

If Need Be

by Julie Gossack

I Peter 1:6, "In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials" (emphasis added).

I was pondering this verse in bed last night. I had many wakeful opportunities to contemplate. The three words, "if need be" kept replaying in my mind. Lord, what do you mean "if need be"? What exactly is needed? Why is it needed?

This afternoon I am pondering some more. I Peter 1:7 sheds some light on the issue: "that the genuineness of your faith... may be found to praise, honor,

and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ." The need is for our faith to bring praise, honor, and glory to Jesus. Period.

The Greek transliteration of the word "need" in I Peter 1:6 means, "must, necessary by the nature of things" (Zodhiates, S. 1994). It is the same word used in Mark 8:31, And he began to teach them, that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and also Titus 1:7, For a bishop must be blameless (emphasis added). It is incongruous to believe that Jesus didn't have to suffer in order to pay for the world's sins. Likewise, it doesn't make sense that a bishop need not be blameless. These things are a "must," just as it is a must that our faith brings praise, honor, and glory to Jesus.

How does our faith give Him that glory? Faith gives Him glory when it is proven, or tested to be genuine. Maybe God

will simply take our word for it that our faith is genuine, without the testing part. Wishful thinking... our faith must be tested and proven, for then He receives glory.

God takes such care to test and prove our faith because our faith is precious. He says so in I Peter 1:7. Our faith is more precious than even gold. Hebrews attests to this as well, "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and the he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." (Hebrews 11:6) Unbelief does not honor God. Belief does. No wonder there is great reward for those who endure testing, "Blessed is the man who endures temptation for when he has been proved (stood the test) he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him (James 1:12).

Resources for Life Change

(Resources are available in the Grace Resource Center):

The Grace Resource Center has many new resources available for you. From Bibles, to parenting books, to marriage and family books, to books on issues in Biblical Counseling, to children's books, to books about Christian living and theology, the Resource Center provides a whole variety of very helpful resources for you. Stop by the Resource Center today, before and after all church services.

1) 8/28: Unlocking God's Promise, by Pastor Bryan Hughes (available in May/June) — Have you ever wondered what God is doing in situations of life? Have you ever been confused about what He is accomplishing in your life? Why does God allow certain things to happen? Is there a passage of Scripture that addresses these questions specifically? These are just a few of the questions Pastor Bryan addresses in his first published book, *8/28: Unlocking God's Promise*. John MacArthur writes, "Romans 8:28 is one of the best-loved and most important promises in Scripture. Bryan Hughes does a wonderful job of unpacking the implications of that promise. This book—like the promise it expounds—is a real treasure." A Sign up sheet for those interested in a copy is available in the Grace Resource Center.

2) Leaving Your Family Behind (related to military persons): As you face deployment, you need more than sympathy and gratitude. You need hope and guidance for yourself and those you love. Jesus Christ experienced the pain of separation when he left heaven for earth, and he understands what you are facing. You can trust him to help in your time of need. Rob Green shares timely biblical guidance for the soon-to-be-deployed on trusting God's deliverance, cultivating a deep spiritual life now, and making the most of the time before you leave. His counsel will help to prepare you and your family for the challenges ahead.

3) Reuniting After Military Deployment: Your excitement at the prospect of reunion is tempered with anxiety. You have heard the stories of divorce, discouragement, and depression. Will your account be any different? Rob Green assures you that successful reunification is possible because of the help found in Jesus Christ. Green offers practical advice for seeking to understand your spouse's struggles, reevaluating schedules and responsibilities, and using your new family time with purpose. By taking steps to intentionally transition out of "deployment mode" and back into the unity God has given you as husband and wife, you can rebuild a family that is stronger than ever.

4) Pleasing People, by Lou Priolo—It might surprise you that perhaps one of the most consistent and nearly universal struggles that people have is the fear of man. Another name for that is being a People Pleaser. In this excellent book, the author exposes the problems with seeking to please people, talks about when it is right to please people, and gives a biblical answer for anyone who battles living in the fear of others. This is an excellent resource and great tool to use in discipleship relationships.

5) Getting a Grip, by Lou Priolo— I'm angry, got a problem with that? Possibly we do have a problem with it. Are you a teenager who has a lot of pent up anger? This book is for you. If you are a parent of an angry teenager, then this book is for you as well. The book, though meant to be read by teenagers, is an excellent book for parents as well. In it you'll find: How to communicate properly; How to maintain your cool when provoked; How to manage manipulating tendencies; How to use the appeal process; How to undo disrespect; and How to handle rejection and hurt. This is an excellent book.



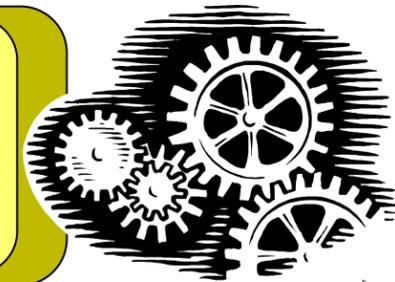
Food for Thought

By Pastor Blake Shaw

Have you ever taken a short statement of Scripture and just sat and contemplated the words of that verse for minutes on end? You may have heard the word "meditation" as used in Scripture. The psalmist talks often about meditating on the Law/Word of God. It is no secret that in our American church culture it is rare indeed for someone to either find or make the time to read Scripture, let alone, actually meditate on it. But sometimes, meditating on Scripture can be one of the most important thing you can do in a day. Here's something to chew on. It wasn't just a suggestion that was written down two thousand years ago when the Apostle Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, penned the words, "...and do not be conformed to this world..." (Romans 12:2) Paul, as he was moved along by the Holy Spirit, was very intentional in writing the specific words he wrote. He wasn't just taking up space. Have you ever stopped and really chewed on these words? I mean, have you ever really worked these words over in your mind?

Having grown up in the church it is interesting to me, how for years, these words in Romans 12 were applied to what were considered the worldly aspects of life, the things that a Christian would stay far away from. You know, things such as drinking, going to movies, hanging out in the bars, dancing, sexual immorality, etc. The church became known for its rules and regulations against many of the things going on in the world system. Sometimes those rules provided a boundary of sorts to keep people from becoming fully absorbed into a world system. And in some sense, that was probably the best thing for some people. But sadly, sometimes the rules and regulations simply lead to the Pharisaical disease whereby one could look like he was alive externally (based upon what he did or didn't do) but internally he was dead. Not only that but what often happened in the church is that it became easy for a person (or a whole church for that matter) to set oneself up on the throne of self-righteousness simply because he avoided the common features of the world system. This resulted in a type of blindness—a blindness that happens slowly and subtly, and is not even recognized as blindness. While the church looked out into the world system and saw a number of activities that truly were rooted in worldliness or lead to worldliness, other critical aspects were missed. While the church was busy avoiding the consumption of alcohol, avoiding movies, dancing, and hanging out in places that didn't encourage godliness, there was a much more dangerous element of conforming to the world system that was taking place within the church culture. Evolution, Health, Wealth, and Prosperity, Feminism and Psychology all walked through the doors of the church and slowly, over decades began to influence the lives of people who claimed to be Christians. If you study church history from 1900 through today you will see the slow process of the church being conformed to this world. Last month we were blessed to have Justin Peters teach a seminar on the Word of Faith Movement, covering the Health, Wealth, and Prosperity teaching as well. The next week, we were then blessed to have our Creation Conference which covered the effects of evolution on

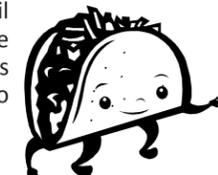
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the church becoming conformed to this world. If you wish to study the issue of feminism and its encroachment on the church, you can gain insight from author and speaker, Mary Kassian.

For this article, let me mention the issue of psychology and how the church became conformed to this world in that regard. You may remember from an earlier edition of THE COG that I noted a distinction between Descriptive Psychology and Prescriptive Psychology. Descriptive psychology is not of concern really when we speak of being conformed to the world system and this is so because descriptive psychology is just that, descriptive. It is simply referring to the multitude of fascinating studies that make observations about people's reactions to certain stimuli, certain situations, etc. It is merely descriptive. But, when we begin to talk about Prescriptive Psychology, there is an issue to be dealt with. The church became conformed to this world by embracing Prescriptive Psychology. In other words, Prescriptive Psychology, most known as psychotherapy, does more than describe things. It offers a reason for a person's problems and a corresponding answer to those problems. The church bought into Prescriptive Psychology because of several reasons: 1) Prescriptive Psychology, especially when coupled with Descriptive Psychology make sense and matches our real life situations. It describes what we are doing and, given the right twist, it makes sense; 2) the church began to compromise and failed to teach sound doctrine and sound teaching of God's Word; and 3) there were numerous influential voices teaching and promoting elements of prescriptive psychology. One such voice was James Dobson of Focus on the Family. Dobson had an amazing strength and God used Dobson, I believe, to promote the sanctity of life and the Judeo-Christian view of marriage. Dobson hosted thousands of daily radio shows that spoke encouragement into the lives of God's people and millions of people were blessed and encouraged by the Focus on the Family radio program. And yet, Dobson as a Christian psychologist became an influence for the church to be conformed to this world because his programming and books promoted various elements of psychology.

These teachings, while an encouragement to God's people, were rooted in modern psychology and were contrary to God's Word. And the church bought it wholesale. Slowly what became critical to the church was people's self-esteem and self-image. Other influential voices began to promote the idea of "needs" and still other influential voices began to reason that one cannot truly love another person until she first learns to love herself. These elements became so deeply intertwined into the thinking of the church that it is virtually impossible, except for an amazing work of Christ, to root them out of the church. Frankly, the church is so grossly conformed to the world system that often it is hard to tell the difference. What needs to happen is a total transformation of the beliefs, the teaching, and the practices of the church system. Until then, one has to wonder: "Do we really have much to offer the unbelieving world?" It makes me wonder: Do we need to take some time to stop and really chew on Romans 12:2?



Conference Reflections

This past week, several women from Grace, Pam Gannon, Dominique Shaw, Stacey Jennaway, and Angelica Shaw traveled to Lafayette, Indiana to the Godly Woman Conference. The focus of the conference was on the subject, "Girls Gone Wise" and the guest speaker was Mary Kassian, author of the book by the same title. I asked the women several questions about the conference. The interview is what follows:

Blake: What was your favorite part of the conference?

Dominique: Hearing the speakers talk on feminism and of course, Steve Viars' sermon on Sunday morning. Mary, the speaker, was very real and transparent. She showed how feminism looks today and how it is a bankrupt philosophy. She showed how women thought that if they could have authority over men, if they could be unshackled from family and responsibilities at home, and if they could have a career, then they could be guaranteed to be fulfilled. Reality is that women are actually more dissatisfied since this supposed "liberation" took effect. Also Mary showed a timeline of the development of feminism. This was very interesting to see how it started being portrayed on television with June Cleaver. Then you see the mind-set of our culture change with the Mary Tyler Moore show, then Murphy Brown, and then FRIENDS. Each step was another change towards embracing feminism. Eventually we end up with Sex In the City where there is a complete breakdown of everything within the family structure.

Angelica: My favorite part was when Mary was speaking about modesty. She showed us pictures of what the world was like with fashion, all the way back to the 1400's and then shows us the changes in fashion and how modesty has looked like from the 1400's to the present.

Stacey: My favorite part of the conference was the amazing musical worship that we got to participate in with them. We probably sang for a total of 2 hours including Sunday morning service. The reason it was my favorite element was because it was so responsive to the teaching about God and His Word. It was exuberant, modern, joyful, Biblical, and parts of the words were direct praise to God and other parts were more responsive regarding our attitude of desiring to surrender and have all of my life lived to His glory! It just completed the conference for me.

Blake: What is one thing you learned?

Dominique: Rob Green stated, "If you want to discourage your husband, complain to him about how he doesn't make enough money and he's not a good provider, even though he works hard every day. And you do this because you want this luxurious lifestyle." We can be a great discouragement to our husbands if we consistently spend outside of the budget or nag them about wanting things. It's just materialism. We aren't content and want more than what God has provided.

Angelica: I learned that women are trying to run the world and men should be running the world. God designed in that way. Women should be running the house.

Stacey: One thing that I learned at the conference was the incredibly pervasive way that feminism has seeped into every aspect of our culture...and that even good Bible believing and Jesus following women have thoughts and ideas that have been tainted by ideas whose origin is the feminist movement. The main underlying thought from the feminist movement is that we as women know better than men and God about who we are...we can define for ourselves who we are and what our roles are. The predominant thought is a dislike and a dis-

regard of men. But, the truth is how we live as women- our attitudes of love and respect toward men, husbands, children, family...really shines a light on the gospel, either for good or for ill.

Blake: What is one thing from the conference that you believe you need to apply to your own life now?

Dominique: I'd say, teaching Angelica a more biblical view of womanhood and modeling that for her.

Angelica: The speaker gave a practical talk about daily devotions. She illustrated it with various things such as: The McD's approach where it is quick and fast. One was the Slow Cooked Roast approach. I like that one because it where the devotions are then filling, comforting, and there is no rush to it.

Stacey: One thing that from the conference that I believe I need to apply to my life now is to be intentionally thinking thoughts and speaking words that affirm the design God has for the roles of men and women. Specifically, affirming and speaking positive thoughts about men. I was convicted that I at times have feelings and thoughts that men are inferior. I mean, not all the time and not awful, but still it's there. God is good and He created us male and female. He created us in His image. He made men and women different. We are not independent of each other, rather we are interdependent.

Blake: What is something you learned about feminism?

Stacey: What I learned about the feminist movement was that it was not just about women having the right to vote, or being against rape, or being in favor of women being respected, or women being able to earn equal wages as men...it really is a distinct philosophy, a way of thinking and living life. In my opinion (not Mary Kassian's), feminism is equally as disrespectful as male chauvinism. God is the only One who has the right to define our role as women because He designed us. Our society (back in the 50s and 60s) idealized the domestic housewife like June Cleaver (from the "Leave It To Beaver" tv show) or Betty Crocker. Then, it seems like our Christian culture ran with that idea...like we all should be like June Cleaver or Ma (from "Little House On The Prairie"). Mary Kassian said the idea of that stereotype for our role (from back in the 50s and 60s) is not necessarily a Biblical one either. We are not dependent on men, we are to be interdependent...like 2 jigsaw puzzle pieces, we are to fit together.

Blake: It's always a blessing to go to a conference at Faith Baptist Church. What is something you observed there that you would like to see at some point become a reality of our own church family?

Dominique: One thing that really stood out to me was how the youth was involved in serving the church body. It was a picture of families serving together, pitching in to make things possible. I see their outreach to the community, through their Community Center, the Vision of Hope, just their involvement in the community. I'd love to see a desire to reach this community become a church wide thing, not just a few people doing that.

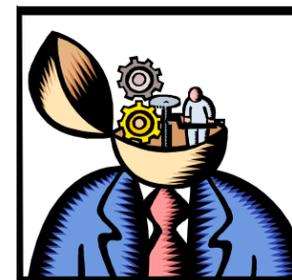
Angelica: I loved how they praise the Lord, doing this with enthusiasm because it was about Christ.

Stacey: Something I observed at Faith Church that I would like to see become a reality in our church family here at Grace Bible is the sheer amount of people actively doing the work of the ministry! It seems like many, many of their people are actively serving in the body. All sorts of different ways, but everyone seems to be wanting to and actually are serving in the body. The majority of the people who attend Faith are in a small group Bible study/Flock Group. I would love to see everyone who comes to GBC plugged into a smaller group where they can learn, grow, love and serve others, be loved and served, bear with others, really get to know their brothers and sisters in the LORD- really live life together. That would be a great joy to me and I think to the LORD too.

Q: Pastor Blake, where is the counseling ministry at Grace headed? (continued from the last two months)

A: As I stated previously, I love this question and it is one that needs to be answered with more space than provided here but we are taking a few issues of The COG to attempt to clarify this issue. Here's a recap of what I stated previously: First, we, as a church family, have to become truly committed to making disciples, not just overseas but right here in the Gallatin Valley. Secondly, those who attend church services at Grace on a regular basis should go through the membership class and truly commit to Grace as a church family. Thirdly, if you are a member of Grace you need to understand that you are expected to serve and grow because God expects you to serve and grow. If truth be told, a church of 1600 people should turn this valley upside down for Christ. Fourthly, if you are a believer in Christ you are to play some role in the biblical counseling ministry. I know all of the objections but God's Word is very clear on this issue. Body life, as taught in the Word of God is very specific about what believers are to do. Fifthly, let me repeat one paragraph from last month: "The ideal picture is where every member of Grace Bible Church is involved in a discipleship relationship where they find encouragement, help, admonishment, accountability, from those in their discipleship relationship. It is my personal belief that if every member were humbly submitted to another person or to others in the church body in discipleship relationships, no member of Grace would ever need "counseling" as we understand counseling. All I'm really talking about here is body life as presented in the pages of Scripture. Study the concept of body life, the local church, and the 'one anothers' of the New Testament, you will find that what I have stated is not too idealistic."

The second group we looked at is the group of people who attend other churches. It may surprise you but very few churches in our area are committed to true, pure biblical counseling. Our ultimate goal in relation to others churches is two fold: 1) That we would have a large group of churches who would all come together and truly embrace a true form of biblical counseling. We have several now that we believe are on-board with this philosophy. 2) That many other pastors/leaders would take on the role of shepherding their flock which includes counseling. Our goal is NOT to do the counseling for other pastors. Instead our goal is try to compel such shepherds to begin to counsel, to shepherd their people. If they need training, there is ample opportunity to be trained, and if we can be a part of that training, it would be a delight to do so. We are all too aware of the fact that some pastors will not want to be trained, for whatever



Q&A

reason. Clearly we know that the road ahead in this regard will be a long and arduous task.

Now, what do we do with the last category mentioned? This is where our counseling ministry is hopefully headed. Jesus, the Head, the Owner, and the Master of the church has placed us here in the beautiful city of Bozeman and the gorgeous Gallatin Valley. But we know that even with all of its natural beauty that people's lives are a mess and in a state of chaos. From addictions, to marriage problems, to depression, to parenting issues, to eating disorders, to anger, lust, greed, jealousy, immorality, our community is loaded with thousands of people who don't know Christ and are experiencing the challenges of life in a sin-cursed fallen world. Many are experiencing what Proverbs 13:15 says, "The way of the transgressor is hard." So what do we do? How do we reach the people of this valley with the astounding, amazing, and phenomenal hope of the gospel of Jesus Christ? One such avenue is through a Biblical Counseling ministry. The Counseling Ministry has the goal and intention to train up a large group of men and women who will be equipped to provide counseling to people within our community. We are well on our way. We take this ministry concept very serious since we know that the counsel we will provide is a matter of eternal consequences. The journey for those who will be a part of this team will be arduous. It will take work, studying, counseling, learning, growing, more studying, etc. But we believe all of the work will be well worth the effort. At some point we will have to take the step and begin to offer free counseling to our community so that we can be blessing to the Bozeman area and most of all, impact our community for Christ.

So let me recap: The members of GBC need to be involved in discipleship relationships. Those who are attendees but not members need to become members and truly become involved in discipleships relationships. We also desire to see a large group of churches come together, embrace true biblical counseling, and begin to work at shepherding the people who are part of the various churches. With the ultimate goal being that we would have a team of 10-15 people who have gone through and successfully completed our counseling training and have been asked by the Counseling Committee to serve on our Outreach Counseling Team.

The Biblical Counseling Committee:

Chairman: Pastor Blake Shaw
Vice-Chair: Dr. Dan Gannon
Members: Ty Typolt, Pam Gannon, Brad Wright, and Pastor Kelly Jennaway

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: The Community of Grace Biblical Counseling Ministry and the editor of the monthly newsletter welcome letters from the readers. Letters may be edited if the editorial team deems it necessary to do so to fit the space allowed or due to unbiblical communication practices. We encourage the reader to write with edification in mind. If you have a question about counseling that you would like to ask for future publications feel free to submit those questions to Pastor Blake Shaw.