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Keystone BAPTIST



THE ONE BIBLICAL HERMENEUTIC

SHEPHERD'S STAFF – July, 2017

Shepherd's Staff is prepared by Clay Nuttall, D. Min.

(Editor's note: Brother Clay Nuttall was promoted to Glory on September 5, 2017, faithfully serving his Savior. We miss him greatly. In his last days Clay was very burdened to be able to finish his book before the Lord called him Home. He emailed me and asked for prayer to accomplish that goal. God answered his prayer.)

The following is a pre-publication “sneak peek” at the book, *The Normal Hermeneutic: The One Biblical system*. The authors are Hani Hana, an Egyptian national, and Clay Nuttall, who prepares the Shepherd's Staff. Have fun.

PREFACE

We have discussed the need for a book on hermeneutics, a book that is foundational and that would be consistent with the normal use of language. After observing students who finish degrees in theology and still hold to theological error, we sought to find out why. The answer became very clear: their interpretation wasn't the problem, varied as it might be. The problem was that they had no authoritative system of interpretation.

After searching through the plethora of humanly generated systems, it was evident that a lot of systems will produce many conflicting interpretations. Did God intend for us to have such theological confusion? Is the text of holy scripture so weak that it could not sustain the one interpretation that God had placed in a text? Was there a single system that would, with major passages, always provide the same interpretation that everyone could arrive at? The problem wasn't that God has not given us the answer, but that man was always tempted to add to and subtract from the text.

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EDITOR

Rev. Paul J. Connor

LAYOUT & DESIGN

Anita L. Fordyce

State Representative's Comments Rev. Paul J. Connor



Thankful Hearts

Have you taken the time lately to thank God for the privilege of praying? Prayer is a powerful tool and the scripture says in James 5:16, "*Confess your faults*

one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Then in Philippians 4:6 it instructs us to "*Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God*", and also in Colossians 4:2, where it says to "*Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.*"

Before I was saved I would recite memorized prayers over and over and over. There was absolutely no power and there were no results – just vain repetition. I did not understand the truth instructed in Matthew 6:7, "*But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.*" There are many attempts to get the attention of God by repeating words over and over as in Roman Catholicism and other religions, but it is wasted time. When I left Mt. Angel Seminary and the preparation to become a RC priest I was overwhelmed when, as a now born again saint of God with my sins washed with the shed blood of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, I saw the power in prayer and the results as God would

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From the Parsonage Window



A GREAT WOMAN

by Anita Fordyce

My favorite Bible women are often unnamed. Among my favorites are those who showed us how to practice hospitality.

The Bible says that we are to be hospitable and in Eastern culture it was a sacred duty. I Peter 4:9 says, "Use hospitality one to another without grudging" It was also a guiding principle of the early church. It should be today as well.

In II Kings 4:8-37, we read about a "great woman" who is a powerful example. "*And, it fell on a day that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman; and she constrained him to eat bread. And she said unto her husband, Behold now, I perceive that this an holy man of God, which passeth by us continually. Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool and a candlestick; and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he should turn in thither.*"

Bible scholars agree that this "great woman" was probably not only a godly woman but also one who was wealthy. She probably lived on a main highway between Samaria and Carmel where there was a school of prophets--a Bible school. After seeing them pass by her house day after day, she approached her husband about sacrificing a cherished part of their home. He agreed and they prepared a guest room and furnished it for Elisha with three articles which have spiritual implications,

I. A bed. It speaks of rest--a necessity. We must rest for our physical bodies, but we also need rest from our burden of sin and guilt. If we don't have rest for our souls by setting aside a time with the Lord to pray and seek forgiveness,

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The answer to the problem has been clearly established. It was in the correct use of all language in the plain, clear statements of the text. Following this path, this book -*The Normal Hermeneutic* - only deals with that one system of language that all literature follows. The Bible is literature, and it is the one book of interest for us in this discussion; but it is a book like no other. God is the author of this text. The Holy Spirit produced it, using human writers. Every word and thought, hence the whole, is inspired, reliable, sufficient, and authoritative. There is no higher authority. Anything scripture speaks to is the final word on the subject. Only one biblical hermeneutical system rises from the Bible text. It is the normal, clear, plain, consistent, literal use of language. The faithful, consistent use of the normal hermeneutic is a scientific process, and it is mathematical. When this system is utilized, it will produce the same answer every time for everyone, unless it is corrupted by human insertion.

Every doctrinal error has its roots in an erroneous system of interpretation or some corruption of the one biblical system. To practice the normal hermeneutic, one must pay attention to the rules that guard all literature. The focus in this work will be on the correct use of grammar, context, and the historical setting of the text. These are rules that are used not only for this specific genre, but for all literature. They are identified in this discussion, as is the proper use of application once the normal hermeneutic has produced that one interpretation of a text.

The nature of this material is foundational. Philosophical discussions are identified only for the purpose of reference, and they have no real authority. We are interested in the clear, plain statement of scripture. This is the real authority. Once a reader leaves the plain, clear text, the temptation to rewrite it is always present.

One has to ask why it is that various learned scholars go to the same text and come away with a dozen different interpretations. It is particularly troubling because many of these commentators claim to use the same system of interpretation. That simply isn't possible. Intellectuals argue that there is no such thing as exactitude in the matter of interpretation of the Bible text. The Biblicist demands that the inspiration of scripture by careful oversight of the Holy Spirit is a verbal, plenary product. The Bible is inerrant. Everything placed in Holy Writ is pure and correct. God cannot be accused of error in the writing of the text. It is fair to ask if God gave us the tools and ability to get out of the text that very same truth that God placed there. This, however, is the point of *The Normal Hermeneutic*. God did make it possible for us to draw from the Bible the very truths He inserted therein. It would be a scandalous thing for God to leave the Bible student without the ability to know exactly what God said and also to know that He meant what He said.



Upcoming PARBC Events

Spring Conference at Union Baptist
Church, Kittanning
April 9 & 10, 2018

Youth Retreat and Talents for Christ at
Calvary Baptist Church, Bloomsburg
April 20-21, 2018

Fall Conference at Marsh Creek Fellowship Baptist
Church, Wellsboro
September 17-19, 2018

Churches Searching for a Pastor

First Baptist Church – Corry

Springside Baptist Church – Distant

Garden Heights Baptist Church – Erie

Calvary Baptist Church – Union City

Grace Baptist Church - Whitehall

Worthington Baptist Church – Worthington



*May the Lord Bless each and
every one of you
In this Christms Season as we
Celebrate our Savior's birth and
Best wishes as we serve Him in this
coming New Year!*

Paul & Judy Connor

Enthusiasm is the Remedy for Mediocrity

By Dr. Lawrence D. Hufhand
Copied from the Hufhand Report



Recently I came across a rather long political essay about the incredible danger of mediocrity. It was written by a South African by the name of Gareth van Onselen. Although its emphasis was political in nature, it has powerful implications in every area of life, especially our 'spiritual life.'

It was John Stuart Mill who said, "*The general tendency of things throughout the world is to render mediocrity the ascendant power among mankind.*"

The author of the essay said "*There is a disease coursing through our society which is fuelled by apathy, legitimized by popularity and fostered by indifference, and that disease is mediocrity.*" He further stated, "*it is a dangerous threat that lurks below the surface of every institution*" and I might add, every profession and increasingly, it is manifesting itself in every aspect of human life.

Mediocrity truly is a disease, and as such, it has infected our whole society in the same manner as a sickness spreads and debilitates a whole population. It is a disease that can be identified; its symptoms can be reduced or suppressed but, like a virus, it can never be eliminated. In 1918 a strain of flu virus spread thru the world killing well over 40 million people, with one third of Europe's population totally wiped out, before it was finally contained, but that flu virus is still alive and well, lurking in some corner of the world just waiting for another opportunity to do its dirty work. Mediocrity is like that. It can be identified and countered, but never eliminated; however, if mediocrity is ignored, its contamination can be so extensive that it can and will destroy everything in its path. The power of mediocrity resides primarily in two things: its

ability to self-replicate and its ability to dominate public thought.

So what is its remedy? Curing it is impossible, but it can be resisted and contained and that containment resides in what I like to call: **Enthusiasm**. I love enthusiasm. I love enthusiasm more than knowledge; I love

enthusiasm more than stability; more than brute strength; more than talent; more than good looks; more than personality;

"There is a disease coursing through our society which is fuelled by apathy, legitimized by popularity and fostered by indifference, and that disease is mediocrity."

and yes, more than charisma. I love enthusiasm more than anything. Most everything you need in life, you can learn if you set your mind to it, but enthusiasm is something that's caught, and it reaches all the way into the deep recesses of your soul. And generally it's hidden behind either a false sense of dignity or too much self consciousness or you just don't have it.

Over the years I have seen lesser people, lesser businesses, lesser institutions, lesser preachers, lesser students, lesser athletes, lesser churches, lesser teams, lesser writers, lesser musicians, win over better ones, simply because they were more excited about what they were doing and they put their whole heart in it. When you lose heart; when you are no longer excited about what you're doing, you'll lose every time, regardless of how good you are.

Mediocrity is the curse of our age, of our times. There was a time when people took pride in what they do and they did it with enthusiasm and vigor. And the results showed it.

so graciously answer according to His Will.
What a marvelous privilege! to pray!

I have seen through the exercise of prayer our Lord intervene in many situations. Some of them were personal (my wife, children, grandchildren and me), and they were very evident of our Lord's intervention. Then there have been collective prayers as a church or churches praying to the Throne of Grace together.

It was obvious at the PARBC Fall Conference this year that our loving Lord had once again answered the prayers offered up by His people for our blessed fellowship. One year ago in September many messengers from our churches came together to decide what to do in regards to the association's financial difficulty. With much discussion in the annual business meeting the overwhelming consensus was to trust the Lord and PRAY as the messengers returned to their respective churches.

Very shortly thereafter love offerings and increases in support began to come in to the PARBC treasurer. Folks continued to pray and our Lord blessed with a very positive annual financial report. What a contrast in just twelve months! God heard the prayers of so many in our churches and things began to turn around for the good of the association.

There was a sense of joy and unity and most definitely a Sweet, sweet spirit within the fellowship. I am so thankful to God for His love and mercy shown to us. And I am so thankful for the privilege and power in prayer. And I am so thankful to each and all of our churches for their love, support and their many, many prayers! Thank you, thank you and thank you – to God be the Glory! Thanks be to God for our wonderful means of communication with Him in PRAYER!

II. A table. The table speaks of communion or prayer. It also allows us a place to study and meditate on God's Word.

III. A candlestick, which speaks of witnessing to a dark world. Scriptures tell us "Ye are the light of the world..." The world has no other example than the light see glowing in our lives as a result of knowing Jesus Christ.

Hospitality is not entertaining, it's providing a place of rest and rejuvenation. It also requires a certain amount of sacrifice on our part as we open our homes and hearts to those in need.

In a ministry we were part of a few years ago, we were challenged to host an open house during the holidays where we invited our neighbors to visit. We were to use this time to share the truth about why we celebrate Christmas and how the Lord Jesus came to save mankind and the salvation He brought..

We had a small crowd at our house. One fellow who came, died suddenly two or three days later. While had talked about the Lord we didn't know if he was saved. After he died, we and our church reached out to his widow, took her to church and held his funeral. Sadly, prior to that, we had not had them in our home or invited them to church.

The "great woman" on the other hand, recognized a need and with her husband's assistance made a place of rest for him. Hospitality is just as much a mandate for the Christian today as it was in her day. Let's don't shut ourselves away from the world. They need someone to carand show them the way to Christ more than ever.



"Fall Conference Theme"

Resolution on the Second Coming of Jesus Christ

- Whereas**, the historical, orthodox hope of the New Testament Church has been the return of Jesus Christ and reunion with him (1 John 3:1-3) and,
- Whereas**, the return of Jesus Christ was promised (Acts 1:11; Matt: 26:27-30) and has been greatly anticipated by the Church for over two thousand years (Titus 2:13) and,
- Whereas**, unbelievers throughout history have continually scoffed at the truth of a returning, righteous King (2 Peter 3:1-13), reflecting a mindset of rebellion and rejection that has been present since the rebellion of Adam (Psalm 2) and,
- Whereas**, the doctrine of the return of Jesus Christ as King and righteous judge is foundational to the hopeful perseverance of the Church (2 Thessalonians 1:3-12), reminding believers that God will make things right, with His reign and will being displayed on earth as it is in Heaven (Matthew 6:9-10, 13) and,
- Whereas**, the spirit and display of depravity (Romans 1:18-32) and the reality of increasing intensity of spiritual opposition against the Church and individual believers (2 Timothy 3:1-5) will see an increase in persecution against true followers of Christ (John 16:32-33; 2 Timothy 3:12) and,
- Whereas**, the Church will experience a weakening of biblical, theological preaching, not wanting to hear sound doctrine (2 Timothy 4:1-5).
- Be it therefore resolved** that we, the messengers of the churches in fellowship with the Pennsylvania Association of Regular Baptist Churches, meeting at the First Baptist Church in Elimsport, PA, on September 11-13, 2017, do hereby re-affirm our conviction and belief in the doctrine of the second coming of Jesus Christ.
- Be it further resolved** that we will encourage the Fellowship churches to be strong and encouraged by the doctrine of the second coming, knowing that the full victory over evil is certain (Revelation 19-22).
- Be it further resolved** that we will encourage the Fellowship churches to continue to proclaim and teach the full counsel of God, including prophetic material, for all Scripture is profitable for the health and vitality of the believer and the Church.
- Be it further resolved** that we call upon each individual of the Fellowship churches to be encouraged and take comfort in the sovereign control of our Lord (Psalm 115:3), as well as His secure love for us (Romans 8:31-39) in these times of national unrest, international tensions, and theological challenges.
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Resolution on Racism

WHEREAS the Lord has created all people, male and female, in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27); and

WHEREAS the Lord, without respect of persons, has redeemed individuals out of “every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation” (Acts 10:34, 35; Revelation 5:9); and

WHEREAS all believers are commanded to love God and love their neighbor (Matthew 22:37-40); and

WHEREAS the sin of racism is a violation of these commands, and continues to be present in America’s social fabric, represented and expressed by, but not limited to groups such as Neo-Nazis, White Supremacists, Ku Klux Klan, Antifa, CAIR, and certain leaders of Black Lives Matter, as well as in individuals of every ethnicity in the world; and

WHEREAS the sin of racism is ultimately a lack of love and grace, while displaying pride and ethnic superiority, and can be a viewpoint or worldview easily held by an individual; and

WHEREAS the use of violence, indiscriminate attacks, fear tactics, thuggery, vandalism, as well as responses in like kind to wrongs experienced at the hands of violent people leads to further division and social upheaval; and

WHEREAS the current climate of social unrest is a result of spiritually dark forces at work in this world (Ephesians 6:10-12); and

WHEREAS the only solution to growing anger, unrest, and unloving responses among different groups within the fabric of American society is the gospel of peace of Jesus Christ (Romans 10:13-18; Ephesians 6:15).

Be it therefore resolved that we, the messengers of the churches in fellowship with the Pennsylvania Association of Regular Baptist Churches, meeting at the First Baptist Church in Elmsport, PA, on September 11-13, 2017, do hereby affirm and proclaim that the gospel message is a message of grace and reconciliation (Ephesians 2:11-22; 2 Corinthians 5:18-21), and is the only hope for overcoming anger, pride, bitterness and hatred between people.

Be it therefore further resolved that we will encourage our churches within the Fellowship to be intentional in proclaiming the gospel to all peoples that God has placed around them (Acts 1:8).

Be it therefore further resolved that we will encourage our churches and individuals to pray regularly for revival in our land, so that the gospel might impact our society, bringing greater reconciliation among the people of our country.

Be it therefore further resolved that we will encourage our churches and individuals to repent of any racism, pride, or anger, to disavow and repudiate the philosophies of any group which promote
