

THE SABBATH SCOOP

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THE IMPORTANCE OF TAKING CORRECTION

43 Years ago, Apollo 13 raced toward the moon. Where would it have ended without course corrections?

By Gregory Dullum

The giant 363-foot tall Saturn 5 rocket stood silently next to the red gantry as the countdown reached zero.

Suddenly, at 1:15 p.m. on April 11, 1970, flames and smoke burst forth from beneath the Saturn 5, and the huge white rocket slowly lifted off the pad and inched toward the heavens.

Picking up speed, Apollo 13 left verdant Cape Kennedy behind and lifted astronauts Jim Lovell, Jack Swigert and Fred Haise toward the blackness of space. Their mission: to be the third group of astronauts to walk on the moon.

Two hours and 35 minutes after blast-off, the three astronauts were sitting comfortably in the silence of space, quietly orbiting the earth. If they did NOTHING else, their dead bodies would still be orbiting today.

Course Corrections

At 3:48 p.m. on April 11, they fired the third stage of the Saturn 5 rocket to propel them out of the earth's orbit toward the moon. This was a **PLANNED** course correction.

Almost an hour and a half later, the command module, the little capsule holding the three astronauts, docked with the lunar module, the spider-legged contraption that was to take two of the astronauts to the moon's surface.

At 7:53 p.m. the next day, April 12, the astronauts fired the engine on the service module behind them. The thrust from this "burn" increased their speed to 25,000 miles per hour.

Before this burn took place, Apollo 13 was on a free-return trajectory. That meant if they did nothing else, they would zip around the moon and return

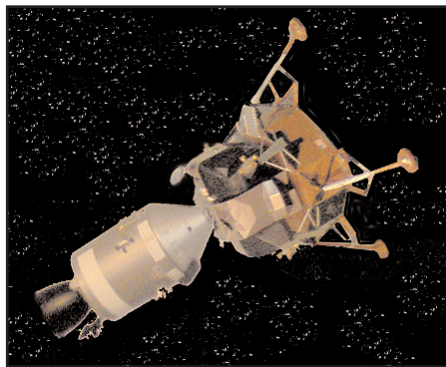


Photo by Greg Dullum

If Apollo 13 astronauts had not made corrections, they never would have safely returned home to earth.

to earth pulled by the gravity of the two heavenly bodies. But that was not their mission. They had to leave the free-return trajectory to establish an orbit around the moon and land on it once they got there. This burn was a course correction necessary to accomplish their mission.

At 9:07 p.m. the next day, April 13, Apollo 13 was closer to the moon than it was to earth. Fred Haise began a procedure called a cryo stir. A spark ignited oxygen in the No. 2 tank and it exploded. Oxygen tank No. 1 also developed a slow leak and emptied in a few hours. The oxygen was used for breathing and for fuel. With the two tanks gone, the only source of energy were three small batteries and a small oxygen tank designed to be used for only a short time during re-entry.

As a result of the explosion, the moon landing was canceled. But the astronauts continued heading toward the moon so they could use the moon's gravity to pick up speed and slingshot back to Earth.

All three astronauts moved into the crowded two-man lunar module.

There were three more critical course corrections on this trip. The first happened at 2:43 a.m. April 14. The astronauts had to fire the engine at 16 feet per second. Then they shut off all their power to conserve oxygen and batteries. This critical burn put them back on a free-return trajectory. Instead of establishing an orbit around the moon, they shot around it and headed back to earth.

Eighteen hours later, as they came around the back side of the moon, they conducted a PC+2 burn that increased their speed as they left the moon's orbit.

One more course correction was needed to correct the trajectory about a third of the way back to earth. With over a quarter of a million miles between Earth and the moon, the Apollo spacecraft had to head in exactly the right direction or it would miss Earth altogether.

Astronauts' Reaction

What was the astronauts' reaction to these course corrections? They **ACCEPTED** them and *did them*. The first ones were no big deal—the computers handled the early burns. But after the explosion, when power was shut down, the astronauts had to manually fire the engine and manually change direction, aiming their spacecraft by using the positions of the sun, earth, moon and stars.

Course corrections were **ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY** to *save the lives* of those three astronauts 43 years ago this month as they raced through outer space.

Our Correction

What about our trip, as Christians,

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Correction

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heading to the kingdom of heaven? Do we also need course corrections from time to time?

The Bible tells us: “And you have not forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as sons: ‘My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; for whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.’ If you endure chastening, God deals with you as sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness for those who have been trained by it” (Heb. 12:5-11).

Five Sources of Correction

If we are God’s sons, He will correct us. How?

1. Hebrews 12 tells us correction comes *through trials*. This is one way God gets our attention. When trials hit us, we stop and ask, what are we doing wrong?

2. God corrects us *through our parents*. Verses 9-10 speak of fathers correcting their sons. We can include daughters and mothers as well. Parents usually seek the best for their children and correct them when they’re doing wrong. If the correction is consistent with the Bible and God’s teachings, then it’s for our good (Deut. 6:7, Prov. 22:6, Eph. 6:1-4). When a parent says we shouldn’t obey God or we should leave his church, that’s bad advice and is not to be followed (Acts 5:29).

3. God offers correction *in the Bible*. “All Scripture is given by the inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

4. God corrects through *the ministry*. “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers” (Eph. 4:11). Why? To keep us under their thumbs? To make them feel superior? No! “[F]or the equipping of the saints for the work of min-

istry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive, but speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ” (vv. 12-15). Correction from ministers is *for our good!*

5. God corrects us *through our mates and others in the church*. Iron sharpens iron (Prov. 27:17). It is not just the ministry who helps us to grow, but ALL members of the body have *their part* (Eph. 4:16). We are encouraged to be “speaking to one another” (Eph. 5:19) and “Submitting to one another in the fear of God” (v. 21).

To the brethren in Galatia, the Apostle Paul wrote, “Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another’s burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Gal. 6:1-2). As brethren, we have an obligation to *help each other* through our trials. We must be careful, however, that we don’t fall into the trap of thinking we are “holier than thou.” Paul cautions, “For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself” (v. 3).

Unless it is asked for, advice is seldom welcomed. We should rarely give correction or advice if it is *UNSOLICITED*. It won’t do any good and could cause hard feelings.

Before we give correction or advice, make sure it’s helpful. How many times have people in the Bible been given *BAD ADVICE*? “Here, Adam, take this fruit. It’s really good and will make one wise!” (Gen. 3:6). “Here, Abraham, take my handmaid and have a child by her” (Gen. 16:1-2). “Curse God and die!” (Job 2:9).

When receiving correction from mates or others in the church, realize some correction will be good and some may be bad, even if well-intentioned. Consider the source, the intent given, and compare it to what the Bible teaches. God may be speaking through the mouths of our mates and friends.

Our Attitude

What is our attitude toward correction? Do we bristle at it? Do we get angry? Do we ignore it?

The Bible is filled with examples of God correcting people and their reactions. We have just finished observing the Feast of Unleavened Bread. How did Pharaoh react to correction from God?

He did NOT submit to God’s will, did he? His heart was hardened. Even after Pharaoh let Israel go, he changed his mind and chased after them.

Examples for Us

An example of NOT receiving correction can be found in 1 Sam. 15:10-23. In v. 13, Saul had *convinced himself* he was RIGHT in what he had done. In v. 15, he *blamed* his sins and faults on OTHERS. In v. 20, Saul *denied* any wrongdoing. In v. 23, Saul was told if he rejected God, God would reject him. We must be sure we don’t react to correction as Saul did—or God will reject us as He did Saul!

An example of properly receiving correction can be found in 2 Sam. 11:26-12:13. When David finally realized what he had done, he acknowledged that his sin was against God (1 Sam 12:13). He made *NO excuses or denials*, and *blamed no one else* for his sin. Then, David *humbly and completely* repented to God (Psalm 51).

How we handle correction is very important! Judah was destroyed because it refused to receive correction (Jer. 5:1-4). This may also be a prophecy for our day. It could even be for *spiritual* Jerusalem—the Church of God!

God became angry with the ancient Israelites because they kept going off course—and refused to make the corrections needed to live right (Jer. 7:22-29). Since that day until now, God has sent his prophets and ministers into the world with a message to repent—to change course! But *few* have listened (vv. 25-26). *Few* have responded to correction (v. 28).

We must make sure we are not among those who don’t take correction. Like the Apollo 13 astronauts 43 years ago this month, we *MUST* make course corrections, because *our (spiritual) lives* depend on it!

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JOHN THE DISCIPLE WHOM JESUS LOVED

John learns about the commitment required to be a true Christian.

By Gregory Dullum
Part 7

John Receives Correction

Peter usually was the outspoken disciple who received correction from Christ. Not this time. It was John's turn to show misplaced zeal.

Christ finished his instruction regarding little children by saying, "Whoever receives one of these little children in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me, receives not Me but Him who sent Me" (Mark 9:37).

"Now John answered Him, saying, 'Teacher, we saw someone who does not follow us casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow us.' But Jesus said, 'Do not forbid him, for no one who works a miracle in My name can soon afterward speak evil of Me. For he who is not against us is on our side'" (vv. 38-40).

The Bible doesn't say how John took this correction. How well do we take *this* correction? Do we tend to be like John, thinking if someone is not of our church organization, that person should be stopped from doing a work?

Even churches that preach error-ridden messages such as Sunday worship *HELP do a good work*. Their missionaries introduce people to the Bible and Jesus Christ. When the true church comes along, it doesn't have to start at the *beginning*. These people may have to *unlearn* some *FALSE* teachings, but they also have a *foundation* upon which they can *BUILD* a *greater* understanding. We should never demand that someone stop doing a good work!

Some people use this scripture to claim various organizations must *ALL* be right; they are *ALL* part of the spiritual church. Christ *didn't say that*. This exorcist was *NOT* a follower of Christ. He most likely was a Jewish exorcist who understood enough about Christ's authority, that he could successfully cast out demons in Christ's name, unlike others who tried and were attacked by the demons (Acts 19:13-15). Although not a believer, this fellow's good work was not to be forbidden.

Be Willing to Give All

A scribe came to Jesus and said, "Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go." Jesus realized this man had not fully counted the

cost of discipleship. He said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head" (Mat. 8:19-20).

Then another disciple said to Christ, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." Jesus told this man, "Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead" (vv. 21-22). This man was letting the cares of this life get in the way of his spiritual calling.

A third man also had a problem with proper priorities. He told Christ, "Lord, I will follow You, but first let me go and bid them farewell who are at my house." Jesus' response? "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:61-62).

Being a true Christian is a serious calling. It requires a *lifetime* *COMMITMENT*. How different is the response from these three disciples, than that of Peter, Andrew, Mark, John and Matthew, who when Christ called them, *dropped everything* to follow Him, with *NO reservations* and *NO questions asked!*

Jesus had selected the twelve, knowing they needed a *HIGHER level of commitment* than the average disciple. How strong is *OUR* commitment? Has it *remained strong* over the years, or have we allowed worldly cares to creep into our lives and have we given them priority over spiritual matters?

John Wants to Call Down Fire

The Feast of Tabernacles arrived in the fall (John 7:2). Jesus' brothers wanted Him to go up to Jerusalem publicly with them to keep the feast. Jesus refused, saying his time was not yet. He told his brothers to go without Him (vv. 3-9). After the brothers left, Jesus and his disciples went up secretly (v. 10).

Jesus planned to spend a night in Samaria, between Galilee and Jerusalem. He sent messengers ahead into a Samaritan town to prepare for the evening. The Samaritans realized that Jesus and his group were not planning on staying long; they were headed for Jerusalem, so they refused to accommodate them.

When James and John heard about the inhospitable attitude of these Samaritans, they were outraged! They felt as if they—and their Cousin, the Son of God—had been slapped in the face!

Recalling the Old Testament account of

how Elijah destroyed messengers with fire from heaven when they did not respect him (2 Kings 1:9-12), James and John asked Jesus, "Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?" (Luke 9:54). They reasoned in their mind that if this punishment for lack of respect was good enough for Elijah to inflict, it was good enough for them, since Christ was greater than Elijah!

Jesus once again rebuked John (and his brother, Mark). "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them." And they went to another village (Luke 9:55-56).

John and his brother, Mark, were exhibiting a spirit of *PRIDE*. It is pride that causes anger to well up inside us and want to seek revenge. Pride makes us say, "How dare you do that to me!" or "How dare you do that to Him. You can't do that!" A humble spirit will not respond in this way! This is explained by David Kulpian in his 2010 book, *How Evil Works*:

"Being angry means you are out of control.

"What causes anger? Arrogance. Show me someone who readily loses his temper and showers those around him with angry yells and insults, and I'll show you a very arrogant man, Anger is the emotion you feel when you are not being treated with what you consider to be appropriate respect. When I erupt in obscene fury at a traffic jam that threatens to make me tardy for an appointment, what I am really saying is, 'How dare they! How dare they make me late! Don't they know how important I am?' Were I to be as humble as I should be, almost nothing would make me feel anger" (pp. 204-205).

Keeping the Feast of Tabernacles

Jesus and his disciples continued to Jerusalem and observed the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days (John 7:11-52). The first day was a holy day, followed by six days that were not holy (Lev. 23:34-36, 41). On the eighth day, they observed another holy day, which was God's seventh annual feast (Lev. 23:36, 39). Since the eighth day was a holy day, making it greater than the pre-

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vious six, many believe it was called by John the “Last Great Day” (John 7:37).

In the middle of the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus began teaching in the temple (John 7:14). The Jews sought to kill Him but no one laid a hand on Him, for his hour had not yet come to die (vv. 19, 25, 30). During His discourse with the Jews, many came to believe (Ch. 8:30). Christ told these new believers, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (vv. 31-32).

When Jesus told the Jews that He was the LORD (“I Am Who I Am”—Ex. 3:14-15) of the Old Testament (“I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM”), they considered it blasphemy and took up stones to kill Him. But He escaped in the crowd (John 8:58-59).

Jesus then encountered a man who was blind from birth. It’s likely that a discussion ensued among the disciples. It was a common belief, based upon scripture, that sickness was *always* caused by (or punishment for) SIN (Ex. 15:26). Some of the disciples thought this man was blind *because* HE was a sinner. Others argued that since he was blind *from birth*, it must have been a result of *sins committed by* THE MAN’S PARENTS. They decided to ask Jesus to settle their argument.

“And His disciples asked Him, saying, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?’ Jesus answered, ‘Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him’ ” (John 9:1-3). Sickness is NOT ALWAYS the result of sin!

Jesus healed the blind man (vv. 6-7). Then He spoke about being the good shepherd who lays down his life for his flock (Ch. 10:1-21).

Jesus Appoints 70

Jesus had many more disciples than just “the twelve.” It was at this point that Jesus “appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where he Himself was about to go” (Luke 10:1). His instructions to the 70 were similar to those He gave to the disciples when He had sent them out two by two (vv. 2-16).

Notice, there were clear instructions not to go door to door as the Jehovah’s Witnesses do today. Jesus told them plainly, “Do not go from house to house” (v. 7).

Their mission was successful. “Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, ‘Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name’ ” (v. 17).

Jesus was thankful that so many were coming to understand the truth. To his Father in heaven, Jesus said, “I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes” (Luke 10:21).

Jesus then turned to John and the other disciples privately, and said, “Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see; for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen it, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard it” (vv. 23-24).

The disciples truly were blessed to see the Lord Jesus Christ in person and to hear preaching directly from his lips. And although they did not fully grasp everything that was going on, they had a deeper understanding than anyone else up to that time!

Lawyer Asks Jesus a Question

John and the other disciples watched as a lawyer stood up to test Jesus, asking, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus answered his question with a question. “What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?”

The lawyer replied, “ ‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,’ and ‘your neighbor as yourself.’ ”

Jesus told the lawyer, “You have answered rightly; do this and you will live.”

The man wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” Jesus replied by giving the parable of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37).

Visiting Mary and Martha

Jesus and his disciples traveled to the nearby town of Bethany (Luke 10:38).

It’s likely that they parted ways temporarily, for Luke does not mention the disciples going with Jesus as He visited the home of Mary and Martha. Luke writes, “Now it happened as THEY went that HE (not *they*) entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed HIM (not *them*) into her house.”

A Lesson in Prayer

While Jesus and his disciples were still in the region of Judea, Jesus prayed. As He prayed, his disciples watched from a distance and discussed prayer.

Some of the newer converts, who had not been around when Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount, expressed a desire to learn to pray like Jesus.

John and Andrew, who had previously been disciples of John the Baptist, may have bragged about how John had taught

them to pray.

When Christ finished his prayer, an unnamed disciple—probably a new convert—approached Him with a special request: “Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples” (Luke 11:1).

Jesus again taught all of his disciples the sample prayer (some call it “the Lord’s prayer”) that He had given during the Sermon on the Mount. This version of the sample prayer was slightly shorter (vv. 2-4; compare to Mat. 6:9-13).

Jesus also told his disciples to be persistent in their prayer requests—They should not give up if they didn’t immediately receive an answer from God. If their request were truly good for them, God would eventually grant it, Jesus said (vv. 5-13).

Jesus Faces Accusations

Jesus then cast out a demon that was mute. Some in the multitude marveled at the miracle. Others accused Jesus of casting out the demon by the power of Beelzebub, the ruler of demons (Luke 11:14-15). Some sought a sign that He was the Christ. Again, He told them no sign would be given but that of Jonah—as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a fish, Christ would be three days and three nights in the grave.

A Pharisee invited Christ to dine with him. There is no mention of John and the other disciples accompanying Him, but they were not far away.

When the Pharisees saw that Jesus did not wash his hands in their ceremonial way before eating, they marveled. Jesus then accused them of washing the outside of the cup and said, “but your inward part is full of greed and wickedness!” (vv. 29-39). Jesus then continued to correct the scribes, Pharisees and Jewish lawyers for their hypocrisy (vv. 40-54).

When a multitude of people had gathered together—perhaps overhearing Christ’s correction of their religious leaders—Christ turned to John and the other disciples and told them, “Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy” (Luke 12:1).

Setting Proper Priorities

Jesus then began preparing John and the other disciples for their futures—a time when He would no longer be with them. Just as angry men sought many times to kill Christ, they would seek to kill his followers. He told them, “My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more they can do to you.” He told them to fear God instead

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Is Spanking Wrong?

A movement is underway to make spanking illegal. Why?

By Gregory Dullum

“Most adults can recall a time when spanking a child, whacking their knuckles or swatting them with a belt were common disciplinary techniques. It was normal. As parenting has evolved, moms and dads are rethinking how they punish their kids. And now researchers are looking at how corporal punishment may affect children down the road.

“Parent-to-child physical punishment is legal in the United States, yet it’s increasingly viewed as inhumane and ineffective. Studies have found that children who are spanked are more likely to abuse drugs and alcohol, and to suffer mental disorders as adults.

“Nadine Block is founder of the Center for Effective Discipline, near Columbus, Ohio. She says spanking can also result in increased aggression, delinquency and anti-social behavior, while alienating the parent and child....

“Every parent has a different opinion on how to raise kids—especially when it comes to proper punishment. But this all begs the question: Is it ever OK to spank them?

“‘No, but it does happen,’ Block says” (“Take a Timeout” by Clare Walters, *Community Health*, March 2013, p. 30).

This “expert” claims it is NEVER OK to spank a child! *Never, ever!*

Block says spanking is outlawed in 33 countries and she expects it soon to be outlawed in the U.S.!

What does God say about spanking? Although the old proverb, “Spare the rod and spoil the child” is not in the Bible, its sentiments are clearly there!

Solomon, the wisest man to ever live, because his wisdom was given to him by God (1 Kings 4:29-34), has quite another story to tell about spanking! He wrote, “He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly” (Prov. 13:24).

Why is spanking necessary? “Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction will drive it far from him” (Prov. 22:15).

Children do foolish things! Sometimes a quick swat on the butt of toddlers is all that’s needed to get their attention away from doing something foolish, such as touching things they shouldn’t. They soon realize what they were doing was *wrong!* They don’t want to suffer this mild corporal punishment, so they give up their foolish idea. It takes fewer and

lighter swats to do the job when children are small. The sooner children LEARN to LISTEN to their parents *instead of getting a swat*, the better (Prov. 19:18, 22:6).

A proper spanking should be done with the open hand upon the rear end of an infant or toddler, and later, when the bare hand becomes ineffective, with a wooden paddle. Leather whips or belts should be reserved for stubborn animals (Prov. 26:3).

If there’s any doubt about using a paddle, Solomon puts it to rest in Prov. 23:13-14: “Do not withhold correction from a child, for if you beat him with a rod, he will not die. You shall beat him with a rod and deliver his soul from hell.”

Solomon isn’t condoning child abuse. He’s NOT recommending an *unmerciful* beating. He is, however, saying that a *proper* spanking will NOT *harm* a child; instead, it will help the child to avoid hell—both the grave and the lake of fire!

Spanking should never be confused with hitting or abusing children. A spanking should be a *limited number* of swats applied *only* to the bottom of children. It should NEVER be done *in anger*, but *in love*. It should not be an act by itself, but should include instruction, correction, and reproof. Prov. 19:15 tells us, “The rod *and reproof* give wisdom.” First, explain to children why they are getting spanked. Then follow the spanking with hugs, kisses, and encouraging words of love, so the children know their parents still love them. Proper correction will result in children who are a delight: “Correct your son, and he will give you rest; yes, he will be a delight to your soul” (Prov. 29:17).

Why are modern parents and “experts” turning against spanking? Because God approves of it and our society is getting further away from God (Rom. 8:7)! People are relying on their own understanding instead of revealed wisdom from God. Notice these phrases from the quoted article: “As parenting has evolved,” “Moms and dads are rethinking,” “increasingly viewed.” God says human reasoning is faulty: “There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death” (Prov. 14:12).

Studies linking spanking to children’s problems are 1) not considering other influences that contributed to those problems; and 2) confusing proper spanking with child abuse and hitting. *Proper* spanking is NOT the same as *hitting!*

Banning spanking may *seem right* to mankind—but it’s the way of DEATH!

Fun Fact



Drawing and Fun Fact are courtesy of NAPS

The term “ad lib,” meaning to improvise, is a shortening of the term *ad libitum*. In music, this phrases a direction to interpret, improvise or omit, according to the player’s preference.

Witerature

Wit and wisdom to complement the truths of the Holy Bible can be found in secular writings.

Atlas Shrugged by Ayn Rand, Signet, 1996, pp. 266-287.

Love Your Wife

“‘What would make you happy, Lillian?’ he asked. His voice was toneless....

“‘Oh dear!’ she said, as in bored amusement. ‘That’s the shyster question. The loophole. The escape clause.... What would make me happy, Henry? That is what you ought to tell me. That is what you ought to have discovered for me. I don’t know. You were to create it and offer it to me. That was your trust, your obligation, your responsibility.’...

“‘What do you want?’ he asked.

“Darling, there are so many things you could guess by yourself, if you really want to know what I want. For instance, if you have been avoiding me so blatantly for months, wouldn’t I want to know the reason?”

“‘I have been very busy.’

“She shrugged. ‘A wife expects to be the first concern of her husband’s existence.’”

Gen. 2:24, Eph. 5:25-31, 1 Pet. 3:7

Quotable Quote

“When in doubt, tell the truth.”

—Mark Twain

Memory Scripture

“Likewise you husbands, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel...”

—1 Peter 3:7

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(vv. 4-5).

Christ told the disciples that God knows the numbers of hairs on their head. Just as God knows every single sparrow that flies or falls to the ground, He knows them, for they are worth more than sparrows (vv.6-7).

Realizing some would face torture before martyrdom, Christ said, “Also I say to you, whoever confesses Me before men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God. But he who denies Me before men will be denied before the the angels of God.” He also told them not to worry about what to say when they are brought before rulers; the holy spirit would give them words to say (vv. 8-12).

Jesus then told the parable of the rich fool, who trusted in his riches and his life was cut short. His riches could not save him. He told his disciples to be “rich toward God” (vv. 13-21). They were not to worry about the cares of this life; God would take care of them (vv. 22-34). They should concentrate on being ready for His return (vv. 35-40).

Difficult times lay ahead, Christ warned. “Do you suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you not at all, but rather division.” Families would become divided over their Christian beliefs (vv. 49-53).

To the multitudes, Christ said they should be able to discern the times in which they were living (vv. 54-56).

Some in the multitude told Jesus about Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. Jesus replied, “Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish” (Luke 13:1-3).

God will protect his own. And if He allows them to die, He will grant them eternal life at Christ’s return. However, those who NEVER repent of their selfish, worldly ways will die and have no hope for eternal life.

Christ spoke the parable of a man who, for three years, found no fruit on his fig tree. He wanted to cut it down. The keeper of the vineyard persuaded him to allow it to live one more season while he fertilized it. Then, if it bore no fruit, he could cut it down (Luke 13:6-9).

God is merciful and unwilling that any should perish (2 Peter 3:9). He will be patient with us for awhile. But if we never bear fruit, we, like a barren tree or barren branch, will be cut down (John 15:1-2, 6).

(To be continued!)



China Says It Won't Forsake North Korea

“China’s foreign minister said Saturday [March 9] that Beijing would not abandon North Korea, reiterating China’s longstanding position that dialogue, not sanctions, is the best way to persuade the North to abandon nuclear weapons....

“In the aftermath of North Korea’s third nuclear test in February, China last week joined the United States to push for tougher United Nations sanctions against the North. Although it remained to be seen whether China would actually enforce the sanctions....

“Delegates to the conference, according to a senior Communist Party official, Qiu Yuanping, talked about whether to ‘keep’ or ‘dump’ North Korea and debated whether China, as a major power, should ‘fight or talk’ with the North” (“China Says It Won’t Forsake North Korea, Despite Support for U.N. Sanctions” by Jane Perlez, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, March 9, 2013, p. 1).

It is likely that China and North Korea will remain allies, becoming two of the “kings of the East” mentioned in end time prophecy (Rev. 16:12-16).

Pope Is a First in Some Ways—Will He Be Last?

The new pope of the Roman Catholic Church is a first in several ways—He is the first from the New World, the first from the strict order of the Jesuits, and the first to take the name Pope Francis.

Will he be the last pope? A centuries-old prophecy of a Catholic known as St. Malachy indicates that he will be. But, as we discussed in detail last month, that prophecy may not be trustworthy.

Bible prophecy tells us there will be one final resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire before Christ returns (Rev. 17:10-14). There will be two strong leaders. One will be a political leader; the other a false prophet (Rev. 13:11-18, 19:19-20). It’s likely that the false prophet will be a pope—for the Roman Church always has been closely tied to the Roman Empire—but he doesn’t have to be. The false prophet could arise out of

obscurity, performing miracles, and claiming to be the returned Christ (2 Thes. 2:3-4, 9-10). Whoever he is, he will attempt to cause the whole world to worship him and the Roman Empire (2 Thes. 2:4, Rev. 13:12).

What is the new pope like? Could he fit the role of this end-time figure?

He is quite different from Pope Benedict XVI. “In many ways, Cardinal Bergoglio—the first to take the name Francis, after the beloved saint who took a vow of poverty—seems to be the anti-Benedict. He is a warm, pastoral figure known as a good communicator, one who might have more success reversing the church’s sagging fortunes than did Benedict, even without a major change in church doctrine....

“Francis is ‘a man who knows how to govern. With firmness and against the tide,’ Sandro Magister, a Vatican expert for *l’Espresso* magazine, wrote in his blog on Wednesday [March 13]” (“Entrenched Troubles at Vatican Await a New Pope” by Rachel Donadio, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, March 13, 2013, pp. 1-2).

Pediatrics Group Backs Gay Marriage

“The American Academy of Pediatrics declared its support for same-sex marriage for the first time on Thursday [March 21], saying that allowing gay and lesbian parents to marry if they so choose is in the best interests of their children” (“Pediatrics Group Backs Gay Marriage, Saying It Helps Children” by Catherine Saint Louis, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, March 21, 2013, p. 1).

The Bible defines marriage as the union between a man and a woman (Gen. 2:24, Mark 10:2-9). Homosexual activity is forbidden and was given the death penalty in ancient Israel (Lev. 18:22, 20:13). It was because of sins, including homosexuality, that God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 18:20-21, 19:4-11). The U.S. is fast becoming like Sodom and Gomorrah, and will also face destruction for its sins! The time for America’s punishment grows closer each day!