

**Scriptures and Doctrine :: He knows the Plans He has for you!****He knows the Plans He has for you!, on: 2006/3/19 19:57**

He knows the Plans He has for you

In Jeremiah 29:11 The Lord says.....

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back from captivity.

When I was 19 I found myself in a jail cell (not the first time I had been arrested) I was very drunk and trying to sleep with one very thin blanket. Then this person was brought in and thrown in the next cell to me. She screamed the whole way, what she was going to do to the cops and so on. Even after they had locked the door, she continued screaming obscenities and threatening violence. I knew it was going to be a long night. Ironically, this crazy girl(a well know lesbian and drug dealer) stayed in the same project as me so we shared a taxi back to our neighborhood the next morning.

This drunkenness was a way of life for me. I grew up in a working class society where drunkenness was a right of passage. I very much admired men who could consume copious amounts of alcohol and still continue to drink. My highest ambition was to become just like them. For the most part I achieved my goals.

In a couple of desperate moves, I moved my family to London and then to America and finally, at the age of 26, having being married almost ten years, I came to Jesus and He changed me completely. I had been saved for about 4 years, when the Lord, completely out of the blue, said "I want you to go home and share the Gospel."

After many miracles, we sold everything and moved back to Scotland. I got involved with a small Pentecostal church and various outreaches. I was able to share my testimony in the local prison. My brother, who is in prison then, and still is as I write this, warned me not to mention his name. I think having a brother as a Christian would kinda ruin his " street cred."

Of course I mentioned my brothers name every time I spoke to the men which opened many doors for me with these guys.

There was one outreach I was looking forward to very much. We had hired a small building right in the heart of the project I had lived in for 7 years. It was known and still is known as "The Strone." This name would strike fear into most Scottish people as it was probably the most notorious government housing project in Scotland. For a long time it was also a "no-go," area for the police.

We would hold meetings in this little building every Saturday night for six weeks. In between we would go round the doors posting flyers and speaking to people. I would show up every Saturday night, and every Saturday night there would be a pretty good turnout of Christians. Now don't get me wrong, I love to fellowship but the whole point of this outreach was to, well, reach out to the unsaved.

On the fifth Saturday afternoon my mother and grandmother were visiting, my grandmother being in a wheelchair. I told my mom that I would drive Grandma home as I was not going to the meeting that night. I told her it was pretty pointless as only Christians showed up.

The meeting started at 7. At four that afternoon the Holy Spirit whispered to my heart "I want you at the meeting tonight." I told my mother and she said that she would take Grandma home.

I walked into the meeting that night and looked around, all Christians. Not only that, it was a young noisy worship band that I really did not care for. I stood with my eyes closed, thinking how much noise these young people were making. All of a sudden the Holy Spirit fell. A heavy holiness from the Lord had quieted the young band and suddenly He was in cha

rage and His presence was everywhere. I heard some noise in front of me. Someone had come in and sat right in front of me.

This person had their head shaved all the way in and I could see the tattoos on their neck. I felt compelled to reach my hand out and pray for the person who was obviously not a Christian. I could now see that it was a female. Her shoulders started to convulse as she sobbed. I could see she was fighting to control her sobbing. Then a young Christian girl came over and put her arms around her. As soon as she touched the unsaved woman, she jumped to her feet and literally ran from the building.

Before I knew what I was doing, I jumped to my feet and ran after her. There was three set of double doors and I caught up with her at the last set. It was only then that I realized who she was. It was the screaming girl that had shared the next cell to me all those years ago. Her name was Susan. I said to her very gently "Do you remember me Susan." Susan came from a notorious family who everyone knew. She said she remembered me. She also said that she knew she was to meet someone here this night. I explained to her how Jesus had completely changed my life and that there was a different way to live. She listened carefully and then asked "what do I do now?" I told her that we could go back in and that she could give her heart to the Lord. We walked through the first and then the second double doors. As we got to the third she began to tremble. Here was this woman, who could take on and beat most men I knew, terrified of walking down the aisle. I took her arm and told her that I would walk down with her. She walked forward and was gloriously saved.

I believe with all my heart that the major reason that my wife and I went all the way to Scotland for a year was for the saving of Susan. Can you imagine a God that would go to enormous lengths to save someone that society did not care in the least for. I can see the Lord looking down, twelve years previous to a drunken screaming woman, and a hopeless drunk guy and thinking to Himself "I know the plans I have for you," "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back from captivity."

The Lord has delivered Susan and I from captivity. Perhaps you have a family member or friend or loved one that seems to be in a hopeless situation, you may even have given up all hope for that person. Yet Our Lord is Hope itself. Hope is the wellspring that all of our joy flows from. We have two choices in this life, even as a Christian, we can live in hope or we can despair. Hope gives birth to joy and to life and to strength. It is because I am in Christ that my hope springs eternal. It is awesome to know that our Heavenly Father is willing to go to enormous lengths to fulfill His plans.

Psalm 139

You hem me in--behind and before;
you have laid your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
too lofty for me to attain.
Where can I go from your Spirit?
Where can I flee from your presence?
If I go up to the heavens, you are there;
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.
If I rise on the wings of the dawn,
if I settle on the far side of the sea,
even there your hand will guide me,
your right hand will hold me fast.
If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me
and the light become night around me,"
even the darkness will not be dark to you;
the night will shine like the day,
for darkness is as light to you.

Re: He knows the Plans He has for you!, on: 2006/3/19 20:25

A wonderful testimony of grace, very sober indeed.

I find that the ones who are brought up in the church are hardly used, and those who have come from a terrible life of sin God uses. Of course God will use anyone, however this is a pattern that I have seen through out my Christian life.

Thank you for sharing that, I love hearing stories of courage and strength.

Re: He knows the Plans He has for you!, on: 2006/3/20 7:40

Frank,

Thank you for sharing this. It is apposite for me right now.

Re: He knows the Plans He has for you!, on: 2006/3/20 7:41

Somehow I posted the same comment twice, so, rather than waste the opportunity, let me say I had never heard of the Strone but I recognise the phenomenum of Christians coming to 'outreach' meetings, and also, that 'knowledge' you have about having gone back to Scotland to meet Susan. That was wonderful! And also that she knew she would meet 'so meone' there! I loved that! That glorious Someone Who has better plans for us. Amen!

Re:, on: 2006/3/20 9:01

Hi Dorcas

You would have to come from my world to have heard of the Strone:) Its a housing project in Greenock. Let me know wh at "it is the opposite of me" meansFrank

Re: He knows the Plans He has for you!, on: 2006/3/20 9:29

Hi Frank,

You know, I think I have heard of the Strone, but I didn't know where it was. Many (many) years ago, a cousin trained a s a nurse in Greenock, so I've been there a few times, and also on the way to Kintyre where we used to holiday near the McCartney estate. (I was born in Edinburgh.)

'Apposite' is a word which means something like.... that two 'things' or concepts can be placed beside each other and they are matching or equal in a kind of complementary way. (You can play a game matching the most appropriate or 'apposite' adjective for a noun...) Is that helpful? (That's a non-dictionary definition...)

Re:, on: 2006/3/20 9:36

"Thank you for sharing this. It is apposite for me right now."

I was actually wondering what this sentence above meant in the context of where you are in relation to what I wrote :)....
....Frank

Re:, on: 2006/3/20 14:26

Loveslave writes

"I find that the ones who are brought up in the church are hardly used, and those who have come from a terrible life of sin God uses. Of course God will use anyone, however this is a pattern that I have seen through out my Christian life."

I too have found this. This would make an interesting subject in itself. What does that say about people who have grown up in the church? There is a saying that there is no grandchildren in the Kingdom of God, I am always worried when I hear people tell me that they got saved when they were four and grew up in the church, I am not sure what kind of "Christianity," that kind of "conversion,; leads to.....Frank

Re: He knows the Plans He has for you, on: 2006/3/21 10:12

Quote:
-----I was actually wondering what this sentence above meant in the context of where you are in relation to what I wrote :).-----Frank

Hi Frank,

About 15 months ago, I had a real check in my spirit, to *not* go ahead with some 'plans' I had in mind. They were only 'in mind', but, had been there for a long time. So, I didn't. Many weeks later I joined SI, and that led to a protracted period of deep inner healing, as some of the saints here prayed for me. So far so good, but there are many gaps in my knowledge about way my future will resolve.

Re: His plans - posted by h2oboy (), on: 2006/3/21 21:39

Hi Frank and Linn,

"No grandchildren in the kingdom?" What kind of conversion?

Let me briefly share some testimony. My mother's parents came to know Jesus as Lord and Savior when they were in their early 20s. My mother was born a few years later and was in church all of her life (this did not mean that she did not sin or was automatically 'saved'). My father was born again when my mother was pregnant with me.

I have been in church all of my life (again nothing automatic). My oldest son now 31 has been born again since he was 6 years old.

What I would like to say is that although each of us were not born 'Christians' and we did commit sins, we all had true conversions as believers of Jesus Christ. Each of us is a descendant of Adam and as such were subject to the law of sin and death. Each of us had a lawless, rebellious spirit that had to go so that Jesus Christ could become King and Lord.

Although this testimony is not very common it is a wonderful example of the faithfulness of God.

Prov 22:6

6 Train up a child in the way he should go, And even when he is old he will not depart from it.
ASV

My grandmother and grandfather prayed each and every day for their children, their grand children, and their great-grand children. God is faithful.

James 5:16

16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much. NASB

By the way my grand daughter turned 9 Saturday and Jesus has been her Savior for more than 3 years.

Linn,

In regard to God's plans for us I struggled with that too. When I was 14 I 'heard' God call me into full-time ministry. I answered yes Lord, I will do anything, except be a missionary and especially not Africa. When I was 19 I believed that God was ready for me. I sent out letters to churches and I got one reply. I soon understood that I was not ready.

Over the years God allowed me to do many things in the Church and Kingdom, including be janitor. When He finally had me, as a ball of clay, pounded and shapeable, I said, OK I will do what ever you tell me. Show me what you want me to be and do. He let me see a big vision.

Like a typical man I said, Thank you, I've got it. I went off running again and feel flat on my face. He finally had to bring me to the place of saying, I don't care about tomorrow, what do you want me to do today? When I said that doors started flying open.

I take each day one at a time. Each day He gives me instructions for that day and I trust Him to have tomorrow taken care

re of. I find that he does more through me in a week than I thought possible to get done in a month. Each day is a new adventure and nothing is impossible because the possible God lives inside of me. Anything that He wants to do today I can believe for including healing the sick, cleansing the lepers, casting out demons and raising the dead.

By the way be careful what you tell God you will not be willing to do. I have been to Central America 4 times and Africa twice. I leave for Guatemala in 12 days and back to Africa twice more this year (if I heard right).

God bless you as you surrender unconditionally and leave the planning to Him.

Love,
Jeff

Re: He knows the Plans He has for you!, on: 2006/3/23 10:04

Jeff, thank you for the testimony about how your grandmother and grandfather's prayers have been answered. May you all continue to believe, right through till the end.

I recognise myself in your description of how you responded to the Lord's revelations to you, and I confess your exhortation was the word of God me, which I have taken on board afresh... because I have been there in the past.

But I needed to hear other things too, and it seems 'today is the day of salvation' in that He has spoken to me yesterday and today as well - all in part-answer to the same question. Amen. There may be more. I'm listening.

Quote:

-----By the way be careful what you tell God you will not be willing to do.

I know about this one, and I'd say He has been very gracious to me, in bringing me to a place where I could *revoke* what was not an ultimatum from me to God (FAR from it.) but, was indeed a very heartfelt plea to be preserved from certain situations, which He, in His immense kindness, did not over-rule.

Also, I am very careful not to use the word 'never' about anything over which I have no control... such as the practical outworking of remaining in (or getting into) the centre of His will.

Re:, on: 2006/3/23 19:08

Hi Jeff

What "no grandchildren in the kingdom," means is that each person must be born-again, you cannot go to heaven on your parents or grandparents faith. While your story is wonderful, it is not typical, an anecdote perhaps.

Do I believe that six year olds come to Christ? No. They are too young to understand. I do believe there is an age of accountability and that all children go to heaven if they die.

Where would you draw the line Jeff 3Year old? 2 Year old? Its only been a few hundred years since the reformation, but the Protestant church is going down the same road as the Catholic church. If the Lord carries another hundred years, the Protestant church will be baptizing babies. A young child is merely going along with his parents. When the age of accountability comes, then they will have to choose to surrender their lives to Jesus or not. The tens of thousands of "recommitments," in this country is almost certainly people really coming to Christ for the first time.

Even when parents see their young adults, (usually college, but not always) sleeping around, drinking and looking exactly like the world, they glean some false comfort by telling themselves that their child is a Christian because they gave their hearts to the Lord when they were four. There is a reason that the Word says "Do not be fooled, those who do these things will not inherit the kingdom. The reason is there is a great propensity for being fooled, that is why we are warned.

I speak from experience by the way. I "gave my heart to the Lord," when I was nine. I liked the things of God, and I followed my mother's lead. Yet when I became a teenager I went "into the world," and became a drunkard, a drug addict, and a womanizer, got a girl pregnant and was married at 17 and then continued to do all those things. I gave my heart to the Lord when I was 26 and was saved.

One last point. Are there exceptions? Yes. There are some people who have had the call of God on their life from very young, glory to God. They are rare, and they are few and far between.Frank

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/23 20:07

appolus,

Thank you so much for sharing that testimony----yours AND Susan's. I can relate much to both of your testimonies as I came to faith in my 20's after MUCH worldly living. Soon after my conversion, I could look back on my life and see how the Lord's hands were on me----even in the midst of all the sin I was involved in. The Lord is surely full of mercy~!

You are extremely blessed to be able to be a part of what the Lord was doing and be a VESSEL for His purposes. Many who have touched a person's life for Christ's sake are unaware of how their witness CHANGED and drew others to Christ----because the conversions of such happen years after the 'seed' has been sown.

Many people will be rejoicing I believe in that day----the day when all of Christ's are gathered together. Then we will be able to see ALL who we have impacted(and didn't even know it) as well as finally being able to find the ones who impacted us who didn't get to see the results of their witness in our lives. I myself can't wait to see a man named Felix who witnessed to me many, many times while I was in the AirForce. I'm sure he will be thrilled on that day to know his witnessing to me did indeed produce fruit----changing a wayward girl's eternal destiny.....Blessings in Him, Cindy

Re: - posted by h2oboy (), on: 2006/3/24 19:10

Hi Frank,

So what age can a child come to know Jesus?

Jeff

Re: - posted by h2oboy (), on: 2006/3/24 19:10

Hi Frank,

So what age can a child come to know Jesus?

Jeff

Re:, on: 2006/3/24 22:37

Well Jeff

As I said, I believe that no child goes to hell, that all children are innocent so the question is moot. I believe there is an age of accountability and that all young adults should be encouraged to surrender their whole lives to Jesus. This age of accountability will vary from child to child but the Lord knows. Much of the confusion on campuses from young "Christian" students is that they are sleeping around, drinking, doing everything that the world is doing but their parents are telling them that they made a "confession," when they were four, therefore they should be living the "christian life." Which of course they cannot because they have never met Jesus personally.....Frank

Re: - posted by h2oboy (), on: 2006/3/25 8:09

Hi Frank,

If all children are innocent what would be the purpose of this command? If the rebellious son is stoned and dies does he go to Heaven?

Deut 21:18-21

18 If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, that will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and, though they chasten him, will not hearken unto them;

19 then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place;

20 and they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard.

21 And all the men of his city shall stone him to death with stones: so shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee; and all Israel shall hear, and fear.

ASV

Jeff

Re: He knows the Plans He has for you, on: 2006/3/25 8:53

Hi Frank,

You have a very strong testimony, and I am not calling any question upon it, but there is one thing you have not mentioned - and possibly, you have not thought of your own life this way. You said you gave your life to Jesus when you were 9. I don't have the post where you mentioned this, immediately open, so I may have misquoted you - not my intention - I just want to remind you you'd mentioned that age. You didn't say if this commitment to God was because of Confirmation under the Roman Catholic discipline, or if you'd been evangelised by a non-Catholic, at that age.

I hear all that you said about the way your life progressed, and how you attribute it to not knowing the Lord for yourself. Where am I going with this? Well, here.... that God knew you and chose you from before the foundation of the world, in Himself. He always intended you to come to saving faith. All those years after you made that first move towards Him as a 9yo, the Father was drawing you. That's one of the reasons you were able to be aware of the gulf between you and Him, which needed to be closed by your active step of faith, eventually.

I, too, gave my life to Jesus when I was VERY small. This was within the context of being in a Protestant Christian family - maternal grandfather a preacher/teacher/writer/evangelist, father a true believer and elder in his local congregation.... but, my mother was not a believer and lived actively as an idolatress. That did not prevent God from keeping His Hand on my life, and although I nearly lost my mind through resisting sin, He had a PLAN for my salvation, which He has been outworking faithfully since I finally asked His help again, to bring my life into line with His will, when I was 19.

When you say 'I believe that no child goes to hell, that all children are innocent'... this is a very dangerous blanket to throw over them. I was able to compute guilt when I was 3. I can't tell you the quality of that guilt, because my mother had been abusing me, but, I know that the term 'age of accountability' can easily be reduced to a legal statement. **Whereas God sees the heart.** Heathens will be judged on whether they obeyed what their consciences tell/told them (Rom 2 :15,16)

Imho, it is an oversimplification of what is going on in a life, simply to reject the possibility of a child of 6 (who has reached the age of reason) being able meaningfully to give his life to Jesus, just as it is to suggest that all children go to heaven. Of course parents want to think like this, but at what age do you say a child who kills another child, was absolved by the death of Jesus, or *knows* EDIT CORRECTION 'knows' to *doesn't know* EDIT end; that what they are doing IS WRONG? I don't think we can just take it upon ourselves to stand in God's shoes like that.

Re:, on: 2006/3/25 9:57

Hi Dorcas

I wrote in a reply to Jeff "This age of accountability will vary from child to child but the Lord knows."

To answer some specific questions. My father was a non-practising Catholic like most men in the Catholic working class, but he made sure his children went to mass. Obviously I also had a Catholic education. My mother became a born-again Christian so it was this that prompted me at the age of nine to make a confession of faith. Yet, as we know from the sower and the seed that many receive the word with gladness, but not all seed come to fruition. I do agree that the hand of the Lord was on me, even in the midst of my wicked life, I know that the Lord saved my physical life on more than one occasion. Yet here is the rub, if I had have died in that position, I have no doubt that I was hell bound. Making Jesus the Lo

rd of my life at the age of 26 I was finally justified, saved, a new heart and a transformation.

I also agree with what you said about blanket statements, they are never very wise, unless we have scripture to back us up. In this particular subject, we do not. The scripture is silent on the subject. One could possibly make an argument that when scripture talks about "household salvation," that this included children, but that would be assumptive, an argument from silence.

The only examples we have in the new testament of people being saved are adults. The notion that children understand what it means to surrender your life, to give it up, to make Jesus the Lord of their lives, is not realistic. Every muslim child will believe what their parents will tell them. But when they are able to understand, then they can make their own descision on what is the truth and what is not. Childrn are innocent and accept blindly whatever their parents tell them.

There is also a reason why Catholics who are born again reject their first baptism, the reason being that their parents made that descision for them and now, having made their own descision to make Jesus the lord of their lives and to surrender their lives to Jesus, they get baptized, this time by their own choice.

So, if you are raised a Baptist, a Catholic, a Pentecostal, a muslim, whatever,. and you blindly follow your parents lead, there will come a time when you have to make your own descision, one cannot go to heaven on their parents faith. It is an individual choice made by minds that are able to understand what it is that is required of them. I have a mentally handicapped child who has no way of understanding the Gospel and what the Father wants from humanity, I have no problem making the blanket statement that all mentally handicapped people go to heaven. I base this on the attributes of a God of Justice.

Finally, I know of people who were raised in churches, came forward and signed on the dotted line, or "prayed the prayer," or "knelt at the alter," and then went on and became murderers and rapists. Would anyone seriously argue that because these people made confessions of faith as children that they are just confused Christians?

So, bottom line, its not what a person, child or otherwise says, its how they live their life, the evidence will be in the fruit. We will know them by their love for one another. In the parrable of the two brothers, Jesus tells us that one agreed to work in the field, the other said no. The one who agreed did not follow through, the one who said no, repented and went and did what he was asked to do. Jesus asks the pharisees, which one of these did the will of their father, which one of these are saved. Bottom line, words are cheap, actions speak louder.....Frank

Re:, on: 2006/3/25 10:03

Hi Jeff

I am really not sure why you would use OT civil law in a debate on New Testament, New Covenant Christianity. First of, we can assume that since the son is a drunkard, that he is not a child but a young man. Secondly, I know that your not saying that we should be stoning prostitutes, or exacting revenge, getting an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, so I really am not understanding your point, perhaps you could clarify.....Frank

Re: - posted by h2oboy (), on: 2006/3/25 10:44

Hi Frank,

I appreciate the clarification of your stance. The issue then is not of age but of understanding. A child can simply mimic what their parents believe and do or they can have a spiritual encounter with the Lord of spirits. The question of at what age this can happen is not something we can define clearly.

You said;

"Finally, I know of people who were raised in churches, came forward and signed on the dotted line, or "prayed the prayer," or "knelt at the alter," and then went on and became murderers and rapists. Would anyone seriously argue that because these people made confessions of faith as children that they are just confused Christians?"

We have accepted a lie that a "profession of faith" is faith. Faith with our corresponding action is dead. I can tell you that I believe that you deposited money in my bank account but if I don't act to use that money it profits me nothing. I can say that I believe the fire alarm but if I do not exit the building I will burn.

Modern man has reduced 'faith' to mental assent or acquiescence. If I simply agree verbally that a statement is true then I believe. This is not Biblical faith.

A child may copy what everyone else is doing in order to be 'accepted' in religious matters and talk. This is not justification by faith. The fruit that you speak of is the fruit of the Spirit. If a 6 or 9 year old child have an encounter with Jesus and begin to exhibit the fruit of the Spirit can we say that there has been no true conversion? Yes there are many who mouth the words just as there are many adults whose 'coming to Christ' is "form of godliness" and not a change of heart. A person who is truly born again, regardless of the age, will have a change of character (values and beliefs) that will be evident in their daily lives.

I believe that the biggest reason that we do not see more 'true conversions' is that we are preaching a Gospel of a Savior without preaching Jesus as Lord. I believe that many who make a 'decision' to accept Jesus as Savior (a ticket out of hell) would not act so quickly if they knew that they have to also receive Him as Master, King, Potentate, Governor, and Lord.

Luke 14:28-30

28 For which of you, desiring to build a tower, doth not first sit down and count the cost, whether he have (wherewith) to complete it?

29 Lest haply, when he hath laid a foundation, and is not able to finish, all that behold begin to mock him,

30 saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.
ASV

I believe we do people and God a disservice to preach Jesus only as Savior. Can He really save anyone who does not make Him Lord?

Love in Christ,
Jeff

Re:, on: 2006/3/25 11:30

Jeff writes

"I believe that the biggest reason that we do not see more 'true conversions' is that we are preaching a Gospel of a Savior without preaching Jesus as Lord. I believe that many who make a 'decision' to accept Jesus as Savior (a ticket out of hell) would not act so quickly if they knew that they have to also receive Him as "Master, King, Potentate, Governor, and Lord.

Hi Jeff

I totally agree with the above point and I think you and I are not far apart on this subject, but I think you may have made my point for me in what you wrote above. If many adults can come forward and get their ticket out of hell or for any other reason other than submitting their whole lives, in complete surrender to the master, how is it that we imagine that a child would understand the gravity of what is going on?

I have been in America for 16 years now, fifteen of them as a born-again Christian. And let me say, and perhaps we disagree on this, that the American church is in a state of disorder, with a watered down Gospel, easy believism and so many other problems. Now I also believe that Europe, including Britain, is even worse.

What are the possible reasons for the state of the Church in America? Well that's an enormous subject, but let me put forward one problem. Those that are raised in the church, those who made confessions as children, pastors children taking over from their parents, are mostly running today's church. Many of these people have a form of Godliness, but do not have the power of a transformed heart. Hundreds of years ago, Whitfield wrote a famous letter. In that letter he claimed that almost all of the clergy "knew nothing of the new birth." It got him barred from almost every denominational platform in the western world, just as well because tens of thousands of people came out to the fields to listen to him preach and revival followed him everywhere.

I would assert that a great portion of today's leaders, who grew up in the church, who "made confessions," as children, k

now nothing of the new birth. In fact many admit that they could not tell you the day and the hour that they met Jesus. This leaves me incredulous that one could have an encounter with the king of kings and Lord of Lords and not remember it, truth be told, one will never forget the day that Jesus comes into their hearts and changes their whole lives.....Frank

Re: - posted by h2oboy (), on: 2006/3/25 13:04

Hi Frank,

You are right in saying that we are not too far apart. The church of America is in disarray. I mostly agree with your point that a person, adult or child, will know when Jesus comes into their heart and makes a change.

My testimony is strange. I don't remember the exact date that Jesus came into my heart. I know that He did when I was eight years old and my life was continuously changing. The reason that I don't remember the exact date was because of bad teaching. I thought that every time I sinned that I was "cut off" and had to be saved again, as a result I got saved many times that year. Jesus was inside of me transforming me but I had erroneous beliefs in what it means to be "saved" because of the teaching.

That false belief and many others had to be renovated in order for me to walk in victory of faith. When a child is trained in a home with the scriptures their belief system does not appear to change as dramatically when Jesus enters their heart personally, as a child who learned many wrong things from their home and environment.

Every child has a spirit of 'anomia' (lawlessness) working inside of them. This refusal to be governed or told what to do manifests very early in life even before a child is old enough to know right and wrong. It is the purpose of God for each child to be shown the light of God's Word, Jesus, that they may be rescued from this bondage to self rule and self-determination and come into the glorious freedom found in submitting to the Lordship of Christ.

Submission and obedience are measured, as has been spoken on other threads, not by a written code of law but on revelation or understanding to the requirements of God. We all have sinned, none of us on the earth has followed the voice of God perfectly. When a person is born again the Spirit of God enters their heart and begins to teach them the ways of God. This teaching is not instantaneous. God measures each person's faithfulness not on a universal set of standards but by their personal responsiveness to what the Holy Spirit has revealed to that person. What a child is taught by the Holy Spirit is far simpler than for most adults but the question is are they listening and obeying.

I have watched some young children, 6-9 years old, hear the Word of God and in simple faith do it. I have seen them lay hands on the sick and seen God heal. I have heard some speak prophetic words that mature Christian adults judged as being the Word of the Lord. This does not mean that these children are mature or faultless (in a human evaluation). The gifts of the Spirit are not a measurement of maturity. This simply means that these children are acting upon the Word of God as it has been revealed to them.

I am getting very wordy here and I am sorry. Jesus said,
Matt 18:2-6

2 And he called to him a little child, and set him in the midst of them,

3 and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.

4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

5 And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me:

6 But whoso shall cause one of these little ones that believe on me to stumble, it is profitable for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and (that) he should be sunk in the depth of the sea.

ASV

We All need to become like little children in that we hear and obey. We adults need to learn how to quit trying to 'unders

tand' and to just in simple faith do what we are told to do. We, like they, will make mistakes but those sins have already been paid for. This issue is relationship not perfection. If we would teach children that they can be one with Christ, hearing His voice and doing what He says, instead of teaching lists of rules to achieve moral perfection, we probably would see fewer stumble and fall away from the simple faith that they 'professed.'

I love you brother. We are closer than you can imagine.

Jeff

Re:, on: 2006/3/25 18:45

Hi Jeff

I was waiting on Matt 18:)I actually think this scripture proves the point. Jesus is urging us as adults, to have blind faith and be innocent and humble. Children are unquestioning, and will take their fathers hand wherever He leads them and expects their father to provide and protect. We should know and trust that our Heavenly Father will provide for our needs and protects us, in this we should be as little children. Yes, I think we are close Jeff....Love ya brother.....Frank