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... Solomon looks far down the path
and sees that ... I will come up short.
Somewhere the grass is always
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There is a great deal of talk these
days about change, and there is a
great deal these days that ought to
change. ...

Was George Washington a Christian?

By Peter J. Marshall, M.Div., Contributing Editor,
Master's International School of Divinity

*"Why do you not know how to interpret the
present time?" (Luke 12:56 NRSV).*



Much of the decades-old cultural battle over whether America was founded as a Christian nation has centered on the question of the Founding Fathers' Christian faith – or lack of it. Were the men that we have come to call Founding Fathers Christians? And, because the best-known Founding Father is George Washington, much of the controversy about them has focused on him: Was George Washington a Christian?

The accusation that Washington and the rest of the Founding Fathers were Deists, and not believing Christians, has been endlessly repeated by academics and historians to the point that it has become an accepted article of faith about American history – akin to the “of course” status awarded to the doctrine of Darwinian evolution. Except that it simply isn't true. The historical evidence, when it is carefully and properly examined, will not allow the label of Deist to be pinned on the huge majority of the Founding Fathers.

The reason all this matters is that the secularists would love to prove that the Christian faith did not influence the Founding Fathers during the time of the Declaration of Independence, the Revolutionary (Continued on Page 3)



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“Was George Washington a Christian?”, by Peter J. Marshall , M.Div.

War, and the establishment of our Constitution. This is a hugely important element of their campaign to try and convince modern Americans that our nation was not founded on the Christian faith.



George Washington, 1732-1799

I am writing on this subject today because I have been spending the entire winter working on a major revision and updated version of our first book, *The Light and the Glory*. The publisher has wanted a second edition of the book for some time, and it now looks as if that will become a reality by the spring of 2009. In the course of adding sizeable chunks of material I have been doing quite a bit of new research into the life of George Washington, and particularly the issue that furnishes the title for this commentary – was he a Christian?

I thought it might be of interest to my readers to share a bit of what is involved in the kind of research and writing I do on the subject of God’s hand in American history.

George Washington was a low-Church Virginia Anglican, who subscribed in all points to orthodox Christian doctrines.

When researching the question of George Washington’s Christian faith, the first issue that emerges is whether or not he was a Deist. What was a Deist? Noah Webster (who was an evangelical Christian believer) defined a Deist in his original 1828 American dictionary as “one who believes in the existence of a God, but denies revealed religion; one who professes no form of religion, but follows the light of nature and reason, as his only guides in doctrine and practice; a freethinker.” Deists emphatically rejected the divinity of Jesus Christ, the authority and inspiration of Holy Scripture, and the personal nature of God, among other things. They believed that God created the world but then ignored it, and was never involved in human affairs. In 1963 Paul Boller, Jr. published a major work entitled *George Washington & Religion* in which he accused our first President of being a Deist. But, does this fit what we can discover about

George Washington? Hardly!

George Washington was a low-Church Virginia Anglican, who subscribed in all points to orthodox Christian doctrines. His mother,

Mary Ball Washington, was a devout Christian who taught her son by example and word the importance and efficacy of prayer. In our 1977 work, *The Light and the Glory*, David Manuel and I quoted some prayers supposedly written by Washington in his own handwriting which were titled “Daily Sacrifice.” (Continued on Page 4)



“Was George Washington a Christian?”, by Peter J. Marshall , M.Div.

They had turned up in Philadelphia in 1891 among some items offered for auction by descendants of Washington. These prayers were couched in orthodox Christian language – for example, “Wash away my sins in the immaculate blood of the Lamb” – and were made up of whole sentences from the original Anglican prayer book. We had used these as proof of Washington’s Christianity, since Deists didn’t believe in the blood atonement of Christ. However, these prayers will not be in the new edition of *The Light and the Glory*, because Peter A. Lillback, in his recent magnificent study of Washington’s spirituality, entitled *Sacred Fire*, quotes historian Rupert Hughes’s point that the tone of these prayers is quite contrary to Washington’s writing style, “as foreign as if they were written in Greek. There is not a misspelled word, not a touch of incorrect grammar, not a capitalized noun or other emphatic word except the titles of the deity.” (This is unlike Washington in every respect). Of greatest importance is the fact that the handwriting doesn’t match Washington’s. Rupert gives the details, saying “The impossibility of the work being in Washington’s hand should be apparent to the most casual comparison.”

But the fact that George Washington didn’t write *these* prayers has no bearing on the question of whether he was a man of prayer.

He was. Lillback has counted more than *one hundred* written prayers from his public and private letters! It is true that some of the public prayers were composed by aides, but Washington would never have signed them unless he agreed with their sentiments. Further, they express Christian beliefs.

By the way, never once, in all of his voluminous writings, did George Washington *ever* use the words Deist or Deism.

During the five years of the War for Independence the Continental Congress issued at least *sixteen* separate calls for days of prayer and humiliation or thanksgiving, depending on how the war was going. (There were more of the former than the latter!) And they were explicit in their Christian doctrine.

The one dated November 27, 1779 includes “our gracious redeemer,” the “light of the gospel,” “the light of Christian

knowledge,” and the “Holy Spirit.” None of these phrases would have been used by Deists, yet this language was employed by the supposedly Deist Founding Fathers of the Continental Congress! As a matter of fact, Deists never saw any value in prayer, since they believed that God was impersonal and uninvolved with His creation anyway. Washington happily signed these and passed them on to the army’s chaplains to be put into practice. (Continued on Page 5)

By the way, never once, in all of his voluminous writings, did George Washington *ever* use the words Deist or Deism.



“Was George Washington a Christian?”, by Peter J. Marshall , M.Div.

When aide Alexander Hamilton drafted a letter for Washington’s signature to the Comte de Rochambeau on February 26, 1781, he wrote: “This repetition of advices justifies a confidence in their truth” to which the General added “which I pray God may be confirmed in its greatest extent.”



One fairly reliable testimony to Washington’s prayer life comes from a letter from a General Lewis of Augusta County, Virginia, dated December 14, 1855, relating a conversation with former Continental Army General Robert Porterfield shortly before his death. In recounting some of his experiences during the New Jersey campaign and the army’s crucible of suffering at Valley Forge, he had said that his duties as a brigade-inspector brought him in frequent contact with General Washington. In an emergency he had once gone directly to Washington’s lodgings and found him on his knees in prayer. When he mentioned this to Alexander Hamilton, the General’s aide replied that “such was his constant habit.”

In E.C. M’Guire’s early 1800’s biography of Washington, when some of his sources were

still alive, he quotes the recollections of a Colonel B. Temple, an aide to Washington during the French and Indian War. Temple said that in the absence of a chaplain Washington would read the Scriptures to his troops and lead in prayer. He also said that “on sudden and unexpected visits into his (Washington’s) marquee, he has, more than once, found him on his knees at his devotions.”

To me, one of the strongest pieces of evidence of George Washington’s Christianity is his extensive knowledge of the Bible and his frequent use of Biblical phrases. Again, Deists had no use for the Bible – they rejected its authority. In a personal letter to the Marquis de Lafayette (whom Washington loved as a son) he makes *seven* separate references to Biblical passages. This was pure Washington – no aide wrote this. In another letter, this one to the Hebrew congregation of Newport, Rhode Island, he employs *nine* Biblical allusions.

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“Was George Washington a Christian?”, by Peter J. Marshall , M.Div.

According to Lillback’s count, throughout Washington’s writings he uses *over 200 different* Biblical phrases of passages or allusions to Biblical passages. Some of them he quoted often, such as his favorite Bible verse, Micah 4:4: “But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it.”

He referred to the Bible as only a Christian would – as the Word of God. In April 1789 he said: “The blessed Religion revealed in the word of God will remain an eternal and awful monument to prove that the best Institutions may be abused by human depravity...” (Note that Deists rejected the doctrine of human depravity!)



In one of his most famous letters, his *Circular to the States*, written after the end of the War for Independence, he listed several developments that had blessed America, and then he wrote: “and **above all, the pure and benign light of Revelation** (emphasis mine), have had ameliorating influence on mankind and increased the

blessings of society.” (Remember that Deists didn’t believe in revelation).



Boller smugly writes that “there are astonishingly few references to the Bible in (Washington’s) letters and public statements.” But in an appendix Lillback lists

about *two hundred!* As he points out, perhaps Boller expected Washington to write down the Biblical chapter and verse, or perhaps Boller simply didn’t know his Bible well enough to spot Biblical references when Washington used them. I suspect the latter. This kind of claim from Boller shows you what we have normally been up against in academic circles.

When Washington took the oath of office as our first President, he revealed his reverence for the Bible by kissing it. And, he added to the oath at the end, “So help me God,” establishing
(Continued on Page 7)



“Was George Washington a Christian?”, by Peter J. Marshall , M.Div.

a precedent which every subsequent President has, of course, followed. Tobias Lear, President Washington’s secretary notes: “While President, Washington followed an invariable routine on Sundays. The day was passed very quietly, no company being invited to the house.

After breakfast, the President read aloud a chapter from the Bible, then the whole family attended church together.” In the afternoon Washington tended to his personal correspondence, “while Mrs. Washington frequently went to church again, often taking the children with her. In the evening, Lear read aloud to the family some sermon or extracts from a book of a religious nature and everyone went to bed at an early hour.”

When Washington took the oath of office as our first President, ... he added to the oath at the end, “So help me God,” establishing a precedent which every subsequent President has, of course, followed.

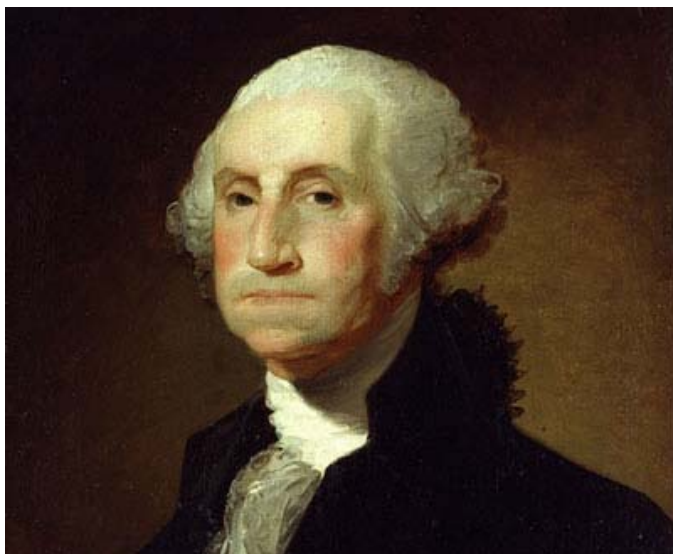
In these short commentaries I cannot do more than present some of the evidence on different subjects that proves Washington’s Christian faith. Today, we’ve considered the question of whether Washington was a Deist; we’ve also looked at his prayer life, and his belief in the Bible as the Word of God.

Was George Washington a Christian? – Part One is graciously reprinted from Dr. Marshall’s web site,

at:

<http://www.petermarshallministries.com/commentary.cfm?commentary=155>

Also see the continuation of this important study, Parts 2 & 3, are in Dr. Marshall’s Commentary Archives.



Anyone wishing information about Mr. Marshall's availability to preach or speak at your church or event, donating to the ministry, or purchasing any of the products in the store, is invited to call the office (800-879-3298) or to visit and explore the web site: petermarshallministries.com.



BIBLE TRUTHS

TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES

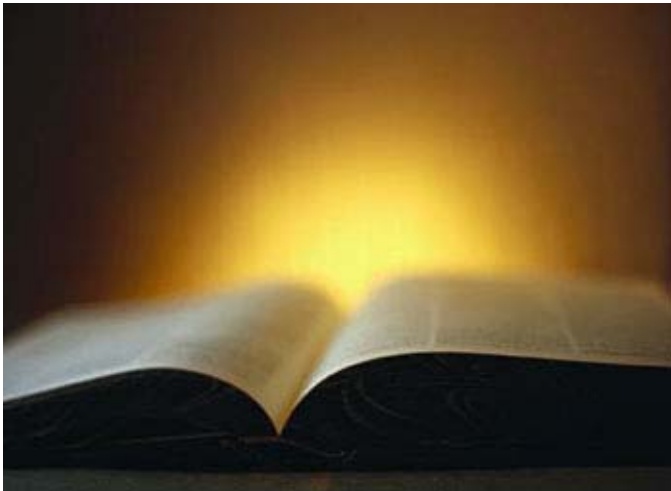
By Ronald E. Frazier, Th.D.

2 Timothy 3: 16 ...All Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.



I do not mean to be an alarmist when I say that the Church today is in a crisis.

Never has there been such an attack against a foundational stone been more sustained than the attack of the last 10 years against the integrity and authority of the Bible. Beloved, if we lose this stone the whole building collapses.



The health of the Church is at stake, and we must not be shy about our affirming the notion that the Bible is entirely God-breathed.

Unfortunately, less and less people believe this. Perhaps you have heard the argument,

'its all interpretation'; or, maybe you have heard someone say 'the Bible simply contains the Word of God'. In today's postmodern context, the notion of 'truth' is treated as something relative.

Is the Bible the Word of God, or does it just contain the Word of God? If the Bible is the Word of God, then it is all God's Word and does not contain error. If the Bible merely contains the Words of God, then it may contain the errors of man. We say that the Bible is the verbally inspired, infallible Word of God.

The world is searching for a reliable source of truth and authority...to solve the complex problems we face and to answer some of life's basic questions ..."where did I come from, why am I here and where am I going when this life is over?"

Can the Bible be trusted...to provide us such answers? Is it possible to know for certain that the Bible is the word of God...not just another piece of old literature written and handed down by fallible men?

These questions demand answers...

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BIBLE TRUTHS

Truth or Consequences, By Ronald E. Frazier, Th.D.

“*You Can’t Handle the Truth*”, Some of you may remember a movie a few years back (1992). I know some of you were alive back then. It was called *A Few Good Men*. It starred Tom Cruise, Jack Nicholson, Demi Moore, and Kevin Bacon. In it the character played by Jack Nicholson, Marine Corps Col Nathan Jessup was being cross-examined by Tom Cruise playing a military Naval lawyer named Lieutenant Kaffee. Lt Kaffee said he wanted the truth. Jack Nicholson said something quite profound.

Truth does not go away just because we ignore it.

Col. Jessep: You want answers?
Lt. Kaffee: I think I'm entitled.
Col. Jessep: You want answers?
Kaffee: I want the truth.
Col. Jessep: You can't handle the truth.



The Thinker, by Rodin

If you haven’t seen the movie, it helps lead to my point. I propose that the vast majority of those who claim to be Bible believing Christians today “Can’t handle the truth, don’t want the truth, or don’t know the truth, or don’t care to know the truth”

The world doesn’t like people who warn us of impending dangers...those that try to point out that a storm cloud is brewing...You’re being negative, fundamentalist, bigoted, homophobic, judgmental...

The problem with this method...is that ignoring it, not talking about it, wishing that it would go away... doesn't change a thing, the "Truth is still the Truth". "Truth" is (1) persistent, (2) powerful, and (3) penetrating.

Truth does not go away just because we ignore it. Truth just hangs around until it is acknowledged. In fact the forerunner John was beheaded for telling Herod the truth.

Jesus Christ, who is “The Truth” the ONE who brought us the "Ultimate Truth" was crucified for telling the world the truth. However, the truth did not die. On the third day, Truth arose from the grave, victorious over death, hell and the grave.

Most of the Apostles were persecuted for telling the truth, and even died as martyrs for telling the known 1st century world the truth.

At some point in our life, we all have confronted the truth or the truth has confronted us. Today, you are either running to the truth, or you are running from the truth. Yet, even running from the truth does not change the truth...

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BIBLE TRUTHS

Truth or Consequences, By Ronald E. Frazier, Th.D.

Truth can be helpful, painful and even frightening. Truth requires that we acknowledge it and take appropriate action...

Here is a relevant truth you cannot ignore...All you have to do is turn on the TV, or pick up a newspaper and read what is happening in our world today. You will quickly discover from the events that are happening all around us...that our world is broken; coming apart at the seams. Wickedness, crime, evil and violence rules the headlines. Even sadder, is that many of our churches are just as fractured. America is out of control, and under divine judgment.

A recent poll was taken at a 2007 **Promise Keeper's** rally where several thousand men who had registered, were asked privately without having to give their name...the question was asked:

We have burdened our children with a growing "Three Trillion dollar debt" that cannot be repaid.

"in the last 30 days, have you looked at, purchased, or visited a pornographic web-site..." Alarming, that over 56% of these church-going men openly confessed that they had done so!

God is tearing down our idols; those things that we have placed our trust in are now betraying us... things like the economy, gasoline prices that climbing off the charts. We have trusted our money, government,

houses, stocks portfolio, and our 401Ks. We should be falling down on our faces before a Holy God and begging for forgiveness and pleading for mercy.

Instead millions are hoping that the Government will solve the problems, with lower prices at the pump, lower interest rates and more credit. We insult the rest of the world with our worthless currency, backed by nothing. Somehow we have grown lazy, and spoiled as a people. We arrogantly believe that the rest of the world should continue supporting our over indulgent appetites...greed, our out of control spending and lavish lifestyle. I just heard today, that Toyota is planning to ship the bulk of its new SUV's to International markets that are demanding them, while America is dumping them like flies. We have burdened our children with a growing "Three Trillion dollar debt" that

cannot be repaid.

The "Truth" is God is not pleased...The wrath of God is being revealed... We have done all the things that early Israel did, and more, and we have the mitigating gall of expecting not to be punished. If God punished His chosen people, the people of Noah's day, the people of Sodom, then what do we think God will do to us. The answer will soon be here.

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BIBLE TRUTHS

Truth or Consequences, By Ronald E. Frazier, Th.D.

“...When there was No King in Israel, Everyone did what was right in his own eyes” Judges 21:25

I became a Christian at age 14; I grew up in the church. I have worked in various capacities of ministry and leadership for most of my life. However, I have never witnessed such a cowardly betrayal, abandonment of the truth as to what is happening today within Christianity, thousands of Churches, all across this country...there is a moral decadence, a downward death spiral, churches out of control, out of touch, and bankrupt. A great falling away has begun, from those time honored truths of “thus saith the Lord”.

A great falling away has begun, from those time honored truths of “thus saith the Lord”.

Today we have our “slicksters” preachers with the force of personality and charisma...that’s what we need at our church. We need us a new Rev. Gunslinger... you know, those who have their own doctrinal and theological agendas. These \$100,000 salaried hired guns, prevail because they are masters of gimmicks.

They have forsaken the old paths...the spoken, relevant, inerrant, inspired word of God... These hired hands, quickly gather a following.

Today, we have our new slogans, We have “seeker churches, our purpose driven churches...people flocking to them by the 1,000’s as they spin...our spew their charm. Today it’s all about new things, new doctrines, the new rock-n-roll bands; they call them new songs of worship and praise. Nobody ever looks at the words anyway; who cares about the words of the song...we just love the entertainment. We love the charm, the gimmicks. Listen to those drums, you can sure tell that he is a talented drummer. Hello, my name is Jimmie, I want all you can gimmie!

This new type of singing on Sunday morning has completely trumped the Hymnbook. What’s wrong with hymns like, “the old rugged cross”, or “a mighty fortress is our God”...We have completely disenfranchised the older Christians...they just don’t matter anymore. Who needs that old stuff anyway?

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“Gideon Choosing His Soldiers” by Gustave Doré





BIBLE TRUTHS

Truth or Consequences, By Ronald E. Frazier, Th.D.

These new pulpiteers even have special revelations...a new anointing, and words they claimed that came directly from the Lord. Many started out sound; soon their egos grabbed hold of them...soon they were a law unto themselves. They said what appeared to be all the right things...they had the same name, and even hoisted friendly flags...Pirate Ship Tactics...the ruse de'gurre.

The primary problem...is a lack of accountability to the truth, or to anyone outside themselves. The Church was designed with a built in protection system of sorts given to us by the Lord, called Elders. He advised that we find wisdom in the council of godly men. Not just one, but a plurality...

Men that are responsible, and accountable, and who will be held accountable...The Apostle Paul trained Timothy and others. These godly men of old were Bereans in their passion to study Gods word, Acts 17:10-11.

They knew doctrine...and they knew the truth, and they knew their God. Only in this

New Testament model where we have a high degree of assurance that God is truly leading in a group of godly men in accountability can we find a return, and renewal...

"Moses Coming Down From Mt. Sinai" by Gustave Doré



The Bible has always been of central importance to evangelicals. It not only defines what we are to believe; it also tells us how we are to behave. A clear and faithful exposition of the scriptures has, historically, been at the heart of those early beginnings of our Christian heritage.

The Bible does not merely contain truth, IT IS THE TRUTH, THE WHOLE TRUTH, NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH. The apostle Paul, describing the character of Scripture to Timothy, writes, "...All Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16).

The primary problem... is a lack of accountability to the truth, or to anyone outside themselves.

(Continued on Page 13)



BIBLE TRUTHS

Truth or Consequences, By Ronald E. Frazier, Th.D.

I realize that such a statement is no longer popular or palatable in our postmodern secular pragmatic world. Yet, we must not shrink from such statements simply because they have become unpopular. The view that all of Scripture is God-breathed—that it is, perfect, infallible, and true—has been the common view of the Christian Church for nearly two thousand years.

*As followers of Jesus,
do we submit ourselves;
do we subject ourselves,
to the written
Word of God?*

Today, we are left with a choice regarding who is to judge whom. Are we to be the judge of Scripture? Is it appropriate for us to

exalt ourselves above the Word of God, the truth by subjecting the truth to our rational processes? Or, is Scripture to judge us? As followers of Jesus, do we submit ourselves; do we subject ourselves, to the written Word of God?

If Arthur Pink is correct, "...if the Divine inspiration of Scripture is indeed the strategic center of Christian theology", then he is also correct in demanding that it be defended

at all costs.

Welcome to 21st Century Christianity - Mainstreet USA, any town, any Church, anywhere, and everywhere...

"The Sermon on the Mount" by Gustave Doré



Conclusion: What did the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the apostles, and the woman at the well, the prostitute, the rich young ruler, and the moneychangers at the Temple, and even His closest followers (John 6:66) and EVERYONE ELSE that He came into contact with...Jesus TOLD THEM ALL ... THE TRUTH.

Remember that, "Being Popular" or being in the majority or being together never determines truth...Jesus does!

Ronald E. Frazier, Th.D.



The World's Most Realistic Investment Strategy

by Arthur J. Moen, Ph.D., Contributing Editor



I heard the animated voice filled with anticipation on the radio. "What would you pay to hear the greatest motivators of the decade? Colin Powell, Rudy Guilliani, Donald Trump, Zig Ziglar." The list went on and on. Who could resist? At \$49 it seemed like the bargain of the century. Of course, you would only see them by taped satellite transmission. If you wanted more, the price went up ... and up ... and up.

But there's no gimmick when it comes to receiving the world's most realistic investment advice. If you had the opportunity to garner investment wisdom from the wealthiest man who ever lived, would you turn away the chance? If you were invited to a private interview with a man who by any standard accomplished more than tens of thousands, would you rush to accept? If you didn't, you'd be a fool, no matter what the price.

The amazing fact is that this realistic advice resides in the public information realm. It costs nothing to get it. That's probably why we don't pay any attention to it.



We are only interested in the advice of those who place enormous value on their wisdom. We think that paying hundreds of dollars for seminars or newsletters will make us far better investors. So we cough up the funds, hoping for big returns. Here's a news flash.

Without the advice from the greatest investor in the world, all that money just goes down the drain no matter what the returns.

Now I have your interest. You're primed for the secret. But as soon as I tell you where you will find this vital investment information, you are likely to dismiss the whole approach. Don't be so quick to throw it away. Since it's free (almost), it won't hurt to take a closer look. What you will find might just change everything about your strategy.

This realism comes from ancient wisdom. It is found in the writings of Solomon. Yes, I know that his thoughts are in the Jewish Scriptures. So what? Does that make them any less valid for today's savvy investor? I should hope not. If Solomon amassed one of the world's greatest fortunes, I want to know how he did it. I want to know how he thought so that I can align myself with the same kind of thinking. When military strategists read Sun Tzu, they expect insight from ancient thinking. When politicians read Plato,

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BIBLE TRUTHS

The World's Most Realistic Investment Strategy, *by Arthur J. Moen*

they are looking for insight into human behavior (actually, it's quite possible these days that politicians don't read. They are too busy campaigning.) So, why shouldn't we expect amazing insight into investing from a man who had it all (including those 1000 women in the harem)?

What does Solomon tell me? If I examine the text carefully, I discover some very disconcerting information. The first thing that this investment guru says is that we must be entirely realistic about the world. That realism means that the world is a very nasty and unpredictable place. Solomon is quite clear. As far as Man is concerned, "anything awaits him." No matter what the hedge fund people tell you, life is completely out of your control and absolutely unpredictable. Solomon got it right. "If no one knows what will happen, who can tell him when it will happen?" So much for stock timing, "obvious" trends and market predictions. The plain truth (free of charge) is this: the future is unknowable. Don't ever listen to someone tells you otherwise.

This fact of life has some further personal developments. "Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful and the end of joy is grief." Solomon sees what so many pundits ignore. Victory today is swallowed in defeat tomorrow. Pleasure today evaporates into sorrow. The good life still ends up at the

grave. Solomon's first principle of investment is this: No investment strategy is worthwhile if it has only a temporal goal. In the end, six feet under is still six feet under. If you are going to invest wisely, you will not concentrate on those things that evaporate at death.

Of course, there is another difficult implication in this bit of sage wisdom. You never know when you're going to die. The conclusion is inevitable. If I am operating on an investment strategy that requires duping the Grim Reaper, I am not only stupid; I am delusional. Solomon's famous dictum, "All is vanity" is the final word on this form of denial. Sometime during your earthly sojourn, you will arrive at the zero sum. That's when you add up all the things that consume your attention, demand your energy, focus your dreams and expend your efforts only to discover that it doesn't bring fulfillment. Human life has a basic emptiness built into it. When Solomon looked at the whole array of human endeavor he saw its ultimate futility. All the opportunities, all the triumph, all the worry and all the gains trickle down to the grave. A hundred years from now, almost everything that seemed to matter so much to us today will scarcely be remembered. On the surface of the earth, one life just doesn't seem to count for much, even if you're the king.

The plain truth (free of charge)
is this: the future is unknowable.
Don't ever listen to someone
who tells you otherwise.

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The World's Most Realistic Investment Strategy, *by Arthur J. Moen*

Solomon uses the word vanity to describe the lack of lasting significance from work. On deepest reflection, in spite of all our efforts, work is more or less a self-defeating wheel for two reasons. There is always more to do and what is done is never quite enough to completely satisfy. Solomon looks far down the path and sees that if I stake my ultimate significance of my work, I will come up short. Somewhere the grass is always greener.

"Judgment of Solomon" by Gustave Doré



So much of today's culture subscribes to this work-identity syndrome. Not just career paths but even our leisure activities, our life missions and our altruism become elements

in the zero-sum game of what we do. Vanity, says Solomon. What about you? Have you looked down the path and seen the gravestone? Are you defined by your emptiness and the fixation to fill it? Are you working for your life? Or living for your work? Or is there something more?

Are you thinking in terms of "legacy"? Sure, I can't take it with me, but I can enjoy it now and when I die, I can leave it all to my children. That counts for something. Now we get a glimpse of Solomon's wisdom. Three thousand years before probate battles, Solomon put his finger on the problem. "I hated all the fruit of my labor . . . for I must leave it all to the man who will come after me and who knows whether he will be a wise man or a fool." That's trust fund planning in a nutshell. You earn. They spend. And who knows if they will be wise or foolish.

Hard core realism is the only sure basis of a worthwhile investment strategy. And hard-core realism says that the world won't turn out the way you want it to, not for you and not for those who come after you. No matter how much you try, you just can't control it.

So, why don't we pay more attention to this undeniable fact of life? Well, it's not very comforting. We don't like to think about our lack of control, so we tend to hope for the best and pretend life is better than it is. Are you divorced? Did you get married planning to get divorced? Why not?

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BIBLE TRUTHS

The World's Most Realistic Investment Strategy, *by Arthur J. Moen*

More than 50% of marriages end in divorce, yet I doubt that any couple at the altar would say, "Oh, yes, we know that we have less than a 50% chance of making it so we have a plan in place for our divorce." No, we don't like to think about the bad news. That's why Solomon (who knew a few things about women too) is such a good advisor. But be careful. Solomon's answer is not pre-marital divorce planning. That's no answer either. Solomon is pointing out that you can't control life *even if you plan for all the contingencies.*

Now
for the
good
news.
If I
know
that I
can't



cover all the contingencies, if I know that the ones I leave my fortune to may blow it all, if I am realistic about my true lack of control over the forces in the world, then I will invest with something else in mind. Something that doesn't depend on contingency planning, uncontrollable fate and disingenuous inheritors. What is Solomon's greatest investment advice? Amazingly, it's not about money at all. It's about the use of money, the purpose of money and the outcome of money. Solomon doesn't suggest a get-rich scheme. He suggests a get-smart program. It goes like this:

- 1. Rejoice in every one of the years you have*
- 2. Remove grief and anger from your heart*
- 3. Recall what acts in your life brought joy to others*
- 4. Repay in some way what you have been given*
- 5. Respond to a higher calling*

Rejoice because the man who is bitter about life will be unable to make much of it.

Remove because truly living is not about what's in the bank but what's in the heart.

Recall because where you made others smile is probably the place where you smiled too.

Repay because what you made of yourself was still a gift.

Respond because no personal legacy lasts but eternal ones do.

If you look at your investment strategy from the perspective of the 5 R's, you can very quickly assess how you're doing on the Solomon scale. The 5 R plan is investment in your peace of mind. And what good is all the money if you're unhappy.

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Guns, Gas, God and Going to Church

Who has not been talking about the high price of gasoline? There is a new kind of pain, and it's not in the neck, it's at the pump. For a great many years of my life I made less per week than it now costs to fill the tank on my truck.

Nevertheless, driving a good sized pickup truck that gets lousy gas mileage seems to go hand-in-hand with believing in God,



going to church and owning a gun. It's the good ole American way you know!

Recently I heard about an automobile dealer

who came up with a terrific idea to capitalize on this middle-class fetish.

He offered a choice of either a \$250 gas card or a \$250 gift certificate to purchase a hand gun to all of his customers who bought a nice sized pickup. Sales have been reported as fantastic. Contacted by a local television station, the delighted dealer

He offered a choice of either a \$250 gas card or a \$250 gift certificate to purchase a hand gun to all of his customers who bought a nice sized pickup.

stated that in his part of the country people still believed in God, guns and going to church! "We all go to church, and we all have guns!" he declared.

Now I don't doubt the dear dealer's sincerity. After all, who am I to question his love of guns, gas and going to church? I do however, have one question. If he was so all fired ready to show how much he love God, I wonder why he did not offer a third option to his customers ... a \$250 contribution to their local church? Something as innovative as that might serve to identify whether it's gas, guns or God that's loved the most!



Change We Can Really Believe In!

by Dennis D. Frey, Th.D., President,
Master's International School of Divinity



“For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself” (Philippians 3:20-21).

There is a great deal of talk these days about change, and there is a great deal these days that ought to change. There are things in this world that ought to change; in the United States that ought to change; in the state or nation where you live that ought to change; where you work, and possibly even in your own life that ought to change. Of course, change is not *just* something we make happen. Change is something that happens with or without our involvement.



Some sociologists have suggested there has been more change in the past 100 years than



in all of previously recorded history. One thing is certain; our world has changed, is changing, and is doing so at a very rapid pace!

My grandparents lived from the end of the agricultural age to the middle of the industrial age. My mother lived from the middle of the industrial age to the middle of the space age. My wife and I have already lived from the end of the industrial age, through the middle of the space age, and well into the information age. My grandchildren will live from the information age to...very possibly...the end of the age.

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Change We Can Really Believe In! by Dennis D. Frey, Th.D.

When I entered grade school in 1951:

1. Few Americans had a television, and those that did needed an antenna that looked like (and served as) a bird perch by which they got two or three stations at best.

2. There were no cordless phones or cell phones, but there were lot of party lines, and that's not a reference to having fun.

3. Air conditioning in most homes consisted of a window fan, and at church, a funeral home cardboard fan stapled or glued to a paint paddle.

4. Hand-held calculators were a pencil and small paper pad in your shirt pocket or purse.

5. There were no such things as an Internet, computers or I-pods.



6. No one had ever heard of CD players, DVDs or digital cameras, and it took about a week to get your printed black and white photographs back from the drug store.

7. Automatic starters for automobiles were when you trusted your kid enough to let them run out and start the car.

8. UPS had not yet expanded into coast-to-coast package delivery; there was no priority mail, we had *the* mail but no *e-mail*.



9. The average price of a gallon of gasoline was 26 cents; milk 75 cents; a dozen eggs 23 cents; a pound of hamburger 53 cents, and hamburger helper was flour and milk.

A lot has changed...I've changed a great deal...mentally, spiritually and physically. You too have changed and are yet changing. Change can be for the good. Changing bad habits and embracing goodness...changing from living in rebellion and alienation from the Creator by entering a new life through Christ is good...very good. In fact, if we ever expect to reach our highest potential, we will need to change in many ways.

The most important change that any person can ever experience is the inner change that takes place when we pass from death unto life through the new birth. here is a great deal of talk these days about change, and there is a great deal these days

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Change We Can Really Believe In! *by Dennis D. Frey, Th.D.*

"And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:13 NIV).

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3).

There is a literal and permanent change that takes place in the life of every person who experiences genuine Christian conversion and is thereby born again. When even the most disjointed, disordered and disappointing life is touched by Jesus Christ, there is a change that takes place that is like no other change, and it is a change that you can *really* believe in!

The Touch of the Master's Hand

"Twas battered and scared, and the auctioneer
Thought it scarcely worth his while
To waste much time on the old violin,
But he held it up with a smile.
"What am I bidden, good folks," he cried,
"Who'll start bidding for me?
A dollar, a dollar - now who'll make it two _
Two dollars, and who'll make it three?"

"Three dollars once, three dollars twice,
Going for three" . . . but no!
From the room far back a gray-haired man
Came forward and picked up the bow;
Then wiping the dust from the old violin,

And tightening up the strings,
He played a melody, pure and sweet,
As sweet as an angel sings.

The music ceased and the auctioneer
With a voice that was quiet and low,
Said: "What am I bidden for the old violin?"
And he held it up with the bow;
"A thousand dollars - and who'll make it
two?
Two thousand - and who'll make it three?
Three thousand once, three thousand twice
And going - and gone," said he.

The people cheered, but some of them cried,
"We do not quite understand -
What changed its worth?" The man replied:
"The touch of the master's hand."
And many a man with life out of tune,
And battered and torn with sin,
Is auctioned cheap to a thoughtless crowd.
Much like the old violin.

A "mess of pottage," a glass of wine,
A game and he travels on,
He's going once, and going twice -
He's going - and almost gone!
But the MASTER comes, and the foolish
crowd,
Never can quite understand,
The worth of a soul, and the change that's
wrought

By the touch of the MASTER'S hand.
~Myra B. Welch

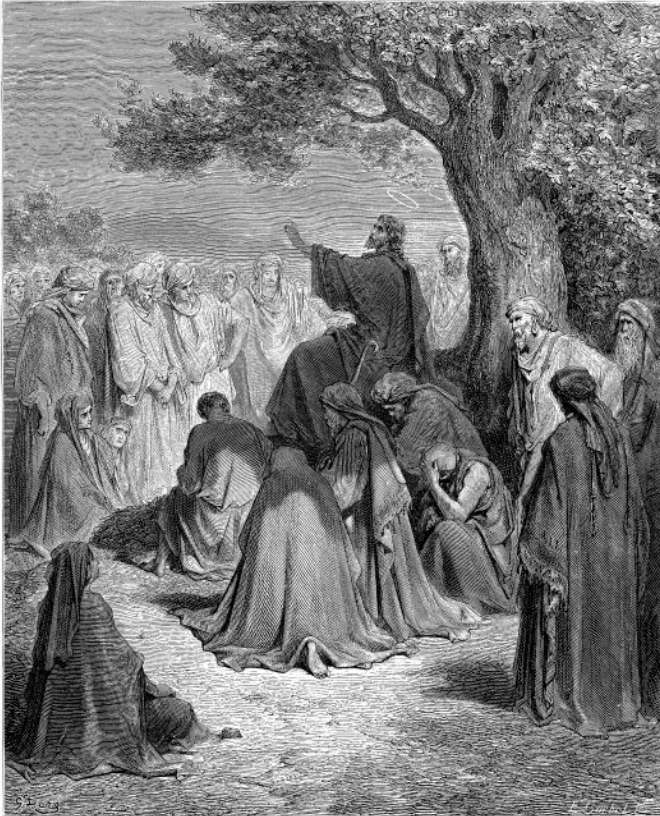
(Continued on Page 22)



Change We Can Really Believe In! *by Dennis D. Frey, Th.D.*

“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” (II Corinthians 3:18). This is change that you can really believe in!

“Jesus Preaching to the Multitude” by Gustave Doré



But there is also a disturbing kind of change, an unsettling kind that brings with it loss and uncertainty:

- We once had robust health, but that all changed with the result of a routine medical test.

- Dear friends no longer speak to us because some misunderstanding changed our relationship.

- A family was torn apart by divorce, and everything changed.

- We once had enough money to go around, but ill fortune or a bad decision changed it all.

- At one time we were young, beautiful, desirable and cool, but the inexorable march of time has changed us. We do not like our pictures to be taken, not because they do not look like us, but because they do.

- We hold many wonderful memories from the past...memories of a secret place in childhood, of good times, of good things, but the secret places have been lost, the memories have faded, the ones with whom we shared so much good are now gone and we cannot recall their faces.

The story is told of a young bride distressed because her husband's aged and feeble mother was to live with them. The mother seeking to make herself useful in some way insisted on washing dishes following an evening of entertaining important guests. Because of her feebleness she broke several pieces of her daughter-in-law's best china. The young wife scolded her mother-in-law telling her that she was to never again wash any of her dishes, then demanded that her husband

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Change We Can Really Believe In! by Dennis D. Frey, Th.D.

purchase a new and complete set of china. Days later he presented his wife with two new sets, and she scolded him for being wasteful since she only needed to replace one set. When she demanded that he explain why he had purchased two, he quietly replied, "The second set is for you, when you too are old and feeble."

Often change comes suddenly and without warning....our lives are never the same. We cannot go back. We cannot change what has been changed. Consequently, we know:

- The pain of separation,
- Tears of sorrow,
- The agony of death...and the fear of our own which is approaching,
- The depths of depression and mourning,
- The weight of crying when crying does not help except to exhaust us physically,
- The power of physical pain to control us,
- The futility of things the way they are and cannot be made better.

But there is a change coming...a change we can *really* believe in!

"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in

a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed " (I Corinthians 15:51-52).

"Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Philippians 3:21).

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful" (Revelation 21:1-5).

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Change We Can Really Believe In! *by Dennis D. Frey, Th.D.*

“And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever. And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true” (Revelation 22:3-6)

Consequently, we shall *never again* know:

- The pain of separation,
- Tears of sorrow,
- The agony of death...which will have lost its sting and have victory no more,
- The depths of depression and mourning,
- The weight of crying when crying does not help except to exhaust us physically,
- The power of physical pain to control us,
- The futility of things the way they are and cannot be made better,

The old order of things will have passed away! This is a change that we can really believe in! How is this possible? It is possible because there is One Who has not changed.

"The New Jerusalem" by Gustave Doré



Malachi 3:6

“For I am the LORD, I change not.”

James 1:17

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”

There is the changelessness of Christ and His promises.

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Change We Can Really Believe In! by Dennis D. Frey, Th.D.

Hebrews 13: 8, 9 *“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever. Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace.”*

It is this changeless Christ who said in John 14:1-4, *“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way, ye know.”*

That place is heaven, the true home of the human spirit. Those who choose to miss heaven will never be able to go home, but will live throughout eternity in a foreign and hostile land that is known as hell. Heaven is home, and it is a real place...an exact location in Divine geography (Dr. L.B. Hicks).

Heaven is a place where nothing will ever change. The Light of it which is the Lamb shall never be extinguished. Day will never change to night. The river of life which flows from the throne of God shall never change into a dry steam bed.

The tree of life which grows in the middle of it shall never wither, nor its limbs crack and fall to the ground. The people who live there shall never grow old, shall never die or

be changed into a lifeless shell. Our loved ones who meet us there shall never again leave us. We shall never change addresses. The angels of God shall be our neighbors and never move away. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit shall be present, visible and live among us. We shall have the eternal security, and ever expanding joy of service that we can only vaguely appreciate in this moment, and a joy that will never change.

Before all of this there will be one final great and permanent change that will be the last change we shall ever be asked to endure. St. Paul explained it for us in I Corinthians 15:51-58. *“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”*

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Change We Can Really Believe In! *by Dennis D. Frey, Th.D.*

That change will bring permanency to our person. We shall never again feel sadness, sorrow, the sting of regret, the flush of embarrassment in failings revealed, sickness, deformity of body and mind or the thousand other cancers of human limitation. This is the kind of change that you *really* believe in!

Jesus promised, *"I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also"* (John 14:18-19). He cannot *not* keep His promise!

Tonight, wherever on earth you may live, the sun will set. None of us, not you and not me, have any guarantee that we will live to see it rise again on earth. All of us are going to someday see our last sunset, and everything we have ever known will be changed. If you believe on and in Jesus Christ for your salvation, that change will be the most wonderful you can possibly imagine. Consider the words of an old and venerable hymn written long ago by Virgil P. Brock.

Beyond the Sunset

Beyond the sunset, O blissful morning, when with our Saviour heaven is begun;

Earth's toiling ended, O glorious dawning, beyond the sunset when day is done.

Beyond the sunset, no clouds will gather, no storms will threaten, no fears annoy; O day of gladness, O day unending, beyond the sunset eternal joy.

Beyond the sunset, a hand will guide me to God the Father whom I adore; His glorious presence His words of welcome, will be my portion on that fair shore.

Beyond the sunset, O glad reunion with our dear loved ones who've gone before; In that fair homeland we'll know no parting, beyond the sunset forever more!

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe" (John 11:25-27).

This is change we can *really* believe in! Do you believe it?

Note: Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture in this article is quoted from the King James Version of the Bible.



JUST A MINUTE!

PARISHONER'S BEST FRIEND

The pastor gave a much shorter sermon than usual explaining that the day before his dog had chewed up the sermon outline. He apologized for giving such a short message.

After the service a visiting couple from out of town shook his hand and said that if his dog ever has pups to please give them one, so they could give it to their pastor.



FUNNY CHURCH SIGNS:

“Don’t let worries kill you. Let the church help.”

“For God so loved the world that He did not send a committee.”

“The 2001 Spring Retreat will be hell May 10 and 11th.”

“The pastor will preach his farewell message, after which the choir will sing, 'Break Forth Into Joy.'”

“The cost for attending the Fasting and Prayer conference includes meals.”



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Picking and Choosing Our Battles

by Paul Abramson



Matthew 10:32-33 *"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."*

There are times when we must make a stand. Here and no further. But there are also times to wisely wait, to let the Lord tell us how best to influence those around us.

Many of today's Christian students in public schools should not always challenge the teacher, particularly not in front of the rest of the class. Since when should a ten year old do battle on the front lines?

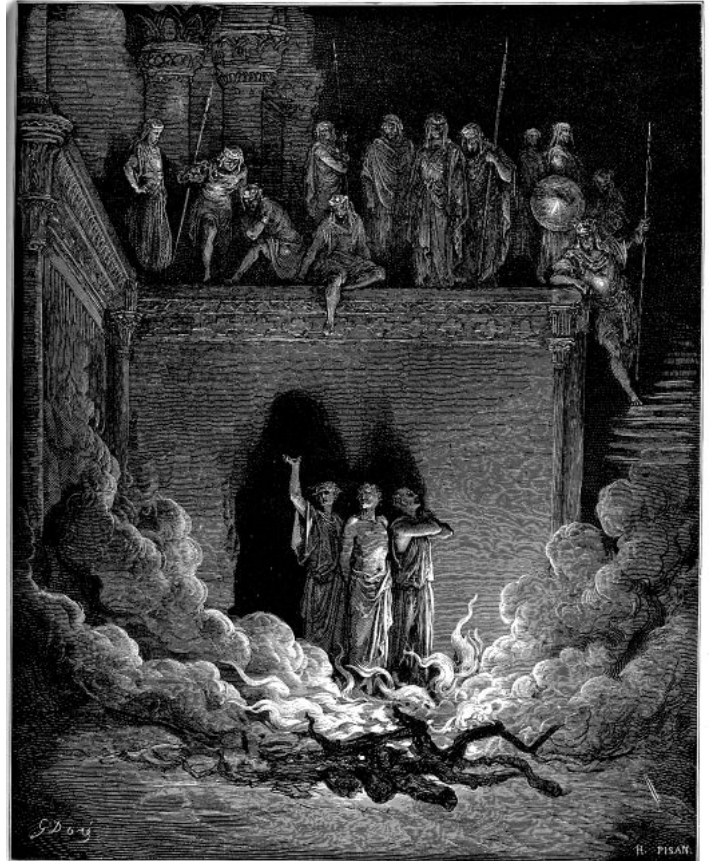
Let's discuss a situation in school where the teacher or professor is teaching that "evolution is science" and that it cannot be questioned.

Pray about this situation.

Dr. Gary Parker is a biologist who used to believe in evolution. Later he learned that creation is true. Today he is a dynamic creation speaker. (He co-authored the book *Scientific Creationism* with Dr. Henry Morris, several years ago.)

Daniel was inventive in his challenges. We see that he asked for a test of his preferred

"Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the Fiery Furnace" by Gustave Doré



diet, over the rich, fatty diet of the Babylonians.

Daniel 1:8 *"But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself."*

Appealing - he asked for ten days - to try the diet.

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EDITOR'S CORNER

Picking and Choosing Our Battles, by Paul Abramson

Daniel 1:13 *"Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants."*

After the ten days - he looked healthier! (Daniel 1:15-16)

Answering science questions in classes can be done wisely. Pray about this. Appeal. You do not have to challenge the teacher(s) unnecessarily. Daniel appealed only on behalf of himself and a few others. He was careful to not be rebellious nor in charging anything against what the rest of the young men did.

We can answer legitimately: "According to evolution ..." or ... "We learn from Dr. Gould...."; "Australopithecus teaches us...."

Modern science answers so many excellent questions that we have in areas of geology, anthropology, archeology, micro-biology, astronomy, chemistry, mathematics, and physics. But when they stray from "testable-repeatable" to ancient "one-time" believed occurrences - they leave the realm of science altogether.

Jesus taught in the Temple during part of His ministry on a daily basis. And yet, He only cleared the tables of the money changers once or twice. Daily, He saw what they were doing.

We pick and choose our battles. Jesus chose to ***not*** clear the Temple of the money changers - except once (or perhaps twice).

Does this logic make sense? Mixed in with all the good science - is some poison. Prayerfully, one could answer them according to their theory.

Proverbs 26:4-5 *"Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him. Answer a fool ACCORDING to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit."*

I can answer a question - "according" to what the theory of evolution teaches.

Dr. Jason Lisle, now working for Answers in Genesis (AiG), kept his love of creation theory and the Bible a secret while he attained his doctoral degree.

There are some creationists who advise students to counter with "were you there?" but this is a bad idea. For one thing AiG (per above) does not practice this strategy with persons they are interested in attaining. They kept Jason Lisle's beliefs a secret,

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Picking and Choosing Our Battles, by Paul Abramson

publishing articles by him under a pseudonym until after he completed his degree.

Also, the fourth grade teacher knows the fifth and sixth grade teachers. If a young student (rebelliously?) challenges his or her teacher with "Were you there?" it could easily be answered: "No, and neither were you. So quiet down and listen to what the experts teach us." Is it a good thing for Christian students to get bad science grades when they may actually be good at science? If the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade teachers decide to reward the "fittest" and to punish the "less fit" to survive, then a student who asks, "Were you there?" may never want to learn about real science in the future.

(By the way, the Creation Research Society <http://www.creationresearch.org/> has about 650 voting member-scientists who espouse young Earth creation theory.)

Finally, note that Mordecai had told Esther to **not** reveal that she was Jewish, until the time was right.

Esther 2:10-11 *"Esther had not shewed her people nor her kindred: for Mordecai had charged her that she should not shew [it]. And Mordecai walked every day before the court of the women's house, to know how Esther did, and what should become of her."*

As a side note, there is a good, recent movie based on the Book of Esther, ***One Night***

With the King. It portrays Esther as surprised that all depended upon her coming before the king in a way that could have easily led to her execution. She wanted God to raise up a deliverer, meaning someone other than her!

Western Culture is becoming less and less "Christian" each year. As such we need to wisely determine which battles to raise. Ultimately it is the Gospel message itself that we must stand for.

Our neighbors do have free-will. They can choose to sin. Recall the Woman at the Well, (John 4). Jesus did not *primarily* address her sin, per se, but rather her needs as a sinner. She needed help more than judgment from Him.

John 4:18-19 *"For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly. The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet."*

What should our attitude be as we see our culture crumbling around us. Are we to primarily judge, or to try to help Biblically?

John 3:17 *"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."*

Let us help redeem the lost and also seek to choose our battles wisely!