

## **Cooperating with Providence**

In the account of Ruth's life, God providentially set the stage for Boaz to rescue Ruth and Naomi from a life of poverty and the shame of not having an heir. Ruth could have been bitter about her status as a young widow, and Boaz might have thought that as a foreigner Ruth was not worth his time. But they recognized the hand of God in their circumstances and converged with His plan to provide for her needs. The best part is that their story doesn't end there. Salvation for the world was yet to come through their descendants—David the King and Jesus the Messiah (Matt. 1:5-16).

We can compete with God's plan and pursue our own agenda. Or we can converge with God's plan and join the winning side. God's plans always lead to victory. The choice is ours. (Joe Stowell)

### **The Choice is Ours**

"I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). Jesus does not force the sinner to repent, but enjoins and beseeches him to do so. The choice is ours: "repent or perish," "turn or be lost"; it's that simple.

Repentance is not despair, remorse, or regret, but is a change of mind coupled with a change of conduct. The first son repented and went (Matt. 21:28-29); the jailer washed their stripes (Acts 16:33); the Ephesians burned their evil books (Acts 19:19); and the prodigal son came home (Luke 15:20). We should repent and be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38) and, thereafter, continue to repent as the need arises. We need to daily strive to meet the Lord's requirements so that we can continue to have our sins forgiven (1John 1:7-9). What is your choice? Will you repent or will you perish?

### **Simeon the Peach**

In his early years of ministry, the English preacher Charles Simeon (1759–1836) was a harsh and self-assertive man. One day he was visiting a friend and fellow preacher in a nearby village. When he left to go home, his friend's daughters complained to their father about Simeon's manner. So he took the girls to the backyard and said, "Pick me one of those peaches." It was early summer, and the peaches were green. The girls asked why he wanted green, unripe fruit. He replied, "Well, my dears, it is green now, and we must wait; but a little more sun, and a few more showers, and the peach will be ripe and sweet. So it is with Mr. Simeon.

Simeon, in due time, did change. The warmth of God's love and the "showers" of misunderstanding and disappointment were the means by which he became a gentle, humble man. The God of all grace works in all His children, humbling the proud and exalting the humble, to make them ripe and sweet. Our task is to take hold of God's grace to endure our afflictions with patience, without growing weary. In time, He will "perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle" us (1Peter 5:10). We must "wait on the LORD" and "be of good courage" (Psalm 27:14). (David H. Roper)

### **"I am the Destroyer of Souls and Homes"**

Pornography, once a secretive backdoor industry, is now out in the open. The easy access and anonymity of the Internet have turned it into a multibillion-dollar-a-year "business." Now every person with a smart phone can access it anywhere at any time (children, too). But it

leaves a trail of broken families, ineffective Christian leaders, and men who have lost the respect of their loved ones.

The apostle John was known for his great love for Christ and His church. In 1John 2:12-17, he warned fathers and young men against these three lusts:

1) The lust of the flesh—the insatiable appetite to indulge in pleasures that inflame the flesh but never satisfy.

2) The lust of the eyes—wandering eyes that continually want more riches and possessions but always remain covetous.

3) The pride of life—the vain mind that thirsts for man’s applause. But the glory evaporates quickly.

Pornography damages users and victims alike. It feeds lustful desires in ways that can never satisfy. True satisfaction is found only when we give our affections to eternal things—to a right relationship with our heavenly Father and with those He has created in His image. “The world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever” (v.17). (Albert Lee)

### **Sunday Services at the Church of Contemporary Convenience**

PREACHER: "Praise the Lord!"

CONGREGATION: "Hallelujah!"

PREACHER: "Will everyone please turn on their tablet, PC, iPad, smart phone, and Kindle Bibles to 1Corinthians 13:13. And please switch on your Bluetooth to download the sermon."

P-a-u-s-e.....

"Now, Let us pray committing this week into God's hands. Open your Apps, BBM, Twitter and Facebook, and chat with God"

S-i-l-e-n-c-e

"As we take our Sunday tithes and offerings, please have your credit and debit cards ready. You can log on to the church Wi-Fi using the password 'Lord909887.' The ushers will circulate mobile card swipe machines among the worshipers:

a) Those who prefer to make electronic fund transfers are directed to computers and laptops at the rear of the church.

b) Those who prefer to use iPads can open them.

c) Those who prefer telephone banking, take out your cell phones to transfer your contributions to the church account.” (The atmosphere of the Church becomes truly electrified as ALL the smart phones, iPads, PCs and laptops beep and flicker!)

“Final Blessing and Closing Announcements...

a) This week's ministry cell meetings will be held on the various Facebook group pages where the usual group chatting takes place. Please log in and don't miss out.

b) Thursday's Bible study will be held live on Skype at 1900hrs GMT. Please don't miss out.

c) You can follow your PREACHER on Twitter this weekend for counseling and prayers.

d) God bless you and have nice day.”

### **World's Best Mom**

On Mother's Day, 2007, British national television ran an intriguing story. Peggy Bush's daughter had died, so Peggy absorbed the responsibility of caring for her daughter's three children while her son-in-law worked. Then, tragically, her son-in-law also died. With both parents gone, Peggy took her three grandchildren in and raised them as if they were her own. In a world where wrong is glamorized and the lurid is presented as appealing, we seldom hear of the good things that happen. Yet this woman's love and sacrifice were recognized,

acknowledged, and honored as the nation took note of her as Britain's "Best Mum" for 2007. She fulfilled the truth of Proverbs 31:28, "Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her."