

Dr. James L. Hayes

## Video Courses Now in Production

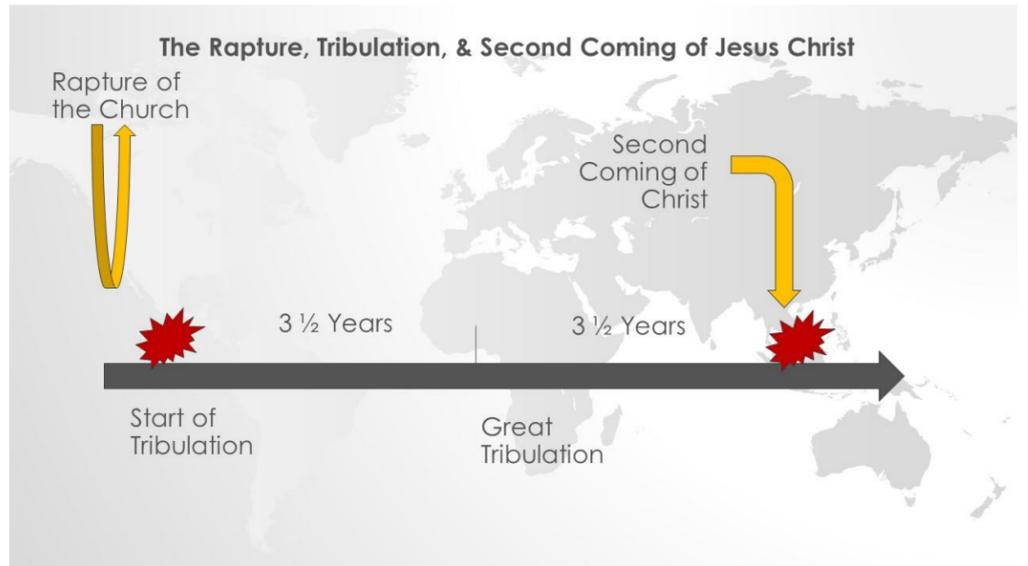
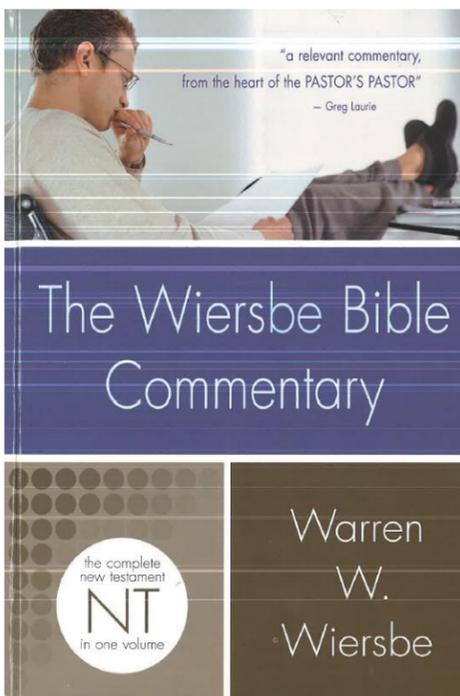
Gospel of Matthew Underway

Dr. James L. Hayes has been pastoring a local Baptist church in deep Southwest Georgia for over a year. But during that time, he has been preparing the lecture material for the new course on Matthew. He has also presented much of the material to the congregation, and their feedback has been invaluable in fine-tuning the material as he prepares the lectures for ATS undergraduate students.

The current plan is for Dr. Hayes and other professors to prepare twenty video courses for the Associate of Biblical Studies program. These twenty courses will cover the entire New Testament in a passage-by-passage format in the Gospels and a verse-by-verse format in the Epistles.

Each video course will contain approximately forty one-hour lectures, giving the students ample opportunity to learn more about the New Testament than ever before. Based upon the Warren Wiersbe New Testament Bible Commentary, the courses will be rich in practical application. But the professors will inject much theological insight into the course lectures as well. This practical-theological balance will prepare students for the pulpit as well as advanced seminary studies, for they will have a solid foundation built upon God's word.

Dr. Hayes hopes for Matthew, along with other video courses, to be completed by Spring 2024. Please be in prayer for this large project, for many elements must be coordinated for the project to run smoothly and in a timely fashion.



Dr. Edwards course on Eschatology focuses upon events from the Rapture until the end of the ages.

Office of Academic Affairs

## Dr. Randy Edwards to Prepare New Courses

Wonderful News for All ATS Students

With a clipped Southern drawl, Dr. Edwards welcomes students to his online course in Eschatology, "From the Rapture Until." Opening as always with a prayer for the students, Dr. Edwards quickly moves into the meat of his lecture for the day. And students sit in rapt attention for the next forty minutes, listening and learning about the events of the end times in simple but profound teaching.

Students have been experiencing this setting since the days when ATS taught students via audio-cassette tapes. In fact, Dr. Edwards' course was originally taught on audio-cassette tape, then transferred to CD, then transferred to thumb-drive, and now to an online format. Yet, though the format has changed, Dr. Edwards' course has remained the same for over two decades, and it has blessed over ten thousand students during that time.

Now, Dr. Edwards is ready to bless ATS students again. If all goes according to plan, Dr. Edwards will reteach his course on Eschatology, which will serve as an introduction to the end times at the undergraduate

level. He will also teach a course on Evangelism at the undergraduate level based upon his C.O.R.P.S. model. At the graduate and doctoral levels, Dr. Edwards will be teaching Daniel and Revelation respectively. He may also prepare a course on Christian Life Skills at the Associate level. These five courses surely will be a great blessing to the students, as time has proven Dr. Edwards to be a great instructor who teaches plainly while inspiring students to do the work of the Kingdom here and now.

The new courses will be taught as multimedia presentations, with PowerPoint slides being coordinated with Dr. Edwards' lectures. The Office of Academic Affairs notes that the new format will engage the students more than lecture alone, and it will also allow ATS to monitor student's activity on the online course learning system even more closely.

In a recent letter to Dr. Hayes, Dr. Edwards related that one of his favorite classes continues to be Eschatology. Also, more recently Dr. Edwards has been teaching on Christian life skills from the Sermon on the Mount.

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### 2022 Mother's Day Sermon

By Dr. James L. Hayes

Dr. James Hayes's sermon to Coolidge Memorial Baptist Church, Coolidge, Georgia, 2022. **Page 2**

### CALL FOR PROFESSORS

Now Hiring!

By Office of Academic Affairs

ATS is seeking new professors to prepare courses for the ATS undergraduate programs. More information on **Page 2**.

### The Goal of Counseling

Bringing God Glory

By Christian Counseling Department

The four-step process for proper counseling is presented for pastors and counselors alike. **Page 3**

Dr. James L. Hayes

## **A Woman's Value**

### **A Sermon Preached for Mother's Day 2022**

I do not have a text as such this morning. Rather, I have several texts that I want to put together to fix the lens of the Bible upon a very specific topic. And to study this topic, I want to begin with a question: **What is a woman's value?**

Now, I do not want to answer according to society's standards for they change from generation to generation. I do not want to answer according to sinful man's standards, for they are distorted by sin. Instead, I want to answer the question according to God's unchanging standard.

So, let us now answer the real question: **What is the Value of a Woman According to God?** Too many times, especially in the Baptist church, women are made to feel like second class citizens. Because it is unbiblical for a woman to preach from the pulpit and to be a pastor or a preacher of a church, men often take this as an excuse to belittle women in the church, in society, in the home. But this is a far different view of women than that which the Bible paints, and the Bible is the very word of

God. It is His final say on each topic that it addresses, and the Bible has much to say about women; therefore, God has much to say about women. And we had better start paying attention to God's words on this very important topic, for without a correct view of woman, man cannot be what God would have him to be, and creation—all of creation—suffers when the biblical view of a woman is distorted by Satan.

Now, like a good lawyer, I want to build a case this morning, and I want to start with the obvious, and work towards that which is often overlooked. I want to build a foundation on what is known so that we may reasonably speculate about what may be inferred. So, to start, I want to list a statistic that I found to be interesting: the word "woman" occurs in 335 verses in the Bible. That is an amazing statistic when I considered that the word "blood" only occurs in 375 verses. Think about it: all of those laws dealing with blood sacrifices in the Old Testament, and the very blood of Jesus Christ as the means of our salvation. And yet,

"woman" occurs nearly as many times as the important word "blood"!

Now, you cannot always know the importance of a word by a simple counting of its occurrences, but you can well mark that when a key word appears over 300 times in the Bible, it is important to God. So women are important to God, and God has much to say about them, and God begins His account and view of women from the very first act of the Bible's story—the creation of the universe.

Turn with me if you would to Genesis 1:1, *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.* God begins His account of history with the creation of the universe, and in this story, God progresses from the outer heavens down to the creation of mankind. But I want you to notice with me something very interesting in this account: the use of the word "good." The first occurrence of the word "good" is when God creates light and then He evaluates its value, its worth, and He uses this word **(Continued on Page 4)**

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Dr. James L. Hayes, Vice President of ATS

## **Atonement & Election**

### **Why Calvinism is Completely Wrong**

There are certainly several key passages in the Bible which deal with election, a fact that the Calvinist is quick to point out. However, the Calvinist twists these verses to fit a preconceived philosophical system. And the history of interpreting these passages is so voluminous that it takes many classroom lectures to discuss the implications and errors of the T.U.L.I.P. doctrines. Perhaps the two most unpalatable petals of the T.U.L.I.P. system are Unconditional Election and Limited Atonement, for they limit the work of Christ Jesus upon Calvary's cross to a few fortunate souls while the mass of humanity is passed over and damned due to God's failure to elect them. These teachings make God into a monstrous tyrant.

Now, in a setting such as this, we do not have time to delve into every aspect of the T.U.L.I.P. or even one of the petals in any detail. Nevertheless, we are compelled to discuss some of the aspects of the errors of Unconditional Election and Limited Atonement. And to this end, we will not tackle the mass of writings on the election passages, but we will examine a key Bible passage that speaks clearly on the matter of God's work and man's salvation. We will then draw some conclusions from the discussion, which hopefully will clear up the false teachings of Calvinism and will be a blessing to your ministry.

The passage to which I invite you to turn is Romans 5:12-21. In Romans 5:12-21, Adam and Jesus are the heads of their respective groups. As heads, their choices and actions affect each individual within that group. Paul states what each head did to/for "the many." So, let us examine the passage and see what Paul says concerning "the many" and God's plan of salvation for them.

Having read Romans 5:12-21 carefully and repeatedly, I would now have you turn your attention to Romans 5:12. Adam's action affected every individual whom Adam represents, which is clearly every person who has ever been born. At the moment of birth, a man is born "in Adam," for Adam is his head via the natural birth process. Every person that is born is born dead in trespasses and sins, for they are born "in Adam" (I Corinthians 15:22). Because all are under Adam's headship and because the head acts for those under his headship, the consequences of Adam's sin has been charged to each individual. (More needs to be said about the difference between Inherited Consequences and Inherited Guilt. We hold to Inherited Consequences, but we will discuss this matter more fully in later articles). Therefore, we may conclude based upon God's word that all are sinners. **(Continued on Page 3)**

Office of Academic Affairs

### **CALL FOR NEW PROFESSORS**

ATS is seeking new professors to prepare undergraduate courses for the Th.B. and B.Min. programs. The Associate of Biblical Studies program will survey the entire New Testament. The bachelor's programs, therefore, will round out the basic ministry training of the ATS student. To this end, ATS is seeking courses in the following areas:

- 1) Systematic Theology
- 2) Old Testament Exposition
- 3) Expository Preaching
- 4) Hermeneutics
- 5) Dispensationalism
- 6) Calvinism & Arminianism Refutation
- 7) Theological Writing

Sample ideas for courses are listed below:

- 1) Doctrine of God
- 2) Doctrine of Man & Sin
- 3) Doctrine of the Church
- 4) Genesis 1-11
- 5) Genesis 12-50
- 6) Major Prophets
- 7) Minor Prophets

If you are interested in preparing a course for the seminary, please email Dr. James Hayes, Vice President of Academic Affairs, to notify him of your desire to teach. He will email you the general requirements for preparing a course. He will then request a proposed syllabus for the course, which he will review for approval. After approval is received, the professor may begin recording your lectures. **Continued on Page 3.**

## The Goal of Biblical Counseling

### An Overview of the Counseling Process

ATS Christian Counseling Department

Biblical counseling is the greatest hope for those who are struggling with the deep issues of the human experience. Whether one is caught up in an extra-marital affair, is hooked on pornography, is grieving a great loss, or is preparing for marriage, biblical counseling addresses all of these issues and any other faced by all people. How can we assert that this bold claim is absolutely true? Because the Bible is a book written to address man's problems, from his salvation problem to his daily walk with God. A quick glance at Psalms and Proverbs will prove this assertion beyond all question.

At the heart of every problem is sin. It may be the sin of the counselee, a sin against the counselee, or both; but sin is the issue. Therefore, since sin is the crux of every counseling situation not due to a physical element, the Bible should be expected to address the issue and offer a solution to the issue. It is simply a matter of finding the passages that address the issue and skillfully applying that passage to the problem(s) at hand.

To this end, we suggest a four-step process to applying God's word. The process moves the counselee from salvation (or security of salvation) to sanctification, which is the ultimate goal of all true counseling.

Step one in the process is to verify that the counselee is a Christian. No true counseling can occur if the counselor and counselee are not both Christians, for the Holy Spirit indwells only those who are believers. And, without the Holy Spirit the counselee is left to fend for himself through his own human efforts, which ultimately will fail, for the flesh is weak. But with the Holy Spirit, the Christian has an awesome resource that lifts them beyond human effort and blesses them with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.

If the counselee is a Christian, he or she may need to be taught their position in Christ. They are preserved forever, eternally secure, in Jesus Christ. It simply remains, therefore, for the Christian to develop spiritually into the saint that God desires them to be. (cont'd on pg 5)

### Call for Professors

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You will submit your first lecture to Dr. Hayes for approval. After receiving approval, the professor may continue recording following lectures. After submitting the course, the Academic Review Committee will review the course for approval. If approved, the course will be added to the ATS undergraduate curriculum.

For each course accepted by the Academic Review Committee, the professor will receive the agreed upon payment. For each Bachelor's course, the professor will receive the agreed upon payment.

All new lectures at the Bachelor's level will be recorded through PowerPoint presentations, allowing the student to see the key points of the lecture while listening to the professor. Dr. Hayes will assist all new professors in developing the presentations.

This is a great opportunity to reach thousands of students world-wide. God can use you to instruct preachers, teachers, and counselors of God's word in sound preparation for the ministry and for the ATS graduate programs. If each student you instructed were the pastor of a church of only 30 people, over the last year your instruction would have affected over 30,000 church attendees! And your teaching could last for many years to come, influencing untold thousands. Email Dr. Hayes at [JamesHayes@andersonvilleseminary.com](mailto:JamesHayes@andersonvilleseminary.com) for more information.

### Election & Atonement

Continued from Page 2

Now, focus upon Romans 5:15. The key to understanding this verse is to know who "the many" are. To decipher the meaning, we must take a step back and look at how Paul structures his argument. Paul begins the verse with the introductory clause, "There is a great difference between Adam's sin and God's gracious gift" (NLT). So, how does the gift differ from the offence? Importantly, note that Paul is not drawing a parallel between Adam and Christ! Instead, he is creating an anti-parallel connection between the gift and the offence. How does he accomplish this connection? Firstly, Paul makes the "many" the subject of the second phrase of the verse, but the object of the last phrase.

The second phrase reads, "For if by the one offence the many died." This is Inherited Consequences. The "many" (everyone) is the subject of the sentence, and as such it performs the action of the verb (died). The final phrase reads, "... the gift in grace by one man, Jesus Christ, abounded in excess to the many." Thus, clearly the grace of God and the gift of eternal life by grace abounded to the many (every person). The "many" is the indirect object of the sentence, stating to whom the action is directed. God's grace and gift, therefore, were offered to the many who were in Adam.

The anti-parallelism that Paul creates at this point sets the offence of Adam in contrast to the free gift provided by Jesus. The effect of Adam's work is NOT contrasted with the effect of Christ's work! The offence (sin) of Adam caused the many to die, whereas the gift of Christ did not cause the many to live. Rather, it was made available to the many. At this point in Paul's argument, the "many" are not caused to become righteous by the grace/gift of God, for this would result in every person being saved (universalism). The free gift, however, does bring the opportunity for justification, and Paul is very specific that the gift of eternal life has been made available to the many in Adam (every person). Romans 5:15, then, undermines the doctrine of Limited Atonement.

Look now at Romans 5:17, which substantiates the fact that God giving the free gift is not giving salvation to all people. Paul says on the one hand, by Adam's offence/sin death ruled by him. But, on the other hand, those who RECEIVE the free gift shall triumph over death by Jesus Christ. Those who RECEIVE the free gift are now represented by Jesus Christ. BELIEF causes the change in headship from Adam to Christ.

Verse 17 clearly states that death affected all people because of Adam's sin. But those who receive the gift of salvation now will reign with Christ. Adam's sin affected all people. The gift of salvation is offered to those same people, but only those who receive it are saved. There is no parallelism between Adam's sin and Christ's work. (See Figure 3)

Finally, verse 5:18 brings the matter to a conclusion. Having now established the basis for the contrast between the effect of Adam on the many (everyone) and the work of Christ on behalf of the many (everyone), Paul can now finish the contrast begun in 5:12.

The Romans 5 Model of Salvation gives priority to the work of Christ. Instead, however, of saying God chose some individuals for some unknown reason that we do not know, this interpretation says God chose individuals who are "in Christ." The work of Christ is the ground, the foundation, the very reason why God chose individuals. Election does have a basis—it is the finished and accepted work of Christ!

While this is not an exhaustive discussion on the passage, hopefully it gives you a foundation from which to consider the great Bible truth that God never passed over the many, but He has offered salvation to each who was doomed in Adam.

May God bless you as you contemplate these thoughts and as you continue to do His holy and perfect will!

## Sermon: A Woman's Value

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throughout His creative acts when He evaluates that which He has created—dry land, vegetation, and so on. But we find in Genesis 2's account of creation something quite remarkable—After God had pronounced so much of His creation “good,” He finds that part of His creation is incomplete. Look with me at Genesis 2:18-20, *And the LORD God said, [It is] not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. 19 And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought [them] unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that [was] the name thereof. 20 And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.*

I call your attention back to 2:18—“And the LORD God said, It is NOT GOOD that man should be alone”! Think with me now... all of creation, piece by piece, had been pronounced as good, but when God looked down and saw Adam by himself, God declared that His work was incomplete. And, in particular, man was incomplete without something being added to creation—and that something was a woman! And notice! When God added woman to creation, He stated something very remarkable—

Turn with me to Genesis 1:31, *And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, [it was] very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.* Now, remember! Genesis 1:31 happens after Genesis 2:18 chronologically. This means that when we follow the order of events in creation, God described everything up until the creation of woman as “good” except one thing—there was no companion for man. But once woman had been created, God said words that He had not yet uttered in relation to His creation—He said it was “very good”

What made the difference from “good” to “not good” to “very good”? The answer is simple: God completed His creation with one final act—He created a woman! Now, that alone should give you pause before you belittle women in the church or in the home. **So, my first point is this: God Gives Woman a High Place in the Evaluation of His Creation.**

Not only did God create woman to complete His creation, but God created woman with a particular purpose. I read Genesis 2:18 to you in the KJV a moment ago. It said that it was not good for man to be alone, so God created *an help meet for him*. But now I want to read from the NLT to help us understand what this “help meet for him” means: *Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him."* Notice that when God created woman, she was made as a helper who is “Just Right” for man.

What honor should a husband bestow upon his wife! When a man finds the wife that God has created for him, he has not found a maid or a cook. He has found a helper who is “just right for him”! Now, before you think too little of this word “help”, think on these verses: Psalm 33:20 *Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he [is] our help and our shield.* Psalm 70:5 *But I [am] poor and needy: make haste unto me, O God: thou [art] my help and my deliverer; O LORD, make no tarrying.* Psalm 115:11 *Ye that fear the LORD, trust in the LORD: he [is] their help and their shield.* God is our help! So the role of helper is not second fiddle. Remember this, for this is God's picture of a woman, especially of a godly wife. **So, my second point is this: God Gives a Woman a High Purpose in His Creation.**



Now, as a man's helper, the woman plays an integral role in the marriage relationship. We find the negative side of this role in Genesis 3. Just after God had placed Adam and Eve in the Garden to guard and keep it, Satan comes to Eve, and notice how the Bible words the story in Genesis 3:1—*Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?*

Yes, we often want to point the finger at the woman for falling for Satan's lie. And, yes, she was deceived. But WHY did Satan attack the woman? I think the answer is often overlooked: Satan used that which was GOOD to lead Adam away from that which was better. Satan did not use a skunk or a possum. He used for his tool that which completed man and completed creation—Why? Because Eve had an influence over her husband. Now, Eve misused that influence, But how many godly wives have used this influence for the good of their husbands, children, and homes? Influence is not an evil thing—unless misused. A wife's influence should be a valuable asset to the marriage. That's why I Peter says to give honor unto the wife. Honor literally means to weigh in the balance. So a godly wife, when her influence and ideas are weighed in the balance, should help bring stability and health to a home and a relationship. How valuable is a godly mother and wife...Whose words are found to outweigh the deceits and devices of this world! **So, my third point is this: God Gives Woman a High Purpose in Marriage.**

Not only does God give a woman a high place in the evaluation of His creation and a high purpose in His creation and a high purpose in marriage, but there is a fourth point: Turn with me to Judges 4:15-22. So, God won a great victory through the brave actions of a woman. Now remember with me the story of the spies of Israel when Joshua sent them out to spy out the Promised Land and Jericho. It was Rahab, a woman, who hid them, lied for them, and sent them away safely. If not for the woman, things might have gone very differently for a very long time. Think with me again of the story of Barak. Barak was a judge of Israel whom God commanded to attack the enemy, but instead of obeying God, he asked first for assistance. And whom did he ask?

He asked a woman named Deborah, whom God used to win a great victory for Israel

Now, again, think with me of the very bloodlines of Jesus Christ as found in the genealogy of Matthew. Matthew's genealogy proves that Jesus is the rightful king of Israel, the Son of David. But notice in v. 3, Tamar is mentioned. In v. 5, Rahab and Ruth are mentioned. In v. 6, Bathsheba is mentioned. And in v. 16, Mary is mentioned. God thought these OT women significant enough and He thought them important enough to list them for all eternity in the royal bloodlines of His Son Jesus Christ, the ultimate King of Israel. The record stands beyond dispute: God values women! **So, my fourth point is this: God Gives Woman a High Place in Old Testament History**

Now, we have seen Woman's high place in Old Testament history, but what of the New Testament? I think it a good question to ask how women are viewed in the New Testament, and I think we look no further than the Gospels before we see just how highly God values them, for He interweaves their stories with the very story of His Own Son, Jesus, as He came to live and die for our sins.

Look with me at Matthew 26:6-13. Jesus said, in effect, this woman is important! In fact, she's so important, I want her story to be recorded in the Bible itself for all eternity, so that whenever and wherever the Bible is read, this woman will be remembered. I want to honor her for her love and devotion and faith. Notice with me, too, that no man ever did for Jesus what this woman did! How precious was her action! How honorable was her thoughts! And how high a place she earned in the Gospels!

What about the woman in Luke 7? In Luke 7:36-50 we find another story of a woman interacting with Jesus.

Again, how precious! Never did a man such an act toward Christ! And her story is recorded for all eternity!

And, as a final example from the Gospels, consider Jesus's crucifixion. There he was, hanging on the cross, dying for the sins of the world, and what thought crosses His mind? Look at John 19:25-27. Notice, firstly, that he lists the women by name. Besides John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, there are no men to list! But notice secondly that one of Jesus's final thoughts is for His own mother to be taken care of. If there were no other verse in the Bible on women, this one would suffice to show what God thinks of women! He loves them, and He has honored them. **And so, my fifth point is this: God Gives Woman a High Place in New Testament History, too.**

But this does not exhaust the high value that God places on woman. Proverbs 31:10, a well-known passage, asks the question: *Who can find a virtuous and capable wife? She is more precious than rubies.* The passage goes on to describe the value that a godly woman brings to a home as a mother and a wife. For the sake of time, we will not read the passage, but I strongly encourage to read the passage the first chance you get, and think on the value that God places on a woman. **So, my sixth point is this: God Gives Woman a High Value in the Home**

Finally, I want you to consider this: God uses a woman to picture the dearest relationship known in all time and eternity between God and His creation. You say, Preacher, what on earth are you talking about? I'm glad you asked. It is found throughout the Bible that God pictures His relationship with Israel as the relationship between a man and a woman, a husband and wife. And God likens His chosen people, the nation of Israel, to a woman in Revelation 12. And Christ likens His relationship with the Church as the relationship between a man and a woman, a husband and wife. Now, why is this important? Because God could have chosen a thousand other pictures—Two brothers; Two best friends; A father and a son. But God chose a woman with which to illustrate His relationship with His people. No higher praise could be given. **So, my final point is this: God Gives High Position to Woman in Illustrating His Love for His People.**

I want to close with just a couple of thoughts. Now, to be the kind of woman that the Bible praises, you must first be a Christian. You cannot love your husband or family in the

way that God desires until you first love Him. And how do you love God? By accepting His Son Jesus. Jesus came and died for your sins, and if you will but trust Him, He will save you from Hell.

Don't you want to be the kind of woman whom God can point to and say, "There is a woman whose value is far above rubies!"? Then come to Him today!

Finally, I want you to think on this: God, looking over all creation, said it is good until He comes to man, and then He says, it is NOT GOOD that man should be alone—I will make a helper just right for him. And then, after He brings Eve to Adam, He reevaluates His creation, and He says, it is very good. What changed? Only one thing: God had created a woman!

Men, never again belittle a woman as being second class in this church or in the home, for God values them, and so, too, should you.

Women, you have a different role than men in the church and in the home. You cannot be a pastor or a deacon, and you cannot rule the house, but you can be all that God has called you to be. And what higher calling can there be?

I began my sermon by asking, "What is the Value of a Woman?" I close my case by putting the Bible's answer before you: God Himself highly values women. How do I know? Because God Himself gave woman a

... High place in His evaluation of creation

... high purpose in that creation

... high purpose in marriage

... high place in OT History

... high place in NT History

... high place in the home

... and God gave woman a high position in illustrating His love for His people.

So, women, you hold a special place in the heart of God as His word so clearly illustrates. Never forget this! And never let anyone take this truth from you!



## Goal of Biblical Counseling

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With salvation confidently established, the session can move to Step Two. The second step is to stop overt sinning by a change of mind. The second step is worded carefully and intentionally. The counselee must stop overt sinning immediately. The final change may take some time, which is to be expected. But if the saved counselee is brought face to face with God's view of the matter and the Holy Spirit begins to work within the counselee, then the counselee can see the immediate danger of continuing in the sin which is so deeply affecting him. And he can see the immediate benefits of stopping that sin. For example, consider Psalm 66:18, where the Holy Spirit states that the saint's prayers are unheard and unheeded if a person harbors sin within their heart. Or consider Galatians 6:7-8, where the Holy Spirit tells us that sin always has consequences. So, the action of the sin must cease immediately.

Step Three must be applied quickly once the sin has stopped due to the counselee realizing the risks he runs in continuing to sin. The third step is to stop holding onto covert sin and to stop identifying with sinful labels. One is not a "gay Christian." One is not a "adulterous Christian." One cannot hold onto the sin as though it is a part of their self-identity. All Christians are "in Christ." This, and this alone, is their identity. If the counselee finds his identity in Christ, he will cease to hold onto the sin in his heart, for his heart will be in tune with God's standards and commandments. In other words, the heart has changed masters and is no longer a slave to sin. Instead, through the application of the truth of God's word, the counselee truly is free to pursue holiness, for he is at peace with God.

Finally, the fourth step can be applied. With salvation assured, overt sin ceased, and covert sin removed, the counselee can start practicing godly actions. It is not enough to stop an adulterous affair, though that is essential. It is not enough to stop thinking adulterous thoughts, though that is essential. The lack of these things will only create a vacuum within the counselee's life, for it is these things with which he has been occupying his time. Now, to fill the void, the counselee must be informed of the positive side of God's commandments. For example, it is not enough to not hate (murder) your brother. You must love him. It is not enough to cease stirring up division. You must build unity in relationships. It is not enough to cease tearing down another. You must edify them in the Lord. The good must replace the evil if true healing is to take place.

To create an atmosphere where a Christian can not only cease holding onto known sinful practices, whether overtly or covertly, but can actively live out a sanctified life is every counselor's goal. Imagine a family where the husband and father is focused on God's requirements for the man in the home. He will not only remain true to his wife and family sexually, in thought and action, but he will provide an atmosphere of love and trust, and provide a space of safety and spiritual growth for his wife and children. John 8:11 still holds true—go and sin no more. But so does Matthew 5:16 and Titus 3:8. And never forget Ephesians 2:10—we are God's vessel, which He will one day display to the entire universe, created unto good works. This is our purpose, to glorify God by allowing His mercy and grace to work within us to transform us into the glorious image of His Son Jesus Christ. There can be no greater goal than this, for the counselor or any other saint.

We trust that this four-step process will help clarify the goals of your counseling session, whether you be a pastor or a professional counselor. May we always keep God's glory at the center of our methods, for if the method fails to achieve this ultimate goal, it is deficient. May we evaluate our own methods and change them as needed for His glory and Kingdom.

## Dr. Edwards

Continued from Page 1

With his ability to take difficult subjects and break them down, he is able to teach so that every student can learn the material in a meaningful way.

As for Dr. Edwards himself, through many years of ministry, he has ministered in person to churches all over the southeastern U.S. Through his teaching and books, he has ministered to people to all over the country and many foreign countries. He has been blessed to teach in Bible colleges in the Philippines and to minister in several churches while in the Philippines.

Dr. Edwards considers his family one of his greatest blessings, but recently times have been difficult for him. His wife of forty-one years was recently diagnosed with cancer, which she battled for over a year, and then she finished her earthly pilgrimage in April 2022. Sandra was his greatest supporter and prayer warrior and by his side constantly. Now, his two children and five grandchildren light up his life and wear him in the best of ways. Family and friends are important to him, as he believes that they are the ones who pick you up, encourage you, and love you through the tough times.

Dr. Edwards has seen and experienced the sufficient grace of God through the hardships, blessings, highs, and lows of life. The life lessons and ministry experience has provided him with more education than institutions. Dr. Edwards has a much share and feels like the greatest years of ministry are yet in the future. He still takes speaking engagements, conferences, missionary trips, revivals, and book signings.

Clearly, Dr. Edwards has much to offer, and his courses will provide a wealth of information to our student body.



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