

## Tradition

By Doy Moyer

There is a difference between traditions that are simply traditions, and tradition as truth. A tradition is something that is handed down as a teaching or a practice. To simplify, we can note that traditions may come in at least these forms:

**1. Error.** A tradition can be passed down that is erroneous. Jesus challenged this kind of tradition in **Mark 7**, where the Pharisees had made their tradition of "Corban" such that it violated God's Law. Wrong-headed traditions need to be challenged and overthrown. This is not to be done, however, just based on mere preference or whim, but on the truth. If a practice or teaching is in error, then truth needs to prevail, lest we find ourselves under Jesus' rebuke: "Why do you yourselves transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?" (**Matthew 15:3**)

**2. Truth.** God expected His truth to be passed down through time, and this, too, is tradition, as Paul wrote: "So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us" (**2 Thess. 2:15**). If we are teaching new doctrines that cannot find actual biblical support for the sake of doing non-traditional things, then we have conflated tradition as truth with tradition as error or tradition as choice. Tradition as truth should always be upheld and practiced, and failure to do so will put us out of line with God's revealed will.

**3. Choice.** By "choice" in this context, I mean that the tradition is neither necessary nor wrong. Not all traditions are necessary in the sense of being required truth (#2). They might help facilitate the teaching of truth, and they might be reasonable expedi-

ents depending on the circumstances (e.g., meeting twice on Sundays or using song books), but they are not necessary. In this case, they are also not wrong, but the danger is that we get used to doing something by choice and then confuse these traditions with truth itself. That is, if the tradition by choice is changed, we fight like it is the truth that is being compromised, when it is, instead, just choices that are under scrutiny. On the other hand, some try to change tradition by choice and may take an approach that is offensive and disrespectful toward those who prefer the tradition to remain as is. There is no need to change such a tradition just for the sake of change, but neither is there a reason to hold on to it if the reason for changing it is warranted. People need to be reasonable, respectful, and open-minded in dealing with tradition as choice.

For the sake of clarity and unity, it is vital that we understand the differences between these types of tradition. So many divisions and problems can occur because we just label something "traditional" without further clarifying what we mean by it. Someone may fight against a "tradition as truth" while thinking it is "tradition as choice," or vice-versa, and problems ensue. First, we should figure out where the tradition we are considering fits. Is it error? Is it truth? Or is it choice? Then we can look at options: 1) reject it if it is error; 2) accept it and practice it if it is truth; or 3) consider our options and weigh the effects if it is choice. Divisive attitudes should never be allowed to prevail, especially over tradition as choice.



### List of Graduates

#### Vet School

Leah Donahue  
Justin Padgett  
Mason Chandler

#### Bachelors

Elizabeth Wiggs  
Meredith Bragwell  
Becky Harris  
Keeley Porter  
Katie Carter  
Brady Peek  
Laura Abell  
Madison Bradshaw  
David Golden  
Cade Smith  
Meredith McCray  
Ryan Nichols  
Alexander Calvert  
Elizabeth Anne Calvert  
Will King  
Makenzie Reynolds  
Ashton Guy

#### Masters

Josh Carter



### May Birthdays

- 1-Bethany Marchman
- 2-Taylor Bethea
- 2-Emily-Anne Rouse
- 3-Paula Davis
- 10-Ian Norman
- 10-Ryan Hasty
- 11-Scott Perkins
- 12-Daphene Whatley
- 12-Patrick Davis
- 13-Anna Grace Long
- 13-Jana Hall
- 13-Peyton Vines
- 15-Bryce Daniels
- 18-Ty Randolph
- 19-Madison Bradshaw
- 19- Amanda Graves
- 22-Sarah Holliday
- 24-Andy Roberts
- 25-Chuck Hahn
- 26-Fallon Hartsell
- 28-Barbara Weeks
- 28-Candy Long
- 31-Rachel Tolliver

### News and Notes

- ☒ - Lets keep in our prayers our expectant mothers, Laura Humphrey and Nicole Pender!
- ☒ - Ken Sullivan underwent an additional procedure on Friday that successfully corrected his heart arrhythmia.
- ☒ - Elle Vaughn, baby daughter of Scott and Genna, continues to develop well!
- ☒ - Susan Sullivan had arthroscopic surgery on her shoulder on Friday.
- ☒ - Kevin Simpson returned to the hospital last week for further treatment for his heart infection.
- ☒ - Anna Miller's grandmother, Louise Pack, suffered a stroke recently and is now in rehab hoping to regain strength in one side.
- ☒ - Chuck Hahn's niece, Rebecca Davis, is in ICU with a blood clot in lungs and pneumonia.
- ☒ - Troy Godwin's mother, Martha, will have surgery on Monday in Montgomery to remove colon cancer.
- ☒ - David Ogle will have surgery on May 28 on his other hip.
- ☒ - Congratulations to those graduating this coming weekend!

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# The Auburn Beacon



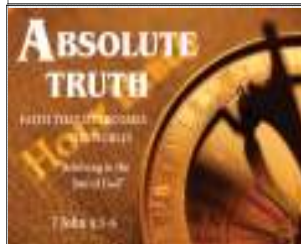
Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (**Matthew 5:16**)

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## Overcoming the Odds

By Matt Adams



### Thoughts to Ponder

For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world -- our faith. (1 John 5:4)

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### SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday

Bible Class .....9:30 AM  
Worship .....10:20 AM  
Evening Worship ..... 6:00 PM  
**Wednesday**  
Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

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Larry Rouse  
Evangelist and Editor

Soon our son, Emerson, will be born into this world. Naturally, how we are to raise him is in our thoughts daily; as his father, being charged to raise him "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord", so many lessons I intend to teach him flood to my mind. One such lesson is how to deal with discouragements; how to counter the thoughts (within oneself, or implied/spoken by others) offered up to tell you that you cannot do something which God instructs you are to do. How he is to conduct himself when the odds seem to be against him or when the road looks dreary and the way tough. How to gather the strength, daily, to walk the difficult way (**Matt.7:13-14**).

As Christians we might be viewed by the world as the ultimate underdogs. It would seem that way to most, considering the choices we make and the stands we take. But isn't that one of the beauties of being a Christian? With God we can overcome such seemingly insurmountable odds!

We love underdogs, don't we?

Love the fight, the challenge, the prospect that one - whom others decide doesn't have a chance - may beat the giant, beat the champion, prove everybody wrong. We see this play itself out in sporting competitions all the time in our day. The prospect of winning the battle drives the one who seems to be at a disadvantage to strive ever more. However, most of the time, we find

However, the reward for a life of honor and a life well-lived before God is worth far more than whatever futility the world offers; it's worth whatever hardships the world brings down upon us.

that with this supposed underdog the greatest battle they face is not their opponent, but rather themselves, their greatest challenge is from within.

Reading through Scripture we see the accounts of so many whom the world cast off, family rejected, their own kin and allies discouraged, those who were destined to lose according to the actions and words of those around them. Let's look at some barriers offered up by those who try to discourage, they who seek to tear down rather than lift up, those whose faith is not in God but in self:

You're too young (**Timothy - 2Tim.4:12**)  
You're too old (**Caleb - Josh.14:6-12**)

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You're too small (**David - 1Sam.17**)

They're too big (**Joshua & Caleb -Deut.17**)

You're too weak (**Paul - 2Cor.10:10**)

There's not enough of you (**to Gideon - Jgs.7**)

Your God won't deliver, we're too strong (**to Hezekiah - 2 Kgs.18-19**)

You can't and you won't! (**Peter & other Apostles - Acts 4 , 5**)

Do we see how defeat can come if we listen to the world, rather than placing our faith in God and thrusting ourselves out into the action?

Isn't it high-time that we fight back? Aren't we tired of hearing the world tell us we can't serve God, we can't go to heaven, we can't be faithful to God? What happens to us is, before long, we begin believing the defeating words, we begin saying those very things to ourselves, we believe the press of the world, our greatest enemy is soon inside our own minds. We begin telling ourselves, "No. You're nothing, you're not strong enough, you're too young/old, you're too small, Satan is too big and his army too mighty, you're just one person, you can't do it!"

Friends, I'm tired of the defeating words of others, the self-defeating words of my mind, the justification for being mediocre so often propagated in this world; God expects more from His children, and so should we. I intend for my son to learn that God gives us the strength to do incredible things, overcome unbelievable odds, and defeat this dreadful foe of Satan and his agents.

Time to rise up and take the battle to the faceless enemy that is discouragement and lies. When God tells me to do something, I had better believe I have the strength within myself to carry it out; let's take a lesson from the examples listed above (**2 Pt 1:3; Heb.11**). God gives us that strength, He empowers us, He builds us up and makes us great. Believe His words, friends. Believe that the One who created us and gave us this soul within is able to deliver us from evil, able to conquer our foes, and will give us the ability to overcome whatever the world throws our way (**1 Cor.10:12-13; Rom.8:28-39**).

The way we prove the world wrong is by living the life God gave us to live. We were built -by the hand of God- to endure whatever this world throws at us. We were made in His image! When we consider this fact, what edge does this world truly have over us? The world calls us underdogs, but we truly

know that we are "more than conquerors" through Jesus Christ - the world is only lacking the realization of that fact; so we must choose to live this fact daily (**Rom.8:31-37**)!

It is my desire to teach my son to silence the world by choosing to live a holy and righteous life (**Deut.6:1-9**). Will that stop the attacks from the world, will that keep them from trying to bring him down, will that make the devil stop pursuing him? No, if anything it will probably make the road harder and make those of the world double their efforts. However, the reward for a life of honor and a life well-lived before God is worth far more than whatever futility the world offers; it's worth whatever hardships the world brings down upon us.

I desire for my son to be surrounded by champions; to look up and learn from those who fight daily as soldiers in God's army; to pattern himself after our fellow-Christians who are daily living like Jesus Christ; those who walk according to the Spirit and not flesh; those who know both victory and failure, those who truly have learned what it means to overcome.

And so, as a Christian and Emerson's father, my plea to each of you is this:

Friends, will you help me to be able to point my son - this new life and soul - to you as yet another example of what a Christian truly is? To point to you so he can witness all that it means to enact God's commands and overcome the adversity that is sin? Erin and I plan to do our part as his primary examples in the home; however, we plead with our brethren to be faithful examples as well.

To the world's underdogs: stand up and fight! Gather your strength, gather your courage, stand unwaveringly against the forces of this world (**Eph.6:10-17**)! Let that warrior inside step up and fight the war raging in your life! Be a man of action, be one of confidence, be one of trust in God Almighty! Take lessons from God's word, our spiritual ancestors, and overcome. Never let that spirit, that desire to rise up and overcome, that resolve to fight for truth until your dying breath...never let it die; for when it dies, your soul dies.

God says we can overcome, may we believe Him instead of the world (**Phil.4:13**).



## “It Didn’t Work”

By Tim Nichols

God does not fail us. On the other hand, we victimize and defraud our brethren, especially new converts, when we teach them to expect some immediate relief, some supernatural reduction in their temptation, or some miraculous increase in their resolve to do what is right.

While serving in the military in Italy I was able to study with a young man in the barracks who seemed to be deeply interested in spiritual things. Over a period of some time I made it a point to go over all that I knew to cover in order to teach him how to be a Christian. We went over the Bible plan of salvation and he seemed to accept it quickly. We studied the nature of the church and one's relationship to it when one is born again. I was pleased beyond words when he expressed his desire to be baptized for the remission of his sins. The small church there was happy to receive a new babe in Christ.

He enthusiastically participated in our Bible studies and worship for a few weeks, and then he began to grow distant and less interested. Then he ceased to attend. He became unavailable for further private study and reluctant to discuss spiritual things. We were concerned that someone had possibly said or done something that had created a problem and we wanted to do whatever might be reasonable or possible to help.

Finally, he told me his problem: "It didn't work." He went on to explain that he had had a habit of smoking cigarettes and he had expected God to "deliver" him from this habit upon becoming a true, New Testament Christian. Instead, the temptation was even stronger than it had been before and he had been praying and pleading with God to remove it. We offered all of the encouragement that we knew how to give to him. We were sympathetic and patient. We prayed for him. He would not return to the race, however, and the pained look on his face suggested that his belief about this matter was sincere.

I suspect that most of us can, to some degree, identify with this man and his challenge. We have found ourselves faced with difficulties and have yearned for some immediate and God-given relief. We have been able to recognize the moral rightness of some activity that we have wanted to engage in and yet we have been unable to easily find the resolve to go and do it. We have seen the evil in some thing that we desire to do and have yet struggled with an intense desire or tendency to do it. Honest and introspective men will admit to this and kind men will not ask me for examples.

Does God fail us? When the preacher loses his train of thought or stumbles over some words after some good brother has publicly prayed that he will have a "ready recollection of the things that he has studied" can it be said that God has failed? When a young man in Italy does not obtain

the desired reduction in his temptation after genuine obedience and fervent prayer, has God neglected to do what He has taught us to expect?

God does not fail us. On the other hand, we victimize and defraud our brethren, especially new converts, when we teach them to expect some immediate relief, some supernatural reduction in their temptation, or some miraculous increase in their resolve to do what is right. These are real people with real struggles who are seeking real answers. We help them on their way up that narrow road to the strait gate of heaven when we teach them the process by

which God does give powerful aid through His inspired word.

This profound difference (between the notion of direct aid and the truth of moral assistance given by God by means of His word) is not merely academic. The doctrine of direct help produces human fatalities. It leads men to expect what is not offered and that expectation causes very real stumbling -- and emotional distress. It leaves honest men and women feeling abandoned by God and looking the other way while God's hand is extended to them.

God wants to actively work in the heart of every Christian. The fact that He has chosen to use His word as His instrument for doing so does not diminish the power of His operation upon our moral lives. Only our All-Knowing and All-Powerful God knows our hearts and is able to supply our needs. He tells us that his word is "living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (**Heb 4:12**). He teaches us to expect that He, through His word will teach us, reprove us, correct us, nurture us in righteousness, and furnish us completely for every good work" (**2 Tim 3:16**). Let us teach our brethren that God is ready, willing, and attempting to help them if they will only avail themselves of His offered help. He knows of our personal struggles and sympathizes with us as He leads us with His word (**Heb 4:12-15**). May we be able to say to those who remain faithful that "we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe" (**1 Thes 2:13**).

