

THE PASTOR'S STUDY

Exercising The Mind || Igniting The Heart || Preparing The Hands

A free quarterly paper for rural pastors.

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WELCOME TO THE PASTOR'S STUDY

This magazine is for pastors who are studying Scripture in order to preach to their churches. Dr. Joel Beeke opens this issue with a vision for preaching (pages 5-8). From there, the focus is on Genesis 3. The details of the text are summarized in “The Story of the Fall” (pages 12-18). Dr. Nelson Were explains “The First Gospel Promise” found in this chapter (pages 21-26). In “Dining with the Devil” (pages 27-29), I explore some connections with the rest of the Bible. Pastor Joshua Muthukya’s closing devotional shows the meaning of Satan’s defeat (pages 49-51).

Pastors will also benefit from other practical articles in this issue. Dr. Paul Ferguson summarizes the Bible’s teaching about abortion (pages 36-40), and Pastor Tonny Karwa explains the biblical pattern for teaching ministry (pages 41-45). Dr. Michael Haykin offers an inspiring account of the life of Onesiphorus (pages 46-48).

Look out for some special features for preachers. On pages 9-11, you will find some suggested steps for preparing to preach this text. On pages 19-20, the “points for preachers” may help you with an outline. On pages 30-32, you will find some notes and questions to help you get started on your sermons.

I encourage you to use these studies on Genesis 3 in your church, perhaps with a series of sermons on the subject. If we can help you further develop your sermons on this subject, please get in touch (more info on this on page 52).

Sincerely, Pastor Aaron Dunlop

EDITORIAL: “PREACHING THAT CAN DO SOULS GOOD”

Dr. Joel Beeke

I am honoured to write a guest editorial for the inaugural issue of this expository quarterly magazine, *The Pastor’s Study*. I pray God that this much-needed periodical will provide much practical guidance for a large number of hard-working pastors in their studies. In this short editorial, I would like to focus on one piece of practical advice: Each biblical, expository sermon we preach ought to aim to expound doctrinal, experiential, and practical truth that can do souls good.

Sound preachers from the Reformation era onward have underscored that biblical preaching must combine three essential elements—doctrinal, experiential, and practical. This subject was discussed by John Newton (1725–1807) and other evangelical ministers at one of their Eclectic Society

meetings in London in 1798. John Clayton (1754–1843), an English independent minister, raised the question, “What are we to understand by doctrinal, experimental, and practical preaching?” He pointed out that doctrinal preaching by itself tends to produce argumentative thinkers, experiential preaching can overemphasize our inward feelings to the neglect of truth and action, and practical preaching may become man-centered and self-righteous, belittling Christ and the Gospel. Clayton said that all three components must have their place in preaching, quoting Thomas Bradbury as saying, “Religion is doctrinal in the Bible; experimental in the heart; and practical in the life.”

John Goode (1738–1790) said, “In the members of our flock, there would be sight, feeling, and obedience; and to produce these, all three—doctrinal, experimental, and practical preaching—must be combined in their proper proportion.” Newton declared the organic and vital unity of these three, saying,

“Doctrine is the trunk, experience the branches, practice the fruit.” He warned that without the doctrine of Christ we say nothing more than pagan philosophers.

Thomas Scott (1747–1821) also warned that there is a false way to handle each dimension of preaching: doctrines may not be biblical truth or may be only half-truths, which effectively are lies; experience may follow human prescriptions or be based on visions, impressions, or man-made schemes; we may substitute mere morality for evangelical or Gospel-empowered obedience.

In conclusion, before we leave our study and head for the pulpit, we should make sure that our biblical, Reformed preaching aims to bring together the doctrinal, experiential, and practical dimensions as one unified whole in faithfulness to the particular text we are called upon to expound for each particular sermon. Though we must humbly admit that in our sermons we often do not attain the kind of

balance and completeness we strive for, we must stress that we cannot neglect any aspect of preaching—doctrinal, experiential, and practical—without damaging the others, for each one flows naturally out of the others.

Joel R. Beeke is a minister in the Heritage Reformed Churches in Grand Rapids, Michigan (USA) and President of Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, where he is also the professor of Systematic Theology and Homiletics. He is author of many books and articles.

PREPARING TO PREACH ON GENESIS 3

Pastor Aaron Dunlop

One of the keys to good preaching is good preparation. Here are some suggestions for preachers getting ready to preach from Genesis 3.

1. Read the story over and over

Genesis 3 is a story, and you need to know the story well in order to preach it well. It would be good to read it through at least 5 times as part of your sermon preparation. This will help you get the flow of the story, identify themes and repeated words or ideas. It will also help when you come to read the passage in public (especially if you have been reading it aloud).

2. Practice telling the story

Tell the story to your children, your wife, or a friend. This will help you to see if you know the story well enough to tell it without notes. It will also show if your children are bored or excited

by how you are telling it. This is good preparation for preaching to a congregation. Key points and highlights in the story will come to light by telling the story in this way.

3. Outline the story

Preparing an outline is a great way to organize your thoughts. It will also help you think about how to use your time: if you have four points to make in 30 minutes, each point should take you about 5-7 minutes. An outline will also help you address the needs of different people in the congregation. In Genesis 3, one point could be mostly for husbands, and another mostly for wives. You may be able to get more than one sermon from the story. Perhaps your outline will become a plan for a sermon series.

4. Make notes

Prepare a page with two columns. One side will be for notes about the text, and the other will be for ideas about your sermon. Use the example on page 12.

5. Ask the right questions

Look for the list of questions on page 13.

6. Compare your thoughts with others

In this magazine, there are several studies of Genesis 3. These may help you get some ideas for preaching.

7. Pray

Pray for God to give you insight into the text, and into the needs of your audience.

(Ephesians 1:18-19)

THE STORY OF THE FALL

Pastor Aaron Dunlop

When God created Adam and his wife, he put them in a beautiful garden called Eden. It was “God’s Garden,” (Ezekiel 28:13), without sin, and as the name suggests a place “enriched” or “made abundant,” where Adam could live in perfect communion with God.

Adam had everything he needed in the garden; every tree was beautiful to look at and good for food. In the middle of the garden were two trees (Genesis 2:9); one was the tree of life, from which he was allowed to eat. The other was the tree “of the knowledge of good and evil.” This tree was also good to look at and good for food, but it was forbidden. To eat from this tree, God told Adam, would be to eat death (Genesis 2:18). With this instruction, God put Adam and his wife in a place where they would have to choose to worship God and

reject sin, or to choose Satan and reject God. Adam chose to reject God.

At the time we meet Adam and Eve in the Garden, Satan had already fallen and taken a third of the angels with him (Revelation 12:4). Not satisfied with his revolt in heaven, Satan turned his attention to earth. If Satan succeeded in bringing down Adam, the fountain head of humanity, he would destroy the entire human race and ruin the whole creation (Romans 8:22).

Now we turn our attention to the story of the fall in Genesis 3.

Satan's Temptation (verses 1-5)

In his attack on humanity, Satan chose a snake, already known for its shrewd and cunning ways. Satan engaged the woman in conversation undermining the goodness of God, casting doubt on the word of God, and convincing the woman, not only that there would be no consequences for eating, but that

she would in fact be like God to know good and evil. He walked our first parents into a position where sin was not only convenient, but attractive and necessary.

Adam's Fall (verses 6-8)

It's interesting that God was silent while Satan worked out his plan with Adam and the woman. God has a bigger plan. But Adam was also silent as he stood alongside his wife. He had no plan, and he was responsible to keep the garden safe and to protect his wife. Adam, however, became convinced of Satan's evil plan and rebelled against God in full knowledge of what he was doing (1 Timothy 2:14).

The record of Scripture very simply says that the woman ate of the tree and then gave to her husband, and he ate. He discovered, however, that sin bound him in a crippling sense of guilt. The guilt intensifies for Adam and his wife, not only in the acknowledgement of their nakedness (verse 6) but to the haunting sound of God in the garden (verse 8).

Something had changed, not in the outward appearance of the garden or in their bodies, but in their own heart and mind. They had died spiritually.

Still, God did not approach them until they had attempted to cover their nakedness with aprons of fig leaves. They discovered how insufficient their own efforts were. In fact, they discovered that not all the trees of the garden could hide them from the all-seeing eye of God.

God's Response (verses 9-19)

From verse nine we read of God's response to this act of war. Dealing with Adam and his wife as image-bearers, God gave them the opportunity to think through what had happened to them by a series of probing questions (verses 9-13). The fig leaves could not hide Adam from his intense sense of guilt. Nor could the trees in the garden, as God called to him personally, with the question "where are you?" This was a searching

question. God was not searching for Adam, for God knew where Adam was. The question forces Adam to search himself and to reason through how he found himself in this situation with God (Isaiah 1:18).

In the end, Satan was cursed with absolute destruction. He will lick the dust (verses 14-15, compare Psalm 72:9, Isaiah 49:23). For humanity, God showed mercy and promised to send a Saviour, the Seed of the woman, who would defeat Satan and destroy death. They will, however, bear the consequences for their sin, and the earth will also groan under the weight of sin (verses 16-19, compare Romans 8:18-22).

The First Believers (verses 20-24)

The last section finished with the declaration that Adam would return to dust (verse 19). Remarkably, however, despite this promise of death, Adam has a sense of hope in the Gospel. Three events followed that point to the hope of life in Christ. First, Adam immediately

named his wife, “The mother of all living” (verse 20). By giving his wife this name, Adam first declared his faith in the Gospel promise, that the Seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent. But Adam was also rebuilding his home. His wife, previously unprotected by Adam, had just been deceived. Adam now shows that he will care for his wife and lead the home in worship.

Second, God clothed Adam and Eve in coats of skin (verse 21). God showed Adam that his own attempts to recover from the fall were insufficient. He needs God to intervene. Furthermore, the use of animal skins is important. By killing an animal as a substitute, God pointed Adam and Eve to the sacrifice of Christ, who would be their substitute, and by whose death their sin would be covered.

Third, in an act of divine grace, God forced Adam and Eve out of the garden, so that they would not eat of the tree of life (verses 22-24). If Adam had eaten of the tree of life at that

point, he would have lived forever under the power of sin. Adam is not allowed to the tree of life now, he has no right to it, and God will preserve him from it. Only after he has trusted in Christ (verse 15) and endured the thorns and thistles (verses 17-19), will Adam be given access to the tree of life (Revelation 2:7). Then he would have both “life and immortality” (2 Timothy 1:10).

Aaron Dunlop was a pastor for many years in Canada before ministering in Kenya. He holds a degree in theology from Geneva Reformed Seminary in Greenville, South Carolina, USA. Aaron is the director of The Krapf Project and now lives in UK with his wife and five children. He blogs at thinkGOSPEL.com.

POINTS FOR PREACHERS

Who do you trust?

1. Trusting Satan (verses 1-7)
2. Trusting Ourselves (verses 8-13)
3. Trusting God (verses 14-20)

A War of Words

1. Satan's words and man's response (verses 1-7)
2. Man's words and God's response (verses 8-13)
3. God's words and man's response (verses 14-20)

Men and Women

1. *God made the world with order.* Humans have rule over animals (Psalm 8). Men are to lead their wives (1 Corinthians 11:8-9, 1 Timothy 2:11-12). Creatures are under God's rule (Revelation 4:11).

2. *Satan overturned God's order.* An animal (the snake) ruled humans, the woman ruled her husband, and creatures tried to rule over God.

3. *God reimposed his order in punishment.* The snake would be crushed under a human heel, the woman punished with pain in childbirth and tension in marriage, the man with pain in protecting and providing.

4. *God restores his order in grace.* Christ changes husbands and wives to love, lead and submit (Ephesians 5:22-33)

THE FIRST GOSPEL PROMISE

Dr. Nelson Were

The book of Genesis is the book of beginnings. In the creation story we have the beginning of earth, solar system, human life, marriage, etc.

In Genesis 3 we have the beginning of sin, and then the beginning of death, pain, and suffering. God's design was a peaceful, harmonious relationship in the garden, both between humanity and God and between the man and his wife.

But sin ruined this and affected every faculty of man and every area of his life. In fact, Paul tells us that by this one man and his fall, "sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men" (Romans 5:12).

In Genesis 3, we also have the beginning of the Gospel, the first Gospel promise. In these

verses the Lord gives us hope for redemption, a way out of death and destruction.

Salvation without human help

God's promise shows us that salvation will be accomplished without any contribution of man.

There are three parts to this promise:

1. The Destruction of Satan God turned to the serpent, and without any question, dialogue, or debate (as he had with Adam and Eve), He cursed Satan, cast him down to go on his belly and eat dust (verse 14). The tempter (Satan) is doomed to be defeated by the Redeemer.

2. The Birth of a Saviour The promise of the "Seed of the woman" (Christ), is the first promise of the Messiah, and it points to the virgin birth of Christ. As Paul points out in Galatians 4, when the fullness of time was come, God sent his Son, born of the virgin

(without the agency or contribution of man), to redeem men that were under the curse.

3. The Work of the Saviour He will take on himself our human nature. The phrase “Seed of the woman” points to the incarnation of Christ (see John 1:14; Romans 1:3, Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:15-17, 22; 1 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 2:14-15).

He will take on himself the punishment of our sin and suffer and die for us. The bruising of his heel points to the suffering and sacrifice of Christ (see also John 1:29-30, Philippians 2:5-11, 1 Peter 2:24-25 and 4:1-2).

He will defeat and conquer Satan as a human, in the flesh. The bruising of the serpent’s head points to the victory of Christ. The wound inflicted on Satan will be fatal (see also Matthew 12:18-21, Hebrews 2:14, 1 John 3:8).

Salvation Anchored in God

The second thing we learn from God’s promise

is that salvation is anchored in the nature and attributes of God (3:16-19).

The story of salvation displays both God's justice against sin and His mercy towards the sinner. God did not curse man, as He had cursed the serpent. Instead, God cursed "the ground for man's sake" (3:17).

Justice demands that humanity bears the consequences of sin, but in mercy there is a door open for redemption. Mercy shines out in the midst of judgement.

Adam continues with the work God had given him, but his work will be with toil and sweat all the days of his life (3:17-19). Eve too is to continue being a help to her husband (2:20), but she will conceive and bear children in pain, and her desire will be to her husband (3:16).

Let us praise God for His salvation. He has destroyed Satan; He has delivered us from

destruction and given us life and immortality in the Gospel (1 Timothy 1:10).

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QUOTABLE

Donald Grey Barnhouse:

“The battle in the garden of Eden, though on the surface a victory for Satan, was in reality the beginning of his ultimate rout.”

Erwin Lutzer:

“The biblical portrait of Satan is that he does indeed have great power, but that it is always limited by the purposes and plans of God.”

Frederick S. Leahy:

“Nowhere in Scripture is Satan presented as victorious.”

DINING WITH THE DEVIL

Pastor Aaron Dunlop

Some of the first words that Jesus spoke to Peter after the resurrection were “come and dine” (John 21:12). In recording this incident, John makes the point specifically that Jesus “revealed himself in this way” (John 21:1). In other words, the invitation to “come and dine,” was more than provision for hungry fishermen. By inviting Peter to “come and dine” Jesus is reaffirming his love for Peter after the epic denial (John 18:27), and he did this by eating with him.

Throughout Scripture the act of eating together is associated with:

- fellowship (Genesis 43:16, John 21:12)
- intimacy (Song of Solomon 5:1-2)
- friendship (Genesis 14:18; Luke 14:12, 15:2)
- union or participation (John 6:54-58)

- and joyful celebration (Matthew 22:1-14, Luke 15:23)

This list is associated with joyful and positive relations. In the story of the fall in Genesis 3, however, when Adam ate of the forbidden tree, it was disobedience against God and marked his communion with the Devil. He became the devil's friend. Adam became an enemy of God (Romans 5:10).

God responded to this act of cosmic rebellion with the same theme of eating. First, Satan would eat dust, a reference to utter defeat, humiliation, and destruction (verses 14-15, Psalm 72:5).

Second, those who trusted God would eat of the "bread of life" (John 6:48). In dining with the Devil Adam had eaten death. Now Jesus has come and invites us to eat of Himself, the bread of life.

Dining with the devil was not the joyous celebration Adam and Eve thought it would be. It brought misery, pain, and death. Eating of the bread of life brings life and peace (Malachi 2:5; Romans 8:6). Jesus invites us to remember this often at the Lord's Table. But we do this in the hope of that final and ultimate celebration of the marriage supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:9), when we will be brought into uninterrupted fellowship with the Saviour in the new Eden.

Paradise will be restored!

PREACHER'S WORKSHOP: EXEGETICAL NOTES

(Notes on the text, words, and grammar)

Vs. 1 — “subtle” crafty, cunning. Can be negative (as here, or Job 5:12, 15:5) or can be positive (Proverbs 12:16, 14:8).

PREACHER'S WORKSHOP: PREACHING NOTES

(Points for explanation and application)

Satan's craftiness (see 2 Corinthians 2:11),
apply this to congregation.

Vs. 4 — Satan questions God's Word (he is the
father of lies John 8:44).

QUESTIONS

Here are some questions you should ask as you prepare your sermon. They will help you focus on the most important matters. You might choose to mention these questions in your sermon, or you might not. Some suggested answers are provided.

1. What does the story teach about God?

The story in Genesis 3 teaches that God is sovereign even over Satan, and that he is merciful even to sinners.

2. What does the story teach us about ourselves?

This story teaches that we tend to believe the evil's lies and rebel against the Lord. It also teaches that we are aware of our sin.

3. What does the story teach about Christ?

This story teaches that he would be born of a woman, to give freedom to fallen sinners, to defeat Satan, and to destroy death.

4. What does this story tell us to do?

This story tells us to grieve over our sin, to resist the Devil, to trust God's promise of salvation, and to hope for heaven when the curse will be undone.

What would you add to these questions and answers?

APPLICATIONS

Application is an important part of every sermon. Show your hearers how the Bible's teaching affects them personally. Show them what God wants them to do and how God wants them to change. It is best to apply your sermon specifically to different kinds of people. Here is an example:

The Lost

Genesis 3 shows God's wrath against your sin: you will die. It also shows God's mercy to sinners: if you believe on the Lord Jesus, you will have eternal life.

The Lazy

Genesis 3 shows that you must be careful to watch for the danger of temptation: Satan will sneak in unexpectedly. Husbands should diligently guard their families.

The Weak

Genesis 3 shows that even the strongest

Christian can fall, and that even the worst sin can be restored by God's grace.

The Wandering

Genesis 3 shows the terrible consequences of leaving God's promises and commandments. Rebellion leads to death. This story also shows how tempting it is to be friends with evildoers, and that this friendship leads to warfare with God (James 4:4).

RIGHTS START IN THE WOMB

Dr. Paul Ferguson

Abortion is one of the greatest tragedies of our time. The most dangerous place in the world today for a child is inside a mother's womb! When a woman says she has a right to do what she wants with her own body, we must ask: Where did you get that right? All rights of humanity are rooted in the rights bestowed by the Creator, according to the Bible, the only objective source of authority. God is against abortion, the Church has always been against it, and we must also be against it.

Consider the following biblical principles of life.

1. God is Sovereign

God is the Creator, and he alone has the sovereign right to give and take away life (compare Acts 17:28, Daniel 5:23, Job 1:21, Ecclesiastes 3:2, 11). To take a life is to strike a blow against God's sovereignty.

2. Children are God's Gifts

The giving of a child (Genesis 25:21; Ruth 4:13) is God's sovereign gift. He personally creates every life, "Behold, all souls are mine" (Ezekiel 18:4). No baby is a mistake, it is a product of divine purpose.

3. God Made us in His Image

Every child is made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27), which means that every human has the capability of rational thought, personality, and moral responsibility. Therefore, each child has great theological significance. To take the life of another human being is to violate that unique image.

4. Unborn Children are Persons

The unborn child is not a "thing" but a person. The Bible never refers to the unborn child as a "foetus" or an "embryo" but a person. To be pregnant is to be "with child," not with that which might become a child. The reality of personhood is never measured in the Bible by

age, stage of development, or mental, physical, or social skills.

In Luke 1:41 we read of the unborn “babe” (John) being involved in spiritual worship. Spirit-filled worship by the babe in the womb shows that the unborn child has personality.

Interestingly, the word translated “babe” is the Greek word *brephos*, which is used in Luke 18:15 and 1 Peter 2:2 for a living baby that has been born.

5. Life Begins at Conception

Life begins in the womb from conception. God cares for the child in the womb (Psalm 139:13-16). The Psalmist also described the person in the womb, as not something that might become David, but someone who was David! (See also Job 10:8-12, Isaiah 49:1-5, Jeremiah 1:4-5, Luke 1:40-44, Galatians 1:15). God elected Jacob over his twin Esau while in the womb (Romans 9:11) and the Holy Spirit

records the conflict of these two persons in the womb before birth (Genesis 25:22).

6. Murder is Sin

The taking of the life of a human by another human is clearly limited in Scripture to very specific circumstances, e.g. warfare, capital punishment, self-defence etc. Biblical theologians recognise that abortion is murder i.e. unjustified killing of human life. This is a transgression of the sixth commandment, “thou shalt not kill” (Exodus 20:13). The penal code for killing the unborn child in the womb in ancient Israel reflects God’s view of the sin of abortion (Exodus 21:22-23).

The devil has a murderous spirit and a murderous agenda. “He was a murderer from the beginning” (John 8:44). Killing children has always been part of pagan religions, and has never been part of biblical Christianity. God has a special care for children (compare Matthew 18:10 and 19:14).

Conclusion

Abortion is the immoral killing of the defenceless and the innocent in the womb. It is designed to take life and not merely prevent life from occurring. God hates the shedding of innocent blood (Proverbs 6:16), and the rights of a baby start in the womb.

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THE TEACHING MINISTRY OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

Pastor Tonny Karwa

“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting.” (Ephesians 4:11-14)

When an individual comes to the saving knowledge of Christ, they are like a new-born baby who must grow to maturity. The New Testament speaks of this growth and maturing often (E.g. Ephesians 4:15, Colossians 1:28, 1

Peter 2:2), but the apostle Paul speaks of this in terms of “learning Christ” (In Ephesians 4:20-21). This begins when we come to faith, but it doesn’t stop there. Learning Christ isn’t an event. It is a lifelong process.

A Christian, then, is a “disciple,” one who is under the discipline of Christ, to learn from Him, and then to go out and live for Him.

So, how does a Christian “learn Christ”?

The Bible emphasises the teaching of the local church as the God-ordained means of Christian growth, and God has gifted the church with pastors and teachers for this purpose (Ephesians 4:11). The pastor must be able to shepherd the flock and to do the work of an evangelist (2 Timothy 4:5). But he must first be able to teach (1 Timothy 3:2, 2 Timothy 2:24). It is important to underscore this in a culture where the teaching ministry receives the least attention.

The Priority of Teaching

In his preaching and teaching ministry, the pastor instructs the people in the word of God. This involves explaining, expounding, expositing the meaning of the Word of God, and applying it to their spiritual, moral, and practical life. All these words (with the prefix ex, “out of,” “from”) indicate that in teaching, the pastor brings out the meaning of the biblical text. Preaching however, is more than instructing the people. Preaching demands a response.

Think of this in three words: revelation, relevance, and response.

Or you can ask three simple questions: What is God saying? Why is He saying it? What does He want us to do?

The Purpose of Teaching

This brings us to the purpose of teaching. As I’ve said it is more than mere instruction. The pastor wants to accomplish something by his

teaching. Let's consider a threefold purpose of the teaching ministry in any local church.

1. Growth

Christianity is living relationship. The apostle uses the picture of living things, like animals and plants and growth as an indicator of life and growth. The Christian is to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18).

2. Grounding

In Ephesians 4:14 the apostle uses another picture to describe the Christian experience. It is a picture of a ship that is being storm-tossed about by “waves” and “wind.” His point here is that Christians are vulnerable to deceptive and crafty teachings as ships are to the waves and wind on a stormy sea. The Christian needs something to ground him, like an anchor, and that anchor is provided by God—“pastors and teachers” (Ephesians 4:11).

3. *Guidance*

The Psalmist speaks of the Word as a lamp and a light for the traveller in the darkness of the night (Psalm 119:105). How will the Christian living in this dark world, make decisions in life? How will he have a marriage that glorifies Christ, build a home, bring up children in the instruction of the Lord or relate to an unbelieving boss? All of these must be addressed diligently from the pulpit and God's word must be opened, expounded, and applied to the life of the believer. Brethren, this is our job as pastors and teachers.

Tonny Karwa is the pastor of Grace Baptist Church, Kisumu, and a missionary with Heart Cry Missionary Society. Before his call to full-time ministry Tonny studied Mechanical Engineering at Kenyatta University in Nairobi, and theology at Trinity Baptist College in Nairobi.

ONESIPHORUS: THE MODEL OF A SPIRIT-FILLED MAN

Dr. Michael A.G. Haykin

During the final days of his life, Paul found himself a prisoner of the Roman Empire. He underwent a trial in Rome for being a Christian, and though sentence was not immediately passed—possibly his being a Roman citizen helped him—he knew that the final sentence would be execution by the sword. You can see these details in 2 Timothy 4, which Paul wrote to his close friend, Timothy, who was far away in Ephesus. In 2 Timothy 1, Paul urged Timothy not to be ashamed of the Gospel and stated that he himself, solely because of grace and the Spirit's power (2 Timothy 1:9), is not ashamed of Christ and his Gospel (2 Timothy 1:12). And to further encourage Timothy to trust in the Spirit's power he gave him the example of Onesiphorus, a Christian brother from Ephesus, whom Timothy knew well. Unlike two elders from the churches in Asia

Minor (what is now Turkey), whose names were Phygelus and Hermogenes and who were ashamed to be associated with Paul the “criminal” (2 Timothy 1:15; 2:9), Onesiphorus “was not ashamed of [Paul’s] chains.” Unlike an earlier imprisonment in Rome, when Paul lived under house arrest in a locale known to many (Acts 28:30), Paul appears to have been imprisoned in a cell that was not easily found, for Onesiphorus had to expend much energy in the search for the whereabouts of the Apostle (2 Timothy 1:17). And when he found Paul, he was not content with a single visit. He visited Paul again and again. And each time he did so, Onesiphorus risked arrest and imprisonment with the Christian leader. But Onesiphorus was “not ashamed” to befriend Paul (2 Timothy 1:16). Why? If we look at 2 Timothy 1:7, which tells us that the Holy Spirit who indwells believers is a Spirit of “power and love and self-control,” one can only conclude that Onesiphorus’ courageous love for the Apostle Paul was because of the power of the indwelling Spirit. Onesiphorus stands as a

model of the Spirit-filled, Spirit-empowered believer. Moreover, Paul is not ashamed to own that Onesiphorus refreshed him. At a basic level, such refreshment would have involved food and other means of practical help. But at a deeper level it would have entailed the Spirit-given joys of Christian fellowship and Christian love. As the German Christian author, Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906–45) has rightly noted: “The physical presence of other Christians is a source of incomparable joy and strength to the believer.” All that we know about Onesiphorus can be found in a few verses in 2 Timothy, but he stands as a fabulous example of the Spirit-filled believer.

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DEVOTIONAL: A DISARMED ENEMY

Rev. Joshua Muthukya

“He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.” (Genesis 3:15)

“And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly.” (Romans 16:20)

The Christian walk is neither easy nor smooth, due to personal sin, worldly opposition, and the attacks of our enemy Satan. His various names (adversary, deceiver, enemy, dragon, accuser) suggest his evil nature and wicked purpose. Satan “walks about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8).

In the midst of this battle the Christian cries out, how long shall it be till this struggle is over, till you silence the enemy once and for all? We rest, however, on the promise of God to crush Satan, which gives us hope and strength to endure the fight. We can bear a

battle better when we have a clear vision of the scope of the war. So where should our eyes be fixed?

Look back to the promise of God in Genesis 3:15, that the seed of the woman (Christ) shall crush the head of the serpent (Satan). God has promised to deal with our enemy, and his promises are powerful antidotes for our ailing spirit.

Look to the work of Jesus Christ. In the cross, Christ destroyed Satan's work (1 John 3:8). When Jesus died on the cross, he removed our debt of sin. Christ has also removed the power of Satan over us. Through Christ, God has destroyed Satan's grip on you, so that sin may molest but you are no longer a slave to it (Romans 6:5-7).

Look further away to the glorious future, when sin and Satan will have an end (Revelation 20:10). Satan and his cohorts are destined for eternal destruction on the day of judgment.

We will even participate in this act of judgment (1 Corinthians 6:3). This is the hope of a glorious future when the “God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly” (Romans 16:20). What an encouragement to fight!

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