

DRAGON TERRITORY

Christianity vs. Neo-Counter Culture



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OUR WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY

Bro. Doug Webb

“

They labored tirelessly night and day to get as much of the harvest in as they possibly could before the opportunity was past”

John 4:35: “Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.”

A few years ago, my wife and I were driving up US HWY 31 in the flat lands of northern Indiana. As we traveled along, we saw field after field of soybean and corn that were ripe and ready to harvest. Some of those fields were gigantic and looked like they may have been several hundred acres in size, while other fields were much smaller. In nearly every field, we saw combines and corn-pickers laboring furiously. It was apparent that the farmers who were operating them realized that time was of the essence, knowing that they had only a small window of opportunity in which to work before the fall rains set in. I was moved by the fact that those farmers did not let the vastness of the task or the shortness of time stifle their spirit in reaping the harvest. Instead, they labored tirelessly night and day to get as much of the harvest in as they possibly could before the opportunity was past.

As we drove along meditating on these things, the Lord began to deal with me about the harvest fields of souls that are now white (ripe) and ready to harvest. He spoke to my spirit that time is of the essence and that it is high time for every Christian to be busy about the Father’s business of gathering souls into His garner.

Harvesting the souls of men and bringing them into the kingdom is the heartbeat of God. Jesus made it plain in Luke 19:10 that His divine purpose for coming into this world was to seek and save that which was lost. Absolutely nothing is more important to Him than the salvation of souls. Saving souls was, and is, His passion, and this passion He passed on to His disciples. In Mark 16:15, we see where the Lord commis-



sioned them to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. Some of the last words spoken by our Lord just before He ascended are recorded in Acts 1:8, “and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.” In this statement, Christ revealed that there are four fields of ministry for which His disciples are to labor in.

The first field, “Jerusalem,” is symbolic of reaching out to the souls of those closest to us. This includes the souls of our family, our friends, our neighbors, and close acquaintances.

The second field, “Judea,” represents the souls we reach out to in our local community, through Outreach Ministries. This would include such things as jail ministry, nursing home ministry, homeless ministries, ministering to the poor, and such.

The third field, “Samaria,” represents Home Missions Ministries. These are ministries that reach out to

touch the lives of people of our nation, by various means, which include evangelistic ministries, church planting ministries, relief ministries that reach out to minister to people in times of calamity, and so on.

The fourth field, “the uttermost parts of the earth,” represents foreign missions, which mainly refer to reaching out to the souls of those in distant lands.

I do believe that it is evident by the order in which Jesus listed these harvest fields of ministry that he was showing us that the first field of ministry we all ought to labor in, is the field at home. Then after that, other fields of ministry as he wills it to be.

I think we would all agree that there are people all about us that we come into contact with every day that need the Lord: people we are kin to, are neighbors with, work with, or go to school with. People right down the street from us, who are at the end of their rope and have no hope. People, in our local community, who are in trouble and have no idea where to turn to get help. People who are in search of peace and rest for mind and soul, but don’t know where to find it.

I would like to share a personal experience I had one time. Several years ago, a member of the church where I was pastoring asked me to visit a lost man in the hospital who was in his seventies and was dying of cancer. I was told that this man had not gone to church since he was a child and that he had never prayed or asked Jesus to be Lord of his life. I prayed about it and felt that I should go to the hospital to visit him. When I entered the room, his niece was standing by his bedside and introduced herself to me. After we talked for a few minutes, I asked if I could speak to her uncle. She in turn told me I could but informed me that he had been in a comatose state and had not responded

to anyone for several days. I stepped to his bedside, and when I called him by name, he instantly opened his eyes and focused on me. I then told him who I was and that I had come to talk to him about his soul. After taking a few moments to share Christ with him, I asked him if he would like to pray and give his life to the Lord. He nodded his head yes, so we prayed together asking the Lord to forgive him of his sins. Afterward, I asked him if he felt like he had made peace with God, and he assured me that he had. It was then that I noticed that his niece had tears running down her face and dripping off her chin. She was so happy that she had just witnessed seeing her uncle give his heart to the Lord. After I talked to him a minute more, he drifted back into a state of unconsciousness from which he never regained consciousness. Glory be to God that

He gave me the wisdom I needed to take advantage of the small window of opportunity to reach this man's soul just before he died.

When it comes to soul winning, it may be that we will have a small window of opportunity of a few minutes to lead someone to the Lord, like the man I just previously told you about. With others, it may be that the window of opportunity to lead them to the Lord will not open until after years of building a relationship with them. I had such an experience with one man. He was my barber. I witnessed to him for years and invited him to church. He coldly rejected me time after time. However, there came a time that he got badly sick, and I went and visited him. He said he couldn't believe that I came to see him. After several personal visits,

he began to soften up and called me his preacher because I was the only preacher who had ever come to visit him. One day I went to visit him I could tell he was wide open to the Gospel. I took advantage of the opportunity and shared Christ with him. He prayed right then and there and got saved! After that, he came to my church.

Dear brothers and sisters, I ask that you look on the fields for they are white and ready to harvest. Work while it is day for the night cometh when no man can work. Pray that the Lord of the harvest will help you recognize your window of opportunity and that you will be ready to reap when it opens. Proverbs 11:30, "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise." ■



LEVITE HOSPITALITY

Sis. Genell Webb



Romans 12:13: "Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality."

The flag on the top of the pie read, "Revival 7:00 PM tonight".

Perhaps it was a fresh-baked fruit pie or mile-high meringue chocolate cream variety. Either way, the delivery the pastor's wife made to her neighbor was a gift of hospitality. The flag and note stuck in the top was a nudge from the Holy Ghost.

In a world of busy schedules and never-ending responsibilities, a personal homemade treat from a friend's kitchen to a neighbor or coworker is heart-warming. Everyone knows that time is a most precious commodity. Energy too, for that matter. Someone sacrificing both for another says, "I really care." Who might you be able to reach out to? That name or face that comes to mind is not a coincidence. Follow the inkling in your heart. One never knows what God might do. ■

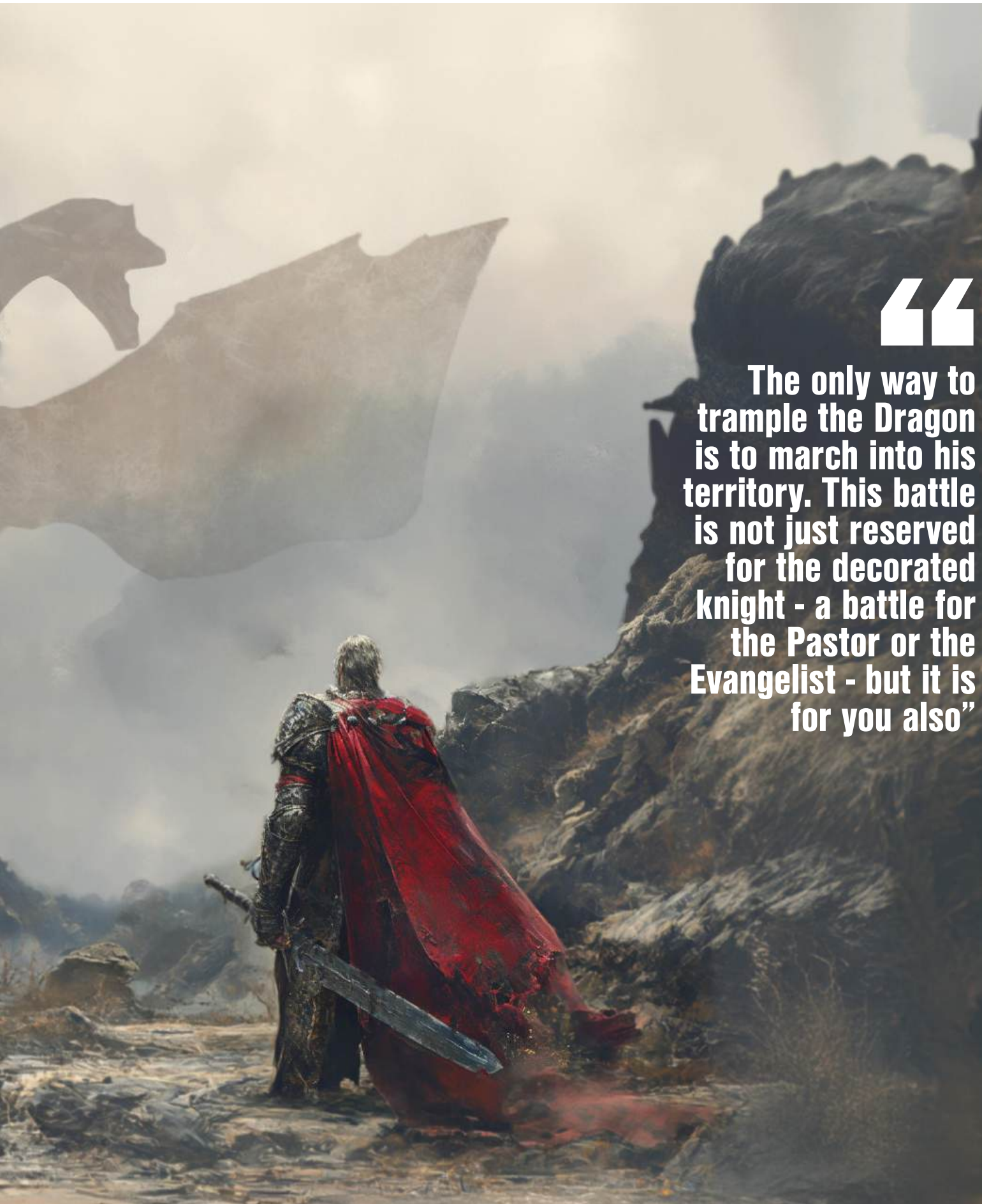
CHOC OLATE CHIP BANANA BREAD

Ingredients

- 1 c. Salted Butter
- 1/2 c. Granulated Sugar
- 1/2 c. Brown Sugar
- 4 Eggs
- 8 Ripe Bananas
- 2 tsp. Vanilla
- 3 c. AP Flour
- 1 tsp. Baking Powder
- 1 tsp. Salt
- 2 tsp. Soda
- 2 Tbls. Cinnamon
- 2 c. Chocolate Chips

Instructions:

1. Cream butter and sugars until fluffy.
2. Whisk eggs and vanilla together, then add to sugar-butter mixture until combined.
3. Mix in processed bananas.
4. Whisk all dry ingredients together and add to the banana mixture until combined.
5. Fold in the chocolate chips, reserving a few to add to the tops of the loaves before baking.
6. Pour into two parchment-lined loaf pans, distributing evenly.
7. Bake at 350 for about 50 min or until internal temperature reads 195-200 degrees.



“

The only way to trample the Dragon is to march into his territory. This battle is not just reserved for the decorated knight - a battle for the Pastor or the Evangelist - but it is for you also”

DRAGON TERRITORY

Bro. Benjamin Bruce

It was the spring of 2003; there I sat in a crowded sanctuary, not an empty seat left in the house. I was a young preacher, Bible school student, and new to the hills of Kentucky. Little did I know, I was in a generational service. Not because it was a PFYC venue. Not because the service was at the hosts' home church on that day, Hodgenville Pentecostal. And no, not even because there was a move of God so strong that even the sound staff in the upper balcony were slain out. There was another reason, one unseen. The Holy Ghost wrote a personal mandate on the heart of the assistant pastor. An inscription that would become his ministry motto.

The preacher titled his message that day “Marching Off the Map.” Drawing inspiration from history, we're taken to Alexander the Great and his army as they reached the Himalayan Mountain range. To them, they did not know of or had never seen the mighty Himalayas. It was not on the map! With uncertainty and fear amongst the ranks, Alexander defiantly echoed, “Most armies will stay within the confines of the known. Most armies will stay within the boundaries with which they are familiar. Most armies will stay within the bounds of what is on their maps. But a great army. A Great army will always march off the map.”

It was in this spirit that a young assistant Pastor charged into ministry. Looking back at two decades of amazing church growth, a PFYC venue that annually gathers multiple thousands, an author of several books, a gorgeous new sanctuary built debt-free, a choir with two albums, regular moves of the Holy Ghost, continuing outreach ministries, and more, I hereby testify that Hodgenville Pentecostal Church has marched off the map.

As I sit in the sanctuary again, this time as a member, I see these feats mapped. The first footsteps of faith have given way to beaten paths for faithful followers. To a generation past - map makers. To the generation present - familiar territory. To a generation future - now what?

Before there can be a map, there must be a man. Before there are new lines to draw, there are old lines to cross. Before territory is staked, there are the stakes themselves. See, you must understand - the world's coastlines were not completely mapped until the mid-1700s. Until then, when map making, it was a custom for cartographers in medieval Europe to draw images of monsters and dragons to depict unexplored territories as a place of danger and unknown. These distinctive figures became figures of speech, and the phrase “Dragon Territory” was birthed.

Metaphorically, it stands to represent the unknown, those uncharted areas of life that pose danger and risk to those who tread thereby.

The dragon itself paints many images from a plethora of perspectives. Asia has its doctrine of the dragon; Medieval Europe romanticized the dragon-defeating knight. Hollywood has exhausted the dragon - from cartoon friend to apocalyptic fear. But may I remind you that behind the curtain of cultural perspective is a Biblical truth. A truth that transcends metaphor and stands as real as Revelation. Revelation is the book that teaches us that Satan is the dragon. It is also the Bible that tells of the dragon's fire, red appearance, large tail, ability to swim, have scales, and that they possess great power and invoke fear.

As sure as I put pen to paper, the great Dragon, Satan himself, has thrust us into territory no soul alive has borne to witness. Saint, this is not a case of history repeating itself. This is history in the making. I feel the Dragon's breath in nearly every aspect of life. I smell and see the parched ground that his fire has devastated. I stand in the shadows of his ghastly presence. I stumble with my footing at the tremors of his massive stride. As sure as John prophesied of our war with the Dragon, we have been thrust into unknown territory and



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drawn to a battlefield covered in smoke and fire. Recount with me:

- The weaponization of US agencies on the American public - Definitive. Dragon Territory!
- The radicalization of an entire political party in America - that is none else, but Dragon Territory!
- The authoritarian overreach of limiting religious assembly during the pandemic - Never thought I'd see...see what? Dragon Territory!
- The unintelligible and unequivocal gender identity battle - Say what again? I say Dragon Territory!
- The rise of militant movements in our streets like BLM and Antifa - is this 18th-century France? No, Dragon Territory!
- The nomenclature of the new age religion: “social distancing,” “transitioning,” “canceled,” “white privilege,” and “non-binary” - who hath heard such things? Dragon Territory!
- The sexualization of every nuance of our culture is paraded on public display in front of our children and mates. Dragon Territory!



- The techno-onslaught of all things digital waging a war with old school ways and conservative values dressed in the veneer of “new age” - not when I was young. Dragon Territory!

- The rise of “influencers.” Not just amongst the heathen. There is the YouTube preacher, the TikTok worshipper, and the Facebook theologian - never hath seen such before. Dragon Territory!

The map has brought us to the foot of the mountain. The line has stopped here. The stakes have never been higher. But as sure as I see new territory, I remember my map. THE MAP. The one that says in Psalm 119:105, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.” I read another directive in this map from Psalm 91:13, “the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.”

The only way to trample the Dragon is to march into his territory. This battle is not just reserved for the decorated knight - a battle for the Pastor or the Evangelist - but it is for you also Holiness housewife, deacon, elder, and youth group; you have been thrust here. Fear not.

The glory of God will meet us on the field of battle.

You just must look for it. As recorded

in Acts 7, Stephen “looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God.”

You say, that is the wrong story; Stephen died. I say, that is the right story. Stephen died, Paul cried, and Asia Minor revived. Battle won. I have visited the scene often: his accelerated heartbeat, the rush of solitude and isolation, sweaty palms and brow: the thoughts of wife and child, uncertainty of his message or its timing, but in that feeble fleshly moment, the glory of God was there. Surrounded by a mob at the cusp of taking a rock to the head? No, I have not been there. In the glory of God in a moment of need? Yes, I have been there. In so much glory that the heavens open and Jesus stands up? No, that level of Glory was reserved for the occasion. The glory of God will match the occasion. Saints, fear not! The fire of this dragon is no match for the fire of the Holy Ghost! The Glory of God is greater on the field of battle.

Haggai 2:9 teaches us a truth that we all know by virtue of Pentecostal experience. “The glory of this latter house shall be greater.” I shall draw on this universal principle to highlight that, whether you stand-alone or as a church, At work or in a grocery line, surrounded by lost family or one-on-one with your neighbor; regardless, the glory of God is greater. He will give you the words to say. The fear-invoking

roar of this dragon is no match for the boldness of the Holy Ghost.

Did the surroundings of this new territory halt our advance? Did the voices shouting around us silence us for a time? Have the actions of our country pushed the church back? Do we retreat and bunker down until the rapture? Become closet Christians?

Nay I say!

We are looking at our map.

We know where we are at - Dragon Territory!

We know what to do. Advance!

Preach the truth, and trample Satan underfoot. Uphold righteousness at all costs and trample him underfoot. Do not deny the Lord's name at work, around family, or in the marketplace, and trample the enemy underfoot. Evangelize without fear and trample him underfoot. Raise your family according to the Scriptures and trample him underfoot!

Feet shod.

Map in Hand.

March! ■



THE ERA OF COMPARISON

Sis. Taylor Hackworth

2 Corinthians 10:12: “For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.”

Comparison, by definition, is the consideration of similarities or dissimilarities between two things or people. In general, comparison is not a negative thing. For example, when someone is shopping at the grocery store, you may pick up two different cans of carrots. One is the store brand, the other a name brand. Naturally, you would compare the two. Which one is cheaper? Which one tastes better? Upon your comparison, you would make a decision and choose which product to purchase. However, in this article, we will look at comparison in a different light.

We are living in the peak of the social media craze; The ‘Era of Comparison,’ if you will. Not only is my generation living in it, but the next generation has grown up knowing nothing else but that. People young and old across the globe are making a living as social media influencers. Even if you are not intentionally using it to influence others, you are. Every single person has been given a platform for whatever they wish to promote. Most of the time, it is themselves. People put their best foot forward and show the highlight reel of their life. With spotless homes

“ Our life is about living for the glory of God and measuring up to His Word and His standards, not the world’s.”

and perfectly put-together outfits, it will make someone think, “Wow - I desperately need to get my life together.” There is and always will be automatic comparison because we are human. This may seem innocent to



“We are living in the peak of the social media craze... ..People young and old across the globe are making a living as social media influencers”



some people, but what does comparison lead to?

Comparison breeds insecurity. Insecurity leads to anxious thoughts and, unfortunately, sometimes an even darker path. Comparison creates questions. Why don't I look like that? Why do they seem so much happier than me? As a twenty-five-year-old young woman, I sit here looking back over the last several years of my life and have come to the realization that any anxiety or insecurity I have felt is related to comparison.

I recently took a poll of several ladies twenty-six and above and then twenty-five and down. Nearly every single one of the women twenty-five and down said they had battled with anxiety sometime in their lifetime. On the other hand, the results were way lower for the twenty-six and above. The majority of twenty-six and above had not ever battled anxiety. I believe this could directly relate to the rise of social media and this Era of Comparison.

The bottom line is that comparison can quickly become toxic and must be kept in check. There are only a couple of ways that can happen. First, put your insecurities and anxieties in the hands of the Lord and find your value in Him. Second, if you cannot handle the pressure and comparison of social media, stay away from it altogether. You will find that it is well worth it.

Our life is not about outdoing one another or having finer things than everyone else. Our life is about living for the glory of God and measuring up to His Word and His standards, not the world's. Whenever you find yourself wading through the endless media and apps, remember to just shut it off and focus on the real-life God has blessed you with. 1 Timothy 6:6: “But godliness with contentment is great gain.”

“...The grass was fine ‘til it looked greener on the other side. Now you're believing that you fell behind. But why try to match what should be one of a kind? ...it comes to steal and hide what is real, comparison kills” - Lyrics from “Comparison Kills,” written and performed by Jonathan McReynolds. ■

CONTENTMENT

Rev. Andrew Astor

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is a privilege and honor to be asked to write for this publication and I appreciate the hard work of all those involved.

1 Timothy is a letter written by the elder Paul to a young preacher named Timothy. It is filled with doctrine and instruction that would help him and us navigate many important issues of church leadership. He deals with doctrines of holiness (1 Timothy 1:9), establishes the qualifications for a bishop and deacon (1 Timothy 3:2-13), and instructions on how to treat our elders (1 Timothy 5:1-2). Nestled in the middle of the last chapter is a scripture that is often overlooked and underestimated. It will be the basis of this article and one I hope we can all strive to do better in.

1 Timothy 6:6: "But godliness with contentment is great gain."

At first, this scripture seems to be overshadowed by the other more famous verses in this book, but let us take a deep look. Although this letter was written over 1900 years ago, it's almost as if Paul could see the culture of our day. If there has ever been a time when we, the people of God, need contentment, it is now. We are living in the most discontent of times. People are restless and constantly looking for the new and next thing.

An article written in Forbes magazine on October 26th, 2021, titled "Why Millennials and Gen-Z are Leading the Great Resignation Trend" shows how these trends of discontentment have grown in the workforce of the past

generations. This article highlights the average length that previous generations have stayed at a job.

Baby Boomers (born between 1946-1964): 8 years and 3 months

Gen X (born between 1965-1980): 5 years and 3 months

Millennials (born between 1981 and 1995): 2 years and 9 months

Gen Z (born between 1996-2012): 2 years and 3 months

These trends are also shown in other facets of our lives such as divorce rates, family relocations, and church membership. It is also evident that people are discontent with the way that the Almighty God has created them. They are not satisfied with their look or genetic makeup and wish to change the very nature that God has created them in. This presence of discontentment is working in our world today, but it was never meant for a Christian.

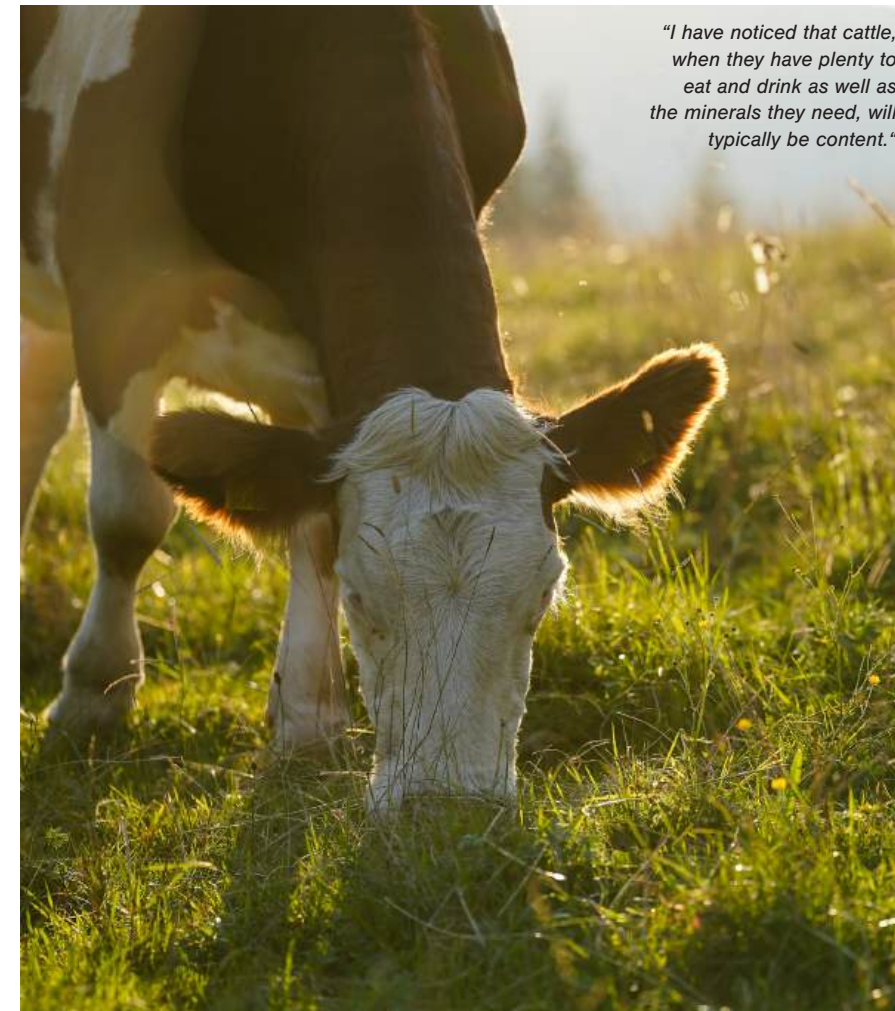
Let's dissect our scripture text into three parts.

First: "Godliness"

It is important to note that the scripture does NOT say contentment by itself is great gain; we must insert godliness into this equation to make it work. There will never be contentment without godliness. It is through godliness that we realize He makes us content. This is why no matter how rich or poor someone is materialistically speaking, he or she can be content. We realize that it all comes from Him, nevertheless.



“
Contentment could have saved David from his downfall with Bathsheba ...might have spared Elimelech his life and sons life ...Maybe Samson could have kept his eyes if he was with a woman of his own faith.”



"I have noticed that cattle, when they have plenty to eat and drink as well as the minerals they need, will typically be content."

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."

Second: "Contentment"

The art of being content is more difficult than one may think. Contentment goes against our natural desires, such as jealousy and envy. We must pray and strive for contentment. Even the apostle Paul had to learn this.

Philippians 4:11-12: "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need."

This state of contentment he writes about is what he was trying to tell the young preacher Timothy. Be content in the place that the Lord has you. In a world that tells us to always be climbing the ladder, God is telling us to be satisfied where he has us.

I do want to make note that contentment is NOT complacency. In fact, these two are opposite one another. Contentment is godly, complacency is of the world (Amos 6:1). It does feel like in our modern-day people are either completely discontent or they are completely complacent. Godly contentment is the cure for both. When you are content, you won't be looking at the green grass on the other side of the fence because you're happy with the field God has placed you in. When you are content, you will be happy when your friends are blessed with a new car or house be-

cause you're happy with what the Lord has given you. When you are content, you won't be flirting with the women at work because you are satisfied with the wife the Lord has blessed you with.

You see, contentment could have saved David from his downfall with Bathsheba. It might have spared Elimelech his life and his son's life if he was content in Bethlehem. Maybe Samson could have kept his eyes if he was content with a woman of his own faith. Could Saul not have gone mad with insecurities towards David if he had just been content?

I got my first beef cow when I was 18 years old. I enjoy raising and taking care of them. I have noticed that cattle, when they have plenty to eat and drink as well as get the minerals they need, will typically be content. It's not uncommon to see them on a bitterly cold day in the winter lying down on a hillside chewing the cud. When I asked my father-in-law about this, his response was "They are content". They have what they need. I cannot help but think about the 23rd Psalm, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters." The great shepherd will lead us into places of contentment.

Third: Gain

Lastly, this scripture promises that when we join godliness and contentment together, the result is gain. You will always benefit from a life of godly contentment. This could mean financially, but it is not limited to that. Your family will benefit from a stable environment. Your marriage will gain from contentment. Your ministry will be sweeter when you practice godly contentment.

I, too, want to learn like Paul of old how to be content. ■

STANDING STRONG

OVERCOMING THE FEAR OF RIDICULE

Bro. Levi Hackworth

In a world where faith and spirituality are often met with doubt and ridicule, young people may struggle with the fear of being mocked for how they live, and how they worship. God left us with a road map: the Bible. The Bible offers valuable insights to overcome the lies of the devil and stand strong in one's faith. I hope to

encourage the young people of today to not let fear of ridicule deceive them from getting all God has for them.

I. The Tricks of the Devil:


All the way back to the Garden of Eden, the devil tricked Adam and Eve. The devil tries to discourage believers by making them afraid of being made fun of for how they live and how they worship. He wants young people to believe that their faith is silly, and that they will be made fun of for living for God and worshipping Him. However, the Bible warns us about the devil's tricks. In 1 Peter 5:8, it says, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:". The devil does not like people, especially young people, living for God and worshipping Him. He will do and say anything to discourage you from living for God. So, I believe recognizing the devil's tricks is the first step in overcoming the fear of ridicule.

II. God's Presence and Confidence:

The Bible assures believers that God is always with them. Young people, you should not believe the lie that you are alone. In Joshua 1:9, it says, "Have I not commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." This verse reminds us that God is always by our side, giving us strength and courage when faced with ridicule. You can stand on the promises of God. God will not leave you nor forsake you.

III. The Blessings of Being Ridiculed:

Contrary to the devil's lies, the Bible teaches that being made fun of or being persecuted for one's faith is a blessing. In Matthew 5:11-12, Jesus says, "Blessed are ye, when men revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Re-



“ Every time someone laughs at you for how you live or how you worship; just know you are laying up treasures in heaven.”



“Another important way to overcome the fear of ridicule is to find like-minded believers. This is why youth groups and youth camps and PFYC are so important. . .By surrounding yourself with fellow believers who share your faith, you can find encouragement, strength, and support in living for God.”

joyce, and be exceedingly glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.” This passage lets us know that those who face ridicule or mockery for living for God and for worshiping God will be rewarded in heaven. Every time someone laughs at you for how you live or how you worship, just know you are laying up treasures in heaven. Young people, find comfort and strength in knowing that you are following in the footsteps of the prophets who faced these challenges before.

IV. Trusting in God’s Word:

To overcome the lies of the devil, you must immerse yourselves in God’s Word. The Bible provides us with many verses that encourage believers to trust in God’s promises and not be influenced by what others say. Psalm 56:3 says, “What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.” This verse reminds us that

in times of fear and doubt, we should put our trust in God and His Word. By reading and reflecting on Scripture and seeking guidance from the Bible, you can overcome fear and stand strong for God.

V. Finding Like-Minded Believers:

Another important way to overcome the fear of ridicule is to find like-minded believers. This is why youth groups, youth camps, and PFYC are so important. Hebrews 10:25 encourages believers to gather together for worship, saying, “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” By surrounding yourself with fellow believers who share your faith, you can find encouragement, strength, and support in living for God.

Conclusion:

In just the 2 years of being a Youth Pastor and working with young people, I have seen the devil lie and deceive so many of our young people out of their blessing. Young people, do not let the fear of ridicule deceive you. Do not let the fear of what people might say or not say affect your walk with God. Instead, stay strong in your faith, and know that God is on your side. He is always with you, and you will be blessed for standing for God. By trusting in God’s Word, finding comfort in His promises, and seeking support from like-minded believers, young people, you can overcome the fear of ridicule and stand strong in these last days. As the Bible reminds us, “Be strong and of good courage” (Joshua 1:9), for God is faithful and will never abandon His children. Stand strong for God, young people! ■

MISHLACHATH?

Rev. David Webb



Eccelesiastes 8:8: “... and there is no discharge in that war...”

The war between living and dying is speeding toward all of us. Not one of us is exempt. There is no possibility of opting out or to unenroll.

The Pulpit Commentary says, “The word rendered ‘discharge’ (mishlachath) is found elsewhere only in Psalm 78:49, where it is translated ‘sending,’ ‘mission,’ or ‘band.’ The severity of the law of military service is considered analogously with the inexorable law of death.”

This lets me know that, until we die, we are either fighting the good fight of faith or we are making excuses why we cannot. There is no in-between. There is no middle ground. Once we are saved, death is the only officer ordained by God to discharge us from our duties.

I have recently observed that “church members” are attempting to excuse themselves from working for the Lord or continuing in His service.

I am hearing things like:

- I am too old.
- Let the young people do it.
- I have put in my time.
- I am too busy.
- They do not need me anymore.

Do not buy that lie!

Where is the spirit of Caleb when,



“...who is willing to stay? Who is willing to get a job and faithfully financially support the church? Who is willing to search out a career that doesn't interfere with church attendance? Who is willing to get full of the Holy Ghost, be the husband of one wife, raise his children right, and give your home church a good candidate to be a biblically qualified deacon?”

“The church needs people who will take their post, embrace their commission, and be content blooming where they are planted. If we ever lose our “home base” called the “home church”, we then ourselves become the mission field!”

at 80 years old, he said in Joshua 14 “... Now therefore, give me this mountain...?”

The church has plenty of:

- Some-timers
- Part-timers
- Most-of-the-timers
- Full-timers

... but where are the life-timers?

Where are those who put down their roots and work in the same assembly until they die or Jesus returns?

It seems to me we have glorified leaving the home church to the point that many of our churches are left to operate on skeleton crews. It has now become vague to do anything other than put

down roots to be faithful where God placed you. The church needs people who will take their post, embrace their commission, and be content blooming where they are planted. If we ever lose our “home base” called the “home church”, we then ourselves become the mission field!

We all hear the pleas from well-meaning preachers in pulpits across our holiness movements saying, “Who is willing to go”; my question is who is willing to stay? Who is willing to get a job and faithfully financially support the church? Who is willing to search out a career that doesn't interfere with church attendance? Who is willing to get full of the Holy Ghost, be the husband of one wife, raise his children right, and give your home church a good candidate to be a biblically qualified deacon?

Where are the Lawrence Irelands

who served for 54 years as a Board Member at the Hodgenville Pentecostal Church?

Where are the 40-year Sunday School teachers with the staying power like Sister Debbie Woolett who taught me and now has taught all my children?

Where are the smiling faces like Brother Elmer Lakes who was a door greeter at the Pentecostal Tabernacle Richmond, Indiana for 40 years?

There is a drought of staying power. People have spiritual ADD and ADHD. The long-term focus is gone! It is all about today - where the big meeting is, where the shindig is, and where we are all going to gather up one more time for moral support.

Is it just me or is it easy to get people to start things but nearly impossible to get them to finish anything?

We need a revival of old-fashioned grit to be birthed in this generation. We need honest hearts that will not place blame for their erratic behavior and be a worker in this last hour!

I am seeing people buy into these lies:

- I am not making a difference.
- It won't matter if I resign.
- No one even cares if I give up my position.
- If I'm not the leader, then I'm not helping to do it.

As a result, the church is suffering from leaches who should be contributing but instead are sucking the life out of everything they touch!

Hebrews 5:12 says, “For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God;

and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.”

It does matter if you're at your post or not!

In December 1944, the German army launched an unexpected attack. In what was to become known as the Battle of Bulge, the Nazis drove deep behind Allied lines. Writing during WWII about the reaction of the American troops to this attack, James Jones said, “No one of these little road junction stands could have had a profound effect on the German drive. But hundreds of them, impromptu little battles at nameless bridges and unknown crossroads, had an effect of slowing the German impetus... These little die-hard ‘one man stands,’ alone in the snow and fog without communications, would prove enormously effective out of all proportion to their size.”

Are you leaving your bridge wide open for the enemy to come in? Are you giving the opposition no resistance to the invasion of your home church? Are you draining the supply tank without the thought of helping to replenish it?

As a young man, Winston Churchill was in a heated battle. The warplanes were dropping bombs all around the soldier's assignments. Several died, but many were running away and hiding and not following commands. One soldier ran past Churchill and asked if he was going to leave and run away. The great leader replied, “I will not do the cowardly. I will stand at my post of duty.”

Will you quit or continue? Will you resign or re-sign?

Matthew 25:23: “His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.” ■



“Writing during WWII ... “No one of these little road junction stands could have had a profound effect on the German drive. But hundreds of them, impromptu little battles at nameless bridges and unknown crossroads, had an effect of slowing the German impetus...”

INTERVIEW SIS. GAIL WEBB

by Bro. Andy Sargent



Bro. Doug & Sis. Gail Webb with their family while evangelizing (left), and now as visitation pastor at Hodgenville Pentecostal Church (background, main)

It would be difficult, if not impossible, to overstate the impact that Brother Doug and Sister Gail Webb have had on the Holiness movement and countless lives around the world. Brother Doug has now been preaching for over 50 years, and Sister Gail has been by his side the entire time. I was recently given the opportunity to sit down with them and speak to Sister Gail about their years of ministry.

Brother Sargent: Sister Gail, what an honor and a privilege it is to sit down with you and learn about the many years of ministry that you and Brother Doug have experienced. Thank you very much for your time. Let's start in the beginning. When you and Brother Doug married, did you already know you were going into ministry? If not, when did that happen?

Sister Gail: I always felt from the time I was very young that I would be in some kind of ministry. From an early age, Brother Doug felt a call on his life as well, but he did not answer the call at that time. When we got married in November of 1973, Brother Doug was seeking the Lord about that call. In June of 1974, we were in a revival at our home church, Calvary Holiness, and that is when he accepted the call to preach.

Brother Sargent: How did you react?

Sis. Gail: I think that I already knew it

was coming, I felt that he was called, even when we were dating. I was open to whatever God's will was for us.

Brother Sargent: Many times, the common perspective is that the wife of a preacher is only a supportive role. While we know that is a huge part, can you tell us about times the Lord used you directly to minister?

Sister Gail: When we evangelized, I especially felt a part of the ministry. I added to the ministry by playing the piano. Up to that point, I had not played much, except at home and a little at church. I had to apply myself to learning more when we started evangelizing. I also sang, and tried to have a testimony ready to give wherever we went.

Brother Sargent: Has your role changed or evolved over the years?

Sister Gail: It has, through the different roles we've had. We worked with the home church youth group for 10 years. After that, we started evangelizing, so I had to "pick it up"! We then pastored for 22 years, and I had many different responsibilities as the pastor's wife.

Brother Sargent: So as his role changed, yours changed as well?

Sister Gail: Yes, that's right.

Brother Sargent: Many know that, along with being in the ministry, you also raised a family. Can you tell us about how you balanced your roles as wife, mother, and ministry partner to Brother Doug?

Sister Gail: I feel that God calls the woman first to be a wife and a mother. That is her first calling. The roles in the ministry are secondary. I have been able to speak at women's retreats and Mother's Day events about this. I tried to be an example while serving as a pastor's wife as well.

Brother Sargent: What advice would you give a young married woman who is also trying to raise a family and support her husband in full-time ministry?

Sister Gail: I would say to always support your husband, and to not hinder him with your own wants and desires. Your goals should coincide with his. The ministry should be the goal you have together. Support, don't hinder.

Brother Sargent: There have been countless lives impacted by yours and Brother Doug's ministry. Can you tell us about one of them that sticks out to you?

Sister Gail: The one that sticks out the most to me is Brother Rick Simpson. He was saved under our ministry. We had a revival at Stinnett Gap Church of God near Hyden, Kentucky. The revival seemed like it was up against a wall. We were almost asking "what are we here for?" We learned later that Brother Rick came every night, and had to walk or hitchhike to get there. He did not know anything of the independent Holiness movement. He got saved on the last night of that revival. After he was called to preach, Brother Doug mentored him and helped him find other Holiness people. He started evangelizing almost right away with his wife and little girl, Sabrina. It opened up a whole new world for him.

Brother Sargent: And there have been countless lives that have been impacted by his ministry as well.

Sister Gail: Yes, absolutely. He actually calls Brother Doug every year on the anniversary of when he got saved.

Brother Sargent: Amazing. One of things that has been a major attribute of yours and Brother Doug's ministry is that you seem to be tireless and to have an unending passion for the work. Can you speak to what has kept you going all these years, and keeps you going even now as the visitation pastors for

HPC?

Sister Gail: It has always been our number one goal to serve the Lord. My life's verse has always been Matthew 6:33, which says "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." From the very beginning, even when we were dating, we centered everything around Christ, and God's will for our lives. His passion is our passion. He was, and still is, the center of our lives.

Brother Sargent: The theme of this edition of The Levite is "Dragon's Territory", a focus on times when we, as ministers of the Gospel, have stepped out of the "charted map", and reached for new heights. Can you tell us about a time that yours and Brother Doug's ministry went into uncharted territory?

Sister Gail: At the end of 1984, we were working as youth leaders, and Brother Doug was a draftsman in structural steel. He felt that God was telling him to quit his job. We didn't have anywhere to go, and we didn't tell anybody what we were doing - plus, we had just built a new house! [laughs] We had lived in it for four months. In January 1985, he fasted the entire month and read the Bible through. We prayed, "Lord, if we're in Your will, You will open the doors; we don't have to broadcast it." We were asked to preach in Indiana for a night, and while there, another pastor came and asked us to preach a 3-night weekend revival. Those 3 nights turned into 30 nights. Many people got saved, and many came back to the Lord during that revival. There was no doubt after that.

Brother Sargent: What an incredible story of God's provision and guidance. You both are truly an amazing example to all of us. Thank you both so much for your time. ■



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