



The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator

“To testify the gospel of the grace of God.” Acts 20:24

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SEVEN HUMAN LOOKS

Arthur Pink, 1950

We continue to write upon "Looking," for, said the prophet, **"My eye affects my heart"** (*Lam 3:51*). John Bunyan (1620-1677) wrote impressively on "Eyegate" and showed what a large part it played in admitting enemies into the *city of Mansoul*. The *heart* has no more influential gate than the eyes; and if we are wise, we shall do as the patriarch and make "a covenant" with them (Job 31:1). Guard your eye — and thereby safeguard your *heart*.

Blessed are they who use their eyes to noble purpose, but better to have been born blind than *pervert* such a gift! Observation exerts a considerable influence upon the inner man, and therefore is no small factor in molding the life. But alas, observation is not always rightly used: instead of evoking reflectiveness, drawing out sympathy, and leading to kindly deeds — only too often it excites our corruptions and issues in evil works. Whether observation affects us for good or evil, depends not only upon the *objects contemplated*, but also upon our *reflections* on and reactions to the same.

1. The look of *FAITH*.

"And the LORD said unto Abram...Lift up now your eyes, and look from the place where you are northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which you see, to you will I give it" (*Gen 13:14-15*). That was in sharp contrast with the greed of his nephew, Lot, who **"lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan"** (*verse 10*), which was the look of covetousness. God here made a great promise and gift to His servant, and bade Abraham view

his fair heritage, for it was a land flowing with milk and honey. As he gazed upon such an attractive portion, his heart would indeed be affected by a sense of the LORD's goodness and magnanimity.

And so should it ever be with us. As we behold the wondrous handiwork of God all around us in the realm of creation, we should admire His wisdom, be awed by His power, and adore the grace of Him who **"gives us richly all things to enjoy"** (*1 Timothy 6:17*) — to evoke thoughtfulness, regale our senses, and minister so freely to our needs. God's workmanship in nature should fill us with wonderment and gratitude.

2. The look of *DISOBEDIENCE*.

"But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt" (*Gen 19:26*). Solemn indeed is that, and chronicled for our admonition. God had given express command, **"Look not behind you"** (*verse 17*), but Lot's wife disregarded His injunction. In unbelief and love to Sodom, she looked back and probably attempted to return there, for in Luke 17:31-32, we find that our Lord pointed His prohibition, "Let him likewise not *return back*" with the warning, **"Remember Lot's wife."**

This incident is recorded to show us the peril of *hankering after forbidden and forsaken objects*, and to make us fear and tremble, lest after having escaped the corruption which is in the world through the knowledge of Christ, we are again entangled therein, and overcome, only to find our latter end is worse than the

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beginning (2 Peter 2:20). Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt as a lasting monument of God's displeasure against apostates. True conversion is the renouncing of the world, the flesh, and the devil; and it is at our peril that we lust after the things we have abandoned. As Matthew Henry (1662-1714) says, "Drawing back is to perdition, and looking back is towards it."

3. The look of **CURIOSITY**.

"And Dinah the daughter of Leah, which

she bore unto Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land" (Gen 34:1). So far as Scripture informs us, she was the only daughter he had, and with so many brothers, was probably petted and spoiled. Born just before Joseph (Gen 30:21-24), she could not have been more than fifteen or sixteen; and therefore, her *mother* was more to blame than she was. The Hebrew for "went out to see the daughters of the land" implies "to look about with them." Probably it was some occasion of public festivity, and unrest and discontent with the tent possessed her; and a spirit of inquisitiveness moved her to mix with the ungodly and to look at the customs and fashions of the heathen. The sequel was disastrous, for not only did she lose her honor, but her conduct led to her brothers committing murder.

For young girls to get away from the eyes of their mothers and go out unchaperoned

is highly dangerous, because of their inexperience of the world, their ignorance of the artifices of unscrupulous men, and their proneness to be easily deceived by flatterers. Let young women bear in mind that God has inseparably linked together "discreet, chaste — keepers at home" (Titus 2:5)!

4. The look of **CONTEMPT**.

"And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him: for he was but a youth" (1 Samuel 17:42). Goliath could scarcely believe his eyes when he saw this stripling advancing toward him, and "looked about" for one whom he deemed more "worthy of his steel." He was expecting to be confronted with the champion of Israel's army; and thus, when he perceived that an unarmed shepherd-boy had entered the lists against him, the Philistine utterly despised him. Therein he made the fatal mistake of underestimating his enemy. David indeed had no coat of armor upon him, but, what was infinitely preferable, he was clothed with **"the whole armor of God" (Eph 6:11, 13)**. He might be totally unacquainted with the arts of warfare, but he knew from personal experience that JEHOVAH fails no one who really trusts Him. Said he, **"You come to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a**

shield: but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied" (1 Samuel 17:45); and the giant fell before him.

Learn, then, that might cannot prevail over weakness — when that weakness leans upon the Almighty!

5. The look of **DISCONTENT**.

"Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought...and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit" (Ecc 2:11). That was the disappointing discovery made by the one man whom God permitted to obtain everything which the carnal heart craves. The force of his honest acknowledgment is the better perceived by observing what he tells us in the nine verses preceding, and then listening to his summing up: **"And whatever my eyes desired, I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labor" (Ecc 2:10).** But having realized his ambitions and gratified every desire, he found that so far from their affording him any real and lasting satisfaction, they still left an aching void within.

Mere *things* — however costly or lovely in themselves — cannot meet the real needs of the soul. The heart was made for God, and He alone can fill it. *Self's* enjoyment of the joys of this earth, leaves nothing but emptiness behind. The thirst of the soul, cannot be quenched by the cisterns of this world. Gold can purchase nothing, but what proves to be vanity. Christ alone **"satisfies the longing soul" (Psalm 107:9).**

6. The look of **HUMILIATION**.

"Hearken to me, you that follow after righteousness, you that seek the LORD... and to the hole of the pit whence you are dug" (Isa 51:1). That is very necessary if a humble spirit is to be preserved in the child of God. It is a most beneficial exercise to look back and view our origin, and behold what we were when the hand of divine mercy was first laid upon us. **"Wherefore remember,"** says the

apostle, **"that you being in time past Gentiles in the flesh...That at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph 2:11-12).**

Remember it to your shame. Look to the **"horrible pit and the miry clay" (Psalm 40:2),** out of which the God of all grace brought you, that you may be confounded and never more open your mouth boastfully (Ezekiel 16:63). Daily ponder the question, **"Who makes you to differ from another?" (1 Corinthians 4:7)** — not only from those who are hastening to destruction, but from what you were *yourself* only a short time since! Let such a look humble you into the dust!

7. The look of **HOPE**.

"Then I said, I am cast out of your sight; yet I will look again toward your holy temple" (Jon 2:4). That is, though because of my reprehensible conduct, You no longer view me with approbation and delight; nevertheless, I will not give way to despair, but cast myself upon Your mercy. Those words, **"I will look again toward your holy temple,"** show that his faith laid hold of that statement: **"If your people...shall pray unto the LORD toward the city which you have chosen, and toward the house that I have built for your name: Then hear in heaven...if they sin against thee...and pray unto you toward their land... and the house which I have built for your name: Then hear their prayer" (1 Kings 8:44-49 and compare 2 Chronicles 20:9).** When a captive in Babylon, Daniel had acted on the same (Dan 6:10), and now the chastened prophet made it *his* confidence. Though in the whale's belly, he refused to abandon hope. He **"remembered the LORD: and his prayer came in unto Him, into His holy temple" (Jon 2:7).** He remembered His grace, His faithfulness, His power, His past mercies — and turned unto Him the eyes of expectation; and he was miraculously delivered! Oh, what encouragement is there here for every failing saint who is tempted to despond.

SEVEN DIVINE LOOKS

Arthur Pink, 1950

Much is said in Scripture about the eyes of the LORD and His looking upon one and another: much that is solemn and searching; much that is encouraging and comforting. What a contrast is there between **"I will set my eyes upon them for evil, and not for good" (Amos 9:4)** and **"For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of those whose heart is perfect [upright, which beats true] toward him" (2 Chronicles 16:9)**. That is the difference between God's *avenging* eye (1 Chronicles 12:17; 2 Chronicles 24:22) and His *gracious* eye.

"For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he ponders all his goings" (Pro 5:21): what a *restraining* influence should our apprehension of that fact exert upon us! On the other hand, assured of the mercy and compassion of the LORD, believers will often desire that He should look upon them, knowing that their very *needs* and *unexpressed longings* will plead for them (2 Samuel 16:12), and give him or her cause to say, **"For he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden!" (Luke 1:48)**.

1. The look of COVENANT FAITHFULNESS.

"And the rainbow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature that is upon the earth" (Gen 9:16). There is no doubt whatever in our mind that the rainbow appeared then in the lower heavens for the *first* time: had it existed previously, it would have possessed no new meaning and message after the flood — compare Genesis 2:6. It was given as an *assurance* to allay men's fears, as a *divine pledge* that the world would never again be destroyed by a universal deluge. It was a ratification of the promise which God had given for the temporal preservation of His creatures. God calls it "MY rainbow," which He sets in the cloud (Gen 9:13), and upon it, He looks in

remembrance of His oath (Isa 54:9) — as we also should. "How blessed to know that the *cloud* that comes across our sky is one of *His* bringing; and if so, how sure that, in some way, He will reveal His glory in it" — Frederick W. Grant (1834-1902). Still more blessed is it to know that the canopy of God's Throne in Heaven is a rainbow (Rev 4:3) — a token and pledge that He is ruling this world according to his covenant engagements.

2. The look of GRACE.

"And God looked upon the children of Israel" (Exo 2:25). This, too, was analogous with the former, for as the content informs us, they **"cried by reason of their bondage. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob."** And well for them that He did so. They had sinned grievously while in Egypt (Jos 24:14; Ezekiel 20:7-8), and were sorely chastised for the same. But now, notwithstanding their provoking transgressions, as their groanings came into His ears — the LORD remembered His covenant and looked upon them. Moses had beheld them with pity, but he was *powerless* to effect their release. But as JEHOVAH saw their abject condition and hard service, He had a favorable regard to them (Exo 3:7-8). His eyes were now fixed upon them to show Himself strong in their behalf and deliver them. It is a typical picture of God contemplating the wretchedness of His elect by nature, when He saves them from their sins: His everlasting covenant of grace is the sure foundation of mercy, and the ground of all His dealings with His people, He is blessed to find that when Israel learned that the LORD **"had looked upon their affliction,"** then they bowed their heads and worshiped (Exo 4:31). Let each Christian reader do likewise.

3. The look of ENCOURAGEMENT.

"And the LORD looked [literally 'turned His face'] upon him, and said, Go in this your

might, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent you?" (Judges 6:14). Such language as that from God to a *worm of the earth* is startling, for what "might" had poor Gideon? None — and what is more, he was *conscious* of this fact. Therein is revealed to us an invaluable secret: **"Before honor is humility" (Pro 15:33).** Gideon confessed his weakness: **"With what shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house" (Judges 6:15).** True, but set over against that the Almighty's **"Surely I will be with you" (verse 16).**

Ah, my reader, the face of the LORD is always turned unto those who acknowledge their poverty and powerlessness. It is the *empty vessel* which He fills, the one owning himself to be "the least" who He commissions and uses (see Isa 6:5-8; Eph 3:8)! That look of the LORD was designed to dispel Gideon's fears, to revive his drooping spirits and send him forth in the strength of JEHOVAH. God used Gideon to effect a mighty deliverance for Israel.

4. The look of REVELATION and DISCOVERY.

"My beloved is like a roe or a young deer: behold, he stands behind our wall, he looks forth at the windows, showing himself" (Song 2:9). Taken in conjunction with the foregoing verse, we have here a blessed figure of Christ desiring fellowship with "his own" and the increasingly clear discoveries — which He graciously makes of Himself, both to the local church collectively and to the saint individually — He is likened to a "roe" because of His pleasantness and lovingness (Pro 5:19), He being most *winsome* to His people, and *gentle* in His carriage towards them. In the spiritual visits with which Christ favors His people, He is pleased to make clearer and fuller manifestations of Himself to them. First, He appears as it were **"behind our wall"** — for we are ever the ones who interpose barriers! — near, but not yet visible. Then, **"he looks forth at the windows"** — a sight, though not yet a full one, being obtained of Him through the

ordinances. Finally, He shows **"himself through the lattice"** of our longings, and we enjoy His manifested presence, and He sups with us, and we with Him (Rev 3:20).

5. The look of APPROBATION.

"But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembles at my word" (Isa 66:2). Pride God abominates, but humility and submission, He appreciates. *Poverty of spirit consists of a realization that I have nothing, am nothing, and can do nothing, but have need of all things.* It is the Spirit's emptying the heart of self — that Christ may fill it. Contrition is a feeling sense of the heinousness and loathsomeness of sin, causing one to mourn over it with godly sorrow. It is the Spirit's discovering to us the plague of our hearts, making sin to be bitter and hateful to us, our sorest grief and heaviest burden.

To *tremble at God's Word* is to be sensible of its searching purity, to be awed by its authority, to be conscious of its requirements, to hold its Author in the utmost reverence. Each soul possessing these qualities is an object of delight to the Holy One. He views them not only with favor, but with pleasure: it is God delighting in His own handiwork, setting His seal of approval thereon.

6. The look of WELCOME.

"But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him" (Luke 15:20). The context gives us a picture of what an elect soul is by nature and practice: a wanderer from God, a dissipater of His mercies, a forlorn creature finding nothing in this world which can meet his spiritual and eternal needs. At length convicted of his wretchedness and sinfulness, his heart and feet turn unto the LORD.

The verse now before us reveals the attitude of God unto such a one and the reception awaiting the repentant and seeking sinner. The father is viewed as on the lookout, ready to welcome the returning prodigal. Love's eyes are keen, and he sees him while he is yet **"a great**

way off" — which tells of the awful distance that sin removes the soul from God. It was love's anticipation and readiness to receive the erring one. He "saw him" with the eyes of favor, yes, eagerness. What a word is this for any repenting and seeking reader — a hearty welcome is assured such if he comes unto God by Christ.

7. The look of **RECOVERY**.

"And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter" (Luke 22:61). Surely this is one of the most remarkable, blessed, and affecting statements recorded in Holy Writ! Note, first, this is said not simply of "Jesus," but of "the Lord": to emphasize the fact that He acted here with divine understanding, authority, and mercy. Second, that He "turned." It was in the high priest's house, and the Savior had been facing the motley gang who had apprehended Him in the Garden. One of "his own" had been overtaken in a grievous fault, but He did not contemptuously ignore him, but turned His face toward him! He did not call to him, lest He should endanger His sheep! He **"looked upon Peter"** — not scowled or frowned! He looked with a sad, yet compassionate expression. It was a look of *conviction*, for Peter at once remembered His warning word. It was a look of *power*, for it brought repentance. It was a look of *love*, for it melted Peter's heart. Christ was about to die and put away Peter's sins, and here He gave him a pledge of it by turning *toward* and "looking upon" him! May He so look today upon backsliders.

Bouquets and Brickbats

CALIFORNIA: You are a consistent and wonderful blessing! Thank you for always "being there".

ARKANSAS: Hello Big Brother! I just finished reading "A Curse For Us" by Bill Lee in your paper. I really enjoyed it! It goes right along with what we are studying this quarter in Sunday School.

MISSISSIPPI: I enjoy listening to the sermons when you fill in for Brother Lee at Central Baptist Church. They are a real blessing.

AN OLD-FASHIONED, NARROW-MINDED, FOSSILIZED PERSON!

By J.C. Ryle

There is a common complaint in these days, that there is a lack of power in Christianity, and that the church does not shake the world as it did in former years. Shall I tell you what the reason is, in plain words? It is the *low tone of life* which is so sadly prevalent among professing believers. I believe we fall far short in our *standard of Christian practice*.

The times require a higher standard of *personal holiness*, and an increased attention to *practical religion* in daily life.

I must honestly declare my conviction, that there never has been . . . so much *profession* of religion--without *practice*, so much *talking* about God--without *walking* with Him, so much *hearing* God's Words--without *doing* them, as there is at this present date!

Never were there so many *empty tubs* and *tinkling cymbals!*

Never was there so *much formality*--and so *little reality!*

The whole tone of men's minds on what constitutes *practical Christianity* seems lowered. The old golden standard of the behavior which befits a Christian, appears debased and degenerated. You may see scores of *religious people* (so-called) continually doing things which in days gone by, would have been thought *utterly inconsistent with vital Christianity!* They see no harm in such things as theater-going, dancing, incessant novel reading--and they cannot in the least understand what you mean by objecting to them! The ancient *tenderness of conscience* about such things seems dying away and becoming extinct, like the dodo-bird.

And when you venture to remonstrate with those who indulge in them, they only stare at you as **an old-fashioned, narrow-minded, fossilized person**, and say, "*What is the harm?*" In short, *laxity and levity* are the common characteristics of the rising generation of professors.

Where is . . . the self-denial, the redemption of time, the absence of luxury and self-indulgence, the unmistakable separation from earthly things, the manifest air of being always about our Master's business, the singleness of eye, the simplicity of home life, the high tone of conversation in society, the patience, the humility, the universal love-- which marked Christians seventy or eighty years ago? *Yes, where is it indeed?* We have inherited their *principles*--but I fear we have not inherited their *practice!*

DOES GOD CONTROL ALL EVENTS, THINGS AND PEOPLE?

By Wayne Camp

Central Baptist Church June 10, 2012

Daniel 4:34, 35 is a very familiar passage of Scripture for those of us who believe in the absolute Sovereignty of God. I will explain to you some things about why I have chosen the subject that I have this morning. ***And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation. And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand or say unto him, 'What doest thou?'***

Then turn to Ephesians 1:11...another familiar passage and verse of Scripture where, of course you know earlier in this chapter of all that has been talked about how we were ***"chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world"***, and that we were predestinated unto the adoption of sons, etc. It says in verse 11: ***"In whom (talking about Christ) also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."***

Every time I read that I think about how often I have been engaged in discussions with people who do not believe the Doctrine of Grace. Then they get on verses of Scripture like 2nd Peter 3: 9, and they will say, "I just believe that ALL means ALL". And then you take them to a verse like this that says God ***"worketh all things after the counsel of his own will"***. They will say, "Now, there are some things that God can't do." Needless to say, they have some problems with that. And then in Acts 4: verse 27 and 28, this is the church. The church at Jerusalem is having a prayer meeting. Peter and John have been in prison, and they are praying that for them. It is kind of interesting that when Peter and John showed up at this prayer meeting

some of them had doubts that their prayers had been answered. They are praying for their deliverance and welfare, but then when it happened, they thought that Peter was actually a ghost. But anyway, Acts 4:27-28. he said, ***"For of a truth thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."***

I remember a BTC lesson when I was in the ABA. The lesson was on disappointments. I have told you about this before, but I will remind you of it again. One part was on "God's Disappointments." I remember the writer said, "God's greatest disappointment came when they crucified His Son. God's expectations were shattered when they crucified his son."

My, there are so many Scriptures in the Bible that point out in one way or another that the death of Christ was ordained before the foundation of the world. The main purpose for which he came into the world was to die. He was the Lamb slain in the mind and purpose of God from the foundation of the world. I wrote to him, (the writer) and pointed out such Scriptures as Acts 4:27, 28, and he did not much like what I wrote, and he said "You are always "nit-picking".

But what I want to deal with this morning is this subject, ***GOD CONTROLS ALL EVENTS, THINGS AND PEOPLE***. Now, I prepared this message after Saturday night – a week ago last night. I was flipping through some channels on TV, and I came across a preacher who was preaching against God's being in control of all things. Anytime people take the position that God is not in control of all things, they usually get arrogant in what they are saying.

I have told you before, I'm sure, about two different preachers, one was preaching at Beverly Manor in Washington, IL. He held up his fist and said, "I can control God! I can make God do what I want Him to do." Basically, the same thing was said by another preacher in a

church where I was preaching one Sunday morning. The idea that man can control God is so totally foreign to the Scripture that it astounds me to hear anyone make such statements.

This fellow that I flipped onto on TV was making light of the fact that we say that God controls all events, things and people. The TV preacher said, "I have heard preachers say 'God controls everything'." Then he set up some "straw men" and shot them down in his dissertation about that.

But, as I said, he was very arrogant in his approach. But when you think that you can keep God from doing something, or that you can control God, you have to be very arrogant. I mean, when this fellow at Beverly Manor said, "I can control God—I can make Him do what I want Him to do" Bro Mark Maddox came out and said, "Brother, let me feel of your muscle." The brother said, "Aw, Mark, why do you want to feel of my muscle?" Brother Mark's response was, "I just always wanted to feel the muscle of somebody who was stronger than God."

After the service I took the fellow over into my office and showed him that what he preached was not scriptural. The TV preacher whom I mentioned raised some questions and smirked as he answered these questions. He made it sound as if he had unanswerable arguments to his position that God does not control all things.

Then my mind began to race as some scriptures came to mind that clearly teach that God does control all things, and **"works all things after the counsel of His own will"**. Such men as this one whom I have discussed, deny that God controls the weather, when it is stormy, or when tornadoes and hurricanes wreak destruction. They will give God credit for the sunshine, and when there has been a drought they will give Him credit for the rain. They will even pray to Him for rain. I remember my home church having a special prayer meeting at church asking for God to send rain. And they will give God the credit for the sunshine, or for a nice shower, or a general rain after there has been a drought. I am sure that people in Colorado today, if it came a good, heavy rain, and put out that 8,000 acres of forest fires they have, would be giving God the credit for that.

On the other hand, the same people, who will

pray to God for rain, who will give God credit for the rain, who will give God credit for the sunshine, if the sun shines too much too long will begin to say, "God did not have a thing to do with this drought". Then when it rains too much, and it floods, they will say, "God did not have a thing to do with this flood." I remember a preacher in Louisiana when we had flooding down there one time, and (you know they bury on top of the ground), caskets were floating down the streams...and they asked (I believe it was an Episcopal preacher) about it, and he said, "I want you to know right now, that God did not have a thing to do with this flood." But if it had been a nice rain after a drought God could have controlled that! But not the other. That is the problem with Arminianism. It is filled with contradictions, and it forces people into contradictory positions. These people give God the credit for the sunshine and nice showers, but then deny that He brings the flood or the tornado or anything that might be associated with that rain. Arminians will thank God for the rain and for the sunshine, but declare unequivocally that Satan is the cause of tornadoes, droughts, earthquakes, and other destructive manifestations in the realm of what we call "nature".

Now, I realize that you have heard many messages in which the Scriptures I will be using this morning have been used. They are not new to you. That is one of the problems of preaching in a church where all the counsel of God is preached. You cannot preach anything new. I mean, if you stick strictly to the Bible, you cannot preach anything new. I don't have anything new. And if you really stick to the Scriptures, you can't preach anything new.

When I first started preaching, I prepared a sermon one time, and I thought, "Man, this is original". And I was real proud of myself with that until the original sermon I had preached....the next week after I had preached it on Sunday, I was in the bookstore thumbing through a book of sermons, and there was my sermon already in print. I learned right then that if I preached truth I cannot preach anything "original". We do not need to preach anything "original". I am reminded of the words of Peter, **2 Peter 1:12 "Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance**

of these things". Peter said, "I am going to teach you this over and over as long as I am teaching you folks, I am going to teach it to you over and over. Though you know them," he says, "I want you to be established in the present truth." Peter certainly believed in repetition in his teaching. Note again what he said a little further in this same epistle, from which we just read – **2 Peter 3:1, 2** "***This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you: in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance.***" In other words, he said I want to stir you up and cause you to remember what you already know, what you have already heard.

"That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour." Notice, he said, what I am going to be saying unto you was said by the apostles, it was said by the prophets, and it was said by the Lord Jesus Christ. I am just going to stir up your minds, and cause you to remember these things. So, I know that you who have a love for the truth, will rejoice again and again when you hear the truth again and again.

You know, if you have been used to the Doctrine of Grace, and you go somewhere where it is not preached, or if someone comes here and does not preach the truth, you do not "Amen" what they say. You say, "Why don't they preach the truth?"

There are three things, mainly, that I want to point out this morning on this subject. ***"Does God Control All Events, Things, and People?"***

I WILL FIRST CALL YOUR ATTENTION TO SOME SCRIPTURES WHICH AFFIRM THAT GOD DOES CONTROL ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER COME TO PASS.

Now, I want you to understand, I am not saying that God is the author of sin. I am saying to you that no sin can take place that God can't control and use for His own honor and glory. I think of Psalm 76: and verse 10, where David said, ***"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."*** If man starts out to do anything that God cannot get glory out of, God will restrain it,

and not let it happen. Now that teaches that God is in control of even the wickedness of men. Nothing man can do can be done unless that, in some way, it will bring God glory. It will work out for the good of God's people and the glory of God.

Let us consider once again one of our texts. ***Ephesians 1:11*** "***He worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.***" You see, if I deny that God is in control of things, of all things, I must deny that ***"He works all things after the counsel of His own will,"*** as this verse sets forth. For if I say that God cannot control all things, then I, at the same time, to be consistent, must deny the truth of this verse of Scripture. Even if one argues that some things are done by Satan, he must deny that Satan is under the control of God, to be consistent with his Arminian doctrine. Satan cannot do anything that God does not allow. Job makes that very clear in the first two chapters of the book God inspired him to write. I love that statement where (I do not like much of what the devil says, but I like what he says in those verses). God says, "Consider my servant Job, etc." and he (Satan) say "Yeah, but you have a hedge around him. I can't touch his health, I can't touch his family, I can't touch his wealth, except you allow it." God is in control!

A study of those first two chapters make it clear to the spiritually discerning person that God is in control of Satan; otherwise, you cannot be consistent if you deny that God is in control of all things.

Another verse that I call to your mind is found in Romans Chapter 11. Actually, we could read verses 33 through 36, but I am just going to use verse 36. ***"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things:"*** All things are of God. One way or the other, either by instrumentality—(whether it be the instrumentality of Satan, the instrumentality of wicked men, or whatever it might be—it is all under the control of God. ***"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen"***

While God is not the author of sin, sin certainly could not have entered the world with God not involved in controlling it. You see, there are certain attributes of God about which we would know nothing if He had not allowed sin to

enter the race. What would we have known of grace if He had not allowed sin? No, we would not have known anything about grace. We would not be able to sing from the depths of our heart, "Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound that saved a wretch like me." If there were no wretches, if there were no sin to make wretches out of us, if the secretary God had not allowed the fall of Adam, and allowed sin to have entered the human race, we would not know about grace. We can sing "Amazing Grace", and sing it from the depths of our hearts, because we know it to be true. God uses means in accomplishing His purpose, as Brother Lee has pointed out more than once recently in some sermons. Sometimes God uses evil men and even Satan to accomplish His will, though He often turns and punishes them for what they do, as he did Nebuchadnezzar. You know he used Nebuchadnezzar to take Israel into bondage, so that His land could have its Sabbaths. He took them into bondage, and He used Nebuchadnezzar to accomplish that. He referred to Nebuchadnezzar as his servant working for what He intended for him to do. But then, because Nebuchadnezzar, without knowing that he was doing the will of God, was taking credit and glory for all the things he was doing, God turned around and punished him for the very thing that he did. You say, "Well, I don't understand that." Well, I don't, either, but I believe it because the Bible teaches it.

Another Scripture which confirms our proposition is found in the Book of Proverbs, Chapter 16. Bad I want you to notice again that this word "all" keeps coming up, and I want to mention it here while you are turning to that verse. The Arminian will make much of "all" when He says, "**God is not willing that any should perish, but that all will come to repentance.**" Then he will say, when discussing Proverbs 16:4, "Well, now that does not include everybody in this place". What does He say here? Proverbs 16:4. "**The Lord has made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.**"

Again let me remind you of another verse of Scripture found in the book of Proverbs. **Proverbs 21:1 The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.** Whether the

king is wicked or not, his heart is in the hand of the Lord and the Lord turns it wherever he pleases.

I don't know about you, it doesn't bother me that God is in control, what would bother me is, if He were not in control. I can't rejoice and smirk, and smile and say, "God can't control everything." Think about that. Think about where we would be if God were not in control. As we study this, we must remember that it is God's will and purpose to manifest all His glorious attributes, whether it be His gracious love or His holy hatred. He purposed to manifest all His attributes.

Now, I want to be more specific in pursuing this proposition, *That God is in control of all things*. There are many scriptures which clearly show God controls the weather regardless of what kind of weather it may be.

I have heard so many times and will give you a couple of illustrations in a moment, it always comes to my mind when people are complaining about the weather, and saying "God did not cause this flood, God did not cause this tornado. God was not behind it."

But may I remind you of the following verse "**The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet.**" **Nahum 1:3.** You see, no matter what kind of storm comes up, or how bad it is, God has His way in it. I am always hesitant to say, "God was judging Tuscaloosa, AL when He sent that tornado in there," or somewhere else. But I do know this, whatever His purpose was, He was in control. He has His way. Some people were killed, yes, "**He killeth and maketh alive,**" the Scriptures say. So He is in control of the weather.

In the plague of hail God brought on Egypt. He controlled the exact places where the hail would fall, and where it would not fall. Turn to Exodus Chapter 9 – verses 23 through 26. This passage of Scripture, and there are many like it, where God is bringing the plagues on Egypt that we could deal with, but I will just deal with this one right now.

"And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven: and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the

ground;(this was talking about the lightning) and the LORD rained hail upon the land of Egypt.” Who did it? The Lord rained hail upon the land of Egypt. **“So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. And the hail smote throughout the land of Egypt all that was in the field, both man and beast; and the hail smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field. Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, was there no hail.”**

Goshen joins Egypt. Goshen was a part of Egypt and Egypt controlled Goshen. And when Joseph brought his family down to Egypt to preserve them, where did they put them? Goshen. The most fertile part of that part of the country, and there was hail right up to the border of Egypt, and not a bit of hail in Goshen where Israel was. You tell me that God does not control the hail? Absolutely, He does, and He did in these cases.

I want to tell you about a couple of things, and I do not know if I have ever mentioned this before, but if I have, I will call it to your attention. I was preaching in a meeting at Davenport, Iowa -- back in the late 60s, I believe it was. Maybe early 70s. Brother _____ was the pastor of the church, at Davenport, it is now located in Buffalo, Iowa. We were going to church one night. He came and picked me up, where I was staying, and we were on our way to church, and we were getting close to the church building, and ran into a hail storm. And it was hailing, and raining, and the clouds were dark. He beat his steering wheel, and said, “Always happens, it always happens, we plan a revival and the devil sends us a storm. I just sat there, and he said, “What are you thinking, Brother Camp?” I said, “I’m thinking I just wonder who’s in control of this weather.” He said, “You know how to hurt a fellow, don’t you?” I said, “I was just thinking about Who’s in control of this weather”.

I drove through snow one night to a revival meeting not far from where I pastored in Illinois, and the pastor’s name was _____. Neither one of these brethren believed the Doctrine of Grace. It snowed pretty heavily right at church time. Some of the people did not show up. The pastor said, “It never fails. Never fails. You plan

a revival meeting and the devil sends a snowstorm.” I reminded him, on the way out that night, very quietly, where others couldn’t hear me, he needed to read some scriptures about Who causes the snow to be upon the earth. Consider these words, from God’s questions to Job. Brother Lee in his study of Job is ready to go into Chapter 38, where God and Job have a dialogue. God said to Job, in verse 22 through 26, **“Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? Or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail. Which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war? By what way is the light parted, which scattereth the east wind upon the earth? Who hath divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder; To cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is; on the wilderness, wherein there is no man?”**

He is saying to Job – **“Job, who is in control of this? Have you looked into the treasures of the snow? And treasures of the hail to see who is behind it?”** God is very explicit in His declaration, that He would bring a flood when the flood of Noah’s day came. He was very explicit. He said, God uses a double declaration here... **“and I, even I,”**. “Make no doubt about it, don’t raise any questions about it...I am going to bring a flood”. He said in Genesis 6:17. **“Behold, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and everything that is in the earth shall die.”** In this verse God wants it clearly understood that the flood came from Him! Therefore, He doubles the expression for emphasis. **“I, even I”**. There is no room for doubt there. God says, **“I, even I”** will do this. **“Behold, I, even I, do bring a flood upon the earth.”** He doubles the expression to put to silence all those who so loudly proclaim that God does not control storms, floods and other calamities. He wants it clearly understood that he is in control.

Well, I thought I could get through this this morning.. We’ll just come back to it tonight, and I will finish it then. Let me remind you again, that with God there are no unintended tragedies, no uncaused calamities, and no undisciplined disasters. They are all under His control!

**FALL MEETING
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SEPTEMBER 7-9, 2012

PREACHER: ELDER JAMES MCDOWELL

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Friday, September 7, 7:00 P.M.
Saturday, September 8, 11:00 A.M.
Saturday, September 8, 7:00 P.M.
Sunday, September 9, 11:00 A.M.
Meal in the Fellowship Hall
Sunday, September 9, 5:00 P.M.
Meal in the Fellowship Hall

**Pastor: Elder Bill Lee
Phone: 662-226-2715
Email: billandjan@cableone.net**
Visitors Are Welcome!

HOT FIRES

Hot fires don't typically produce much smoke -- it is the low fire that smokes the most. So those who are truly burning for Christ don't make an effort to be seen by others, while false disciples seek to attract everyone's attention and praise.

Spurgeon: "Women are best when they are quiet. I share the apostle Paul's feelings when he bade women to be silent in the assembly. Yet there is work for holy women, and we read of Peter's wife's mother that she arose and ministered to Christ. She did what she could and what she should. She arose and ministered to him. Some people can do nothing that they are allowed to do, but waste their energies in lamenting that they are not called on to do other people's work. "

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Dan Cozart, Texas
Roger Dohrer, Oklahoma
Jimmy Hamrick, Texas
Forrest Keener, Oklahoma
James McDowell, Oklahoma

Visitors are welcome!

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