

These men are not drunk as you suppose *Acts 2:15*

Types and Shadows: **The New Exodus**

Rick Davis

"And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people"
Acts 5:12

One reason we often fail to see the big picture in the New Testament is that we have failed to understand the story of the Old Testament. In the Old Testament the overriding motif is the Exodus. The creation account and God's covenant with Noah in the flood show us God's dealings with people. This prepares us for the great covenant made with Abraham. The covenant with Abraham in turn lays the foundation for God's creation of His covenant people and His faithfulness to Abraham's descendants in the book of Exodus. The first chapter of the book sets the stage, and ends thus *"And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence. So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt."*

Once we understand the importance of the Exodus in the Old Testament we can see that Luke uses the phrase *"signs and wonders"* to show that the events of Acts are a replaying of the events of the Exodus and Conquest in the Old Testament. This phrase that appears 9 times in Acts is used throughout the Old Testament in reference to God's workings in Egypt. Out of the 16 times the word *"wonders"* is used in the OT, 14 are references to the Exodus. And every time without exception, the phrase *"signs and wonders"* refers to the Exodus. God's signs and wonders are being multiplied in the city of Jerusalem and playing the part of wicked Pharaoh. We have the Sanhedrin, the Jewish religious rulers who rejected the Lord's Messiah. Just as Pharaoh re-

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America's Creed

Chase McMaster

The difference between liberals and radicals is that liberals ignore creeds while radicals try to change them.

It was the dawn of summer in 1776. The modernism of Europe had already captured the imagination of the American spirit. A mood of independence had been circulating amongst the colonies for many months. War had already begun. Grievances against the British magistrate had been filed. Parliament had long been considered irrelevant as far as the states were concerned. In fact many states had just declared their own independence before Congress and had begun rewriting their constitutions.

A tobacco farmer and former lawyer by the name of Thomas Jefferson sat alone on the second floor of a brick house on the corner of Second and Market Street in Philadelphia, having been commissioned by Congress to write an apologetic. His task was to defend the idea of American independence before a watching world.

Jefferson, like many of his counterparts in the Second Continental Congress, was a radical. The reason that many in that day would have considered him such is because he sought to separate from the ideologies and traditions of the British crown, and that's what radicals do - they tear away from the norm. The irony is clear. Conservatism is founded upon some form of creed, some type of set standard, lest it have nothing left to conserve. And yet, while conservatism is based upon established dogma, it is quite often born from radical ideas, ideas that in effect give birth to a new system and a new tradition, in essence, an altogether new conservatism. This is why Jefferson was considered a radical compared to many of his contemporaries. He brought his agenda to life with the swoop of the pen, laying out the framework for a new independent America

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(Exodus, continued from page 1)

fused Moses, so the Sanhedrin refused Jesus.

Luke deliberately works in such language throughout the book of Acts. For example, the Ananias and Sapphira story in Acts 5 is a direct parallel to the story of Achan in Joshua 7. Stephen in Acts 6 is described in language reminiscent of both Joshua and Moses. *“And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people,”* just as Moses did in Egypt. Just as Moses face shone after he came down from Mount Sinai, so those who saw Stephen *“saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.”* We are told that Joshua was *“full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him”* (Deut. 34:9). Likewise once Stephen had hands laid on him by the apostles *“they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake.”*

However, the greatest example of a parallel between Exodus and Acts is that in the book of Acts we see the recreation of God’s people. In both the Hebrew and Greek languages the word for “wind” and “spirit” are the same. This is important to an understanding of how God creates His people. In the creation account in Genesis, the spirit of God moved over the water. Then after God destroyed the world in the Flood, we are told (Gen. 8:1) that God caused a wind (spirit) to pass over the earth, leaving a faithful remnant as His people. The preeminent example of this is once again, the Exodus account. When God took His people out of slavery and determined to make them a great people, He brought them across the Red Sea, by causing a mighty east wind (spirit) to blow across the sea (Exodus 14:21). This imagery of God creating the world and a people for Himself by his wind/spirit is continued in the NT. Jesus explains to Nicodemus in John 3 that a man must be born of water and the spirit to enter the kingdom of heaven. *“The wind (spirit) bloweth where it listeth...so is every one that is born of the Spirit (wind).”* This culminates in the New Testament counterpart to the crossing of the Red Sea: the day of Pentecost. A mighty rushing *wind* came into the house where the believers were and the *Spirit* hovered over them. God set apart the faithful remnant, His New Israel. The rest of the book of Acts follows God’s people as they go forth to conquer the land. New Israel then sets forth to spread Christ’s kingdom to the ends of the earth.

These events in Acts were prophesied in the book of Joel. Peter declares this at Pentecost in Acts 2. *“And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke”* (Acts 2:19) Once more, blood, fire and smoke were all signs that God gave

in Exodus.

Blood was the sign that God sent upon Egypt in the first plague. The Egyptians worshipped the Nile as sacred and almost of all their gods were associated with it. In attacking the Nile, God attacked the Egyptian Pantheon that was associated with the Nile. In like fashion, God shows repeatedly by signs and wonders that He is with the Christians who have heeded the voice of the Messiah and is against those religious leaders who have rejected the Messiah.

Fire and smoke were both signs of the Lord’s presence at Mt. Sinai. Ex. 19:18 *“And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.”* The Holy Spirit descended like *fire* at Pentecost. In Acts 4, the people are filled with the Spirit, *“the place was shaken where they were assembled together,”* just as Mt. Sinai quaked greatly when God descended upon it.

These signs and wonders given by the apostles were to show that God was with the Christians, those who followed the Lord’s Messiah. These signs were to be for the Jews to see and learn what was occurring. A New Exodus had taken place, and a New Conquest was beginning, one that would dominate the entire world.

A Lynchburg Locale King’s Island Restaurant David Cooper

Located between Link Rd and Hollywood Video on Old Forest Road is Lynchburg’s finest Asian Restaurant. King’s Island offers Japanese, Polynesian, and American food in a comfortable dining environment. The service has always been top notch and the fare is delightful. The jumbo sesame shrimp is a good example of a delicious and moderately priced meal. What sets King’s Island apart from anything I’ve had in Lynchburg is the quality/freshness of the food and the excellence of the Sushi bar. If you have never tried Sushi, now is the time and King’s Island is the place. If raw fish turns your insides, then try the Vegetable Roll, California Roll, and the Tempura Shrimp. They will convert you. For the more adventure-some, the Rainbow Roll is amazing.

The Patriot

Directed by Roland Emmerich

Sony Pictures 2000

Film Review by Chase McMaster

If you watch *The Patriot* expecting a history lesson, then you might be disappointed. However, if you watch the film expecting to be captivated by a good story, then you will probably end up appreciating the greatness that the film has to offer. Many scenes will grip you and quite possibly bring you to tears. Many scenes will make you think about issues like the justification of war, the horrors of evil, and the ethics of revenge. Overall, you will get a great depiction of overcoming evil through adversity and triumph through the family bond.

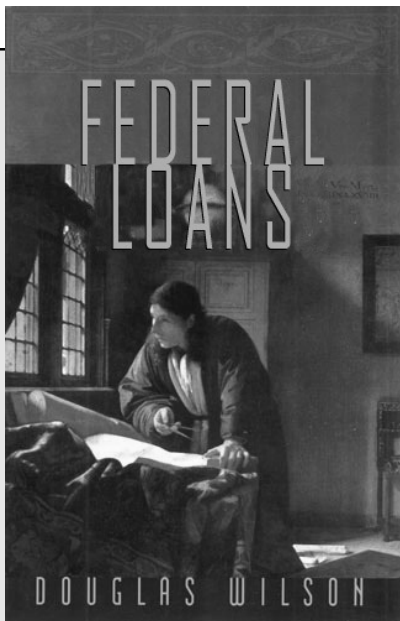
The context is the Revolutionary War. The British are the bad guys, brutally tyrannizing the colonists; the colonists are the good guys, defending their homeland against the tyranny, trying to make for themselves a better America. Certainly, this is historical hyperbole, but it doesn't matter. *The Patriot* is not about how evil England was. *The Patriot* is about how one man, widower Benjamin Martin, when confronted with the choice to fight with the colonists for independence, chooses instead to stay home and care for and protect his children because he believes the war is not worth leaving his children as orphans. As a former war hero himself, he regrets the horrors which war inevitably creates. But circumstances change, and when one of his sons is killed outside their own home at the hand of British brutality, his reason for not wanting to fight, namely the protection of his family, now becomes his great-

est motivation in going to war and seeking revenge for the murder of his son.

Imagine a father, his oldest son just captured by the enemy, his second oldest son just murdered, dashing through the forest, dodging trees, his rifle in hand, and his two younger sons, maybe eight or ten years old, each totting a rifle of their own, trying desperately just to keep up. Imagine those sons waiting in ambush with their father for the enemy to march by on the road, their rifles in ready position, waiting for their fathers command to shoot, and firing away, picking off enemy soldiers one by one from their hiding place in the woods. Imagine these boys visibly shaken at the harsh reality of actually killing somebody. Imagine a young daughter given charge to lead her little siblings across the dangerous countryside in order to find shelter at their aunt's house. Imagine an entire civilian community betrayed by one of their own and tricked into their mass destruction.

The greatness of *The Patriot* lies in the execution of the story. It draws you in. You feel the danger. You hate the villain. You sympathize with the tragedy. You know the characters. Great films do this. Sure, there is a little bit of Hollywood sentimentalism sprinkled through the story line, but there is so much richness as well. There are deep truths about honor, justice, and the goodness of family that resonate throughout the film. It is a fabrication of an historical event. But it's a superb one, no doubt.

editor's note: *We were going to again have dueling reviewers but Mr. Cooper was cowed into taking an early vacation since he could not come up with enough or even substantial reasons why The Patriot is not a great movie. So, we are going to print Chase's review anyway and give Mr. David a chance to respond next IQ.*



Federal Loans

A Reformed Guide to Debt Management

by Douglas Wilson

Too many Christian men in our day are relinquishing their head of checkbook responsibilities. The time is ripe for Christian men to fill their chests, step up to the challenge, and get substantially ahead by making use of the benevolence of the Fed.

"The first book that compares the Pre-Million, Post-Million and A-Million views of Credit's return." - Tim LaPaye

"I'd say it raised my interest rate considerably." - Allen Greenspan

"This is exactly why I'm not a Hyper-Creditist." - Dr. Ergun Planner

CanonBALL Press ~ Literature for a Life More Silly

Eternal Covenant-How the Trinity Reshapes Covenant Theology

Ralph Smith

Canon Press 2003

Book Review by Virgil Hurt

"If the covenant characterizes the very life of the Triune God and if it is the key to all of His relationships with man and the physical universe, then the covenant is the central and most important single idea in the Christian worldview." (p.99)

Ralph Smith has accomplished something quite amazing in this short book. He has challenged a long held prevailing paradigm of reformed theology in a concise and compelling manner. Like any paradigm, there is a tremendous difficulty for those living and thinking inside of it, to think or live in any other way. The only way out of the prevailing paradigm is to break out. *Eternal Covenant* is this sort of 'breaking out' of paradigm, a paradigm shift, if you will.

God's covenant with Adam is the prevailing paradigm of covenantal understanding. While Smith does not directly assail this part of the paradigm, he does work hard, and I think successfully so, to show that in adopting the covenant of works with Adam as the standard, we have got the cart before the horse. He shows that God's covenant with Adam is not the ultimate paradigm from which to view covenant. The ultimate covenant is the one that operates within the Trinity itself. This puts the cart back behind the horse where it ought to go. Furthermore, he goes on to attack the very idea and nature of the 'covenant of works' as a non-biblical idea. This fact has many theologically significant results as well as some startling manifestations in how we apply covenantal thinking in our everyday lives.

The Godhead does not exist as a primarily agreement/reward kind of covenant. That is, the Son does not merit the Father's favor in the way in which we generally view God's covenant with Adam. The prevailing view of the Adamic covenant is one of a *covenant of works*. If Adam obeyed God, God would then grant him eternal life. This is the standard view of the covenant of works. We then push this covenant of works *forward* to Jesus and assume that Jesus's job was also to merit God's favor and thus win the salvation of men. But this way of thinking is flawed.

Foremost, Adam was not promised eternal life for compliance. He was promised death for failure. Adam

already existed in God's covenant of love and life, prior to any so-called meritorious completion of the terms of the covenant. He had the life but lost it. As we think about Jesus, the same is true of Him. He did not have to earn or merit the Father's favor. He was in the Father's favor. But that which Adam lost, Christ never lost. The idea of merit or works is not a necessary component of either God's covenant with Adam or Jesus's work for us on the cross.

Why is this a powerful paradigm shift? Because the proper view of the covenant is not one of agreement/fulfillment/reward but rather a covenant of love/response. We view the foundational aspect of the covenant not as one of pact but one of mutual love. This changes our view of the Godhead and all the persons of the Godhead, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and also of God's dealing with man.

I have paraphrased Smith's teaching above. Let me add some tantalizing quotes from him. "The compelling, consistent and comprehensive character of God's covenantal relations with creation and man suggest that the covenant is not a mere secondary feature of the world, but an aspect of God's own being." (p.37) "The life of God is covenantal life. God is three persons united in covenantal love." (p. 47) "Love is the fulfilling of the whole covenant, the essence of the law." (p. 53)

Smith spends a few pages, in the beginning of the book, arguing for the covenant as an hermeneutical principle. He then does a reformed historical survey of several different views of the covenant, attempting to provide a historical link to the idea of a covenant within the Trinity. Some may find this helpful. However, he does his best work when he moves on to new ground fleshing out the covenant of love as opposed to the covenant of works and even suggests a revision of our confessional standards along these lines.

I would highly recommend this book, particularly for those already committed to a covenantal understanding of the Scriptures. The views put forward here will have a great impact in the way in which we view God and His relations with us. This is bound to have lasting and good effects in the way in which we worship and live out our lives before our Triune God, loving Father, faithful Son, and communing Holy Spirit.

Illinois

Sufjan Stevens

Asthmatic Kitty Records 2005

Music Review by Richard Okimoto

Once upon a time, last summer, I had several free online music downloads. I decided that I'd use them to check out something totally unfamiliar. I asked around on the internet for recommendations. One suggestion that came in was *The Predatory Wasp Of The Palisades Is Out To Get Us!* by Sufjan (pronounced *soof-yan*) Stevens. One thing you will notice at this point is that Sufjan Stevens' song titles are not common or conventional. This is a good indicator of his music.

After listening to the sample of the recommended song, my immediate response was, "This is like playtime music for three year olds." Two days later I came crawling back in sackcloth and ashes, both feet firmly in my mouth. Thanks to two free downloads from amazon.com (<http://artist.amazon.com/illinois>), I was hooked. I remember quite clearly the moment I was converted. I was listening to one of the songs (*Casmir Pulaski Day*) and said to my wife, "What do you think of this?" My question was admission of defeat.

Let me pause for a moment to offer a warning. This is not simple, cotton candy music. It requires you, the listener, to give something of yourself in order to appreciate and enjoy it. If you are not willing to give it a chance, and listen to several of the songs two or three times, then save yourself the time and effort; don't listen even once. You will only walk away thinking that it is weird music, and make a mental note to take *IQ* reviews with a nice sized grain of salt.

Sonically speaking, I find it very difficult to fit *Illinois* into any single genre. There are elements of folk music, with acoustic guitar and banjo leading some songs. Others have more of a modern rock flair, with distorted electric guitar. There is even a touch of classical music, with choral arrangements over layers of strings and horns. Then there is the droll description one friend shared with my wife, "It sounds like a carnival". It really is a mixed bag, which defies categorization.

If forced to describe Sufjan Stevens' sound I would use the single phrase, "unsettlingly beautiful". The artful, often complex arrangements coupled with the unique, ethereal vocal stylings form a dissonance (which Stevens confesses is intentional) that makes you ask yourself, "Is this good, quality songwriting? Or is it just silly?"

My initial reaction, it turns out, isn't entirely in left field. This tension, which is only intensified by the lyrical content, causes us to examine the music and ask if it is any good. And upon such examination, we discover that it is quite good, and worthy of yet more attention.

Sufjan is a Christian, but his music is not what can be classified as Contemporary Christian Music. You won't find any Christian radio stations playing his songs, for instance. But, if you are at all like me, you'll take that as a compliment. This absence from the CCM scene isn't due to a lack of Christian themes and imagery, though. From the depraved nature of man in the haunting *John Wayne Gacy, Jr.*, to our recreation in *Chicago*; from our need for a Savior in *The Man of Metropolis Steals Our Hearts*, to a celebration of Pentecost in *Predatory Wasp, Illinois* is chock full of elements of the Christian Faith. But it is not explicit. Like I said, it is not classified as CCM. Stevens is much more subtle and organic than to whack you upside the head with these things. Some may question whether they are even present, suggesting instead that I have pulled them, like a rabbit, from my hat. I can only suggest that you find a copy of *Illinois*, settle down for an hour or so of active listening, and judge for yourself.

This Quarter's Brew: Cooper's Sparkling Ale

David Cooper

I wish I was the brew master of this fine ale, but the distinction belongs to an Aussie who also makes a spectacular Stout and tasty Pale Ale. The reason the Sparkling Ale stands out at this time of year is its wonderful freshness of flavor. And the body itself seems springy and vibrant. There is a strong undercurrent of apple cider crispness.

A Notable Wine: Barefoot Chardonnay 2004

David Cooper

For less than five bucks, Barefoot offers a tasty everyday sort of wine. My family has had success with Barefoot's Chardonnay, Zinfandel, and Cabernet Sauvignon. The Chardonnay pairs well with chicken or seafood. This overall mild wine has subtle smells and flavors of apple and vanilla. The finish is smooth and pleasant but a little thin. Barefoot wines are available everywhere.

Re-Formed: Confessions of a Former Baptist

David Hart

Not long ago, if you asked me if I was "Reformed", I would have walked away thinking you called me an ex-con. After all, I was a pastor's kid who had grown up Baptist. Very Baptist. As a child...

- I faithfully witnessed to my dog, who I just knew went straight to Heaven one fateful morning when I missed the school bus and he didn't.
- I asked new neighbors next door to wear a name tag, and asked them to fill out Information Cards so I could, "know a little more about them."
- I gave school reports with the aid of my mom's Vacation Bible School flannel board. (Christopher Columbus discovering America looked remarkably like a missionary bringing the Good News to heathen villagers.)
- I acted out Bible stories with Star Wars Action Figures. (Obi-wan Kenobi leading the Israelites across the Red Sea in a land cruiser, Luke Skywalker's dramatic conversion experience on the road to Damascus, and Han Solo working for 7 years in order to marry Princess Leia but waking up with Chewbacca instead.)

Fast forward through years of Christian education, 10 years of marriage, and four children, while attending only Baptist churches. Then close friends invited my family to visit a "Reformed" Evangelical church called Providence Church.

I felt confused that first Sunday morning. Initially, I made note of everything this church did not have:

1. It did not have parking lot captains with mirrored sunglasses and two way radios. ("Papa Bear this is Roger Rabbit. Be advised, I have a Silver Fox needing a Code 7, license Echo Bravo Tango, Over." "Roger that Roger. Inform Silver Fox she may proceed to Vector 12, over." "Ma'am, thank you for your patience. You can park in that Handicapped spot right in front of you.")
2. It did not have full-color maps directing parents to remote Sunday School rooms in the west wing of Building "L".
3. It did not provide electronic devices for buzzing parents informing them that there was a problem with their child (or that their table was ready at Olive Garden – depending on the church).
4. It did not offer a pre-service movie trailer with dra-

matic voice-over ("In a world... ravaged by human secularism... one pastor dares to take a stand and boldly declare the truth... in a 12-part series on tithing starting next Sunday.")

Then images of what this church did have replaced my confusion with profound clarity. Children sat with parents and participated in corporate worship. The congregation sang Psalms and hymns by turning pages in real books.

Men enthusiastically read Scripture passages despite mild protests of teething babies. The pastor patiently taught verse by verse without humorous anecdotes he'd been emailed earlier in the week. The service culminated in Communion which was more like a sacred feast than a religious snack.

And after the service? Children ran. Ladies hugged. Men laughed. An hour passed before we broke free from our circles of newfound friends.

I had not experienced a church fellowship like this in years. Sweet, without the bitterness of something artificial. Liturgical, without the coldness of something dead. During the coming weeks and months, many questions that seared my heart began to mend. For my first impressions were admittedly superficial. Seen and felt observations. What about the deeper theological questions?

What about modes of baptism? What about wine at communion? What about a million things it seemed? Could there really be a biblical basis for the reformed practices which most evangelical churches simply ignore?

As I tackled these questions, I found many folks once like me. Whatever that was. "What was I, anyway?" I wondered. "A Presbapterian? A Reformtist?"

I'm still answering some of those hard questions. And I'm still trying to explain to many friends why I'm seeker-"insensitive", and purpose "non-driven". But I know one thing for sure. When someone asks me why I now call myself Reformed, I just smile and say, "It was Providence."

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The Joy of Suffering

Chase McMaster

“And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings...”

Romans 5:2-3

Suffering, by its very nature, runs contrary to glory. In fact, Dietrich Bonhoeffer once wrote that ‘suffering means being cut off from God.’ Can it really be any other way? Can Divine glory experience affliction? Is affliction compatible with Divine glory? Are not glory and affliction at enmity with one another so that to experience the one is to the exclusion of the other? If suffering is not being cut off from God, then what else could it possibly be? To simply say that suffering is a consequence of being cut off from God is true enough, but that speaks neither to the nature nor the origin of suffering. And is not the same thing as saying that suffering means being cut off from God. Suffering and being cut off from God are not merely a cause and effect relationship, but rather they are two aspects of the same experience, much like the relationship between faith and repentance. Both suffering and being cut off from God are the consequences of sin. Sin is the origin. Suffering, or being cut off from God, is the consequence. Amidst all this, one thing is certainly clear - God wants Christians to rejoice in their sufferings. Therefore, if suffering means being cut off from God, we ought to conclude that God wants Christians to rejoice in being cut off.

But why? What reason do we have to rejoice in suffering? The scriptures tell us to rejoice because of the good things which suffering produces. James writes that “the testing of your faith produces patience” and Paul writes that “suffering produces perseverance”, and ultimately, “hope,” and “hope does not disappoint.” But a question arises. When the Scriptures exhort us to rejoice in suffering does that mean that we ought to rejoice merely in the good things which suffering produces? Is the exhortation merely futuristic? Or is there a present implication as well? Do the Scriptures not also require the Christian to rejoice in the very suffering itself? When Paul writes “And we rejoice also in our sufferings,” is he not requiring the Christian to take joy in the experience itself, no matter how painful it might be? We rejoice in the suffering because the suffering *itself* is good. It is good because it produces good things, certainly, but it is also good because suffering *itself* is a means of grace. It is a means of

grace while at the same time being the state wherein we are cut off from God.

A means of grace is a vehicle that God has ordained to bring us to Christ. The Word of God is a means of grace. So are the sacraments. So is prayer and Christian fellowship. And tribulation is right there with them. Suffering is a means of grace because through it the Christian is brought nearer to Christ by the sanctifying fires of purification. Our faith is tested and strengthened, and God further conforms us into the image of His Son.

Surely it is impossible to imagine a man who has never suffered in some way. Surely each of us has, in one form or another, experienced affliction. Every affliction is caused either directly or indirectly by the presence of sin. There is no one who escapes this experience. Maybe you have been betrayed by a friend or scorned by an enemy or just felt lonely or neglected or inadequate? Maybe you have been physically injured or assaulted or unbearably exhausted? Maybe you have endured the death of loved ones or experienced torment in your soul? Perhaps you have waged a grueling, seemingly endless battle against your own sin? Maybe the world is against you? Maybe evil has surrounded you or you have nearly drowned yourself in your own sadness? Maybe death is at your door? This is suffering. This is being cut off from God. And yet it is in these things that God requires Christians to rejoice. Suffering is a means of grace.

But these things are evil, you say. How can I rejoice when bad things happen to me? How can I possibly take pleasure in such terrible troubles? It is not the sin in which we rejoice. It is not the evil. It is not the scolding. It is not the death. It is not the bad things that are good. It is the suffering that is good. The suffering is the result of the evil. The suffering is not the evil. The suffering is the means of grace.

But how, if suffering means being cut off from God, can it simultaneously be a means of grace that brings us to God? This paradox is beautifully answered in the incarnation and the suffering of our Lord and Savior, Jesus.

The reason suffering means being cut off from God is because suffering is not the Divine experience. The Divine life is a life of complete joy and satisfaction. The Godhead, in Himself, experiences perfect happiness. Suffering originates when that perfect happiness is forfeited and a contrary experience exists which has been cut off from the Divine one. We call it suffering and it produces misery by its very nature. But God, in the Incarnation,

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Glorious Things Baseball

Virgil Hurt

Life comes in all shapes and sizes. Sometimes big things come in small packages. It takes wisdom to recognize the size of glory. For some people, bigger is always better. Super size me. But to fail to see the glory in quality is a failure that many live to regret. This principle holds true in many areas of life. We want something more, something bigger, something more important, something OTHER than what we, in fact, have. But life does come in all shapes and sizes. And wisdom must figure out which packages are the really important ones and which ones are not. Sometimes it is the big ones and sometimes it is the small ones.

One of the packages of life the Lord has given to us is baseball. Our son has played Little League for several years. We have found this small package to be full of glory.

It is interesting that many Christians have opted out of sports. There are a couple of reasons for this. One reason we have heard is that sports are frivolous and take away from the all-important academic and spiritual pursuits. They say that Christians ought not to waste their time with such things when they can be studying and learning. *Gnostics!* There has been an element of the serious home school crowd (of which we are part) that has strongly resisted sport. But sports have a tremendous power to create and grow character, particularly in the lives of boys.

Another reason parents have shied away from sports is bad experiences that they had growing up or have heard about from other parents. These bad experiences usually run along the lines of kids, parents and coaches with bad attitudes and they do not want their children infected.

It is good for parents to protect their children from those who would do them irreparable harm. This is the reason we have opted out of the government education programs. We cannot undo in a couple of hours each day what the indocrinators put into our children's heads six hours a day. Besides, the Lord requires Christian parents to give their children Christian education. As a foundational principle, the government system does not allow Christian education. This is a good and consistent argument for keeping your kids out of government schools. But the argument falls short when arguing against keeping your kids out of sports, whether the sports are run by

organizations such as Little League Baseball, the city, or even government schools.

Of course, we must still apply wisdom. There *may* be situations in which it would be harmful for your child to participate in a particular sport, *at all*. I can imagine such circumstances. But as a general rule, exposing your child to the world of sinful people, people with bad attitudes, is a good thing, not a bad thing. Especially, when you are able to do so in such a way that you do not give up control of your child until he is ready to handle that responsibility. Parents can attend practices and games and give careful instruction to their children about what is going on around them. When they are little, this protection is close and careful. As they grow older, the responsibility shifts to the child a little at a time. But simply keeping them from sinful people with bad attitudes is not a good enough excuse. They will always have the problem of being around sinful people because they have to deal with you, with themselves and with anyone else that they meet. All men are sinful.

We know that what we are really guarding against is bad company corrupting good morals. This is biblical and I wholeheartedly agree. This is why the burden of personal accountability and responsibility must shift to the child's shoulders, *by degree*. You consider his frame. You do not give him more than he can handle. But you must keep in mind that you are training him up to be a man. He must be given opportunities to grow and mature. Sport is a tremendous way to do this, with minimal risk and a great up side. When considered and used rightly, sports are like small packages of great value.

Our son plays Little League. This year he made the All-Stars. We are happy about that. It is a pleasure to see him field, run, hit, score and celebrate. His team just won the district championship and they are heading to state. This, too, baseball success, makes us happy. But where is the glory in all of this? Is it simply in rejoicing in one's labor? Yes, but there is more.

Zachary does not play on Sundays. We, and he, agree that Sunday is the day to honor the Lord. We *can* do this with recreation, for Sunday *is* the day of re-creation. But it ought to be a day that is different from other days. It ought to be set apart for worship, for fellowship with the saints, for stepping back from one's *normal* occupations and vocations, so as to put the Lord and others first. This is rest from one's labors, the purpose of this great day. He missed the district tournament game on Sunday, potentially his last Little League game. But they won. Zach was not there to pray with them before the game that

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Christian History

July 4, 1187: Saladin, leader of the united Muslim forces, defeats the armies of the Third Crusade at Tiberius, Syria. *(Later that year, the King and his advisors hold the first All-gods worship service at the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople and invite leading Muslim clerics to explain their peaceful religion. The clerics were highly impressed with the cathedral and took notes.)*

July 11, 1955: Congress puts "In God We Trust" on all U.S. currency. *(to satisfy the ACLU, Congress approves an additional E-D, at the end of the phrase.)*

July 17, 431: The Council of Ephesus adjourns, having condemned Pelagianism (a doctrine refuting human depravity). *(Why is it that we must teach our children to share and be kind, but we don't have to teach them how to lie or throw tantrums? Hmm...)*

July 28, 1727: Moody, stiff young preacher Jonathan Edwards marries Sarah Pierrepont, a lively 17-year-old. The union proved happy and produced 11 children, six of who were born on Sundays. This caused a bit of a scandal, because people then believed children were born the same weekday they were conceived. *(This may be true, you know. Have you actually kept track? Jonathan was onto something here.)*

July 31, 1966: After John Lennon proclaims the Beatles to be "more popular than Jesus," residents of Alabama burn the band's records and other products. *(This may be true, also. Can you name the men in Jesus's band? Now try to name all the Beatles. See?)*

August 4, 1792: By order of revolutionaries, all houses of worship close in France. *(would somebody please head-butt those guys?)*

August 10, 70: Roman troops, sent by Emperor Vespasian to put down a Jewish rebellion, break through the walls of Jerusalem and destroy the temple. Some said that the event occurred on the same day of the year as the earlier destruction of Solomon's temple by Babylonians. *(but I thought that chapter of the bible was going to happen in 2070?)*

August 11, 1519: Johann Tetzel, the German Dominican priest whose peddling of indulgences inspired Martin Luther to write his 95 Theses, dies. Throughout Germany he infamously preached, "As soon as the coin in the coffer

rings, the soul from purgatory springs." *(And nobody rang a bell, and Tetzel never got his wings)*

August 14, 1248: Construction of the Cologne Cathedral begins. Workers completed it on the same date in 1880. *(Now, that's a long-term vision)*

August 22, 565: Celtic missionary and abbot Columba reportedly confronts the Loch Ness Monster and becomes the first recorded observer of the creature. "At the voice of the saint, the monster was terrified," wrote his biographer, "and fled more quickly than if it had been pulled back with ropes"

September 2, 459 (traditional date): After spending 36 years on top of a pillar praying, fasting, and occasionally preaching, Simeon Stylites dies. At first he sat on a nine-foot pillar, but he gradually replaced it with higher and higher ones; the last was more than 50 feet tall. After his death, the Syrian ascetic—who had won the respect of both pope and emperor—inspired many imitators. *(If he had lived another few thousand years, perhaps he could have made it to heaven)*

September 10, 1718: Founded in 1701 by Congregationalists who feared Harvard was straying from its Calvinist roots, The Collegiate School at New Haven, Connecticut, changes its name to Yale. *(Oh, good thing they fixed it)*

September 12, 1922: The American Episcopal church votes to excise the words "to obey" from its wedding service's marriage vows. *(They liked that, so they waited a few strategic decades and then had the phrase struck from their bibles.)*

September 15, 1648: The British Parliament approves the Larger and the Shorter Catechisms, now used by Presbyterian, Congregationalist, and Baptist congregations. *(Well, 'now used' might be a bit overly optimistic.)*

September 21, 1944: The National Religious Broadcasters organization is formed at a convention at Chicago's Moody Memorial Church. *(All were full of hope that the gospel would be quickly preached in every nation and then the Lord would return. But some of the more worldly wise realized that if that happened the prayer lines would have to go down and the money would stop rolling in. So, instead of preaching, they decided on a circus format, complete with clowns, real and imagined. This has been largely successful, has not reached many remote corners of the earth, the Lord's return appears, thankfully, to not be imminent, and the prayer lines are still up.)*

(America's Creed, continued from page 1)

and the principles that would become the new dogma for American life. Thomas Jefferson wrote America's creed.

A creed is a covenantal concept. It is a body of words which bind participating parties together under a common system of belief. A creed transcends individuals, even to a place of authority, demanding submission of its subscribers. In church, when a creed, for example the Apostle's Creed, is read or recited, something happens. All those who participate are in effect bound together in the declaration of a specific doctrinal system, in this case Christianity. A creed, in order to be considered a creed, is not so much dependent upon whether the words are true so much as the fact that the words, true or false, are unifying those who participate. In fact, even if nobody really believed, for example, that the words in the Apostle's Creed were true, the creed remains the same. It is not affected. It still binds the worshippers together under a specific system of doctrine that defines them as Christians. This is the problem in many liberal churches. They have a creed. They have had one for generations. At one point people even believed in it. Slowly, people begin to lose interest in it. Finally, it becomes nothing more to them but bare tradition. They cease to even know or understand what the words of the creed mean. They may not even care to know. They begin to believe and act contrary to the creed. But it is still their creed. It hasn't gone anywhere. It still binds them together under it, unfaithful as they might be and it continues to bind them together until they abolish it completely. Creeds form a corporate body of conviction greater than the faith of any single individual.

America has a creed. Thomas Jefferson wrote it, and we remember it every year on July 4th.

Whether or not the Declaration of Independence was justified or whether or not it is a distinctly Christian document is a matter of debate. Regardless, one thing is certainly clear: the Declaration of Independence is religious in nature and establishes the principles of government upon which America as we now know it is founded. It is saturated with Jefferson's passionate appeals. We may love it or we may hate it but the one thing we cannot do is ignore it because it is our nation's own statement of faith. Just as the Apostles Creed defines us as Christians, the Declaration of Independence defines us as Americans.

The Declaration is basically arranged into three parts. The first is an apologetic for what Jefferson and his peers considered proper governmental principles for liberty. The second was specific grievances, or examples, of how they believed those principles had been and could be

breached. The third part was a declaration of America's independence. So what exactly were these principles which formed America's creed?

The first is the right of separation. Jefferson maintained that although governments bind people together politically, there may come a time when, for necessary reasons, one group will rightfully separate themselves from another group.

Secondly, this right of separation is bestowed upon the people by the very laws of nature and by the God who presides over those laws. In other words, the universe is coherent, and governments must be coherent within the framework of natural law. In fact, civil politics is subservient to natural law.

Thirdly, very specific truths can be known from the laws of nature. These include:

1. That all men are created equal, that the laws of nature exclude inherent political hierarchy in order that no one person is above the law.
2. That all men have, by nature, certain inherent rights such as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.
3. That the civil government's only duty, its only reason for existing, is to secure and protect those rights to the people.
4. That the powers of civil government are only derived from the consent of the people being governed. In other words, civil government cannot rightfully exist where the people refuse it.
5. That if the system of government ever fails in those duties to the people, then the people have a right to change it or abolish it and institute a new system that will work.

Fourthly, the above truths are self-evident. They need no proof. They exist in the laws of nature established by the Creator.

Finally, after the grievances are given, Jefferson declares independence and covenants the United States together by the mutual pledge of their lives, fortunes, and honor for the carrying out of the principles of liberty.

Whether or not the Declaration is particularly Christian is debatable and beyond the scope of this article. However, it ought to be understood that, in a sense, the Declaration defines us as Americans, serving as a national creed, expounding principles of government and binding all Americans together under those principles. In that

sense, Christians can relate. Christians have the same covenantal concept in our creeds. Our confessions work the same way. We have a body of doctrine to which we subscribe that is greater than ourselves. We share it together, defining who we are as Christians. It is not all right to ignore them. If we recite them then we need to believe them. If we do not believe them then we need to stop saying them or change them. If they are true then we must submit to them. If they are false, then we must reject them. But they exist for a good reason. Creeds hold us accountable to the concept of objective, covenantal truth. Creeds are not something to be taken lightly. The Declaration of Independence is no different. It is not to be used merely to fill the pages of history books. It is not something to merely spark nostalgia. It is real and it gives all Americans the right to pass judgment upon it, but it does not give us the right to ignore it. It should make us lift up our heads and ask, "Are these principles good? Are these principles still being followed today?" If not, something ought to change, because after all, the difference between liberals and radicals is that liberals ignore creeds while radicals try to change them. Conservatives, on the other hand, hold them close.

(Baseball, continued from page 8)

day. And everybody knew he was not there. His absence was most conspicuous. His silence was deafening.

God is good to us and gives us many opportunities to serve Him, to stand up for what we know is right and what glorifies His great name. We are to glorify God but not just that. We are to enjoy Him, forever. We do this by giving Him glory. We rejoice in doing His will and when we do so, God is honored and His great name is exalted.

Lynchburg All-Stars are going to State. They play on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. However, Zachary will not be playing on Sunday. But he will be joyful and he will honor the Lord. And one day, those boys, perhaps twenty years from now, will remember that kid who did not play on Sunday, that Christian kid, who loved the Lord more than baseball. In whatever state life finds them at that point, loving whatever they love, they will remember. And God will get the glory.

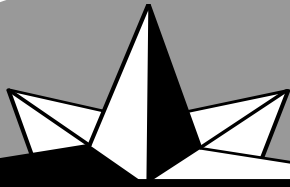
(Suffering, continued from page 7)

lowered Himself. Christ considered equality with God not a thing to be grasped. Christ bowed His neck to tribulation. Christ drank the cup, and he did so willingly and joyfully. Christ, who is God and has never ceased being God, was cut off from God, and for us, it is a means of grace. It is only through being cut off from God that we can enjoy communion with God.

The paradox is one of redemption. Suffering, for he who is in Christ, produces Christ-likeness. Suffering, for he who is outside of Christ, produces more suffering and eventually death. Because suffering produces Christ-likeness for the Christian, we endure it joyfully, but that is not the only reason we rejoice. We rejoice in suffering because it is good. It is a means of grace. The grace is the redemption. The means is being cut off from God. Therefore, in Christ, being cut off from God brings about our redemption.

But this is not true in an ascetic sense. We do not suffer in order to gain acceptance before God, nor should we necessarily seek it out. On the contrary, we suffer because Christ first suffered for us. Christ made access to God for us through His suffering and therefore we suffer because we are united to Christ by faith. Christ suffered by forfeiting glory, by willingly bearing the consequence of sin, though He Himself knew no sin. He has been raised to life with full dominion and therefore conquers suffering. So that instead of being cut off from God, suffering becomes union with a glorious King.

Bonhoeffer was right. Although suffering runs contrary to glory, it is also the road to glory. Being cut off from God is the way to God. And yet, when the Christian experiences communion with God, the Christian cannot really suffer. Therefore, because of Christ, suffering has been swallowed up in glory, and it is for that reason we rejoice.



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While contributors are generally likeminded, we do not agree on every point. And we like it that way.

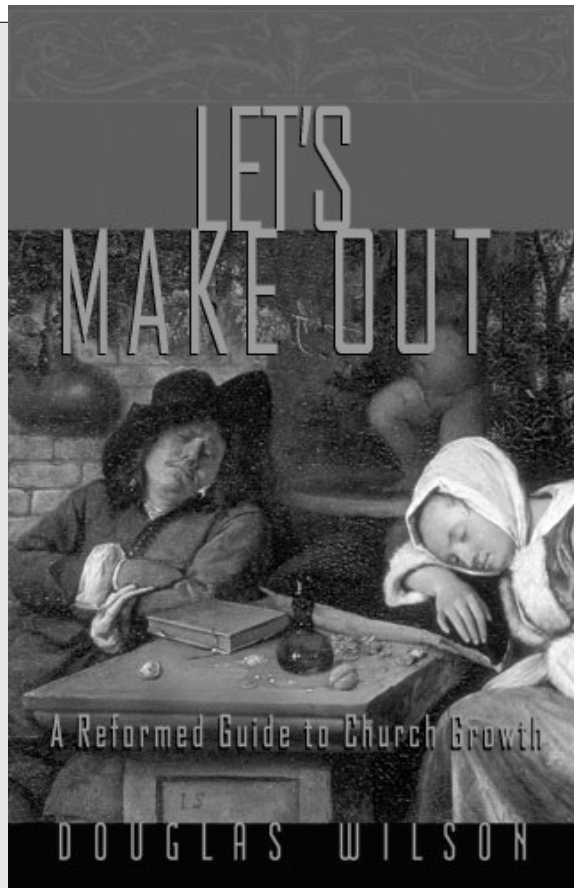
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And do not be drunk with wine...but be filled with the Spirit." (Eph 5:18)

"When the apostles came forward on Pentecost Day, for the first time filled with the Holy Spirit...others mocked and said "They are full of sweet wine." ...This was the explanation. But it is inadequate, because, strangely enough, they were not this way only in the morning, no - if they were drunk - they were still drunk in the evening; and it was not only that morning, no - if they were drunk - they were also drunk the next morning and the evening of the next morning, and a month later, and twenty years afterward, and even in the hour of death they were filled with the sweet wine that they, according to the mockers explanation...must have drunk that morning."

-Soren Kierkegaard in Judge for Yourself!

At Intoxication Quarterly, we feel it is necessary to be continually drunk in the Spirit of God, Intoxicated with God's goodness, mercy and truth. So let us live.



Let's Make Out

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by Douglas Wilson

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