

Campus Chronicles

Trinity Life Bible College

John Calvin's Institutes

Predestination & Human Curiosity,

by Andrew Johnson

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After much exposition on prayer, John Calvin proceeds to discuss the doctrine of divine predestination and election. Calvin provides us a preface to his treatment of predestination. On the one hand Calvin offers counsel concerning the danger of unrestrained human curiosity when discussing this doctrine. Calvin also discusses the folly of, on the other hand, ignoring or even repudiating the doctrine of predestination as it is taught in Scripture.

John Stott, in his commentary on Ephesians, observes that "Scripture nowhere dispels the mystery of election, and we should beware of any who try to systematize it too precisely or rigidly." Richard Muller also writes, in expressing the theology of Calvin's contemporary Peter Vermigli, "The doctrine of predestination is obscure and unprofitable to any who would seek out the divine reason for the election of one man and the rejection of another. Nor should a person refer to the doctrine of predestination when inquiring concerning the propriety of an act." Calvin himself was concerned that "Human curiosity renders the discussion of predestination...very confusing and even dangerous. No restraints can hold it back from wandering in forbidden bypaths and thrusting upward to the heights." For those who would "try to systematize...too

precisely" or who "would seek out the divine reason" for the election of one man and not another, Calvin issues the warning, "let them remember that when they inquire into predestination they are penetrating the sacred precincts of divine wisdom."

Calvin encouraged his readers to maintain a "learned ignorance" in certain matters. "For it is not right," he asserts, "for man unrestrainedly to search out things that the Lord has willed to be hid in himself, and to unfold from eternity itself the sublimest wisdom." This is a wisdom He would have us "revere but not understand" so that through it He would "fill us with wonder." To seek any knowledge of predestination other than "what the Word of God discloses is not less..."

Continued on page 4



Netley Abbey, photo courtesy of Crossdaily.com

The Changing Face Of Politics, by Ronald Wade

Recently the news media reported that long time Republican, Senator Arlen Specter, switched to the Democratic Party. Specter stated that he has become at odds with the Republican philosophy and more in line with the philosophy of the Democratic Party," Specter also said, "... the prospects for winning a Republican primary are bleak." (CNN, April 28, 2009) I know his move was to save his political career, but it is another blow to an already beleaguered party. Why does it seem the Republican Party is falling apart at the seams?

The perception is that the GOP is not in touch with the people. I remember as a child my father always telling me the Democrats are for the people and Republicans are for the rich. Economic inequity in our country has increased over the last fifty years. (NewsBatch.com, April 2008) Is it a coincidence that the face of Christianity in our country has decreased steadily over the same time? I don't think so.

A further perception about the Republican Party is it is far from inclusive of American society, and that is why President Obama was able to win this last election so easily. When I watched the Democratic National Convention (D.N.C.) on television it looked like a melting pot. All faces, all colors, all creeds. When I watched the Republican National Convention (R.N.C.) in looked like a white's only meeting. I was not the only minority to feel like this. A dear friend of mine said, "I thought I was watching a Klan meeting at first." Why do minorities feel like this? ...because few faces of color are part of the Republican Party. This is truly a tragedy when you remember that Abraham Lincoln was a Republican.

We need to get our country back on track. How will we do this? The first key solution is to find our moral compass and stop the compromise of Judeo-Christian values. That begins with individuals standing by biblical morality and

teaching others why these standards are still valid. Then take these standards into the political arena.

If the Republican Party is going to survive and be politically relevant then it needs to include those whom they may have unwittingly excluded before. The GOP must actively pursue minorities and bring them into the fold. It should be easy. According to an AP exit poll of California voters in November 2008, 7 out of 10 African-American voters voted for Proposition 8, to define marriage as between one man and one woman. That should tell you something. Most African-American voters align with the beliefs and moral standing of the Republican Party, but still feel excluded.

We believe in an America where all people are created equal and I am willing to sacrifice to assure that equality is given to all. Be honest in your beliefs and do not compromise. Make sure the next R.N.C. looks like an America with many faces. Chapel at TLBC is what the RNC should look like. I have never felt uncomfortable at Chapel, but would not be caught dead at a Republican National Convention. I believe that most God-loving minorities want to belong to the Republican Party, but do not feel wanted or desired. If this were not true then the amount of minorities who affiliate themselves with the

GOP would not be so small. This country is going in a direction never seen before. Those of Christ-like minds must come together in order to move this country back to God, Christ and the Bible. The GOP must break the color lines. I am truly scared of the direction this country is going. Things must change.

One more thing: Change starts at the top. When I go to TLBC I feel like a student: Not a black student, not someone unwelcomed, just a student. I feel loved. It starts with Pastor Ron Harden. He exudes love and it shows in his staff. His staff is love. I have not met one teacher at TLBC that did not have a good heart. These are the type of people that need to be at the head of the GOP.

I believe that over the next four to eight years our country will be taking a moral downturn, and Americans will cry for the days of old. They will cry for the day of prayer in our schools. They will cry Abba - Father. The protecting hand of God is being lifted off this country just as I sit here and write this article. With the lifting of that hand comes unimaginable suffering. I pray that through that suffering God and Christ will return to the hearts and desires of the American people. As Christ is lifted up and exalted so will those who proclaim His Name and give Him Glory be likewise blessed.



Dating and Purity, by Matthew Balling

"You've got way too much confidence in your flesh, if you think you can ride alone in a car with a member of the opposite sex!" These are lyrics to a song I wrote called "R U Single?" It's a song about dating, emotional purity, and embracing and enjoying the single life. I had to "die to self" even more to gain a correct perspective on dating and relationships. I also discovered this can be a very controversial topic.

When I was dating out there in the world during those B.C. days, it was all bad. I was dating selfishly, only to satisfy my sinful nature. I had no standards, because I didn't have the Word. "For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Galatians 6:8). The way I was dating, I'm thankful to be alive. The sowing and reaping process of my dating went something like this: flesh + lack of knowledge = corruption, serving Satan and falling into deep, dark pits. I thank the Lord because he pulled me out and set my feet on solid ground.

After I accepted Christ, dating became fun. I still made some mistakes though, but as I sought God out in prayer, He began to reveal some things to me. For instance, when I came across the scripture, "It is good for a man not to touch a woman" (1 Corinthians 7:1). I ran with it, I was like: Great!!! I can go out with the opposite sex all I want to, as long as I

don't physically touch. I'm cool. I won't hold their hands, give hugs, and kissing is definitely out of the question. So, I should be doing all right. Right? ...Wrong!!! Even though there's no physical touching going on, you can still touch each other's emotions. This is where emotional purity comes into play. The Bible says to "guard your heart" (Proverbs 4:23) diligently. I also looked up the word "touch" in my Strong's Exhaustive Concordance and the definition was "to attach oneself to." We need to be careful how we touch and speak to one another.

I'm thankful for the body of believers I fellowship with on Sunday, because when they greet you, they say "Hi brother so and so!" and "Hello there sister." Even when I call a girl on the phone from my church, she greets me with, "Hi, Brother Matthew " and I feel convicted already about asking her to dinner and the movies. I know, it just doesn't feel right trying to date someone you call brother or sister. However, to consider one another like this helps us have right relations in the body of Christ and in the world

"Rebuke not an elder, but treat him as a father; and the younger men as brothers; the elder women as mothers; the younger as sister, with all purity" (1 Timothy 5:1-2). With all purity!!! God has revealed something to me about dating, and emotional purity. He said *while you're single,*

the only one you are to be attached to is Me! Then, when you get married, you're attached to Me and then your wife. However, if, while you are dating, you emotionally attach yourself to all the people you date, you may not be whole when you get married. I believe they call that emotional baggage

So, here's my recommendation. Going out in a group setting can be a great way to get to know someone of the opposite gender. In a group setting with other believers, you have accountability. Plus, misunderstandings of various kinds are less likely. You still get to know the person on a friendship level, before either becomes emotionally invested. Try it, I think you'll like it.

Travel to London

In March 2010, we will be traveling to London. Contact Prof. Colburn for more information. There are also information sheets at the TLBC office. Payment options are available. You can also go on-line to www.EFTours.com and register right away with our tour #693089, or by calling EF Tours at 1-800-637-8222. Fundraisers will be available to help you afford this wonderful opportunity. Family, friends and pastors of TLBC are also invited to travel with us. Blessings, Prof. Tana Colburn

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5225 Hillsdale Blvd.
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95842
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...insane than if one should purpose to walk in a pathless waste, or to see in darkness." We should be restrained by this thought, "that the Word of the Lord is the sole way that can lead us in our search for all that is lawful to hold concerning him, and is the sole light to illumine our vision of all that we should see of him." There are aspects of predestination that God has revealed in Scripture, and it is that revelation with which we must be content. Yet there are aspects that God does not reveal about His predestination, and it is there that we must maintain a "learned ignorance." Augustine said, "We must walk, we must advance, we must grow, that our hearts may be capable of those things we cannot yet grasp. But if the Last Day finds us advancing, there we shall learn what we could not learn here." This is the pathway of faith, growing in wisdom and understanding. Nevertheless we will not grasp everything and what we do not grasp now, we will finally see on the Last Day.

Announcements:

GRADUATION VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are needed to help with Graduation. Please contact the TLBC office and help make this graduation GREAT!

FIELD MINISTRY REPORTS ARE DUE!

It's time to turn in your quarterly Field Ministry Report. This simple one page report is a requirement for all TLBC students. Instructions are available in the TLBC front office.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Merrill Gardens at Citrus Heights is seeking volunteers to work with our Seniors for 6-week sessions this summer. Looking for enthusiastic, fun loving people who enjoy working with the elderly and can teach classes in Beginning Spanish, Art History or Art Appreciation.

If interested, please contact Melissa, Activities Director

at 725-7418 or
citrusheight@mgmail.org

Ron Jones
At TLBC
Friday, May 29, 2009,
10:40 AM
CL&M Guest Speaker
Be sure to sign-up at
the TLBC office for the
seminar and for
lunch.

