



Volume 7 Issue 12

West Suffolk Epistle West Suffolk Baptist Church



December 2020

Thoughtfully Reformed - Redemptively Relevant

The Time of Harvest

Revelation 14:14–20

“Another angel came out of the temple, calling with a loud voice to him who sat on the cloud, ‘Put in your sickle, and reap, for the hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe’” (v. 15).

After showing John the spiritual conflict that motivates Christian persecution and the truth that the beast of the sea and the beast of the land will come against God’s people (Revelation 12–13), the Lord shows John many truths to encourage him and his readers in these difficult days. Thus, Revelation 14 reveals the fall of governments that persecute believers and the sure blessing of those who die in faith (vv. 1–13). The chapter concludes with an assurance of judgment on those who reject the Savior.

Joel 3:13 is a key background text for Revelation 14:14–20. The vision that John sees builds on what the prophet Joel foretold. However, there are some difficulties in this passage, most notably the relationship between verses 14–16 and 17–20. Some commentators believe verses 14–16 refer to the harvest of the righteous, of those who receive eternal life because they are in Christ, and verses 17–20 depict the judgment of the wicked, amplifying what is said in the preceding verses. Others believe that the entirety of verses 14–20 concerns the judgment of the wicked. It is difficult to be sure which view is correct, but we will assume that the entire text concerns the judgment of the unrighteous.

The key lesson we are to take from this text is the surety that those who persist to the end in sin and in rejection of the Lord and His standards will certainly be repaid for their wickedness. This will be done at just the right time, for the harvest—the judgment—can occur only when the crop is fully ripe (v. 15). Sometimes we can get discouraged when we see evil men and women prospering, when we see the wicked continuing to oppose God with no apparent consequences. At such times, we must remember that the wicked endure no longer than God has ordained. He will harvest—judge them—once their evil has ripened. What might look like a delay of justice is, in fact, no delay at all. God will bring an end to wicked people at just the right time.

In verses 17–20, the wicked are likened to grapes that are crushed to make wine. This image comes from Isaiah 63:1–6, where God tramples on the wicked just as grapes are trampled for their juice. The Lord’s trampling sheds enough blood to flow for 1,600 stadia, or 184 miles. This stresses the thoroughness of divine judgment. When the Lord judges the wicked, none will escape.

CORAM DEO Living before the face of God

God will perfectly judge the wicked, doing so both at the right time and with the thoroughness that is required. This gives us hope, for though we see evil people succeed for a time, we know that they will certainly answer for their deeds. It also allows us to leave vengeance in the hands of the Lord. He knows far better than we do how to repay the wicked for their deeds.



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A Direct Threat to Christian Education

The accreditation of Christian colleges and schools has just been directly targeted by the nation's most influential LGBTQ organization. The Human Rights Campaign has recently issued a document directed at the incoming administration entitled *Blueprint for Positive Change 2020*. The *Blueprint* demands that President-elect Biden adopt a legislative agenda and enact specific executive orders that are in line with the LGBTQ movement—a movement that Biden pledged to champion.

Contained within its pages are perhaps some of the most alarming demands that threaten religious liberty, and the mainstream media has given little to no attention to this dimension of the report.

The *Blueprint* is not ambiguous—it makes detailed policy positions and recommendations, department by department, for the Biden Administration to deploy once the president-elect assumes office. From the Department of Agriculture to the Department of Health and Human Services, the Human Rights Campaign demands the enactment of policies to prohibit what is identified as discrimination.

In the Department of State, for example, the *Blueprint* urges the department to, “include a non-binary gender marker and modernize existing requirements for updating gender markers on United States’ passports.” Such policy proposals would upend a system specifically designed to quickly and accurately identify individuals for the purposes of safety and security. Hence this is why, when reporting a crime or a missing person, a police officer will ask you if the suspect or missing person is male or female. Passports are designed for specificity in order to promote safe travel throughout the United States and around the world—a policy likely to be undermined by a passport that includes “non-binary” gender markers and is “modernized” for our cultural moment. All this contributes to the elimination of gender or sex as a meaningful category – which is not accidental. If the intention is to remake humanity, the passport will have to be redefined.

Also included within the recommendations for the Department of State is the following: “Create a panel of human rights experts to review the conclusion of the Commission on Unalienable Rights and provide inclusive recommendations.” The *Blueprint* justifies that policy proposal by arguing, “The Commission on Unalienable Rights was designed to challenge the international consensus with a narrow view to human rights that, among other things, would leave LGBTQ people even more vulnerable to violence and discrimination.”

To be clear, the Department of State established the Commission on Unalienable Rights in order to identify those rights that all human beings possess—rights that ought to be recognized for every human being around the world. Those unalienable rights stand contrary to invented and artificial rights that have been declared by various courts around the world.

By calling for the end of this commission, the Human Rights Campaign has levied a veiled critique of the Trump administration's State Department under Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. The Biden administration, according to LGBTQ activists, must correct the missteps of the Commission on Unalienable Rights by reasserting the newly invented sexual liberties of the LGBTQ movement.

Indeed, the *Blueprint* argues that the Commission was created to “challenge the international consensus” on rights and liberties, especially sexual liberties. The problem with this, however, is that if you are looking for an international consensus on the issue of unalienable rights, you will not find it at the Human Rights Campaign.



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A Direct Threat to Christian Education

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You will not find an international consensus in the *Blueprint*. It is intellectually dishonest for this group to claim an international consensus for the LGBTQ revolution—a consensus that, quite frankly, does not exist.

Yet, the most shocking demand in the report is found under the section for the Department of Education. The Human Rights Campaign demands the Biden administration to ensure that “non-discrimination policies and science-based curriculum are not undermined by religious exemption to accreditation standards.”

That is sinister. I’ve not seen any document like this before—the Human Rights Campaign is effectively calling for religious colleges and schools to be coerced into the sexual revolution or stripped of accreditation.

The *Blueprint* states, “Language regarding accreditation of religious institutions of higher education in the Higher Education Opportunity Act could be interpreted to require accrediting bodies to accredit religious institutions that discriminate or do not meet science-based curricula standards. The Department of Education should issue a regulation clarifying that this provision, which requires accreditation agencies to ‘respect the stated mission’ of religious institutions, does not require the accreditation of religious institutions that do not meet neutral accreditation standards including nondiscrimination policies and scientific curriculum requirements.”

In terms of accreditation, that is an atomic bomb.

In clear text, for all the world to see, the Human Rights Campaign summons the Biden administration to deny accreditation—or, at the very least, to facilitate the denial of accreditation—to Christian institutions, Christian colleges and universities, and, for that matter, any other religious institution or school that does not meet the demands of the LGBTQ orthodoxy. This would mean abandoning biblical standards for teaching, hiring, admissions, housing, and student life. It would mean that Christian schools are no longer Christian.

This is insidious from top to bottom. Schools that will not get in line with the moral revolution, if the Biden Administration acts as demanded, will be denied their accreditation. We must not miss the language: Accreditation should be revoked for those who do not meet the LGBT “non-discrimination” standards or “science-based curricula standards.”

Wait just a minute. The Human Rights Campaign is not known for any particular agenda on the creation-evolution front, nor is the group preoccupied with particle physics. The Human Rights Campaign is targeting issues of sexual orientation and gender identity, cloaking them in the language of “science.” This is an undisguised effort to require Christian schools and colleges to abandon biblical authority or lose accreditation.

This is an open threat to the ability of Christian colleges and schools to operate by Christian conviction.

This is an outright attempt to eliminate religious freedom for Christian schools—or for any religious school that refuses to bow to the moral revolutionaries at the Human Rights Campaign.

If the Human Rights Campaign achieves its policy goals, religious institutions will either be coerced into capitulation over fundamental religious and theological doctrines, or they will be marginalized.



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A Direct Threat to Christian Education

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This kind of policy goes even further than, for example, attempts to strip federal funding and student aid from institutions that will not surrender to the LGBTQ movement. Indeed, accreditation is a more basic and pervasive threat—those colleges or universities would not be permitted to participate in the GI Bill; students would not be allowed to transfer their credits nor would they be allowed to apply for graduate study at other institutions. The threat to accreditation is more basic than the threat to federal funding. It would threaten even institutions that do not receive a single penny of government funding.

This is an undisguised attempt to shut down any semblance of a Christian college or university that would possess the audacity to operate from a Christian worldview.

This comes with chilling specificity and clarity. We dare not miss what is at stake. ~ *Dr. R. Albert Mohler, Jr.*

Ungratefulness as the Root of Sin

When my niece was two and a half, my sister and brother-in-law took her to visit friends. When they arrived, the six-year-old daughter of those friends took my niece into another room to play with her while the adults talked together. After about twenty minutes, the six-year-old came into the room exasperated. She had been playing a game with my niece that required her to hand my niece dozens of game pieces. The little girl complained, “Every time I hand her a piece, she says ‘thank you’ and waits for me to say ‘you’re welcome.’” This had been the constant “dialogue” for twenty minutes, and the older girl had gotten frustrated with it.

Teaching our children to give thanks and to have a thankful spirit is an important part of Christian parenting. The reason is that our heavenly Father demands that His children overflow with thanksgiving. Thankfulness is central to being a follower of Jesus Christ. Ungratefulness, on the other hand, is a sin and the root of other sins.

God created man—then re-created His people—to worship Him. In the classic work *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, Jeremiah Burroughs writes, “*Worship is not only doing what pleases God, but also being pleased with what God does.*” Worship includes taking delight in and giving thanks for all that God brings into our lives—in all circumstances. The thankful heart is the worshipful heart. The thankless heart is incapable of worshiping God.

In Romans 1:18–3:20, Paul delivers a sweeping and comprehensive detailing of human sin and God's condemnation. No person is excluded (“*all have sinned*”). No shade of sin is left out—from covetousness to malice, from envy to murder, from gossip to slander, from hating God to disobeying parents, from the rebellious to the self-righteous, from doing evil to inventing evil, and from committing sin to approving of those who commit sin. At the root of it all, however, is humanity's failure to honor God as God and give Him thanks (1:21).

In its essence, ingratitude is a rejection of God. It is a rejection of Him as Creator and Ruler of all things. It is a rejection of God as the giver of life, the giver of every blessing, whether expected or unexpected, whether pleasant or painful. Even in prison, Paul rejoiced and exhorted the Philippians to rejoice with him.



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Ungratefulness as the Root of Sin *Continued from Page 4*

He exhorted others to give thanks always. Believers have thankful spirits because they recognize that whatever we have, wherever we are, and, indeed, all that we are comes from the hand of God—for His glory and for our good.

Christians, like my niece, recognize that everything we have is a gift. God has given us everything—life, salvation, and everything that makes up life in this world and the next. Every day, every moment, should be filled with thanksgiving. God is good, and everything He does and gives is for our good. It is all a gift.

Imagine the child of wealthy parents who has received expensive gifts, attended the best schools, and lived in comfort and security, telling his parents, *“You never gave me enough.”* We would call that child spoiled, an ingrate. Yet, every gift that God gives to His own children is infinitely better, more lavish, perfectly suited for every circumstance, always for our good, and always undeserved. What spoiled children we are if we fail to give Him thanks continually.

It is fitting, then, that thanklessness is a characteristic of the apostasy in *“the last days.”* Paul writes, *“But understand this, that in the last days . . . people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy”* (2 Timothy 3:1–2). It is fitting that *“lovers of self,” “proud, arrogant,”* and *“ungrateful”* are grouped together. The thankless person believes he is the center of the world. He has earned everything he has. For him, nothing is a gift.

Paul points to ingratitude as a root of the plethora of problems in the Corinthian church. He writes: *“What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?”* (1 Corinthians 4:7). They failed to recognize that everything they had was a gift from God. Instead, they were prideful and boastful.

Here, then, we see the ultimate “original” sin rear its ugly head—the sin of pride. Ungratefulness and pride go hand in hand. Where one goes, the other walks beside it. The prideful heart is the thankless heart and is at enmity with God. Christian, everything you have is a gift. Give thanks to God continually for it. ~ **Dr. William Barclay - Senior pastor of Sovereign Grace Presbyterian Church and adjunct professor of New Testament at Reformed Theological Seminary in Charlotte, N.C.**

Son of the Most High

The angel said to her, *“Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.”* (Luke 1:30-33)

God’s people had not seen or heard from an angel in more than four hundred years. During that time there had been no revelation from the Lord, no miracle, and certainly no sequence of miracles. But then for the second time in the span of a few months the same angel appeared, both times with an extraordinary birth announcement to an ordinary person.



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Son of the Most High *Continued from Page 5*

Gabriel is one of only two angels who are actually named in the Bible. The other one, Michael, is associated with assignments requiring power and strength (Revelation 12:7). Gabriel is God’s supreme messenger who brought great, glorious, and crucial announcements from heaven. For example, he also delivered the pronouncement to Daniel regarding the future of redemptive history and the seventy-weeks prophecy (Daniel 9).

Gabriel delivered the most astounding and significant birth announcement ever. His words about the divine child, Jesus, constitute a summary of the entire Person and work of our Lord and Savior. The summation appears rather simple on the surface, but the complexity of each facet challenges our ability to grasp and appreciate all that the angel said to Mary. It is truly awesome to contemplate Jesus’ saving work, His perfectly righteous life, His title of deity, and His kingly position—all in the same concise overview.

His Saving Work

First, the angel gives a preliminary indication of the Child’s saving mission. Jesus’ name itself comes from the Hebrew Yeshua, which means “*Jehovah saves*” (Matthew 1:21). The God of the Old Testament was a saving God, and His people knew it (2 Samuel 7:23; Job 19:25; Isaiah 44:21-23, 45:21; Hosea 14:2; Joel 2:12-13; Jonah 2:9).

In Luke’s description of the incarnation, he reiterates and underscores the point that the Child, Jesus, was the long-awaited Savior: “*For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord*” (Luke 2:11 NKJV); “*For my [Simeon’s] eyes have seen Your salvation*” (Luke 2:30); “*And coming in that instant she [Anna] gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem*” (Luke 2:38 NKJV). And later in his gospel, while chronicling Christ’s ministry in Perea, Luke conveyed in Jesus’ own words the reason He came: “*For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost*” (Luke 19:10).

His Perfectly Righteous Life

Gabriel makes the simple statement that Jesus would be “*Great.*” Some commentators would say it’s better to translate the Greek word for “*great*” as extraordinary. Or it might be better still to substitute the adjective splendid, magnificent, noble, distinguished, powerful, or eminent. But those words still don’t allow us to speak as excitedly as we ought about the life of Jesus. Christ’s greatness is best understood in relation to what the apostle John wrote about Him:

But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him, that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke: “Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again: “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, lest they should see with their eyes, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.” These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him. (John 12:37-41 NKJV)



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Son of the Most High *Continued from Page 6*

John's second quote from the prophet is from Isaiah 6:9-10, when Isaiah saw the glory (or greatness) of God. The prophet Isaiah knew that one day God would send the Messiah, His Son, to live a perfect life among His people and to save them from their sins (Isaiah 7:14, 9:6-7, 53:4-6). He had a preview of the same glory of Christ that the apostles later witnessed and described (Matthew 17:1-8; John 1:14). When Gabriel told Mary that Jesus would be great, he meant that Jesus would manifest the very glory of God.

His Title of Deity

Gabriel's announcement also affirms the deity of Christ. *"He will be called the Son of the Most High"* (Luke 1:32). Most High was simply a title for God, clearly indicating that nobody is higher than He is. Mary and other righteous Jews were familiar with that title because it is used throughout the Old Testament (cf. Genesis 14:18; Psalm 47:2, 91:1; Daniel 7:18). The Hebrew equivalent of the Greek term used by Luke is El Elyon, *"God Most High."* This title refers to God's sovereignty and the fact that no one is higher, more exalted, or more powerful than He is.

To identify Jesus as the Son of the Most High is to declare that He has the same essence as the Most High God. *"He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high"* (Hebrews 1:3). Jesus told His disciples, *"He who has seen Me has seen the Father"* (John 14:9). And He boldly asserted to His opponents, *"I and the Father are one"* (John 10:30). Gabriel announced, and the New Testament confirms, that Jesus unquestionably was and is worthy of His divine title, because He truly is the Son of God.

His Kingly Position

The story of Jesus will wonderfully conclude with His sovereign rule over the earth and heaven. The story of redemption will culminate with great precision in the glorious reign of Jesus Christ on David's throne over the nation of Israel, by which He will establish an earthly kingdom for a thousand years, followed by an eternal kingdom.

When Jesus came to earth as an infant, He came with the proper credentials to rule. He offered His kingdom to His people, but they spurned it and rejected and executed Him. However, Christ will return in glory and with omnipotence to establish His kingdom (Revelation 19:1-21:8).

The Old Testament writers, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, foresaw the coming of Christ's kingdom. For example, David writes,

Yet I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: The Lord has said to Me, "You are My Son, today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession." (Psalm 2:6-8 NKJV)



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Son of the Most High *Continued from Page 7*

In 2 Samuel 7:12-16, God told David he would have a Son who would reign forever. And that Son was not Solomon, but the Messiah, Jesus.

The Bible promises that all believers will be part of God's kingdom. Even though God will take us to heaven through death or the rapture, He will include us in the millennial kingdom. Others will be saved during the tribulation and become members of the kingdom. Christ will return, judge the unbelieving, and then establish His earthly kingdom of righteousness, peace, and truth. And once the final rebellion of Satan and his followers is crushed and they're sent to the lake of fire, the Lord will establish His eternal kingdom. The magnificent words of Handel's "*Hallelujah Chorus*" perfectly describe the conclusion: "*He shall reign forever and ever!*" ~ **Dr. John MacArthur**

Listening to your Conscience

"My conscience is held captive by the Word of God. And to act against conscience is neither right nor safe."

These words formed a crucial part of Martin Luther's fateful response to authorities of church and state when he was ordered to recant of his teachings at the Diet of Worms in 1521. He was pleading that his intention was to be neither rebellious nor obstreperous, but to be faithful to Scripture. What Luther was declaring was not so much that he would not recant but that he could not recant.

Luther used the metaphor of the prisoner. He was as a man in chains, incarcerated, with no option of liberty by which he was able to do what the authorities commanded. He was not physically restrained. The irons that gripped him were of a moral sort. It was his conscience that had been captured by the Holy Ghost.

The only option by which he could please men was the option to act against his conscience. To act for men was to act against God. Though the stakes were high, the decision was actually a "no brainer." Scripture declares that whatever is not of faith is sin (Romans 14:23). ~ **Dr. R.C. Sproul, Sr.**

Resolved

For the last four years, I have spoken at a conference on the West Coast called "*Resolved.*" The name is drawn from the Resolutions of Jonathan Edwards and is aimed at college students and "twenty-somethings" in the next generation. As an eighteen and nineteen year old, young Edwards wrote seventy resolutions, which became his personal mission statement to guide his life. To launch the first conference, I spoke from Edward's first resolution, what Edwards determined would be the single most important pursuit in his life — the glory of God.

Edwards began his Resolutions with what he desired to be the driving force of his life — an all-absorbing passion to pursue the glory of God. "**Resolved:** that I will do whatsoever I think to be most to God's glory and to my own good, profit, and pleasure, in the whole of my duration, without any consideration of the time, whether now or never so many myriads of ages hence.



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Resolved

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Resolved: to do whatever I think to be my duty, and most for the good and advantage of mankind in general.
Resolved: to do this whatever difficulties I meet with, how ever so many and how ever so great.”

With this before his eyes weekly, this first resolution set the tone for his entire life. In every arena, he resolved to honor God supremely. Everything else in his life would be subsidiary to this one driving pursuit.

What is the glory of God? The Bible speaks of it in two ways. **First**, there is His intrinsic glory, the revelation of all that God is. It is the sum total of all His divine perfections and holy attributes. There is nothing that man can do to add to His intrinsic glory. **Second**, there is God’s ascribed glory, which is the praise and honor due His name. This is the glory that man must give to God.

For Edwards, to be resolved to live for God’s glory means to exalt His most glorious name. It means to live consistently with His holy character. It means to proclaim and promote His supreme greatness. This is the highest purpose for which God created us.

Why did Edwards place this resolution first? He understood that Scripture places the glory of God first in all things. Edwards was gripped with a transcendent, high view of God. As a result, in writing his “resolutions,” he knew he must live wholeheartedly for this awesome, sovereign God.

Thus, Edwards intentionally chose to “*do whatsoever I think is most to God’s glory.*” Here is the interpretive principle for everything in life. You want to know what God’s will is? You want to know whom to marry? You want to know what job to take? You want to know what ministry to pursue? You want to know how to invest your resources? You want to know how to spend your time?

There it is! Everything in life fits under this master theme. Anything out of alignment with this principle pursuit is in dangerous territory. Sometimes our decisions are not between right and wrong. Sometimes they are between good, better, and best. These are sometimes the hardest decisions. Edwards said that he would not live for what is merely good. Nor for what is better. He purposed to live only for what is best. Whatever is most to the glory of God — that is what is best!

Edwards believed that God’s glory was inseparably connected with his “own good, profit, and pleasure.” Whenever he sought God’s glory, he was confident that it would inevitably yield God’s greatest good for his life. The glory of God produced his greatest “pleasure.” So it is with us. Would you know unspeakable joy? Abundant peace? True contentment? Then pursue God’s glory.

With unwavering determination, young Edwards chose this first resolution to mark “*the whole of my duration.*” As long as he was alive, this was to be the driving thrust of his life. He must always live for God’s glory. He would never outgrow this central theme. He must never exchange it for a lesser glory.

Also, Edwards’ believed that his commitment to God’s glory would bring the greatest “*good of mankind.*” By seeking God’s honor, the greatest advantage would accrue to others. Thus, living for the glory of God would lead to the greatest influence of the Gospel upon the world. Souls would be converted. Saints would be edified. Needs would be met.



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Resolved

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Would you have maximum impact upon this world? Would you lead others to Christ? Would you live for eternity? There it is! Live for God's glory.

No matter what, Edwards resolved to live for God's glory despite "*whatever difficulties I meet with, how ever so many and ever so great.*" Regardless the cost, despite the pain, he would pursue God's honor. Even if it meant persecution or poverty, his mind was made up, his will resolved. He would pay any price to uphold the glory of God, regardless of the hardship that awaited him.

This is my challenge to the next generation: Would you seek the highest goal? Would you know the deepest joy? Would you realize the greatest good? Would you cast the widest influence? Would you overcome the greatest difficulties?

Then make this first resolution of Jonathan Edwards your chief aim. Be resolved to live for God's glory. ~ **Dr. Steven J. Lawson**

God's Unfathomable Ways

"Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross" (Philippians 2:8).

Christ's humiliation displayed God's wisdom

Somewhere along the path of Christ's descent, you'd think He would have said to Himself, These people really aren't worth redeeming. This is too degrading and humiliating! But the grace and love of God toward sinners was such that Christ stooped to die for you and me. At the end of Paul's doctrinal survey of salvation in Romans, he said, "*Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!*" (Romans 11:33). He was in awe of God's plan of salvation—a plan no man would have devised.

If we had planned the Incarnation, we probably would have wanted Christ to be born in a palace. His family would have been wealthy and prominent, and He would have been educated in the finest universities with elite teachers and the best tutors. We would have orchestrated events so that everyone loved, revered, honored, and respected Him. He would have been in all the prominent places and met all the prominent people.

We would not have had Him born in a stable to a poor family. He would not have spent His youth in a carpenter's shop in an obscure town. Rather than a ragtag band of followers, we would have made sure He had only the best people as His disciples, and they would have had to pass stiff qualifying tests for the privilege.

We would not have allowed Him to be humiliated. We would have imprisoned or executed anyone who spit on Him, pulled His beard, mocked Him, or hurt Him. Our plan for the Messiah would have been very different from God's plan, and, as a result no one could have been saved. It's no wonder the psalmist said, "*Thy judgments are like a great deep*" (Psalm 36:6). God's ways are unsearchable, His truths profound. And His plan to redeem us was accomplished by Christ's humiliation. ~ **Dr. John MacArthur**



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Thoughtfully Reformed - Redemptively Relevant

If you have a December birthday or anniversary that is not posted here or is listed in error, please e-mail Walt (gwlcfl0415@gmail.com).

Birthdays and Anniversaries Corner December 2020

Amelia H. (3)

Terrye B. (4)

Katie S. (9)

Auden Douglas T. (12)

Jennifer A. (13)

Tony H. (14)

Wilma S. (16)

Scott T. (19)

John M. (21)

Cheryl P. (22)

Jessica T. (23)

Lorraine H. (25)

John and Teresa H. (1)

Malcolm and Amber H. (14)

John and LeAnn M. (22)

Alistair Begg Quotes

Jesus did not come to live as an example of how to die as a martyr, but as a substitute, taking the place that we deserve in order that we might enjoy what we don't deserve. This is good news. Let us tell all our friends!

The only true conqueror who shall be crowned in the end is he who continues until war's trumpet is blown no more.... Christian, wear your shield close to your armor and cry earnestly to God, that by His Spirit you may endure to the end.

The Christian will be sure to make enemies. It will be one of his objects to make none; but if doing what is right and believing what is true should cause him to lose every earthly friend, he will regard it as a small loss, since his great Friend in heaven will be even more friendly and will reveal Himself to him more graciously than ever. ~ **Dr. Alistair Begg**



***West Suffolk Baptist Church
Leadership***

The West Suffolk Epistle is a monthly publication of West Suffolk Baptist Church.

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