

Foundational Teachings

ON THE TRAGIC EVENTS OF 9/11/01—

Let Islamic “Jihad” Speak for Itself

We know that *not all* Muslims are hateful; there are many who are peace-loving and kind. But a certain brand of Islam, in itself, as a religion, needs to be evaluated in the light of its very own confessions, especially concerning “jihad” (“holy war”). With deep pain we note the persecution and imprisonment, torture and murder of Christians in Sudan, Afghanistan, Indonesia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and other Muslim nations by the hands of those who feel, by these very acts, that they do God’s will. (Please note carefully that not all Muslims believe in “jihad” as one of the pillars of Islam. Those who are terrorists and those who slaughter Christians, however, do. They believe that such atrocities against “unbelievers” honor God. These are enemies of the Cross of Christ and the civilized world.) On this issue, we will let this brand of Islam speak for itself.

Statements such as these are quoted by the Islamic “Jihad” from the Qur’an:

- “When the forbidden months are past, then fight and slay the Pagans wherever you find them, and seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in every stratagem (of war)....”—The Qur’an, Sura 9:5
- “Fight those who believe not in God [Allah] nor the Last Day... (even if they are) of the People of the Book [Jews and Christians]....”—The Qur’an, Sura 9:29
- “Hypocrites... shall have a curse on them: wherever they are found, they shall be seized and slain (without mercy).—The Qur’an, Sura 33:60-61

From these and other quotes from the Qur’an, the following conclusions have been made by Jihad supporters:

- In his book, *Jurisprudence in Muhammad’s Biography*, the Azhar scholar, Dr. Muhammad Sa’id Ramadan al-Buti, says the following: “The Holy War, as it is known in Islamic Jurisprudence, is basically an **offensive war. This is the duty of Muslims in every age when the needed military power becomes available to them.** This is the phase in which the meaning of Holy War has taken its final form. Thus the apostle of God said: ‘I was commanded to fight the people until they believe in God and his message...’” (p. 134, 7th edition).
- Saudi Scholar, Dr. Muhammad-al-Amin, in his book, *The Method of Islamic Law*, clearly

states: “No infidel [unbeliever] should be left on his land as it is denoted from Muhammad’s statement: ‘I was commanded to fight the people... (until they bear testimony to the fact that there is no God but Allah and that Mohammed is his messenger).’”

- In his book, *The Biography of the Apostle*, part 4, Ibn Hisham says: “Muhammad sent Khalid Ibn al-Walid to the tribe of the children of Haritha and told him: ‘Call them to accept Islam before you fight with them, but if they refuse, fight them.’ Khalid told them: ‘Accept Islam and spare your life.’ They entered Islam by force. He brought them to Muhammad. Muhammad said to them: ‘Had you not accepted Islam I would have cast your heads under your feet’” (p. 134).
- Dr. ‘Afifi Abdul-Fahah, in his book, *The Spirit of Islamic Religion*, writes: “Islam has approved war so that the Word of God becomes supreme. This is war for the cause of God (Holy War)” (p.382), and “Islamic law demands that before Muslims start fighting infidels (unbelievers), they first deliver the message of Islam to them. It was proven that the prophet never fought people before he called them to embrace Islam first” (p. 384).
- Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, in his writings, states: “When the prophet migrated from Mecca to Medina, God ordered him to fight those who fought him only. Then when the Chapter of Repentance was revealed, God commanded His prophet to fight anyone who did not become a Muslim from among the Arabs, whether (that person) fought him or not.”
- *The Lights of Revelation*, a commentary on the Qur’an declares: “Fight Jews and Christians because they violated the origin of their faith and they do not believe in the religion of the truth, namely Islam, which abrogated all other religions. Fight them....”
- *The Ordinances of the Qur’an* (part 2, p. 50) declares: “The apostle of God killed and captured (many) of the people of the Book [Christians and Jews] until some of them embraced Islam....”
- *The Book of the Islamic State* by Taqiy al-Din, states: “The foreign policy of Islamic states must be to carry the Islamic mission to the world by way of holy war. This process has been established through the course of the ages... This process has never been changed at all. The apostle Muhammad, from the time he founded the state in the city Yathrib, prepared an army and began holy war to remove the physical barriers which hinder the spread of Islam” (pps. 112, 113).

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FALL 2001

Foundational Teachings is published by Immanuel’s Church on a free-will offering basis for the expanding of the Kingdom of God worldwide.

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Immanuel’s Church Worship Center



Immanuel’s Church Sanctuary

Immanuel’s 18th Anniversary

The yearly celebration of Francis of Assisi on October 4 coincides with the yearly anniversary of Immanuel’s Church on the first Sunday of October. We take his life, devoted to Jesus, as an inspiration for our own lives!

Francis of Assisi, born Giovanni Bernadone in 1182, was known as a man of deep and abiding joy. He knew that after all was done or undone, he was still “the herald of the Great King.” No one should ever doubt that Francis was quintessentially a man in love, and a man in love with the greatest of lovers. Francis was a true Charismatic. Thomas of Celano recorded that when Francis “was filled with the Holy Ghost” he invariably spoke in the French tongue, one of the reasons he adopted the nickname “Francis.” There was simply no bottom to Francis’ grateful happiness. He told his friars that it was their vocation “to lift up people’s hearts and give them reasons for spiritual joy.” They needed no other ministry in the local or universal church. They, like he, were to be troubadours and minstrels of the Lord!

Omer Englebert recorded of certain early Franciscan friars that “the Office [Matins] was

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On Timothy J. McVeigh's Final Statement

"I don't believe in God or in hell ... but if I end up there, I'll have plenty of company."—Timothy McVeigh, days before his execution

—by Charles P. Schmitt

Though Dotty and I were scheduled to leave Monday morning, June 11, for a three-day vacation, we both sat before our television, until after Timothy McVeigh was pronounced dead by lethal injection just before 9:15 a.m. EDT. I can scarcely describe the anguish that filled my heart as his final statement was read publicly. "My head is bloodied, but unbowed" seemed to reveal the dreaded conclusion (unless something unknown to us transpired in his very last moments) that McVeigh had died as he had lived—"unbowed," unrepentant and, therefore, unprepared to meet his God.

"I am the master of my fate"—was only a partially accurate statement. By those biblical truths that teach human responsibility and accountability, Timothy McVeigh *did* seal his own fate; but ultimately it was our Lord God who was "the master of [his] fate." Revelation 21:8 declares in lucid language of all "murderers—[that] their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death." At 9:14 a.m. on Monday, June 11, what the hymn writer had so graphically described took place for Tim McVeigh: "When I soar to worlds unknown; see Thee on Thy Judgment Throne...."

Before that terrible and holy Throne, McVeigh's divine sentence was then carried out: "Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41).

The greatest human error made by Timothy McVeigh—and repeated by multitudes of other foolish souls—was to believe: "I am the captain of my soul." Disregarding chart and compass (the Holy Word of God) and disobeying the winds and currents of God's Holy Spirit, McVeigh shipwrecked his own life on the rocks and shoals of hatred and vengeance. He made a very foolish "captain of [his] soul." How much better—forever better—it would have been for him to have yielded his life to Jesus Christ, and to have prayed: "Jesus, Savior pilot me, over life's tempestuous sea...."

On the backdrop of this human tragedy lies a much greater human tragedy—the untimely death of 171 people, inclusive of the three pre-born children, that died in that Oklahoma City blast six years ago. I wonder how many of them were prepared to meet their God? For many there was not so much as one moment's notice.

The issue of the death penalty for capital crimes such as McVeigh's is not an emotionally easy issue to address, but the death penalty is supported by plain biblical statements in both the Old and New Testaments (Exodus 21:23; Romans 13:3-4). My personal opinion is that the death penalty is biblical, but should be used carefully and sparingly—never for convictions based solely on circumstantial evidence or on questionable confessions, but rather for convictions based on conclusive evidence (DNA, for example) or, for those, as in the case of McVeigh, who in his recent book is quoted as *confessing* that he masterminded and carried out the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building on April 19, 1995.

Perhaps one of the more sobering issues in this whole drama was an observation made on *48 Hours* the evening of the execution. Trying to uncover the source of McVeigh's deep anger and hatred, the issue was raised of the insecurity of his early childhood years in the face of his parents' violent interchanges of anger. Only God ultimately knows why seemingly nice kids go wrong, but the above observation warrants our serious consideration. We, as parents, need to fall down before our Lord in a fresh way, asking for wisdom and grace to so impact our families that our influence will lead them in the way of life. There are various issues clustering around the execution of Timothy McVeigh. I believe we, as Christians, need to ponder each one carefully and not just rush past them in the bustle of our lives. Each of us personally should emerge from this national catastrophe better fitted for time and for eternity! †



The Seasons of Life

—by Dotty Schmitt

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven.
—Ecclesiastes 3:1

Teach us to number our days and recognize how few they are; help us to spend them as we should.
—Psalm 90:12 (The Living Bible)

Recently Charles and I returned from a wonderful journey through Minnesota. This beautiful state was our home as a married couple for about 18 years. Our three daughters were born there, and our early roots as a young, inexperienced couple in ministry were there. Our experiences in life and ministry in Minnesota go back over 40 years.

As we visited with numerous precious people from this past season of our life, I was filled with gratitude and with deep thoughts as to the significance of our lives as believers in Jesus. As Charles and I walked the grounds of the former Camp Dominion in northern Minnesota, our memory banks overflowed with all sorts of rich reflections. I remembered working in the camp from 5:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.—cooking for hundreds of people, helping train the children's counselors, teaching the women's classes—with much, much work and laughter. As I walked these beautiful campgrounds, I took in all the physical changes—some camp buildings were gone and some were about ready to fall down. Standing alone, looking out over the lake that I always enjoyed, the Lord spoke deep into my spirit: "Every physical, temporal, and material thing will pass away but only what you have invested into My Kingdom will remain."

Such a love for the Lord and for His ways washed over me. As I reflected back on some of the very hard times, as well as some of the awesome times of rich revelation that came to us from prolonged seasons of worship and meditation in His Word, I felt I was one of the wealthiest persons alive!

I returned home from our journey through Minnesota with a renewed determination to enjoy every season of my life in God. To know Him is to love Him! And to love Him totally and passionately is the very core and essence of life. Life brings many changes and much passes by all too quickly, but in it all we are able to say with Peter: "Though you have not seen Him, you love Him; and even though you do not see Him now, you believe in Him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy" (1 Peter 1:8).

People of God choose fully to love and to serve Him in every season of life! †

We celebrate twins
Dylan Charles and Brooke Morgan
born on September 1, 2001, to
George and Laura (Schmitt) Uecker



"I will bless you with incredible blessings and multiply your descendants."

—Genesis 22:17
The Living Bible

Death and Dying

—by Charles P. Schmitt

This article appeared in our Immanuel's Church Sunday bulletin just after our beloved Betty Cassidy, Dotty's administrative assistant, went to be with the Lord on August 20, 2001. We trust it will encourage the hearts of our readers.

The Scriptures declare two things about death. First of all, death is an "enemy." Paul tell us: "The last enemy to be destroyed is death" (1 Corinthians 15:26). Death is our enemy, robbing us of those we love so dearly; death is also our enemy, taking our own lives in its evil grasp. But, scripturally, death is also "precious"—"Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints" (Psalm 116:15). The Hebrew word for precious is often used in the Old Testament to describe the rare beauty of a precious jewel. The death of a saint is precious in the sight of the Lord because it is the very act by which another of His servants (having been shaped and polished by His dealings in life) is taken to become a treasure in His crown! "They will be Mine," says the Lord Almighty, "in the day when I make up My treasured possession"—"My jewels," *kjv* (Malachi 3:17).

These two aspects of death—as an "enemy" and yet as "precious"—are reflected in the words "loss" and "gain." When a loved one dies, there is a great loss, often an overwhelming loss. That is why we grieve. We grieve over the loss of someone precious to us, though Paul tells us, we do not "grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope" (1 Thessalonians 4:13). Our grief has a shaft of hope radiating from it because of Jesus! Though the loss is ours, to the one who has gone to be with the Lord, it is all *gain*. Paul declares: "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21). This glorious gain is reflected in his words: "I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far" (Philippians 1:23). For Paul, as for all of God's saints, "to be absent from the body [is] to be present with the Lord" (2 Corinthians 5:8). And this is "joy unspeakable and full of glory"! This

is indeed *gain*! And for this reason the death of a believer (though death is an enemy) is also *precious* in the eyes of the Lord, for it is the doorway into eternal glory and delight!

Jesus our Lord is the One who has transformed death for the believer from being an enemy into being precious. He, by His own death and resurrection, has taken the sting out of death and made death a passageway into life—eternal life!

The recent death of our dear Betty Cassidy is a loss—a loss for her family and friends and for all of us who loved her so dearly; but for Betty this experience is *nothing but gain*—the gain of a new dimension of the presence of our Lord! I believe Betty was welcomed into the eternal habitations of glory on Monday morning, August 20, 2001, at 9:00 a.m. by our sister Irene (and the two of them, *I am sure*, are right now dancing before the throne of God in utter delight). Family members and friends who know Jesus and other of our Immanuel's saints were also there to greet her. What a glad reunion that was! I wish I was there to see that!

We grieve over all deaths, but especially over *untimely* deaths. Betty should have been with us yet another 20-25 years, at least. But no believer departs this earth apart from the sovereign decrees of our God. He has appointed "a time for everything ... a time to be born and a time to die..." (Ecclesiastes 3:1-2). According to Psalm 90:10, "The length of our days is [normally] seventy years—or eighty..." To us, therefore, the loss of 20-25 years is a lot, but to God, whose timetable is "one day is as a thousand years" (Psalm 90:4), Betty has only lost about ½ hour—a small *loss* compared to the immense *gain* of being *forever* with the Lord!

One final note: How do we understand any untimely death in the light of our conviction that Jesus heals? The same Scriptures that teach us that "by His wounds you have been healed" (1 Peter 2:24) also record of Paul, "I left Trophimus *sick* at Miletus" (2 Timothy 4:20). How do we reconcile these two thoughts? We can only reconcile them in the sovereign will of a God "Who works out

everything in conformity with the purpose of His will" (Ephesians 1:11). And sometimes it seems He chooses to take the best prepared saints prematurely (Jamie Buckingham and Ruth Heflin, for example—both of whom died just around Betty's age), and He heals and raises up others who perhaps, in some cases, need yet more time for preparation before they can appear before Him. But in all things, though we may not understand His ways, we can most certainly trust His wisdom and His sovereign purposes. It seems He has been recently populating heaven

with His more choice servants, perhaps as part of those intercessors who appear before His immediate presence (Revelation 6:9-10; 8:3-4), birthing—by their very prayers—the fresh purposes of God in the earth!

Many of us had been faithfully praying Psalm 30, along with Betty. We had hoped that by His healing hand our Lord would bring Betty "up from the grave" (vs. 3) and save her from "going down into the pit" (vs. 9). But we must now simply change our expectation on *how* this psalm shall be fulfilled for Betty, for it will now be fulfilled in Betty's physical resurrection at the soon coming of our Lord, when death will be fully swallowed up in victory and those who are in the graves will come forth with singing (Isaiah 25:8-9)! Such is the fruit of the redeeming work of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be all glory and praise—for all time and for all eternity! †



Betty Cassidy



ANNOUNCING:
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- *Torchbearers* is for those who are serious about preparing themselves for God's service.

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- Space is limited. *Torchbearers* begins January 2002 and continues through December 2002—a one-year mentorship.
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Human Depravity, Prevenient Grace and Divine Election

—by Charles P. Schmitt

“Wherein may we come to the very edge of Calvinism?” When asked this question, John Wesley replied: “In ascribing all good to the free grace of God, in denying all natural free-will, and all power, antecedent to [before] grace. And in excluding all merit from man; even for what he has or does by the grace of God” (John Wesley, *Works*, VIII, p. 285). I wish us to probe this issue even deeper.

On the Issue of Total Depravity

The Scriptures teach the *total* depravity of every man, woman, and child born of Adam’s race. “We all, like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way” (Isaiah 53:6). “As it is written: ‘There is no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one’” (Romans 3:9-12).

The Calvinist position on *total depravity* (as over-against the perceived Arminian position) is described in this fashion: “The theory that gives man a little credit for his salvation by granting him the ability to believe, pictures man as drowning... If someone doesn’t save him, he will die. He may have his lungs partially filled with water, even lose consciousness for a moment or two, but he still has enough presence of mind and ability to wave and yell to the lifeguard to save him. If he calls to the guard, the guard will save him. The biblical picture, however, is one of a man at the bottom of the ocean in the Marianas Trench, more than 35,000 feet deep. The weight of the water on top of him is six tons for every square inch. He has been there for 1,000 years and the sharks have eaten his heart. In other words, the man is dead and is totally unable to ask any lifeguard to save him. If he is to be saved, then a miracle must occur. He must be brought back to life and to the surface and then he can ask the guard to rescue him. And that is the picture of the sinner. He is dead in his sins and trespasses (Ephesians 2:15). He does not want to be made whole, let alone even know that he should be made whole. He is dead” (Edwin H. Palmer, *The Five Points of Calvinism*, p. 18).

To the Calvinist’s picture of total depravity we add a unqualified “amen.” Their description is *exactly* true of every man. Now enters...

God’s Prevenient Grace

The definition of *prevenient* grace is grace which “goes before” or “precedes”; grace which “anticipates” and “expects”; grace

which is “*antecedent to human action.*” God’s prevenient grace is most clearly taught in the Holy Scriptures; and that God’s prevenient grace is upon the whole of His creation—every man, woman, and child—is likewise clearly taught in the Scriptures.

When we read Romans 1:19-20 and 2:14-15 (concerning the illumination that comes to all souls from creation and the conviction that comes to the consciences of all because the law has been inscribed on their hearts) we are compelled to ask: “What is the source of this enlightenment, this conviction, this understanding, this consciousness?” This is clearly God’s *prevenient grace* striving with His whole creation, drawing them—step by step—to that grace that alone can save them. In this way we understand John’s explanation of Jesus as “the true light that gives light to every man coming into the world” (John 1:9). Jesus truly is “the light of the world” (John 9:5). And He enlightens every man born into this world.

Concerning “every nation of men that should inhabit the whole earth,” God even “determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live.” In His amazing prevenient grace, “God did this so that men would seek Him and perhaps reach out for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us.” And for this reason (because of the activities of His prevenient grace) God can justly command “all people everywhere to repent” (see Acts 17:26-27, 30). And because repentance in itself is a gift from God (Acts 11:18), along with every measure of grace given to help us respond to God, along with the very faith itself that enables us to be saved, along with the very salvation of God itself (Ephesians 2:8)—because all of these graces are merciful gifts from God, and never by human works or merit, “no one can boast” in anything involving their coming to God (Ephesians 2:9). It is all of grace; but, likewise, this amazing “grace of God... has appeared to all men” (Titus 2:11).

Yes, men are totally and utterly depraved; but thank God for His prevenient grace and for His saving grace! And thank God His grace is upon His whole creation!

On the Issue of Election: Conditional or Unconditional?

Calvinism insists on an *unconditional election*. By election, the Calvinist understands

“that God chooses some to go to heaven. Others are passed by and they will go to hell” (Palmer, p. 85). Calvinism then insists that “divine election is always an *unconditional* election. God never bases His choice on what man thinks, says, does, or is... He does not see something good in a particular man, something that he does that makes God decide to choose him” (Palmer, p. 26). Calvinism’s perception (whether accurate or not) of Arminianism is that “they believe in election—in a conditional one. They think that God foresees who will believe on Christ, and then on the basis of that foreknowledge God decides to elect the believers to heaven. They believe that at times the natural, nonregenerate man has enough

goodness in him so that if the Holy Spirit assists him he will want to choose Jesus. Man chooses God, and then God chooses man. God’s choice is conditioned upon man’s choice. Thus the Arminian teaches conditional election; whereas the Calvinist teaches unconditional election” (Palmer, p. 27, *emph. mine*).

Palmer, in his argument, then concludes, “The Five Points of Calvinism all tie together. He who accepts one of the points will accept the other

points. Unconditional election necessarily follows from total depravity. If men are totally depraved and if some are still saved, then it is obvious that the reason some are saved and some are lost rests entirely with God” (Palmer, p. 27). I wish to challenge that statement. Whereas it may be true that Calvinism’s incomplete understanding of “total depravity” necessitates an “unconditional election,” it is also true that the scriptural understanding of God’s *prevenient grace* upon a totally depraved humanity will require a conditional election, as we shall now see.

An Election Conditioned upon What?

The Scriptures do not teach either a selective election nor an election based upon some merit in man. “The natural nonregenerate man” *does not* have “enough goodness in him so that if the Holy Spirit assists him he will want to choose Jesus” (Palmer). This is heresy—plain and simple—and those who believe this (should there be any) are *heretics* from the true faith of Jesus.

The Scriptures paint a picture of a God who is altogether holy and just, yet merciful and gracious, a God who pursues sinners to the uttermost.

This Is What It's All About

A man's daughter had asked the local pastor to come and pray with her father. When the pastor arrived, he found the man lying in bed with his head propped up on two pillows and an empty chair beside his bed. The pastor assumed that the old fellow had been informed of his visit.

"I guess you were expecting me," he said. "No, who are you?" responded the man.

"I'm the new pastor at your church," the pastor replied. "When I saw the empty chair, I figured you knew I was going to show up."

"Oh, yeah, the chair," said the bedridden man. "Would you mind closing the door?" Puzzled, the pastor shut the door.

"I've never told anyone this, not even my daughter," said the man, "but all of my life I have never known how to pray. At the Sunday service I used to hear the pastor talk about prayer, but it always went right over my head." "I abandoned any attempt at prayer," the old man continued, "until one day about four years ago my best friend said to me, 'Joe, prayer is just a simple matter of having a conversation with Jesus. Here's what I suggest. Sit down on a chair, place an empty chair in front of you, and in faith see Jesus on the chair. It's not spooky because He promised, 'I'll be with you always.' Then just speak to Him and listen in the same way you're doing with me right now.'"

"So, Pastor, I tried it and I've liked it so much that I do it a couple of hours every day. I'm careful though. If my daughter saw me talking to an empty chair, she'd either have a nervous breakdown or send me off to the funny farm." The pastor was deeply moved by the story and encouraged the old guy to continue on the journey. Then he prayed with him, anointed him with oil, and returned to his office.

Two nights later the daughter called to tell the pastor that her daddy had died that afternoon. "Did he seem to die in peace?" he asked. "Yes, when I left the house around two o'clock, he called me over to his bedside, told me one of his corny jokes, and kissed me on the cheek. When I got back from the store an hour later, I found him dead. But there was something strange, Pastor. In fact, beyond strange—kinda weird. Apparently, just before Daddy died, he leaned over and rested his head on a chair beside the bed." †

*"What a friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear;
What a privilege to carry
Everything to God in prayer."*

—Joseph Scriven

Divine election is *only* "according to the foreknowledge of God the Father [and is always] through the sanctifying work of the Spirit [and is always] for obedience to Jesus Christ and the sprinkling by His blood" (1 Peter 1:1-2). God's election is indeed *conditional* on His foreknowledge—but His foreknowledge of what?

The Calvinist understands "foreknowledge" as meaning not much more than to "love beforehand" (Palmer, p. 31). This definition is deficient. God's foreknowledge is far vaster than that. Because of His awesome omniscience (all-knowingness), God knows *absolutely everything*; and He knows *absolutely everything about everyone*—every man, woman, boy, and girl!

The part of God's foreknowledge that becomes the basis for His election and predestination (1 Peter 1:1-2; Romans 8:29) is defined for us by Peter not as something good found in man himself, but rather "the sanctifying work of the Spirit," which leads to "obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by His blood." God's election is predicated on His foreknowledge of the "sanctifying work of the Spirit" in man, drawing and convicting and empowering that man to respond in obedience to Jesus Christ and to receive the sprinkling of His blood! Paul says the exact same thing in 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14. Our God sees, and always has seen, and always will see, the activity and the influences of His Spirit upon the souls of all men—and how they respond, by His grace, to His grace—both to His preventer grace and then to His saving grace.

And when one is given a gift, the mere reception of that gift (especially if the *ability* to receive that gift actually comes from the giver Himself!) leaves absolutely *no room* to boast. It is all of grace! But, by the same token, when one is given a gift—some gracious impression of the Spirit, some conviction of sin wrought by the Holy Ghost, some illumination from His hand—if one should then refuse that gift, and thereby perish, *no room* is left for any man to vilify God and to declare Him unjust!

It is clear from Scripture that God's Spirit strives ("contends," NIV) with man (Genesis 6:3)—illuminating, convicting, drawing "all men" Christ-ward (see John 12:32). Thus, we are seeing the activity of a God who is really, honestly, and truly "not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9)!

Calvin himself, in his *Institutes*, declared his understanding of unconditional election to be a "horrible doctrine" ("*decretum horribile*")—and such it is, for unconditional election presents a most horrible picture of God. Calvin pictures God as if He were standing in a burning building where vast multitudes of His creatures

lay overcome and lifeless ("fast bound in sin and nature's night"), and *when it would have been in His power to save them all*, He arbitrarily chooses to rescue a few, leaving most to burn to death—declaring, in the process, that they were burned to death because, *helplessly* born in sin and *hopelessly* totally depraved, they *deserved* to be burned to death! How ever could such an unjust God expect us to love Him and then to care for and love *our* enemies, when He himself has acted in such a horrible fashion toward *His*! But such is not the true God!

I totally and unequivocally reject such a grotesque notion of God; and I am compelled by the plain words of Holy Scripture to reject such a "horrible doctrine" as "unconditional election," as portrayed by Calvin. The Scriptures are clear. We are "chosen *according to the foreknowledge of God* the Father, *through the sanctifying work of the Spirit* for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling of His blood" (1 Peter 1:1-2).

Though its proponents utterly reject the idea, Calvinism *does* make God ultimately responsible for most not coming to saving grace. He *could* have chosen them, but He did not; and they, in themselves, could not come for they were unable, and He was not there for them to help them. The Scriptures, however, paint an entirely different picture of God—a God altogether holy and just, yet merciful and gracious, a God who pursues sinners to the uttermost, and who so strives with all men by His law and by His Gospel that ultimately before His bar of justice, concerning those who have rejected His drawings and wooings, that "every mouth may be silenced and the whole world *held accountable to God*" (Romans 3:19). These doctrines of Calvinism violate the accountability of the whole world before the judgment of God, for these are unscriptural notions that impugn the justice of God and violate the plain statements of the Holy Scripture.

We can only praise God for more accurate pictures of human accountability and of God Himself that stems from His holy Word! Amen! †

—This article is adapted from a longer article, *Coming to the Very Edge of Calvinism*, by Charles P. Schmitt. The longer article goes on to discuss the Atonement (limited or limitless) and Grace (sovereign or irresistible) and the Perseverance of the Saints (what if a soul does not persevere?). Also available on the subject are two other articles by Charles P. Schmitt—A Response to John Owen's "The Death of Death in the Death of Christ," and "The Five Points of Calvinism—A Contrasting Point of View." These three articles are available from Foundational Teachings upon request. Please send \$2.00 to cover the cost of duplicating and mailing.



The Healing of the Human Spirit

—by Dr. Jim Burck

The prayer by Paul in Ephesians 3:14-19 reveals much about the human spirit needing to be empowered by the Holy

Spirit on a continual basis—“strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man.” Just as the body needs nutritious food to maintain life and health, so the human spirit needs the nurturing of the Word of God and the Holy Spirit within to give life, purpose, and power.

The Holy Spirit also gives the *agape* kind of love to sustain the “inner man,” where our true identity is “being rooted and grounded in love.” Just as the soul thrives on the basic need of *phileo* (brotherly love) and the body has a basic need of *eros* (physical love of the marriage partner), the spirit must have *agape* (God’s love) to generate the “fruit of the Spirit.”

Our basic roots of identity as Christians are now developed in our spirits, drawn from the Lord, where we are gradually being restored into His image. If the human spirit is functioning well through the Holy Spirit and being

nourished by the Word of God, it has the pre-eminent capacity to direct the soul and body toward wholeness. But if the spirit is neglected and not allowed to be properly edified by the Holy Spirit, it languishes and can be grieved into despairing meaninglessness.

The problem of sin, either overt or covert, has a devastating effect upon the spirit of man. Sin separates a person from God and helps facilitate loneliness and despair. The “sin-sick soul” originates in the spirit that has been defiled by personal transgressions against God. Paul exhorts in 2 Corinthians 7:1—“Therefore, having these promises believed, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness [defilement] of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

David is the prime example of a man “after God’s own heart,” who sinned blatantly but found his way back through repentance, expressed in his prayer of confession in Psalm 51:1-4: “Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight.”

Nowhere can there be found a better example of heartfelt repentance with a desire toward restoration. Though David was forgiven the blood guiltiness of his sins, he and his family lived with the consequential results

all the days of his life. Never does willful sin go exempt from some consequences. This prevents some from testing the grace of God, thinking they can enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season and then go through an act of repentance.

But the consequences of David’s sin were not as painful as the aching in his spirit that came from knowing he had grieved the heart of God. He describes the inner agony of spirit in the continuation of his prayer asking for cleansing restoration—“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me” (Psalm 51:7-12).

This restoration of forgiving love on God’s part is truly a miraculous healing in the spirit. The cleansing of the spirit from the defilement of sin was what David pleaded for. The desperation to feel clean is one of the agonies of a spirit corrupted by the filth of sin—“Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow” (Psalm 51:7).

After sin is repented of and confessed before God, the spirit of the person is renewed into a healthy relationship with God by His forgiveness.

We must recognize that the condition of our spirit determines how our spiritual life will rule over the rest of our whole soul and body. †

continued from page 1 on the Islamic “Jihad”

These are the testimonies of Islamic Jihad! Ahmed Bishara, Kuwaiti political activist, cried out: “We have to reflect on why we, as Arabs and Muslims, have sunk so low as to glorify violence and destruction.”

How unlike our precious Redeemer and Lord, Jesus Christ, who taught: “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:44).

Five Things We as Christians Must Do

1. We must *personally* not retaliate with hate and unkindness, but rather respond with love and compassion. (This must be our stand *personally*, even as the leaders of our nation are compelled to respond with justice against the terrorist atrocities of September 11, 2001.) Only by a heart of personal kindness and Christian love toward Muslims can we avoid the sinful acts of the 12th century Crusaders who went forth in the name of Christ against the Muslims, but who acted in the spirit of Anti-Christ against them.
2. We must also intercede in faith, as Ephesians 6:10-20 teaches us, believing that deception will fall from the eyes of those blinded by it.

3. We must be bold in our witness to our Muslim friends and neighbors—declaring the salvation of our God (salvation from hate and from all sin) through our Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world.
4. We must be aggressive in our support of apostolic missions into the 10/40 window (from North Africa to the Orient), that the more than one billion people who yet lie in darkness will see the glorious light of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!
5. We must lift our voices and lend our hands to help on behalf of those who are being brutalized in Islamic nations simply because they are believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.

And in all of this, to rejoice in the ultimate declaration of our God, that “at the name of Jesus every knee *will bow*, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue *confess* that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:10). †

—To order the cassette *Radical Fundamentalism* by Charles P. Schmitt, please see page 7.

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- Must have a call from our Lord
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- Must know or be willing to learn Spanish



Contact: Pastor Charles Schmitt at addresses listed on bottom of page 3.

continued from page 1 on Immanuel’s Eighteenth Anniversary

sometimes interrupted by the infectious *gales of laughter* that would sweep over them.” At times, eyewitnesses tell us that Francis was so filled with gladness that “he would pick up a stick from the ground . . . and going through the motions of playing, he would sing about the Lord. This whole ecstasy of joy would often end in tears and would be dissolved in compassion.”

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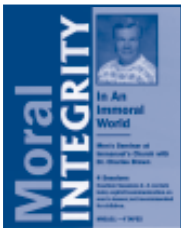
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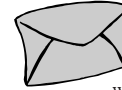
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Charles and Dotty Schmitt's Speaking Itinerary

- **October 5-6**—Dotty—Christ Church Women's Retreat, Nashville, TN; Contact: Jill Ott at (615) 834-6171.
- **October 19-20**—Dotty—*Catch the Fire* Women's Conference, Immanuel's Church, Silver Spring, MD; Contact: Rosemary Parisi at (301) 989-4673, ext. 260.
- **October 25-27**—Dotty—*Awake Deborah* Women's Conference, Northern Ireland; Contact: Rosemary Sambrook in Ireland at 011-44-28-92-668660.
- **November 2-3**—Dotty—Harvest Temple Church Women's Conference, Largo, FL; Contact: Melody Denim at (727) 595-2034.
- **November 8-10**—Dotty—*Women of Worship* Conference, Central Assembly of God, Horseheads, NY; Contact: Cheryl McKinny at (607) 796-2530.
- **November 16-17**—Dotty—Women's Retreat, South Hills AOG, Pittsburgh, PA; Contact: Georgia Cohen at (412) 835-8900, x1150, or bilco2000@aol.com
- **November 23-24**—Charles and Dotty—*Fanning the Flame* World Congress, First Spanish Pentecostal Church, Camden, NJ; Contact: (856) 963-6115).
- **November 29-December 1**—Charles and Dotty—Pastors and Leadership Conference, Lakeland, FL; Contact: (863) 668-8787 or www.thesecondplace.org.

Please also pray for Charles in Morocco October 26-28, in Nepal November 5-11, and in Cuba in December!

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