

YOUNG PRECIOUS SEED

is a supplement of *Precious Seed*, designed for those young in the faith. Its purpose is to restate timeless truths from the word of God for a new generation of Christians and to kindle a biblical approach to current issues in the world in which we live. YPS is published by *Precious Seed*, PO Box 8,829, Derby, DE1 0SY, UK, and is available separately from the main magazine.



Editor's Introduction

Welcome to the February issue of YPS.

The start of the year is the time when many of us 'restart' our Bible reading plans – how is it going for you? It is good at any

time to encourage ourselves, to 'give attendance to reading', 1 Tim. 4. 13, every day.

I hope that you find the articles in this issue to be enjoyable and a blessing.

Andrew Dutton

Seeing the world through a biblical lens – biblical masculinity

STEPHEN G. BAKER, LIVERPOOL, ENGLAND

In recent articles, we have discussed God's creation of human beings at the beginning of time. When describing this act of creation, God states, 'So God created man in his own image, in the image of God, created he him; male and female created he them', Gen. 1. 27. This statement makes it clear that God did not create two identical people but rather two unique individuals with many similarities. Thus, masculinity and femininity are not products of human social structures but are part of God's design. Both men and women were created to reflect different aspects of God's nature. In the case of men, this includes strength, wisdom, protection, and love.

One significant issue in 21st-century Western civilization is the lack of identity that many people feel. The Creator's intention was for men to embrace their identity as men. It's important to clarify what I mean, as historically some men have exhibited chauvinism, aggression, arrogance, and excessive assertiveness. Genesis chapter 3 verse 16 hints at these traits as consequences of sin entering the world.

To truly understand what God means by masculinity, we need to read scripture carefully. Masculinity does not imply a lack of feelings or emotions, nor does it mean that a man should be aggressive, proud, or hard-hearted. Such behaviours are often the result of sin and diverge from God's original intentions for men.

The scriptures indicate that a man should embrace adventure (as seen in the stories of David, Samson, etc.), possess the capacity to work hard, and use his physical strength for the purpose of providing for and protecting his family, 1 Tim. 5. 8. Provision is not limited to financial means; it also includes emotional, spiritual, and relational support. A biblically masculine man takes responsibility for his family's well-being and nurtures their growth. To fulfil this role, a man needs strength. Joshua chapter 1 verse 9 commands,

'Be strong and of a good courage: be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God will be with thee whithsoever thou goest'. Biblical masculinity involves trusting God in the face of fear and leading others with confidence grounded in the Lord.

Masculinity is not a justification for oppression or rudeness. Instead, it is the God-given capacity to embrace adventure, remain steadfast in difficult situations, and demonstrate the strength and skill that God has bestowed upon men, 1 Cor. 16. 13. This call to vigilance and courage is not about physical dominance but about spiritual resilience. Men are encouraged to stand firm in truth, defend righteousness, and lead with conviction. It is crucial to note that this does not imply that men are better than women, but that men are distinct from women, 1 Cor. 11. 8-12. The Lord Jesus exemplified humble masculinity, as described in John chapter 13, when He washed His disciples' feet – a task reserved for servants. True masculinity follows Christ's example by serving, protecting, and uplifting those in one's care.

Paul's exhortation in 1 Timothy chapter 6 verse 11 provides a blueprint for masculine virtues, 'But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and gentleness' NKJV. These traits, often overlooked in modern portrayals of masculinity, are central to the biblical model. Gentleness and endurance are not signs of weakness but indicators of spiritual maturity.

In our next article in this series, we will explore femininity. As I conclude, I want to remind all males reading this article that they possess unique capacities and abilities that differ from their female counterparts. It is essential to use these characteristics wisely, for the glory of God, and for the good of others.



Gone, but not forgotten. Epitaphs of the kings of Judah

RICHARD SMITH, BRIDGE OF WEIR, SCOTLAND

All quotations are taken from the New King James Version

Uzziah and his pride

The ages of kings when their reign began are interesting. Joash and Josiah were seven and eight years old respectively. Manasseh was twelve. By comparison Ahaz, at twenty, was practically a pensioner! Uzziah was sixteen. He was very young and inexperienced. However, youth should never be a barrier to service for the Lord, 'Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity', 1 Tim. 4. 12.

From the start Uzziah did that which was right before the Lord, 2 Chr. 26. 4. He sought the Lord, v. 5, or he set himself to seek the Lord. He did this in several ways:

- He took the instruction of Zechariah, v. 5.
- He went to war with God's enemies, v. 6.
- He built strong cities in their land, v. 6.
- He built towers in Jerusalem and in the wilderness for watchmen to spot threats, vv. 9, 10.
- He built wells, v. 10.
- He built a strong military, v. 11.

There are a number of positive lessons to learn from Uzziah:

- Experience matters – we should always be willing to learn from those who have walked this road before.
- The world, the flesh, and the Devil are all at enmity with God. We should declare war on them. If not, we can be sure that they will defeat us.
- We have no choice but to live in the world. We must be well-defended from its attacks.
- Our enemies are sly and subtle – always be watchful.
- We should never take our refreshment from the world – our source of refreshment is the One who gives 'living water'.
- The weapons of our warfare are spiritual. God has given us His armour, 'be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil', Eph. 6. 10, 11. Much could be said about these verses, ultimately our best defence is God Himself, a knowledge of His word, and regular communication through prayer.

Uzziah was very successful:

- God helped him, v. 7.
- His enemies honoured him, v. 8.
- He became very strong.
- He had large herds, farms, and vines.

BUT – often a terrible word in the Bible

'But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up, to his destruction', v. 16. He became 'full of himself', entering the temple to burn incense – that was a job for the priest. When the priests withstood him, Uzziah became angry. As they watched, leprosy entered his forehead. He was banished from the temple, the palace, even the city. Uzziah died a leper. He was buried, not



in the kings' tomb, but in the kings' field. What a fall from grace, all because of pride.

Pride is listed as one of the great causes of sin in the world, 1 John 2. 6, the Lord says it comes from within and defiles a man, Mark 7. 20-23, and it is in the list of 'deadly sins' that the Lord hates, Prov. 6. 17. Pride is essentially self-worship, taking what is God's and bestowing it on ourselves. Pride should never be in our thinking. There are a number of causes of pride including:

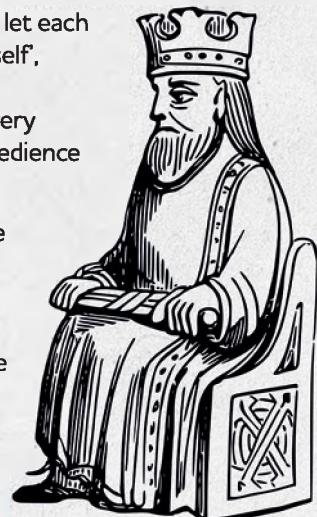
- **Knowledge, 1 Cor. 8. 1:** Knowledge puffs up. As we increase in knowledge of the word of God our knowledge must not induce pride. Instead, it should lead to humility as we increase in appreciation of God.
- **Wealth, 1 Tim. 6. 10:** The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. At times, it causes us to be 'haughty', leaving others feeling less worthy. Wealth is not a reason to glory, 'What do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?' 1 Cor. 4. 7.
- **Good looks, Isa. 3. 16-18:** There is nothing wrong with being attractive. A problem arises when a person's attractiveness becomes a source of pride to them. We live in a day when it seems that, for many, the only thing they have in their favour is their appearance. If you are a good-looking person, the Lord bless you, and may you use your good looks to God's glory rather than yours, and may your beauty be that which is within.
- **Lack of understanding of the Lord, Prov. 8. 13:** 'Pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverse mouth I hate'.

Pride exalts self, it should always be our ambition for only the Lord to be exalted, Isa. 2. 11. Pride causes division, Prov. 16. 18, and disgrace, 11. 2, and is opposed by God, 3. 34.

How do we avoid pride?

- **Love:** 'Love does not parade itself, is not puffed up', 1 Cor. 13. 4.
- **Lowliness:** 'In lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself', Phil. 2. 3.
- **Likeness to Christ:** 'bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ', 2 Cor. 10. 5.

It's easy to see where Uzziah's pride came from. Let's determine not to follow that path. Isaiah knew who glory should be ascribed to, 'In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple', Isa. 6. 1. Do we appreciate the glory of the Lord?



Christian basics – spiritual gifts

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'They are gifted' is a term often reserved for talented musicians and artists or successful sports personalities. The phrase refers to natural abilities that very often are supplemented with hard work and dedication.

'They are gifted' also refers to Christians, not a select group, but every believer in the Lord Jesus, not in the sense of natural abilities, but spiritual gifts. We can and should use the natural abilities that we have in service for the Lord, but there is a very important principle that each one has received a spiritual gift, 1. Cor. 12. 1; 1 Pet. 4. 10, DAVID NEWELL said helpfully, 'Spiritual gifts ... are enablements given by God through the Holy Spirit to all believers so that they can effectively function in the body of Christ'.¹

Difference of gifts in the body

Paul teaches the Corinthians that Christians make up 'one body', 1 Cor. 12. 12, 'not one member, but many', v. 14. Just as the human body needs many body parts to function in harmony, all believers need to work together using their different gifts as God has 'set ... [them] in the church', v. 28, for the benefit of each other, and to the glory of the Lord.

Distribution of gifts

In Ephesians chapter 4, Paul indicates that the Lord Jesus, who has 'ascended up far above all heavens', v. 10, has given men, 'some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ', vv. 11, 12. The emphasis here is on the individuals, using different gifts given by the Lord to benefit the people of God. Other teaching emphasizes the gift itself, 'do the work of an evangelist', 2 Tim. 4. 5. The point is that God 'works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills', 1 Cor. 12. 11 NKJV.

Development of gifts

Writing to Timothy, Paul encourages him to 'neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee', 1 Tim. 4. 14. This instruction can be applied to all of us as believers. We must not abandon or be careless with our spiritual gift. We need to work hard at it. All gifts require us to 'study to shew thyself approved unto God ... rightly dividing the word of truth', 2 Tim. 2. 15; this instruction to study and understand the word of God isn't just for the Bible teacher! Paul also tells Timothy to 'endure afflictions', when doing 'the work of an evangelist', 4. 5. Just as natural abilities require hard work and dedication, so do spiritual gifts!

Practical points to note

In considering your spiritual gift, the following points may help you:



- Through prayer, commit to God and be serious about your spiritual gift.
- If you are unsure what your gift is, pray about this too. Ask the Lord for help in finding ways to serve Him. As a result, you may develop a special interest in some works – we sometimes refer to this as being 'burdened'.
- Be open to serve the Lord in a variety of ways, and work hard at the things that you commit to do.
- Consider the guidance of older believers. When I was young, I adopted a principle of trying to do anything that I was asked to do by an older believer, and this helped me identify the areas of service I was fitted to.
- Preparation is required. Paul spent three years being prepared by God for service, Gal. 1. 15-18.
- Realize that gifts need to be used to be developed.

¹ D. J. NEWELL, *Letters to a New Believer*, Ritchie, pg. 131.

Saints' CVs: Amy Carmichael

BY JEREMY SINGER, BRIDGE OF WEIR, SCOTLAND

AMY CARMICHAEL 1867-1951

Amy Beatrice Carmichael was born into a prosperous Victorian family in Millisle, County Down, Northern Ireland. She was the eldest of seven children. Amy trusted the Lord at an early age.

She was always sympathetic to people in need. As a teenager, she encountered the 'shawlies' – rough, working-class girls in Belfast who could only afford cheap woollen shawls rather than proper hats. She was instrumental in setting up and running the Welcome Hall, an outreach mission to these girls where they could hear the gospel message and see the love of God in action through the kindness of believers.

Amy moved to Manchester, England, with her mother and younger sisters when the family fell into poverty, shortly after the death of her father. Here she became involved with the Keswick movement, meeting influential leaders like Hudson Taylor and F. B. Meyer. Amy felt an urgent call to missionary service. In 1893, she sailed for Japan as the first missionary to be supported directly by the Keswick Convention. However, poor health forced her to return after little more than one year.

Following a brief visit home, she left for the South of India in 1895 and remained in that country for the next half a century. Amy learned to speak and read the Tamil language fluently. She observed, humorously, that if God could make a donkey speak, then He could teach her another language.¹ Following the example of Hudson Taylor, she integrated with the community by adopting their local dress and food.

Amy travelled around villages teaching women and children about the Bible. The biggest problem she encountered was the prevalence of idol temples, where young girls would be 'married to the gods', effectively sold into immorality, similar to first-century pagan practices.

Amy began rescuing temple children, protecting them from this terrible life of abuse and slavery. She encountered severe persecution, including at one stage being accused by the authorities of kidnapping children. Eventually, Amy set up a residential centre for young people in Dohnavur, Tamil Nadu state. The Dohnavur mission which she founded remains in operation today.² Children affectionately called her 'Amma', which means mother in the Tamil language. Although she had left her family behind in Britain, Amy enjoyed the friendship and loyalty of many children at Dohnavur.

She was a prolific author, publishing over thirty books. Many of these were written after a serious accident in 1931 which left her with limited mobility. Her primary audience was back home in Britain, as she informed them about the remarkable spiritual need in India. However, she never solicited funds directly; like Müller and others, she always looked in faith to the Lord for

provision
of her
needs. The
Dohnavur
Fellowship
runs on identical
principles today.

Carmichael was a gifted poet, producing many striking devotional works. Some of these have been set to music as hymns, such as *Make me Thy fuel, Flame of God*.³

From subtle love of softening things,
From easy choices, weakenings,
Not thus are spirits fortified,
Not this way went the Crucified;
From all that dims Thy Calvary,
O Lamb of God, deliver me.

Give me the love that leads the way,
The faith that nothing can dismay,
The hope no disappointments tire,
The passion that will burn like fire;
Let me not sink to be a clod;
Make me Thy fuel, Flame of God.

She also wrote a meditative commentary on 1 Corinthians chapter 13, entitled *If: What Do I Know Of Calvary Love?*⁴ Some of her challenging statements are shown below.

'If I can easily discuss the shortcomings and the sins of any; if I can speak in a casual way even of a child's misdoings, then I know nothing of Calvary love'.

'If my interest in the work of others is cool; if I think in terms of my own special work; if the burdens of others are not my burdens too, and their joys mine, then I know nothing of Calvary love'.

'If I covet any place on earth but the dust at the foot of the Cross, then I know nothing of Calvary love'.

Amy Carmichael is buried at Dohnavur in India; by her own request, there is no headstone to mark her grave. There is a statue of Carmichael in Belfast, as well as a blue plaque in her birthplace of Millisle. However, her powerful legacy consists of the many children rescued from temple slavery and her stirring devotional writings.

¹ FRANK HOUGHTON, *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur*, SPCK, 1959, pg. 96.

² See: <https://dohnavurfellowship.org>.

³ AMY CARMICHAEL, *Toward Jerusalem*, CLC, 1989.

⁴ AMY CARMICHAEL, *If*, CLC, 1992

