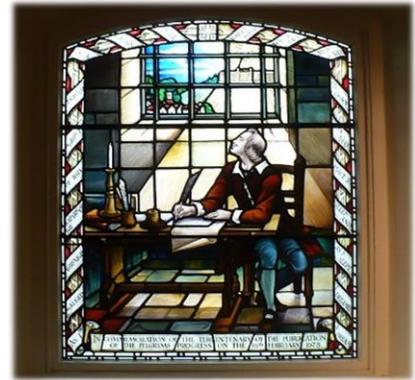


April 20, 2020

Good morning, Everybody.

Last week one of our folks sent a picture of the family meeting in the living room (or den?) for one of our live streamed services. I'm so glad that he did. It was heartwarming. I've pulled it back up several times just for the encouragement. And it gave me an idea.



This morning I talked to Pastor Tipton about his being the receiving point for a little church-wide project for as long as we're having to stay sheltered in place. If any of you wouldn't mind the rest of us getting a little morale boost from seeing you meeting for the live streaming, would you please take a picture and send it to him? He could collect a file of them, and then on Mondays I'd include a couple of them in this letter for everyone's delight.

Please don't say, *That's a **bad** idea.* Just be a team player and send a picture!

Check your grip

Attached to the front of our church's pulpit is a beautifully hand-carved, open Bible; the loving craftsmanship of brother Jack Hill when he constructed the platform furniture years ago. Visually it projects our understanding of our purpose; *Taking the Word to the World*. But for God's Word to be of any benefit to us whatsoever it must be **believed**.

To believe the Bible is to consider it to be entirely true. And it is then to trust it, to rely upon it unhesitatingly.

A book I've been reading, *The Thought of God* (Maurice Roberts), contains a chapter entitled, "Our Need of Faith at This Hour." Roberts writes,

There is no greater obedience possible to us than to believe, receive and then rest upon the Word of God. To be able to believe is the highest expression of God's mercy. . .

Hence older writers said that “faith is human when it rests on the testimony of men; divine when it rests on the testimony of God” (Charles Hodge). . .

That is why our great spiritual forefathers were pre-eminently men of one Book. They were not content till they could quote the Bible extensively and accurately, sing its psalms, expound its theology, apply its laws to daily life and solace themselves with it on their deathbeds.

Roberts continues with a grim assessment of the diabolical effects upon a society when the Church’s confidence in the Word of God is undermined.

*The vices which immerse our unhappy generation were made inevitable by the nineteenth-century Higher Critical views of the Bible. Where there is no confident assertion by the church of the truth of God, there can be no firm faith in the people. And where faith is absent, every species of sin must sooner or later make its appearance. Our problem is that today sin has come to monstrous ripeness. But the lineage is quite clear. Our drug addicts, our aborted infants, our sodomists and “gay” people are the late fruits of the same tree of unbelief whose other branches included the Graf-Wellhausen theory, Jean Astruc and the ‘Quest for the Historical Jesus.’ To take away from the people an infallible Bible, as these did, was not just a sin, it was **the** sin, the very essence of all infidelity and all irreligion. These earlier writers who laid the axe to the root of biblical infallibility did all in their power to banish heaven from earth and lay the world open to the unrestrained influences of hell itself.*

God’s displeasure is afflicting our entire world. About what is He the most greatly displeased? Read Romans 1.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness (v 18).

To *suppress* (*katecho*) is to **hold** (*echo*) **down** (*kat*). The church prays *that the word of the Lord may run!* (I Thess. 3:1) *No!*, shouts society, **suppress** it! *Hold it down!*

Therefore from time to time God *shakes* the world.

Check your grip today. Is yours a *living* grip on your Bible. A *tightening* grip? All living things, regardless of species, tend to tighten their clutch tenaciously the more violently they're tugged and tossed.

Job prayed to die (6:9). *Would that God were willing to crush me, that He would loose His hand and cut me off!*

Yet he hastened to clarify, *But it is still my consolation, and I rejoice in unsparing pain, that I have not denied the words of the Holy One* (v 10).

Praying for You Today,

Pastor Minnick (smile)