

God's Design

By Paul B. Blake, Sr.

Jean and I went to Blackwater Falls for our 35 anniversary, and we went to the lookout above the falls. We looked down at the canyon, at the beautiful high mountains, and at the deep valley. God put trees, and pines, and flowers to cover the mountains. What a beautiful flower garden He made! It was so big, it was breath taking. Looking at this beautiful sight told me something about God's design. It told me what God likes, what He thinks is beautiful, and what His thoughts are. Then Jean said something to me. She said, "You know God is going to destroy this some day and give us something better. This place is so beautiful. And God is going to give us something more beautiful than this. As the song goes, 'How Beautiful Heaven Must Be'." We can't even comprehend how beautiful Heaven will be. The scriptures say that the streets are pure gold. Stop and think. We have gold down here on earth; so what? Look at gold and what it means. It is just God's way of trying to tell us how beautiful Heaven is. Gold-pure, Gold-rich, Gold-power, Gold-honor. God gave us gold to show us how beautiful heaven will be. People will kill for or die for gold. So when God told us about Heaven we should seek it and want to go there. We should desire to go there more so than the strong desire some have to seek after gold. We should do anything God tells us to do to obtain it.

On the way home, Jean said it's like making pattern out of cheap material, then making the pattern out of the best material you have. I was thinking if I could only own all of Blackwater Falls. What a joy that would be! But the scriptures say "if you gain the whole world." Oh My! If I could own all of that and every beautiful place there is here on earth. I would be something. Wrong! Read the rest of the verse. "And lose your own soul; what doeth it profit you?" Nothing. I could own the whole world, yet if I am lost, I am nothing. I lost it all. There a song, "I sooner be just a poor beggar, than to own all earth riches with no hope of the farther abode."

Everything God made is perfect. But man has corrupted it. Heaven will be perfect, and it will stay perfect for ever. All of this beauty we see here on earth will not last, it will end. Remember that everything you see, God created it just the way He wanted it. That was His design. If we don't see beauty in something, it doesn't mean it's not there. We just can't see it. When God created man and women they were beautiful. But who corrupted them? God or man?

Dinglehoffer's Den

(The following is a parody of a men's business meeting. However, in my opinion and based on my experiences in congregations without elders, it is not too far from the truth. There is Divine wisdom in doing things God's way, including church organization. Troubled and dying congregations would do well to give up business meetings where "Every man did what way right in his own eyes," and appoint qualified elders. prb)

Business meetings not always like that. Many times meet, very little business. Been to some that were real clambakes. Met one time to discuss new time for Sunday Evening service. Some wanted earlier; some wanted later. Finally set time to please most. Could rush out to get home for favorite TV program. Employed good reason. If

don't have service so visitors can get home for program, "they" won't come. They were thinking of others.

One meeting, brother who lived by stopwatch thought morning services dragged. Said if eliminated one prayer, one song, and unpleasant announcements about sick and infirm; could get out fifteen minutes earlier. Knew his trouble. He chafed because Methodists and Baptists beat him to cafeteria. Didn't object much to cutting song, prayer, and announcements. Saw red when he wanted to cut my sermon. Such a thing is going too far; loved to prolong sermons after that. He squirmed as thought of waiting in cafeteria line.

Hard to keep brethren on subject in meetings. One time discussed helping sister. Case stated: hospitalized three months, husband out of work, she had taught class and was faithful for years. Whole family faithful. "How much hospital bill?" "Three thousand and growing." "Medical costs have increased," said one. "Them doctors gettin' rich," said another. "It's gov'ment that's doin' it," said third. Round table discussion of government, sorry doctors, welfare state, and personal experiences with operations. After cultural exchange, I asked, "What'll you do about her?"

Thoughtful pause. One said, "We've had a lotta expense lately. Can't tell what the future may bring. Suggest we go slow until we see what the budget will stand." Heads nodded at this careful course. "We've got other expenses," said one. Before could stop, they decided to spend three thousand on parking lot, five thousand on new roof, two thousand on air conditioner, and bring reserve fund up to seven thousand in case of bad storm. Decided to send sister twenty-five dollars. Said, "after all, twenty-five here, twenty-five there, soon adds up." Heads nodded. Wise course. Brotherly love. Compassion. Golden rule.

Talked about cracks in floor, painting door, fixing leak in restroom, termiting. "How sound we are!" "Rotten liberals." After an hour in the meeting, brother timidly said, "We need to take some action and allocate some funds to teach the gospel to the lost." Suggestion greeted by earsplitting silence! Throats cleared. "We've discussed enough business for tonight. Suggest we table that for future." Motion seconded. Meeting dismissed. Shouldn't have introduced foreign matter into business meeting. Meeting over. Brethren pleased. Satisfied to know that the Lord's cause was marching on. They had just decided that. (via Gospel Teacher)

The Worm In The Apple

How does a worm get in the apple? Perhaps you think the worm burrowed in from the outside. No, scientists have discovered that the worm comes from the inside? But how does he get in there? Simple. An insect lays an egg in the apple blossom. Later the worm hatches in the heart of the apple, then eats his way out. Sin, like the worm, begins in the heart and works out through one's thoughts and actions. For this reason David once wrote, "create in me a clean heart, O God" (Psalm 51:10).

A Moments Wisdom

We do not need better methods or more money; we need better men.
If you want to hear about the trouble in the church, ask some ungodly person.

Giving is grace; not giving is disgrace.
People seldom “lose their religion” by a blowout; it’s usually a slow leak.
Moderation in sin is no more possible than moderation in hanging.