

# THE PIONEER BAPTIST

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## BRYAN STATION BAPTIST CHURCH

### PLODDING THROUGH PROVERBS

Two Messages from a Series by Pastor Tom Ross

*“Accuse not a servant unto his master, lest he curse thee, and thou be found guilty”* (Proverbs 30:10).

Servants or slaves in ancient times found themselves in a most distressful situation. Slavery was and is a reflection of the worst of human depravity where men feel compelled to own and control other men. I doubt if there has ever been a time in human history where our world has been free from the inhumanity of slavery. It is still common today in the sex trafficking business, though its wickedness is rarely exposed because those in power are often enriched by it. It is also common in Muslim countries where infidels are either killed or enslaved by Islamic jihadists.

A slave was completely at the mercy of his master. He had no recourse whatsoever if someone accused him of a crime. The wise man is urging men to take this into account before they accuse a slave of some wrongdoing. At best he would be severely punished and often mercilessly beaten, at worst he would be killed at the behest of his master. How wicked it would be to falsely accuse a slave of some wrongdoing in light of these penalties. It is wrong to slander someone under any circumstances, but it is even more grievous when the accused has no recourse in a

court of law. We should ever be mindful of the Golden Rule prescribed by our Gracious Master: *“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets”* (Matthew 7:12). No one in their right mind would want to have someone falsely accuse them of wrongdoing when they knew they were innocent. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Don’t slander, falsely accuse, be meddlesome, or gossip about others. The Lord Jesus knew the emotional pain of false accusations that ultimately led to His painful execution at the hands wicked men. Those who use their tongues to cut and slander others falsely are emulating the devil, who is the accuser of the brethren.

Charles Bridges wrote: *“Beware of the busy wantonness of the talebearer”* (Leviticus 19:16). Never make trouble for trifles; or accuse the servant, when he may not have the full liberty and power to defend himself. When conscience does not constrain us to speak, the law of love always supplies a reason for silence. The Jewish servants were ordinarily slaves, for the most part crushed by their masters’ oppression. Cruel therefore would it be without strong cause to heap degradation upon a sinking fellow-creature, for whom the Mosaic law

prescribed kindness and protection (Deuteronomy 23:15).

When a man falsely accuses a servant, it may prompt the servant to curse the accuser in return. Often those who are in the business of spreading lies and falsehoods about others are guilty themselves. Sometimes they are guilty of the very thing they are accusing someone else of in order to cover their own sin. Be sure your sin will find you out. The powerful may get away with slander in this life, but the ear of the Almighty hears every false accusation and His omniscient eye sees every injustice. God will judge all of the ungodliness that is covered up by men. Such men are double cursed, first by the innocent, and then by God for all eternity in the Lake which burns with fire and brimstone.

Let us use extra caution before we accuse someone of wrongdoing. It is hypocrisy worthy of judgment to accuse others of what we ourselves are guilty of. Matthew 7:1-5 should always be our standard: *“Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, be-*

*hold, a beam in in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."*

*"There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother"* (Proverbs 30:11).

Agur begins to comment on four distinct generations of people that may be found in every age due to the severity of human depravity. The generations of mankind pass on their wickedness and depravity to their progeny. This truth may be established by examining how the sin nature has been passed down through the centuries beginning with fallen Adam up to the present day. Ever since Adam and Eve fell in the garden of Eden every single person who has descended from them has been conceived in sin and born a sinner with only one miraculous exception. The Lord Jesus Christ was conceived in the womb of Mary by the overshadowing power of the Holy Spirit when she was still a virgin. The Lord Jesus is the only person since the fall of Adam who was free from sin in conception, birth, and in life. He had no sin nature and hence committed no sin during His earthly life. Jesus Christ never cursed His Father, nor did He displease the Father in any way. In fact, Jesus was the only person who could honestly say *"...I do always those things that please him"* (John 8:29). Jesus was holy, harmless, and separate from sinners. When He went to the cross the sins of all those that the Father had given Him in the covenant of grace were imputed to Him as He suffered as a vicarious substitute for all who would believe the Gospel in time. Jesus offered His obedience, merit, and precious blood as a perfect sacrifice to redeem His people. It

amazes me that that Lord Jesus Christ, who had no sin of His own, was so willing to suffer for my cursing and sins. He was cursed for my cursing, my blasphemy, and my wickedness. Galatians 3:13 declares: *"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."* There is not a greater or more noble display of love and grace, especially when I consider how unworthy I am of even a drop of mercy. I have always marveled at the truths expressed in II Corinthians 5:21 and 8:9: *"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him...For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."* Jesus took my sin and poverty and gave me His righteousness and riches in return. Hallelujah, what a Savior!

*"The thing that hath been it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun"* (Ecclesiastes 1:9). In every generation of men there have been those who have dishonored their father and mother. Some in more heinous and grievous ways, but every man and woman is guilty to some degree of a breach of the fifth commandment expressed in the Moral Law. Agur notes the wickedness of a man who curses his father and fails to bless his mother. It is a special kind of dark depravity that curses the very people responsible for one's existence. This sin was perceived to be so wicked in ancient times that God ordered that anyone who cursed his father or mother by way of persistent rebellion would suffer the horrific judg-

ment of public stoning (Deuteronomy 21:18-21). I am sure that every generation of men has lamented the disrespect of children for their parents as it is manifested in rebellion and disobedience. This kind of wickedness will be especially prevalent in the last days according to II Timothy 3:1-2, 13: *"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholily...But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived."* May God deliver us from the scourge of wicked and rebellious children! It is the lowest of the low who fails to bless and be a blessing to his mother. Let us pray fervently for the Word of God to restrain their depravity until the Spirit of God is pleased to give them spiritual life and a heart for the things of God.

I like the observation and concern of Charles Bridges who wrote the following in 1846:

*"Many are the forms, in which this proud abomination shews itself; resistance of a parent's authority, contempt of his reproof, shamelessly defiling his name, needlessly exposing his sin, coveting his substance, denying his obligation. Most fearful is the increase of this generation among ourselves. Every village bears sad testimony to this crying sin, that brings down many a parent's grey hairs with sorrow to the grave, and spreads anarchy throughout the whole land. No plea of extenuation can be allowed to justify the sin. The authority of parents, even in the lowest degradation, must be respected, when we dare not, must not, follow their examples."* (page 600)



## THE CURSE OF SELF RIGHTEOUSNESS

***“There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness” (Proverbs 30:12)***

Self righteousness is one of the greatest scourges found in every generation of men. Those who think they are pure are guilty of the greatest self delusion. A man who thinks he is pure is not being honest. If he were to measure himself against God’s holy law he would quickly agree with Romans 3:23: *“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”* Every man is defiled by the disease of sin. No one is exempt from a filthy nature that loves sin and despises holiness. Job 15:16 asks: *“How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water?”* Just as the physical nature of man needs water to survive, so the fleshly nature of man craves iniquity and ungodliness. The natural man loves the darkness of sin and rejects the light of Christ’s holiness. There is absolutely nothing that is pure or holy in the natural man. Isaiah the prophet observed: *“Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and purifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment”* (Isaiah 1:5-6). The idea set forth is that the natural man is from head to toe likened to an infected, open sore oozing with pus and blood that is so rotten it stinks. Every moral faculty of man has been polluted and corrupted by sin. Jeremiah 17:9 declares: *“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?”* Romans 8:7-8 states: *“Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.”* Isaiah 66:3b-4 reveals: *“Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations. I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer;*

*when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not.”* The wicked heart of man reveals his impure affections that are set upon iniquity. The carnal mind is hostile to the law of God. The heart and mind act in concert with man’s perverted will to choose that which is sinful and abominable. There is no sense whatsoever that man can be considered pure in the eyes of a holy God. However, man’s wicked heart, darkened mind, and corrupt will have combined to somehow convince the self righteous that they are pure in their own eyes. Someone may object and say “I certainly can’t be as bad as all that!” The truth is you are probably far worse in God’s estimation. God’s Word plainly states: *“For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not”* (Ecclesiastes 7:20). Romans 3:12 declares: *“They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one.”* The failure to understand the doctrine of man’s total depravity is at the foundation of every false religious system and every failed political ideology.

Worse still, the man who is pure in his own eyes is unwashed from his filthiness. He sees no need of the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ. He is content to wallow in his sins like a pig in the slop, thinking all the while that he is alright. The natural man is so blinded by Satan and bound by sin he actually thinks that he is good enough to be accepted by God. He is deceiving himself according to I John 1:8 and 10: *“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us...If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”* Most people have a very high estimation of themselves and their religiosity. This is why the doctrine of works salvation thrives in man made religious systems. The natural man loves to devise his own way of salvation through sacraments, standards, law keeping, good works, and water of all things! All the devices of the natural man serve to bolster his self confidence and self righteousness. Yet the very best works of righteousness the natural man may offer God are not enough. Isaiah 64:6

declares: *“But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind have taken us away.”* The very things that man trusts in to make him acceptable to God are considered to be nothing more than unclean, filthy rags. The self righteous man faces a terrible dilemma. He deceives himself into thinking that he is alright with God and as a result sees no need for cleansing from sin. He will remain in his moral filthiness throughout all eternity in the Lake of Fire. Revelation 22:11 states: *“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still...”*

The only way a man can be saved from self delusion and self righteousness is for God to intervene in sovereign grace. God must open the blinded eyes of the natural man enabling him to see his sinful condition and need of Jesus Christ. God must change the darkened heart of man so that he may turn to Christ Jesus alone for righteousness and peace. God must overpower the perverted will of man and make him willing in the day of His power. Thank God, He does all of this when He begins His work of grace in the elect! *“For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ”* (II Corinthians 4:6).

It is the height of folly for someone who professes to be a Christian to be guilty of this type of self righteousness. A true believer is indwelt and enlightened by the Holy Spirit of God. As such he must painfully agree with the apostle who lamented *“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not...O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”* (Romans 7:18, 24) An honest believer acknowledges he is impure and unclean and in need of daily cleansing through the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit applying the Word of God. He longs for the purity and holiness of the Lord Jesus Christ to shine through him.

