



## Revivals And Church History :: Barton Warren Stone's struggle prior to the Cane Ridge revival

### Barton Warren Stone's struggle prior to the Cane Ridge revival, on: 2010/6/18 18:34

About this time my mind was continually tossed on the waves of speculative divinity, the all engrossing theme of the religious community at that period....I at that time believed, and taught, that mankind were so totally depraved that they could do nothing acceptable to God, till His Spirit, by some physical, almighty and mysterious power, had quickened, enlightened and regenerated the heart, and thus prepared the sinner to believe in Jesus for salvation.

I began plainly to see that if God did not perform this regenerating work in all, it must be because He chose to do it for some and not for others, and this depended on His own Sovereign will and pleasure.....this doctrine is inseparably linked with unconditional election and reprobation.....They are virtually one: and this was the reason why I admitted the decrees of election and reprobation, having admitted the doctrine of total depravity. They are inseparable.....

Often when I was.....persuading the helpless to repent and believe the gospel, my zeal in a moment would be chilled at the contradiction. How can they believe? How can they repent/ How can they do impossibilities? How can they be guilty in not doing them? .....On a certain evening, when engaged in secret prayer and reading my Bible, my mind came unusually filled with comfort and peace. I never recollect of having before experienced such an ardent love and tenderness for all mankind, and such a longing desire for their salvation....for some days and nights I was almost continually praying for the ruined world.....I expressed my feelings to a pious person and rashly remarked, "So great is my love for sinners that had I the power, I would save them all." The person appeared to be horror stricken and remarked "Do you love them more than God does?

Why then does He not save them? Surely He has almighty power." I blushed, was confounded and silent and quickly retired to the silent woods for meditation and prayer. I asked myself, Does God love the world----the whole world? And has He not almighty power to save? If so, all must be saved, for who can resist His power?....I was firmly convinced that according to Scripture all were not saved ; the conclusion then was irresistible that God did not love all, and therefore it followed, of course, that the spirit in me, which loved the world so vehemently, could not be the Spirit of God, but the spirit of delusion.

I prostrated myself before God in prayer, but it was immediately suggested, you are praying in unbelief, and "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." You must believe or expect no good from the hand of God. But I cannot believe ; as soon could I make a world. Then you must be damned, for " he that believeth not shall be damned." But will the Lord condemn me to eternal punishment for not doing an impossibility? So I thought.....blasphemy rose in my heart against such a God and my tongue was tempted to utter it. Sweat profusely poured from the pores of my body and the fires of hell got hold on me..... in this uncommon state I remained for two or three days.

"From this state of perplexity I was relieved by the precious Word of God. From reading and meditating upon it, I became convinced that God did love the world, and that the reason why He did not save all was because of their unbelief ; and that the reason why they believed not was not because God did not exert His physical, almighty power in them to make them believe, but because they neglected and received not His testimony given in the Word concerning His Son. "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His name." I saw that the requirement to believe in the Son of God was reasonable, because the testimony, because the testimony given was sufficient to produce faith in the sinner, and that the invitations and encouragements of the Gospel were sufficient, if believed, to lead to Him , to the Saviour, for the promised Spirit, salvation and eternal life.

This glimpse of faith, of truth, was the first divine ray of light that ever led my distressed , perplexed mind from the labyrinth of Calvinism and error, in which I had so long been bewildered. It was that which led me into the rich pastures of gospel liberty.

(Barton Warren Stone)

**Re: Barton Warren Stone's struggle prior to the Cane Ridge revival - posted by JoanM, on: 2010/6/18 22:51**

Thank you for sharing a wonderful find. Of course different readers will find different interests in this.

QUOTE: BUT BECAUSE they neglected and received not His testimony given in the Word concerning His Son. "These are written, that ye might believe that JESUS is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His name."

After over a year of swimming in the Gospel of John adding knowing Him, AS THE SON OF MAN, as the Christ, the Son of God; I had the following thought.

Natural man follows natural man. Moses and David were followed that way. So too Hitler and Mao. Gods of man's imagination, of other religions, are not followed: they are placated, advocated, imposed, etc. As I reflect on how He was followed DURING HIS LIFE, Jesus also was followed as a man, the Son of man, as He frequently referred to himself. I am impressed with the importance of Jesus being the Son of man, the enabling importance for all men, that we might follow Him— and not His "just" being the Son of God. Of course there are many other reasons He had to be Son of man, like His shed blood, but I am narrowed down here to "believe" and "follow."

With perhaps the exception of Abraham, I wonder how many/how much man believed God until Jesus.

Anyway, good to read how Barton Warren Stone found the Divine Love of God— an element, jewel really, in revival.

**Re: , on: 2010/6/19 1:16**

Hi Joan, I appreciate your thoughts. I found the quote from brother Barton to be a fascinating insight, and a refreshingly honest one at that, into the struggles that he had. In the midst and after this revival there was an uncommon unity amongst the believers there. The "isms" were dropped and the Lord was elevated. I am becoming increasingly frustrated at everything that takes the focus off Jesus. It just seems to be such an effective tactic of the enemy.....brother Frank

ps I have many thoughts on the Gospel of John, it's my favorite Gospel.

**Re: Barton Warren Stone's struggle prior to the Cane Ridge revival, on: 2010/6/19 10:04**

brother Frank, I shoulda known that come from you!

I've always looked for a really good testimony/account from Cane Ridge, but have yet to find one.

I did find one on my favorite Ebay bookseller, Dust and Ashes, but bowed out when the bidding went north of a \$100. It was an antique book.

God bless you, Neil

**Re: , on: 2010/6/19 12:56**

Hey Neil, the original source for the quote is "The Pilgrim Church," by Boradent. I found it to be a wonderful source for rare quotes and of course it is awesome to follow the story of God's remnant people.

God bless you, Frank