

Cornerstone Connection

Thinking Biblically by Bill Moore

A Serious Faith

For as long as I can remember, a sentimental Christianity, one based more upon emotions than upon the Scriptures, has been unappealing to me. Frankly, it simply seems useless. Such a Christianity, unfortunately, pervades the American religious landscape.

Roger and Bertha (not their real names) are now in their seventies, and they have a son named Charles (okay—not his real name, either). Charles has been married and divorced three times and is now married to a fourth wife (or is it married and divorced four times and now has a fifth wife?). Roger, Bertha, and Charles are life-long church members and don't hesitate to use God-talk whenever conversations take a religious turn. The couple has never rebuked the son for his multiple marriages and divorces, and the son has never repented. When a church took steps to discipline Charles after he left his first wife and children for another woman, both Roger and Bertha were "hurt" by the stand the church leadership was taking and eventually left the church for another. Charles had already left that church and had been welcomed into another local church of the same denomination by a pastor who had been fully informed of Charles' sin.

Roger and Bertha and Charles will talk with great affection about God, the church, the cross, and heaven. They are "nice" people and do "nice" things for others. Their local church plays a central role in their lives. When it comes to making difficult choices in following Christ, however, they always justify taking the easier route, the road that never has to confront sin, either their own or their children.

The problem with such folks is that their Christianity is a man-centered religion. For them, the reason Christ came to earth was to make life more pleasurable *for his followers*. *The purpose for the death of Christ is so they can enter heaven. Such thinking betrays a worldly and sentimental view of Christianity and is naive and foreign to the Scriptures.*

Bernard of Clairvaux, writing in the twelfth century, maintained that following God is a matter of finding in him our desire, the very centrality for our living: "We read in Scripture that God has made all things for himself. His creatures must

aim, therefore, at conforming themselves perfectly to their Creator and living according to his will. So we must fix our love on him, bit by bit aligning our own will with his, who made all for himself, not wanting either ourselves or anything else to be or to have been, save as it pleases him, making his will alone, and not our pleasure, our object of desire."

Bernard's thinking is much more in line with what Jesus taught than is the thinking of the Rogers and Berthas and Charleses of our American Christianity. In Luke 9:23–25 Jesus taught, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?" Jesus spoke these words to religious people, folks for whom God-talk was a pleasing thing.

Sentimental Christianity refuses to make the hard choices, refuses to make real and tangible sacrifices, refuses to respond to the sin in one's life. In the end, many whose Christianity is merely a sentimental longing will find themselves outside the atoning work of Christ.

Biblical Christianity, though, sees the loathsomeness of sin, both one's own and that of others, sees the graciousness of a forgiving Father and the loving sacrifice of his Son, and takes seriously what the Scriptures teach. Biblical Christianity exalts the will of God above one's own and desires ultimately that God be glorified. Jim Elliott, the missionary whose life was taken on an Ecuadorian mission field, recorded this prayer: "Father, take my life, yea, my blood if Thou wilt, and consume it with Thine enveloping fire. I would not save it, for it is not mine to save. Have it, Lord, have it all. Pour out my life as an oblation [a drink offering] for the world. Blood is only of value as it flows before Thine altar." May that be our attitude and prayer as well.

Monthly projects

United Ministries continues to distribute food to needy families in our community. Cornerstone is asked to provide flour, sugar and peanut butter.

Remember to pick-up one or more of these items the next time you are in the grocery store.

Don't forget to save empty inkjet printer cartridges, old cell phones, Campbell Soup and Tyson Chicken labels, and Box Tops for Education found on General Mills products for **Laurens Academy**.

The Laurens Baptist Association helps families in need and in crisis situations. We can help by donating the requested items each month.

Crisis Center needs for June are:
Ramen noodles, boxed dinners

Baskets are outside the church office for collection of monthly project items.

Family Mission Trip ---- June 11-17 Park City, Kentucky

Due to the distance of the mission trip this summer, expenses will be greater than the amount allocated in the annual budget. Gifts will be accepted in April, May and through June 5 to help with the cost of the trip. Even if your family cannot make the trip, you can be a part of the mission work by making a contribution.

Received to date: \$2,865.00

June Birthdays

Anna Dailey	11
Kecia Faulkner	13
Katie Orcutt	16
Bernice Snyder	19
Shirley Davis	20
Sam Freeman	22
Whitey Murphy	22
Sheila Dailey	29
Bill Moore	30



Don't forget that the monthly financial reports will be on the table in the narthex on Wednesdays after the first of each month.

The reports are also available in the church office at any time.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

June 27-July 1

6:00-8:30 PM

Have you signed up to help with Vacation Bible School? In this year's *Gold Rush*, the children will go on a mining expedition to discover the *Rock of Ages*.

Contact Debby Young to volunteer to help or to register your child.



Walt Allen will be involved with mission work through Campus Outreach this July and August in San Diego. He will be participating in the spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ through relational ministries, refugee tutoring, and mercy ministries in the inner city. At the same time, he will be able to grow spiritually through studying the Word of God and living in community with fellow believers. If you would like to donate to the cost of his trip, you can make your check out to Campus Outreach or to Cornerstone and write "Walt Allen--Campus Outreach" in the "for" blank.

Received to date: \$300.00

Summertime Kids Connection

A study of Christian Heroes from history:

Perpetua
John Bunyan
William Tyndale
Eric Liddell
Gladys Aylwards

An introduction to real Kids of Courage
at risk for their faith today

in five countries:
China—Egypt—Nigeria
North Korea—India

Learn to apply eternal truths to your
own lives and become



June 1,8,22
July 6,13,20,27
August 3,10,17
Bring a friend!

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(Carolina Commentary)

Thank you

Cornerstone Baptist Church,

Because of people such as yourself, PIMI continues being a viable mission ministry to Romania. I thank God for you and some others who give so that our blessed Romanian friends may have a chance to come to Christ! God bless you, real good!!

As of today, PIMI has two mission projects in July. The first is a children's camp in Codru, Romania. There are some forty children who are already registered to attend this camp. PIMI will have two teams of leaders in this camp to assist with the children as well as to help teach. This camp will occur July 2-9. Will you remember to pray for this special time of outreach?

Then, from July 16-23 PIMI will conduct a project that will center in Oradea, Romania. PIMI has at least twenty-four persons going on this project, which will include evangelism, discipleship, medical clinic and Children's Camp. Our plan is to get into familiar villages and to find villages where the Gospel of Jesus Christ has never been heard. Please pray for this project as well.

PIMI has always been led by God to work in Romanian villages. There are very few people who want to go into villages because it is more difficult in those places. I would not want to be anywhere else. And, for the last several years, we have been working with Gypsies in Romania. God has been so good to give us the heart of both Romanians and of Gypsies. Why don't you pray about going with us some time?

Your friend,
Bob Ward

Dear Friends in Christ,

United Ministries appreciates your recent gift. Our community is blessed to have church families like Cornerstone Baptist share God's blessing in this way. This gift will be used to provide crisis assistance for our neighbors in need.

From our location at Samaritan's Corner, volunteers operate our financial assistance ministry Monday and Wednesday mornings and our Food Bank Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. Our Food Bank also distributes USDA food the second Wednesday of each month.

Again thank you for your gift to help others in the name of Jesus Christ!

In behalf of United Ministries,
Sharon Stephens

Laurens Academy also sends their thanks for the use of our tables for their recent auction.