

I think this is the idea in Galatians 2:20. "I have been crucified with Christ." When did this occur? Paul died when he was baptized into Christ, into death, into Christ's death. He was no longer living for himself, but for Christ because he (Paul) was crucified. Note: Paul used the past tense when he said, "I have been crucified with Christ." This was a one-time event. Because of that event, he continued to repent of his sins and live to God.

--PKW



## [Online with Joel](#)

This month, we want to look at a resource that is especially designed for people who speak English as a second language. The website is **EasyEnglish Bible** (found at <http://www.easyenglish.info>) and it is a product of Wycliffe Associates. On this website, they have provided a Bible translation in simple English that only requires an English vocabulary of 1200 words. Obviously it is not a literal translation, but is designed to help people learn English while reading the Bible. The main benefit for those who speak English as their primary language is that it teaches us how to simplify concepts when we speak to those who are still learning English.

This is useful if you are preaching in Africa, South America, and many other places in the world. It can also be useful for teaching children. For an example, we will look at their translation of Acts 2:38:

*"Each of you has done wrong things', Peter told them. 'You must tell God that you are sorry about that. Then you must stop doing those wrong things. You must obey God and you must do right things. Then someone with the authority of Jesus Christ will \*baptise you. And God will \*forgive you for all the wrong things that you have done. Then God will give you his gift, which is the \*Holy Spirit."*

We can learn several things from their translation about how to speak (or write) for those who do not speak English well.

1. **Replace technical words with simple explanations**
2. **Replace passive voice with active voice**
3. **Keep sentences short**

The translation needs to be used carefully. When things are simplified, much can be lost and sometimes things can be twisted. I could have done a better job with Acts 2:38.

They also provide commentaries in simple English for those with a slightly larger vocabulary (2800 words). Another useful tool is their dictionary where you can see simple ways of defining difficult words (although their definitions are not always accurate). Under "Bible Translation Aids," you can find "Accessible EasyEnglish" which is a collection of Bible stories for people with learning disabilities, but I think it would work great for teaching children as well. All in all, this is a good resource for learning how to simplify your teaching of the Bible.

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## [THE ATTACHED ARTICLE](#)

In the October 2008 issue of *Gospel Truths* there is a long and very important article by Edward O. Bragwell, Sr. titled: "**The Church in Crisis**." It is too long for PTG Magazine, yet I want you to read it. I have therefore attached it to this email. I hope you will read and consider what he says very carefully.

-- PKW

## **BOTTOM LINE**

As teachers and preachers of the saving gospel let us be ever so careful of any words or actions that might cause one to be prematurely turned off. [--petermc11@nexicom.net](mailto:--petermc11@nexicom.net)

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## **A Different Experience**

In 1950 or 1951 I attended a Texas National Guard training camp. When Wednesday came, I invited a young Baptist man who was in our company to go to church with me, and he went.

That night the preacher preached a rip-roaring, no-holds-barred sermon against denominationalism. I was sure that my friend would be left angry and that I would not have another opportunity to teach him. But as we started down the steps of the building he said, “Paul, I want to talk to you about this.”

Friday night we talked—and studied from Genesis to Revelation. At 11 p.m. he said, “I want to be baptized,” and at midnight he was baptized in the baptistry of the building where he had heard that scorching sermon. Later I learned that he converted his whole family, except for his father.

We Christians are not in the business of insulting people. We are to preach in love. But that means that we must preach plainly without apology. This is how Jesus preached, and we must follow His example. There is no way to please those who do not want the truth, as a reading of the Gospels will show. Even Jesus could not do that.

Let us be careful of our words. Let us do the best we can to teach in such a way as to avoid arousing unnecessary prejudice. But we must preach plainly so that all can understand.

“Preach the word, be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.” (2 Timothy 4:2)

--PKW

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## **Repentance and Dying to Sin**

My remarks about Romans 6 and dying to sin have caused some to question what I meant. I wrote: “When we repent, we decide to stop sinning. But we do not die to sin until we are baptized with Christ into death. This is when we are separated from the guilt of our sins (separation is death).”

Death to sin is more than quitting sin. It is more than repentance. We die when we are separated from sin, and that only comes when we are forgiven of our sins—in baptism. We cannot be separated from our sin without repentance. But all the repentance in the world will not separate us from sin without the forgiveness of Christ. This is what Paul describes in Romans 7. Under the Law of Moses he wanted to quit sin, but “sin, taking opportunity through the commandment” (v. 8) produced coveting. How could he be free from this? “Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (vs. 24-25).

Read again Romans 6:2-4: “How shall we who died to sin still live in it? Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.” The death we are buried into is death to sin. Then, having died to sin, we are no longer slaves of sin, but slaves of righteousness.

Continue reading Romans 6. Paul reasons that because we have died to sin, we can no longer live in it. “Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body” (v. 12).

# In Preaching Beware of TRIP-WIRES

Peter McPherson,

## **THE SETTING**

A while ago I was asked to hold a gospel meeting for a congregation (it matters not where). I have held meetings there before. This time, knowing that some folks don't want any of their friends or relatives that they invite to be embarrassed, unduly pressured or prematurely affected negatively in any way, I had mentioned more than once in the early part of the meeting that everyone should feel free to bring their neighbours and relatives as I would be polite and tactful in presenting the gospel truth.

## **MY LESSON**

The last night of the meeting we had a good crowd. I saved my best to the last. A Power Point lesson entitled *Those Who Are Christ's* from Galatians 5:24. Using the book of Galatians itself for most of my material I taught just who it is that "are Christ's." Though there were no visible results at this meeting as I delivered my best that last night I was feeling pretty good about the lesson, the number present and what good I might have been able to contribute especially to non-members.

## **MY TRIP-WIRE**

After the last prayer, the closing remarks and invitation song, I went to the back of the building and began the usual courtesies of shaking of hands, talking to the people, receiving and giving well-wishes, etc. I was happy to realize at that time that the eloquent gospel preacher Paul Casebolt was in the audience (had I known that I would have been nervous preaching). All was going well. I was receiving great applause for my effort. But then one family, both the husband and his wife appeared quite perturbed and they told me why. I was told, that when I mentioned in my sermon the "Methodist Church" it was a "trip-wire." Unbeknown to me the man, having good faith in me to "not do any harm but only good" had brought his aged mother to the meeting that night and she happened to be a Methodist. When I mentioned in my sermon that some churches "like the Methodist Church baptizes by sprinkling," it was a *trip-wire* to her and from that time on, her son thought, she never heard a word that I said.

## **KNOW WHAT?**

In retrospect I agree with their assessment. I did not fully keep my word. I did not need to, at that time and place, mention any specific church. All I had to do was teach the positive teaching on water baptism being immersion and give the Bible proof for the same. I might have even said that that in contrast to immersion *some* religious folks practice sprinkling and pouring, but to be specific about one particular church was unnecessary to the point being made. To that good family what I said was a "trip-wire" for their mother. Now, they will have to work harder on her to save her soul. Of course, if she is honest they will be successful.

## **TACT AND TIMING**

No, I have not gone "soft." I am a straight-shooting gospel preacher. But I do realize that one needs to be tactful and as the Great Teacher said "be wise as serpents and harmless as doves." Working with small churches and reaching out to the sincere lost in the community as a general rule I have learned to not be premature with negative teaching.

## **INSULTING REMARKS**

While I am talking about "trip-wires" let me tell you about one that was totally unnecessary. I was preaching in my first work at Bancroft, Ontario Canada. I had made a number of contacts in the area. At a gospel meeting one night a Pentecostal woman came through the door. I mentioned this to the visiting preacher before he began preaching. Well, at some point in his lesson he got to talking about "speaking in tongues." Then he said, "most of the people that claim to speak in tongues can't even speak good English." Talk about a "trip-wire"! The lady stood up, knocked over her chair on the cement floor (making a real noise) and hurriedly left the building. A possible opportunity ruined by a preacher who at that time displayed his own ignorance.

# ***Preaching the Gospel***

**A monthly magazine for preachers and those who want to preach.**

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## **Flies In The Ointment (Concluded)**

**James W. Adams**

### **Be An Exemplary Influence**

The Christian who attains influence among the people of God involves himself thereby in a commensurate responsibility “to walk worthy of his calling” (Eph. 4:1). Greater influence in spreading God’s truth entails greater accountability “and will incur a stricter judgment” (Jas. 3:1). He must be morally circumspect, meticulously discreet, scrupulously consistent, and doctrinally sound (1 Tim. 4:12; 3:2). A small aberration, which in others might scarcely be observed, becomes in him a foul and destructive influence (1 Tim. 5:24).

Elders, preachers, editors and writers of religious journals, and administrators and teachers in schools and colleges operated by the brethren all fall into this category. Such people are men of “reputation for wisdom and honor.” They cannot, therefore, afford to speak, write, or act irresponsibly. Yet, too many subscribe to the cliché, “I will hew away and let the chips fall where they may.” He who uses an axe assumes the responsibility, by a careful and practiced use of his chopping tool, of the direction in which his chips and wood will fly.

Elders, preachers, writers, and school personnel have a grave and solemn responsibility to measure carefully their words and acts in the light of their possible influence for good or ill on the lives of other Christians (1 Cor. 10:31; 2 Cor. 6:3). Caution, restraint, and moderation should be cardinal qualities in their behavior. This is particularly true with reference to public acts and utterances. Such is not to say that men in these positions should be privately one thing and publicly another. It is to say that public acts and utterances, by reason of their inherent power to influence, are to be guarded commensurate with the degree of that power.

Thoughtful, prayerful, responsible conduct on the part of men in positions of “reputation for wisdom and honor” can do much to build up the kingdom and preserve the peace of God’s people (Jas. 3:13, 17-18). Conversely speaking, irresponsibility and unrestrained speaking, writing, and acting on the part of persons in such positions will produce strife, division, and every evil work (Jas. 3:14-16). Indeed, as Solomon observed, “They send forth a stinking savor.”

### **TO BE PUT ON THE E-MAIL LIST**

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