



CONNECTED

October—December 2019

In this issue

His Eye is on the Sparrow	1
Fly fishing preachers	1
Making Followers of Jesus Christ	2
Preaching CDs	2
Calvinism and Choice Seminar CDs available	3
Food for thought	3
Book Review: People of the Shining Mountains	3
The Abuse of "I'm Sorry"	4
Dr. David Gibbs, Jr. Coming this month	4



Fly fishing in beautiful Colorado with dear men of God. What a trip!

"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork." Psalm 19:1

His Eye is on the Sparrow, and I Know He Watches Me

A great Israeli king once said, *"I will sing of the mercies of the LORD for ever, with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations," Psalm 89:1.* Oh how I want that to be me! It's so easy to moan and gripe. Oh, the mess we'd be in if we got what we deserve; but most of the time we don't see it. We're too focused on ourselves, what we want and what we don't have to see how good God is to us! Oh, it's easy to blithely say, *"God is good, all the time."* That sounds good, and makes us sound a little spiritual; but really *seeing* the goodness of God to us on a daily basis is pretty rare. The reality is that *"It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness," Lamentations 3:22-23.*

The farther down this road of life I travel, the more I see it. In spite of my warts, wrinkles and other such infirmities, the great God of the Universe just keeps being good to me. For all these years He has taken such good care of me. I am so grateful!

Where I live July, August and September are hot months; but neither God's goodness nor our fruitfulness to Him is dictated by circumstances. He is *good all the time*, and every one of us should and can *serve Him well all the time*. Most of us know what summers do to our schedules; with camps, VBS, vacations and a host of church functions, life is in the fast lane. I continue to conduct more funerals and see more doctors. I

am happy to report modest improvement.

One of the highlights of my summer preaching is at [Gateway Baptist Church](#) in Gatesville, Texas. Pastor Mike Bragdon invited me there to preach specifically on the role of prayer in salvation from sin's penalty. From Gatesville Mrs. Hutson and I drove directly to Garland for the Rodgers Missions Conference. This year's Conference was especially good. For all of us, Pastor Ron Thomas and [Rodgers Baptist Church](#) are a model in excellence. After the Conference I was blessed to spend five days on a great trout stream in central Colorado with five dear preacher brothers. What a blessing; the fellowship was wonderful, and we caught lots of fish.

Much of my time and energy has been consumed in an intense pastor search. I have observed many good pastors who stayed too long, and the church where they were suffered. There is something to be said for being honest with yourself, about facing the reality of where you are in life. That's hard for all of us, but it is the right thing to do. I know [Northwest Baptist Church](#) needs a young, dynamic pastor who can reach the next generation, and lead the church with health and vibrancy into the future. The years are increasingly taking their toll on me, both physically and mentally. It is time for me to give serious attention to a ministry of writing good Christian materials while there is still a little fire in the furnace.

Here at Northwest we

have just completed our annual *Evaluation and Planning Workshop*. It's an intense time. We never assume we have it all together, and that we don't need lots of improvement. We look at everything from the buildings and grounds, to our worship services, to preaching, to music, to our emphasis, to our programs, to our attitudes, to our outreach, to our approach, to every facet of our operations. We've also just celebrated our 55th anniversary as a New Testament Baptist Church in Houston, Texas.

One of the richest blessings for me over the last three months has been the privilege of spending time in the life of a couple. They have trusted Christ, and Mrs. Hutson and I are working diligently to make them true followers of Jesus Christ. We've been through the *Basic Bible Truths*; but as it always is with newborn babes in Christ, there is much work still to be done.

Real soon we will be in Israel. The trip is full and everyone is really excited. For people who love the Bible, it's a trip of a lifetime.



Christ died for you

MAKING FOLLOWERS OF JESUS CHRIST

Those who know much about the Bible and true Christianity know that the number one job of every believer is to make disciples, followers of Jesus Christ. That's why we exist; it's our life purpose. This is how God is glorified through us. Our primary reason for being is not merely to grow up, get married and have children. Life's greatest good is not pleasure and comfort. It's not making money, great achievements or becoming famous. All of these can be good, but they are secondary to our main purpose of making followers of Christ. Even going to church and a life of great service or sacrifice is empty apart from making followers of Christ.

"*Be fruitful and multiply*" is not only about having natural babies. The spiritual message is very much a part of the command. God's children are to reproduce themselves in others. They are to be followers of Jesus Christ, and they are to routinely be making followers of Jesus Christ of other people. That is as clear as high noon on a sunny day in **Matthew 28:19-20** which we know as *The Great Commission*. It's as straightforward as things come. Jesus said we're to (1) get people saved, (2) identify them as believers through baptism and (3) facilitate their spiritual growth to the point of followers of Jesus Christ. It's not enough to win them to Christ, then abandon them. Our work through Jesus' church is to bring them to functional followers of Christ. If we fall short of that, we've not completed our assignment.

This is fundamental, and we all know it; but somehow seeing a person make a follower of Jesus Christ out of another person is a pretty rare sight. We get 'em to church, develop friendships, occasionally secure a profession of faith, make them spiritually obese with a parade of fat sermons and great lessons and even get a good number of *thou shalt and thou shalt not*s into their systems; but getting them to the place where they are making followers of Christ is truly rare.

This reality is glaring in many, many churches. They are full of good, old Christians; but they are dying. They are not producing very many followers of Jesus Christ, not enough to keep the church alive. Good people, great facilities, polished programs, great preaching, church every Sunday, lots of love and fellowship among themselves; but dying. Almost nobody connecting with another person and holding on long enough to make a follower of Jesus Christ of him.

To a sad degree, I have personally been guilty. Busy, but not at that which counts most, making followers of Jesus Christ. It grieves me to know that I am not alone in this failure. It is my prayer that every person who reads these lines be honest about your track record. Are you actively, deliberately working to make followers of Christ? If not, will you join me in returning to the most basic of all our responsibilities? Attach yourself to a life, and invest yourself in him. Do all within your power to make a follower of Christ of him. This is our Great Commission.

**I PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, AND TO THE REPUBLIC,
FOR WHICH IT STANDS, ONE NATION UNDER GOD, INDIVISIBLE, WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL!**

PREACHING CDs

Each CD which I offer has (1) digital recordings of the sermons as preached, (2) my preaching notes for each sermon, (3) a PowerPoint for each sermon and (4) a bulletin insert for each sermon. The CDs are \$5 each plus a mailer and postage. The *Lester Hutson's Teaching Collection* is \$20.00. This one CD contains each of the other series except *Esther*.

- ◆ *Joshua: Victory Against All Odds*
- ◆ *Esther*
- ◆ *Philippians: God's Love Letter*
- ◆ *2 Timothy: The On-going Brotherhood*
- ◆ *James: God's Practical Hammer*
- ◆ *A History of Churches*
- ◆ *Lester Hutson's Teaching Collection*

Be decisive! Right or wrong, make a decision. The roads are paved with squirrels that couldn't make a decision.

A Wise Man Once Said
Nothing

Contact us at:

lesterhutson@gmail.com

CALVINISM AND CHOICE SEMINAR CDS AVAILABLE

In May Attorney Hutson Smelley conducted an excellent seminar at Northwest Baptist Church on the subject of *Calvinism and Choice*. As only a lawyer can, Attorney Smelley put the TULIP on trial. From their own writings he quoted their definitions and claims. He also used their proof texts, the Scriptures they use to support the theory of Calvinism. Those truly interested in the truth owe it to themselves to hear this case.

Each session was video recorded. The DVDs are available for \$10.00 per set. Email nwbcsec@gmail.com. His book *Deconstructing Calvinism: A Biblical Analysis and Refutation*, 3rd edition is available at [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com).

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

A young woman was about to finish her first year of college. Like so many others her age, she considered herself to be very liberal, and among other liberal ideals, was very much in favor of higher taxes to support more government programs designed to redistribute wealth.

She was deeply ashamed that her father was a rather staunch conservative, a feeling she openly expressed. Based on the lectures in which she had participated, and occasional chats with professors, she felt that her father had for years harbored an evil, selfish desire to keep what he thought should be his.

One day she challenged her father on his opposition to higher taxes on the rich and the need for more government programs. The self-professed objectivity proclaimed by her professors had to be the truth and she indicated so to her father.

He responded by asking how she was doing in school. Taken aback, she answered rather haughtily that she had a 4.0 GPA, and let him know that it was tough to maintain. She pointed out that she was taking a very difficult course load and was constantly studying, which left her no time to go out and party like other people she knew. She didn't even have time for a boyfriend, and didn't really have many college friends because she spent all her time studying.

Her father listened and then asked, "How is your friend Audrey doing?" She replied, "Audrey is barely getting by. All she takes are easy classes, she never studies and she barely has a 2.0 GPA. She is so popular on campus; college for her is a blast. She's always invited to all the parties and lots of times she doesn't even show up for classes because she's too hung over."

Her father asked, "Why don't you go to the Dean's office and ask him to deduct 1.0 off your GPA and give it to your friend who only has a 2.0. That way you will both have a 3.0 GPA and certainly that would be a fair and equal distribution of GPA."

The daughter, visibly shocked by her father's suggestion, angrily fired back, "That's a crazy idea, how would that be fair! I've worked really hard for my grades! I've invested a lot of time, and a lot of hard work! Audrey has done next to nothing toward her degree. She played while I worked my tail off!"

The father slowly smiled, winked and said gently, "Welcome to the conservative side of the fence."

LOVE NOTE FOUND ON A CHURCH DOOR

It is possible that on entering this church, you may hear the call of God. On the other hand, it is not likely that he will contact you by phone. Thank you for turning off your phone. If you would like to talk to God, come in, choose a quiet place, and talk to him.

If you would like to see him, send him a text while driving.

I NEED TO RE-HOME A DOG

"It's a small terrier and tends to bark a lot. If you're interested, let me know and I'll jump over my neighbor's fence and get it for you."

A BOOK I HAVE READ AND REALLY ENJOYED

***People of the Shining Mountains
The Utes of Colorado***

Charles S. Marsh
Westwind Press
ISBN 0871086131

Sometimes I enjoy reading books that are not directly biblical in nature, especially good local histories. They can be fascinating and very informative; really broaden your horizons. It becomes quickly obvious that people all over the world regardless of time, location or culture are just people. We are all fallen people and have the same basic needs for food, shelter and protection; but also for love, fellowship and significance. People everywhere know there is a higher power (most of them don't know who He is), need love and they all die. Inserting good variety in your reading will greatly enrich you.

Last year a very precious and long-time friend was promoted to heaven. She was Franette Zellner. She served faithfully in Denver with her pastor husband Edwin. She was an avid reader. One year when I was preaching in a Bible conference at Victory Baptist Church, Franette introduced me to the captivating story of the Ute Indians. Though there were seldom more than 6,000 of them at any one time, and they were dispersed in small bands, they ruled the Rocky Mountains for several hundred years from Wyoming to New Mexico and from the Front Range into Utah. They stole horses from the Spaniards at Santa Fe, New Mexico and quickly bred thriving herds while other Indians were still on foot. To survive in the rugged mountains they called home, they were extremely hearty people. The book is also a rather painful view of how they were horribly mistreated by the United States government who took their lands, broke treaty after treaty and treated them worse than animals.

The Utes were called the "Blue Sky People" by other tribes. This journalistic study gives the general history of the Utes, their tribal origins, relations with neighboring tribes, religious beliefs, and customs.

If you enjoy great and eye-opening historical accounts, you will thoroughly enjoy *People of the Shining Mountains*.

If you have no debt and have \$10 in your wallet, you are wealthier than 25 percent of all Americans.

THE ABUSE OF "I'M SORRY"

Thanks be unto the great God of heaven and earth who forgives repentant souls regardless of the gravity of their failures and sins. *"Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow,"* **Isaiah 1:18**. One of the many great beauties of the gospel of Christ is that *nobody is too bad*. In Him there is forgiveness and hope for all men.

However, Satan is the master twister. He specializes in taking the greatest, clearest of truths to twist and pervert. He uses men, even men in churches who profess to believe God and the Bible. Often theologians lead the way.

What a beautiful thing it is to see a sinner face up to his sin, his mistake; admit it before man and God and seek forgiveness! Genuine, true, repentant confession! No pretense; the real McCoy! To His children God says, *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness,"* **1John 1:9**.

It saddens my heart to see this beautiful truth so denigrated and abused. Too often it is obvious that *"I'm sorry"* is shallower than a saucer. It's just a way to *get off the hook*; there is no evidence of genuine conviction or remorse for the harm and evil that has been done. There is no brokenness and humility, no efforts toward restitution and no change for the better in future behavior. *"I'm sorry"* are merely buzz words that allow a person to continue in the same *destruction path* of God-dishonoring, hurtful ways without consequences. Even though there is no recognition of the damage done and no remorse, *"I'm sorry"* clears everything. Sometimes such unrepentant people are quick to point out Jesus' teaching about forgiving 70 X 7 times.

Yes, people make mockery out of great Bible truths. God forgives, and God's people ought to forgive; but nobody should cheapen and treat blithely the great truth of repentance on the part of the offender. *"I'm sorry"* should never become a quick escape from the consequences of wrong-doing. Offenders should be held accountable for their offences, and be required to take responsibility for their words and actions. When there's a broken and contrite heart, forgiveness should come; but even God does not forgive those who stubbornly remain unrepentant.

So much carnage has continued since Adam and Eve. The impact of their choice on humanity is beyond adequate description. Multitudes have told lies on others and destroyed good reputations. Fits of anger and passion have resulted in untold chaos even deaths. The carnage of alcoholism is staggering. Harsh, evil words have destroyed friendships, families and churches. The best that many perpetrators have done is say, *"I'm sorry;"* and go on like nothing ever happened. Thank God who can forgive anything, but woe be unto that person that takes his wrongdoing blithely, and who uses *"I'm sorry"* without really meaning it!

Shallow words without truth, sincerity and reality have no place in the economy of God, even *"I'm sorry."* They're just empty words, and words that are not truth are really lies; and any person who uses them is a hypocrite.



DR. DAVID GIBBS, JR. AT NORTHWEST BC

ON OCTOBER 27

The respect I have for Dr. David Gibbs, Jr. is enormous. I have been involved in his life and ministry for a long time, and what I have seen has been character, integrity, commitment to the cause of Christ and His churches, intelligence used to glorify God, unselfishness, an astounding work ethic and stamina rarely observed.

This month he will be our guest speaker in the 6:00 p.m. worship service on October 27 at Northwest Baptist Church. He's a rare individual, a true spiritual giant in our lifetime. It is not often for most of us to have the opportunity to hear a man of this renown and caliber in person. If you're within reach, it would be worth your effort to attend this special service.

The service will start promptly at 6:00 p.m.

