

Banner

"You have set up a banner for those who fear you, that it may be displayed because of truth." Psalm 60:4



*"Pleasing God,
Making Disciples
of
Jesus Christ"*

A COMMUNICATION MINISTRY OF QUIDNESSETT BAPTIST CHURCH

Do a quick survey of your life. Not on the inside. Just stay on the outside.

How dependent are you in the world?

It doesn't take long to realize just how depend we are on a host of things. Go over your lists as I do mine. Dependency ranges from utilities to keep us comfortable to gasoline to keep us going to media to keep us informed. And those three just touch the tip of the iceberg of dependency encountered in everyday living.

Now let's go deeper. Identifying things we are dependent upon in life really points to the real issue of dependency. Whether one believes in Jesus Christ or not, our dependency is on God. Accepting or rejecting

this truth proves irrelevant to its truthfulness. Truth is not subordinate or altered based on my reaction. Paul writes to the Corinthians of our dependence on God, "What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?" (I CORINTHIANS 4:7).

We are created in the image of God to be dependent on God. The fall created independency not the created order. Sin produced this ugly fruit of pride and it will be our constant foe until our God finishes the work in us of conformity to His Son.

So, in this issue of THE BANNER, we will take a few looks at the spirit of dependency. May we seek to glorify the Lord by learning to lean on Him for all we are and all we need.

"Truth is not subordinate or altered based on my personal reaction ."

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The Quidnessett BANNER

GOSPEL GLIMPSES

The work of God's Spirit in conversion doesn't put itself under the complete understanding of human beings. Jesus told Nicodemus this mysterious but clear work of God is like the wind blowing — *"The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit"* (JOHN 3:8). Did you catch the part our Lord says about our knowledge of this? Just in case it ran by without much thought, He said, *"you do not know where it comes from or where it goes."*

It reveals much about our spiritual development, actually lack of, when we think we have salvation "all figured out" and go about being experts evaluating the saved and

unsaved. Sure, clear evidence of the fruit of new birth comes forth in a life, but the giving of new life lies in the sovereign grace of God not subject to my evaluation of its presence or not.

So, why address conversion in an article about dependency? As mysterious as the new birth may be and our understanding of its working limited, one thing rests certain. Conversion or salvation through the grace of the Lord Jesus demands total dependency on Him.

I may not know the depths of justification by faith and its associated blessings, but one thing I must know in coming to Him to be justified is absolute and total dependency upon Him. If I don't come in this manner, I don't come.

Remember the healing of the blind man in the gospel of John,

chapter 9? The man's response to the inquiry from the religious crowd provides a great illustration of one who knew dependency on Jesus. John writes, *"So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, 'Give glory to God. We know this man is a sinner.' He answered, 'Whether He is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see'"* (JOHN 9:24-25).

The man didn't have all the answers, but what he did have was an unshakable conviction of dependency on Christ for his healing. I may not have all the ramifications of conversion figured out. However, in a paraphrase of John Bunyan's testimony, I can echo the words of life-giving dependency on Christ—*"I know one thing. I am a great sinner and Jesus is a great Savior."*

THE PASTOR'S PEN

A great man of God from another century named J.C. Ryle wrote, "A Christian may be known both by his inward warfare and his inward peace." This is a pretty good summation of the daily battle in the bosom of the believer. The battle fought against spiritual forces of evil relentlessly goes on and on without much reprieve.

Paul defines the intense nature of the battle in his letter to the Ephesian believers, *"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places"* (EPHESIANS 6:12). The sport of wrestling obviously differs from team sports. For instance, I may be "hanging out" in right field on my baseball team and not interact

much with others. Not so in wrestling. This sport is "up front and personal" with an opponent literally "in your face" and so defines the spiritual conflict of those delivered from Satan's domain to Christ's glorious kingdom. Our foes wrestle not with long-range cruise missiles, but with tactics and weaponry masterfully honed for close-in combat.

One key strategic area of battle is our wills. In fact, the will may be THE TARGET of exploitation and all-out assaults by the flesh, the world, and the devil. Weaken the will and it won't be long till sin and worldly passions rule victorious defeating the believer causing soul misery and turmoil.

In the battle against our will, a primary means of victory is dependency on God's will. When the forces of evil attack our will, they always camouflage their tactics with the promise of satisfaction and delight.

"You can watch that television show. The language isn't that bad" or maybe this whisper, "You worked hard. You're tired. It is okay to miss out on prayer meeting or church. God understands." Begin to let these and other similar insinuations flood your mind and it will only be a short period of time before your will succumbs. The attacks focus on short-term comfort or satisfaction producing an undisciplined life where dependency on the will of God is foreign.

The truly satisfied life rests in reliance or dependency on God's will. This means at all cost, I willingly resign to let Him reign through His Spirit and Word. No matter the pain, I look beyond the immediate to the eternal and in complete dependence model my Lord, *"Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours be done"* (LUKE 22:42).



RUNNING SCARED

Edward Welch

New Group Press

Paperback, 314 pages

Edward Welch's new release addresses a universal issue - fear. He writes to those living in the grips of fear with its associated anxiety, worry, and dread.

Written with great pastoral care and rooted in sound Biblical truth, *RUNNING SCARED* encourages the reader with real, practical, and godly applications to combat the daily fears we encounter.

The book is divided in two parts. First is initial observations followed by the section "God Speaks." In part two, Welch identifies three areas of fear - money and possessions; people and their judgments; death, pain, and judgment. This is a very encouraging book for the believer battling fear and its fruits in daily living.

QUOTABLE QUOTE

"We get no deeper into Christ than we allow Him to get into us."

J. H. JOWETT

The marriage appeared doomed.

One party wanted reconciliation and willingly extended the offering. The other wanted out. Painful words of independence rang out from a heart determined to have its way, "I need my space. I need to be free. I need my independence."

It doesn't have to be restricted to a marriage. The cry from the corrupt human heart screams for independence across the board. We may say it isn't so, but that only reveals a lack of true understanding of the maverick heart of sinful humanity.

Our first parents wonderfully embraced dependence on God not independence from God. The GENESIS account sadly paints the ugly picture. Go to the tree, eat the fruit and welcome to the misery of human independence and goodbye

WALKING WITH THE MASTER

to the glorious freedom of dependence on our benevolent God.

Nothing changes. If I choose the pattern of Adam and Eve, the path of independence is travelled and the results are never good despite what I think or want. Independence may provide a quick sensual experience, but it eventually leaves the heart wrecked and solely pained.

Our Lord Jesus Christ came to destroy human independence and reestablish our rightful position of dependence on God. Which position do you find yourself today? Jesus said, "I came that they might have life and have it more abundantly" (JOHN 10:10). The very essence of true life, abundant life is Godward dependence not human independence.

DID YOU KNOW?



We are very familiar with the great old hymn, AMAZING GRACE, but do you know much about its author John Newton?

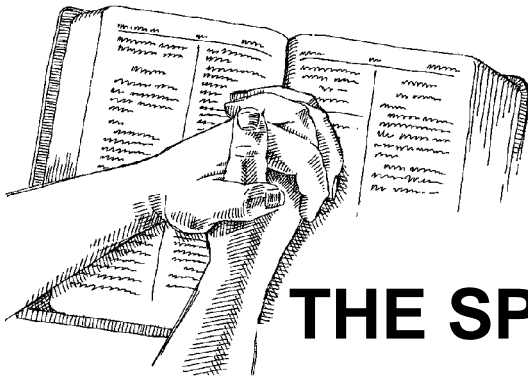
- When caught attempting to leave the Royal Navy, into which he had been impressed against his will, Newton was whipped 24 times with a cat-o'-nine-tails. This was actually the lighter punishment for going absent without leave. He could have been hung for desertion.
- The hymn AMAZING GRACE was written to accompany a sermon Newton prepared from I CHRONICLES 17:16-17.
- The original title of AMAZING GRACE, as it first appeared in his Olney Hymns, was "Faith's Review and Expectation." Not quite as eloquent sounding as AMAZING GRACE.
- In June 1775, after news of the first shots of the War of American Independence broke, Newton's congregation held an impromptu early-morning prayer meeting. Newton reported that between 150 and 200 people turned out at five o'clock in the morning for an hour of song and prayer.
- John Wesley recognized God's hand on Newton stating, "You appear to be designed by Divine Providence for an healer of breaches, a reconciler of honest but prejudiced men, and an uniter of the children of God that are needlessly divided from each other."

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THE SPIRIT OF DEPENDENCE

QBC HAPPENINGS

DECEMBER 2007

- Young at Heart Christmas Dinner and program will be held *Tuesday, December 11th*
- QBC Christmas Musical will be held *Sunday evening December 16th*
- No Men's Fellowship this month due to Christmas

JANUARY 2008

- Young at Heart Fellowship will be held Tuesday, January 8, 2008
- QBC Annual Meeting will be held Friday, January 25, 2008 at 7:00 p.m.
- Men's Fellowship will be held Tuesday, January 29, 2008 at 6:45 p.m.

THE QUIDNESSETT

Banner

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