



# The Tri-Cities Edifier

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## When Your Affections Become Divided

by Shawn Bain

A boy said to his girlfriend one night, "I don't have a lot of money like Jerome Green, but I sure do love you," to which she said nothing. The boy said, "I don't have a beautiful home like Jerome Green, but I really love you." She still remained silent. "I don't have a brand-new Porsche like Jerome Green," the boy said, "but you mean all the world to me." Finally, the girl said, "I love you, too, but will you tell me a little more about Jerome Green?"

Sometimes Christians "love" their attachment to Christ but have yet to tell others about Him. At times it may be their voice holds a greater interest in the world. Then we wonder why people are more interested in learning about all the things that go on in the world than they are about the things of Christ. Funny how that is!!

***It is quite natural and inevitable that, if we spend sixteen hours daily of our waking lives in thinking about the affairs of the world and five minutes in thinking about God and our souls, this world will seem two hundred times more real to us than God. -- William Ralph Inge***

Here is the way scripture places our affection and life together: "*If then you have been raised with Christ, **seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.***" (Colossians 3:1-4).

It is certain whatever our love is, our heart and life are attached to it. Our words speak it. Our attitudes demonstrate it. Whenever someone or something tries to break up and tear us from our affections, how rich and deep are our real affections? "I love Jesus", but I can't let go of my job. "I love God", but I can't lose my friends. "I love the Lord", but "I can't miss the game". "I love Jesus", but "what about how I feel?"

I know about the world, and what others are doing in it. Tell me more about how to love God, Jesus, and righteousness if that is who and what you love!

## The Excellence of His Majesty

By Greg Chandler

History is an essential part of a well-rounded education. This is not the case from the standpoint of memorizing dates or battles or lists of leaders; it is from learning what makes humans "tick." It is from learning what worked toward success and, conversely, what led to failure.

One can truly know the importance of history from reading the Bible. Within its pages, God has meticulously recorded both personal and national histories as a way of teaching how He wants humans to approach Him. These lessons should not be lost on the Bible student. Studying through these sordid histories not only teaches the human condition, but it also teaches how one can strive for humanity's God-given goal: Eternal life with Him.

For all of history's benefits, there is also a tragic element. Humans have a keen tendency to allow the past to master their present. One way this happens is by resting on past accomplishments and failing to progress. The Apostle Paul warned

about such an attitude when he wrote, “But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:13b-14). Not “peaking too early” should be the goal of every child of God! Every year of one’s life should illustrate this desire to press forward in Christ.

Another side of this tragic element is allowing guilt over past wrongs to place restraints on moving forward. Reckless living in youth, spiritual failure of one’s adult children, and years spent in apathetic service to God are examples of the kinds of things that create a burden of guilt, making one believe that a positive way forward with Him is unachievable. Such an attitude clouds over God’s love of forgiveness and His promise to help one move forward. The apostles Peter and Paul certainly attest that past wrongs do not diminish a spiritually rich future.

To allow one’s future to be held captive by the past is a clever tool of the enemy. Borrowing a well-worn phrase, it allows a man “to become his own worst enemy.” While the past can provide good teaching, it must never become a controlling force over one’s future.

What follows is a writing that was recently shared with me that highlights the dangers of allowing the past to serve as master. Take time to read and meditate on the rich truths found within it. Above all, remember that past successes or failures are just that – past. With every new morning, God gives opportunity to progress in faith and, through his love and grace, grow better prepared for the grand promise of eternal life to come.

## What Does God Desire For Us?

Joe Greer

The question posed in the title is reasonable enough. It is natural for us to wonder what is on the mind of God and what He is thinking for His creation. It may be hard for us, well ... no, it is impossible for us to fully understand all that God knows and has in His mind. Jehovah God spoke, **“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, declares the Lord. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.”** (Isaiah 55:8-9) That makes it very plain—God is on a different level than us. We cannot ‘read the mind’ of God, and yet, we really can know what He wants for mankind. He has never made His will a secret but has revealed His desire for us.

God **“desires all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.”** (1 Timothy 2:4) There it is ... God’s will for us. To know the truth. Truth is our means of salvation and how we come to know God and His will. Truth is why Jesus came to earth ... **“I came into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.”** (John 18:37) Jesus said, **“And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”** (John 8:32) Truth is what delivers us to freedom from sins. How can we understand God’s desire for us? To know His truth which will set us free from sin.

Perhaps the next question would be: What are we going to do with the truth? The apostle Paul rejoiced at the response to truth in Rome, **“But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.”** (Romans 6:17-18) What will you do with truth?