions that one must meet. (**Acts 2:38; John 3:16; Mark 16:16; etc.**)

(3) If God has already determined who will be saved and who will be lost, why preach the gospel? Everyone will be saved or lost whether I preach to them or not. It has already been determined according to Calvin. But the Bible says to preach as if it makes a difference. (**Mark 16:15; Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 8:4**)

(4) This would also make the Judgment Day unnecessary. Why have a day of judgment if God has already judged from the foundation of the world. Makes judgment scene of God a mockery. But we are told that we will be judged according to our deeds, not according to what God has already decided before the foundation of the worlds. (**Acts 17:30-31; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:12-13**)

Limited Atonement

Since God determines beforehand who will be saved and who will be lost, then it follows that the atonement of Jesus Christ is only for the elect -- those that God has predetermined to be saved. Again, this doctrine is foreign to the

Bible. Christ did not die just for the elect. (**Heb. 2:9; John 3:16-21; 1 John 2:2; Rom. 5:18-19; 1 Tim. 2:5-6**). Christ died for all, but all do not accept His atonement. The only reason any person is not saved is because he chooses not to be. God doesn't determine whether or not I will be saved. I do by either accepting or rejecting His message.

Irresistible Grace

It follows that since one is so depraved that one cannot do anything good, the only way that God can save one is to change that person. The Calvinist would say that He does this by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit. And since God has predetermined who is to be saved and who is not, then those determined to be saved cannot resist God's grace. They will be saved whether they want to be or not. (Of course, no one can really want to be saved, since he is totally depraved.) But, the Bible teaches otherwise.

We are told that we can resist God's grace. (cf. **Acts 7:51; Heb. 10:28,29**). We can choose whether or not we will follow God and be saved. (cf. **Rom. 6:16**). I can read and understand God's word without the direct operation of the Holy Spirit. (**Eph. 3:2-4; Rom. 10:13-14,16-17**) -- And obey it.

Perseverance Of The Saints

Finally it follows that if God has determined beforehand who will be saved or not, then those He saved certainly will be preserved to the end. If God has determined to save them, they won't be lost no matter what. The Bible, however, does not teach "once saved, always saved." We are told that we can fall away. (**Heb. 6:4-6**). We can sin after receiving salvation and face the consequence of judgment. (**Heb. 10:26-29**). It is possible for us to return to our former state. (**2 Pet. 2:20-22**).

Conclusion

While many are not willing to accept all the teachings of Calvin, they are none the less affected by these doctrines. Naturally, since it has been many years since Calvin formulated his doctrines, those who follow them have modified them somewhat. Today, these doctrines may take on a different form, but what is taught is only a slight departure from classical Calvinism.

What is often taught today is: (1) Man is a sinner because he inherited his sin from Adam. (2) The only way man can turn to God is by asking God to enter his life and change him by the operation of the Holy Spirit so that he can understand God's word. (3) Man, then believing in God and accepting Christ as "personal Savior" can now be changed from a "depraved" individual, to a "spirit-filled", godly individual. and (4) Once this occurs, man is saved and can never be lost. Really, the only departure from classical Calvinism that we see today is the introduction of free choice.

How foreign to the Bible can the doctrines of Calvinism be? Let's follow God's word.



The Last Day

By Kent Heaton

The last day of the year is a day to remind us that everything comes to an end. Each year has a beginning and an end as does each month, each week and each day. The new year is only the beginning of twelve months that end on December 31. Life is expressed in the cycle of time that has a beginning and has an end. "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace" (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8).

As we begin to reflect upon the new horizon of 2013 we should also pause to reflect the sober reminder that we are mortal creatures that have a beginning and at least on this earth -- an end. Yet the irony of this message is that we still exist beyond death. Our ending here is a beginning in eternity and upon the frail time of space we share in life eternity depends. "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgment" (Hebrews 9:27). "This is the end of the matter; all hath been heard: fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every hidden thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil" (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).

The last day of the year is a day of reflection. It reminds us that time does not stand still. We grow older with each passing year and draw nearer to our eternal abode. Paul looked at his life near its end and said, "For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the

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December 31 – the last day!

righteous judge, shall give to me at that day: and not only to me, but also to all them that have loved his appearing" (2 Timothy 4:6-8). He looked back on his life and forward to the life to come. The apostle had confidence in his life in service to Christ. His last day was fast approaching and he could see the fight coming to an end; the race nearly completed; the maturing of his faith in God as nearly complete. Can we have the same hope as Paul on this last day?

He also looked forward to a new day coming. This hope was built upon faithful service to the Kingdom of God. Paul knew that his last day on earth would propel him to that eternal home with God. What vision to live with faith in this life that will guide us across the final day. The final day for the Christian is the beginning of the eternal day with the Father. The last day of mortality will be the beginning of our immortal joy. "Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Corinthians 15:51-54).

The last day is a day of victory. It will be a time when all the grace of God is revealed and the joy of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ will be revealed in the resurrection. The last day of this year should be a time of victory to see how we have grown in our faith toward God - looking forward to that final last day of our life; whether in death or in the glorious coming of our Savior. December 31 – the last day! What a great day to reflect and enjoy the blessings of God. The new year gives opportunity to strive with more zeal to live for the last day. It will not be a day of sadness but a day of awakening. The last day is a day that will last in eternity when we are found faithful.

