

The Hidden Treasures of Messiah Jesus

A Ventures for Christ Newsletter

To those hungry Disciples who long to intensify and expand their following of the Savior by taking up their cross.

Issue 5

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Words of Eternal Hidden Wisdom

And the Lord Jesus Himself says, "I will open My mouth in parables. I will utter things hidden since the creation of the world" (Matt. 13:34-35).

"Collect for yourselves treasures in heaven," and prove my eternal wealth is Messiah Jesus in my heart (Matt. 6:19-20).

"All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Him" (Col. 2:2-3), the Apostle Paul.

"But Mary treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart" (Luke 2:19), response of the Virgin Mother.



You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." (Gal. 3:13-14)

I will walk about in freedom, for I have sought out your precepts. (Ps. 119:45)

But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. (Rom. 6:22)

George Washington: The Master's Pinnacle Politician (Part 1)

Pastor McCarty

This piece was created for a Washington's Birthday Luncheon Celebration. I continue to be deeply impressed by the impact and vision of our first, and arguably greatest, president. His life and his words show us what it takes to be a Pinnacle Politician! I strongly urge each of my friends to read a biography of the General and to study deeply his *Farewell Address* as president (1796). I quote often from both as they give brilliant insight into the *American experiment*. In his own words from a general order to his Army in 1776, "The time is perhaps near at hand which must probably determine, whether Americans are to be, Freemen...The fate of unborn Millions will now depend, under God, on the Courage and Conduct of this army...Let us therefore rely on the goodness of the Cause, and the aid of the supreme Being, in whose hands Victory is, to animate and encourage us to great and noble Actions."¹

In my view the overwhelming evidence of history should convince us that the great errors in human government, with its fluctuating benefits and tragedies, spring from the reality that all people are seriously flawed, incomplete, and partial, even when it comes to governing their own minds and hearts. Powerful leaders always bring down on the societies they dominate various degrees of blessing (F.D. Roosevelt) or buffeting (Adolf Hitler). These two men are ideal comparisons as the same war that rescued one vision destroyed the other...America verses Germany. The heritage of each country and involved was magnified or marred by the values of these two major contributors.

Four thousand years of recorded history attest to the fact that each generation (like the birth of a child) must *start over*. They must deal with their civilization's governments and societies as well as their cyclical (A), linear (B), and synergic (C) realities of life (see Figure I). Only those leaders and ethnic groups who approached *the*

pinnacle point of the human condition and community needs have governed themselves best, given the most to their children and brought the enlightenment of hope, peace, and prosperity to the world at large. With the power of positive synergy—when wise and qualified leaders influence and guide people to join themselves together in quest for the highest level of truth—the results always exceed the most hopeful imaginations and dreams! The *start over* point is always advanced depending on the people's knowledge, comprehension, and application of their positive heritage vision. America was better served in peace, pleasures, and prosperity when I was a boy in the 1940's than my boys and girls—grandchildren—of the insane "woke philosophy" now current!

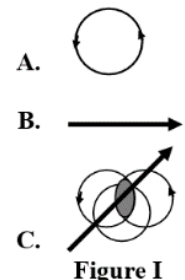


Figure I

American Exceptionalism

The witness of history teaches us that the American experiment has brought more freedom, liberty, equality, security, justice, and prosperity to the maximum of its citizens than any other governmental system to ever exist on earth. Why? Although we have never achieved the highest pinnacle of societal unity (has anyone?), we have at least had that *ideal of truth* in our minds and, perhaps to a lesser degree, in our hearts. As our Lord put it, “The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak!” (Matt. 26:41). The American vision has proven it is the best practical hope any nation could have, and we have proof. However, the lesson is also clear to the God Believers that it is impossible to achieve it without a divine ethic and supernatural empowerment in the passions of its people.

I am indebted to James O’Toole in his outstanding little book *The Executive’s Compass*² for the following graphic. He takes the four major fundamental and ethical values of Western Civilization and discusses the

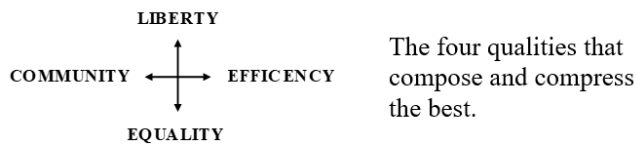


Figure II

other considerations of those doing the trading. The challenge of course is to merge these four realities into a single balanced ideal and force. The hope is that such an achievement will create for the most people the best options a citizen can have for prosperous, protected, and positive living. Cross Disciples teach and proclaim that the only way this will ever happen is to listen and then yield to the voice of the Spirit.

A measure of each of these four realities must always be implemented into a consensus if we are to live in “the Good Society.” Everyone has our favorite *balls* (options), but we must learn to bounce (actions) them for the benefit of all! Keep in mind that what is authentically *good* or *bad* is continually debatable and subject to ethical and moral preferences plus the circumstances you are living through (see Figure III).

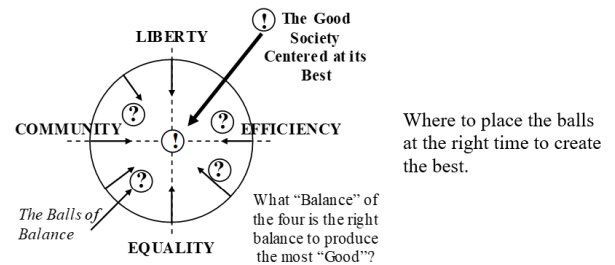


Figure III

My own attempts to understand the genius of our system is to grasp the broad tradeoffs and polarizing tendencies that create more of a *bouncing ball* than a *stable center* of permanently merged truth and tranquility (see Figure IV). Our American experiment has been the best in history to produce a government that benefits most of our people with *the ball* most often closest to the center. Each of our four balls of vision (personal freedom, potential rights, resulting excellence, egalitarian participation) will be positioned toward the center according to the four political convictions (liberal, conservative, radical, passive) preferred and chosen by the citizen participants (●)? The merging of these four always demands great statesmen exercising sacrificial leadership that requires both compromise and accommodation and patience. The Lord Jesus never compromised His pure vision, but He did accommodate Himself to sinful (weak) people’s poor and partial perceptions as well as sinfulness. Every true

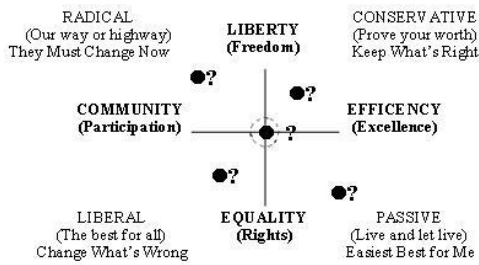


Figure IV

American patriot who has the vision of our Founders should believe, sacrifice, and strive for this same truth. We want liberty for all, equality for all, the best excellence for all, and want all included in the egalitarian process. Achieving this ideal with our fallen natures is exceedingly difficult and explosively vacillating and, in some areas, next to impossible. Study world history and take a hard look at the chaos of the nations today! Yet even our *declarational deviations* and *constitutional failures* have produced the best for the most if they have embraced and applied with maturity the essence of the *American dream*!

Now that I've presented the four goals of "our dream" and the almost four impossibles to block it, we see that we need supernatural help to pull it off. The Framers, lead by George Washington, realized the same thing. The decline of Judeo-Christian values, the "woke" philosophy, CRT, materialism, and emphasis on self-pleasure has made America chaotic as never before, except for the Civil War. It seems all the nations of the world are in deep trouble economically, revolutionarily, politically, and in the right answers. What are we to do? For Cross Disciples of Jesus we are to do two things—be more relaxed about the world and be more yielded to the voice of the Holy Spirit. That's the only place of peace within and overcoming without.

We will continue this analysis of our first president next month in Part 2 of *George Washington: The Master's Pinnacle Politician*. To be ahead of the game go ahead and read what the Lord Jesus said in Matthew 24 and the Apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 3. I urge you to read my favorite prophet Habakkuk. He has the answer for true followers of the Lord and the outcome. Read carefully the prophet Habakkuk 3:16-19 and say Amen!

Notes

¹ Washington's general order to the Army dated July 2, 1776, before the Battle of Long Island, August 27, 1776. Accessed on 3-10-15 at http://www.pbs.org/georgewashington/collection/other_1776jul2.html.

² Oxford University Press, 1993.



The Power of Praise

Pastor McCarty

Every problem you have is a potential discovery of a promise that Jesus has already made for your overcoming! You must prove to yourself and others that the Lord is bigger to you than your biggest problem! The highest, authentic proof that you are confidently trusting the Savior to handle all your issues triumphantly is PRAISE!

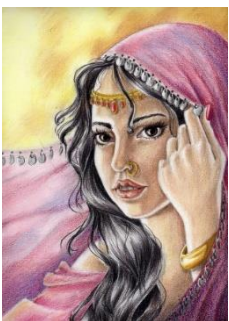


Cross Disciples in Action

Esther: For a Time Like This

Ruth Ann Stites, staff writer

The Old Testament book of Esther tells the story of a young woman who was instrumental in saving the Jewish people from genocide during their captivity in Persia around 479 BC. While solidly part of the Old Testament canon, it contains no direct reference to God, either by names or titles, although there are indirect references, most notably Esther 4:14. Nonetheless, Esther is a spiritually powerful book about a young woman who used her position, like Washington, to be a Pinnacle Politician. Traditional rabbinical interpretations note that the story of Esther illustrates how God works through the lives of people and the issues they face to bring about His purposes.



Esther's story has all the ingredients of one of Tom Clancy's politically charged spy novels with romance, intrigue, evil plots, heroic action, retribution, and rewards for the victors. While we can only hit the highpoints of the book here, it is the account of a young orphaned girl who is adopted by her uncle, Mordecai, an astute and savvy member of the Jewish Sanhedrin. Esther, her Hebrew name was Hadassa, wins a most unusual "beauty contest" to become queen to Persia's King Ahasuerus following the deposition of the former queen Vishta who had refused a direct command from her husband the king. Esther "won more favor from [the king] than did any of the other young women. He placed the royal crown on her head and made her queen in place of Vashti" (Esther 2:17, Holman Christian Standard Bible).

Following Mordecai's instructions, Esther did not reveal she was a Jewess. This decision would prove to be an important part of a larger plan to save her people. Now King Ahasuerus' queen, with her uncle as her counselor, Esther is quickly drawn into palace politics. Mordecai overhears a plot to kill the king and, through Esther, warns him. The king now knew that his queen had his welfare in mind. That political capital was about to produce a huge dividend.

It was Mordecai's custom to sit in the King's Gate. Being a Jew, he was not inclined to reverence anyone but God so he did not follow the king's edict to pay homage to Haman, one of the king's chief advisers. Rather than allow this dishonor to his person on religious grounds, Haman comes up with a devious plan to exterminate not only Mordecai, but all the other Jews who would follow his example. Haman sought the king's favor to put the fate of the Jewish people in his hands and sweetened the deal with an offer to pay 375 tons of silver into the royal treasury: "The king removed his signet ring from his finger and gave it to Haman..., the enemy of the Jewish people. [He] told Haman, 'The money and people are given to you to do with as you see fit.'" (Esther 3:10-11).

Very quickly the edict went out across the land from the fortress of Susa where the king presided. While Haman and the king sat down for a drinking party, the city was in confusion and the rest of the nation was equally confused, especially among the Jewish residents, "There was great mourning among the Jewish people in every province where the king's command and edict came. They fasted, wept, and lamented, and many lay on sackcloth and ashes" (Esther 4:3). Mordecai did likewise although he could only come to the King's Gate to send Esther a message (no one could enter wearing sackcloth). In the palace Esther's servants informed her. The queen sent a messenger to her chief adviser, Mordecai, and before long they formulated a strategy to outwit Haman.

Their plan involved great and immediate personal risk for the queen. It had been some time since she had been called to attend the king. No one was to enter his presence without his consent. If she came to him and was not acknowledged, she would die (it was a capital crime). Mordecai's answer is the pivot point of the story, "'Don't think that you will escape the fate of all the Jews because you are in the king's palace. If you keep silent at this time, liberation and deliverance will come to the Jewish people from another place, but you and your father's house will be destroyed. Who knows, perhaps you have come to your royal position for such a time as this'" (Esther 4:13-14). The queen replied with a request that the Jewish community fast and pray for her for three days even as she and her ladies did. She concludes, "After that, I will go to the king even if it is against the law. If I perish, I perish" (Esther 4:16).

On the chosen day the queen, dressed in her court finery, approached the king as he sat on his throne. Seeing Esther, he acknowledged her by extending his golden scepter bidding her approach. And she did—only to offer an invitation to a banquet for the king and Haman.

Queen Esther's dinner party was a huge success. The king offered any reward she liked, but her request was simply that they come again the following day. Both men went away satisfied. But Haman's good humor only lasted until he saw Mordecai at the gate, still refusing to bow to him. Once at home, he described to his wife, Zeresh, and the friends he asked to join him, how he had been promoted by the king and favored by the queen yet was not enjoying it to the full because of the pesky and insolent Jew, Mordecai, sitting at the gate. Their advice, "'Have them build a gallows 75 feet high. Ask the king in the morning to hang Mordecai on it. Then go to the banquet with the king and enjoy yourself.' The advice pleased Haman, so he had the gallows constructed" (Esther 5:14).

But the king was not having a restful night. He asked for some light reading to distract his thoughts...his daily journal. His attendants read the account of how Mordecai had warned the king (through Queen Esther) of the earlier attempt on his life. Ahasuerus asked if Mordecai had been honored for his service and was told nothing had been done. He called for a courtier, and who should be present but Haman, on his way to ask the king to let him hang Mordecai. The king asked his counselor what should be done to honor a man the king wished to favor.

Haman, thinking he must be the man, suggested rich raiment (something the king himself had worn), a diadem, a fine horse, and a noble escort to lead the horse in a parade around the square proclaiming, “This is what is done for the man the king wants to honor” (Esther 6: 11). So that is what the king ordered Haman to do...for Mordecai! After he performed this duty, the distressed courtier went home to tell his wife and friends this latest humiliation. Their response was of little comfort, “Since Mordecai is Jewish, and you have begun to fall before him, you won’t overcome him, because your downfall is certain” (Esther 6:13). And at that moment his escort to Esther’s banquet arrived.

The party was a success, and the king once again said, “Queen Esther, whatever you ask will be given to you. Whatever you seek, even to half the kingdom, will be done” (Esther 7:2). This time the queen made the request she had in mind from the beginning, “If I have obtained your approval, my king, and if the king is pleased, spare my life—this is my request; and spare my people—this is my desire. For my people and I have been sold out to destruction, death, and extermination. If we had merely been sold as male and female slaves, I would have kept silent. Indeed, the trouble wouldn’t be worth burdening the king” (Esther 7:3-4). When the king asked the name of the schemer, the queen answered, “The adversary and enemy is this evil Haman” (Esther 7:6).

While the king strode away into the garden to consider his response, Haman began to beg the queen for his life, falling on her couch to do so. The king, returning, exclaimed, “Would [you] actually violate the queen while I am in the palace?” (Esther 7:8). His fate was sealed. Informed that there was a gallows at Haman’s house, the one he planned to hang Mordecai from, the king ordered, “Hang him on it” (Esther 7: 9). His order was, of course, carried out to the king's pleasure.

King Ahasuerus gave Queen Esther Haman’s estate and, learning of her relationship to Mordecai, called him to the palace, gave him the king’s signet ring once worn by Haman, and placed him in charge of the estate. (According to Esther 10, Mordecai became the king’s leading adviser, second only to the king himself. He continued to work for the good of his people.)

Queen Esther had one more emotional request to make of the king, the salvation of her people. While the law would not allow the king to revoke the original decree, he instructed his queen and Mordecai to write whatever they liked concerning the Jews and seal it with his ring, making it as unbreakable as the original decree.

The proclamation that Mordecai crafted was ingenious and soon went out across the empire, “The king’s edict gave the Jews in each and every city the right to assemble and defend themselves, to destroy, kill, and annihilate every ethnic and provincial army hostile to them, including women and children, and to take their possessions as spoils of war. This would take place on a single day throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month Adar” (Esther 8:11-12). There was great rejoicing in Susa and across the land as the edict was proclaimed, especially among the Jews.

The plan worked to perfection. On “The Day”, the Jews defended themselves and killed many opponents, including Haman’s ten sons, whose bodies, at Queen Esther’s request, were hung on the gallows. It made excellent political theater as well as a reminder of the Jews’ ability to defend themselves.

Author Henry T. Blackaby captures the impact of the story of Esther for the Cross Disciple in his writings. He reminds us that, “The reality is that the Lord never calls the qualified; He qualifies the called.” And in another quote: “...God can do anything He pleases through an ordinary person who is fully dedicated to Him.” The question we need to ask is, are we ready to face our fears and join Him at work? Like the young woman, Hadassa, the future Queen Esther, will we embrace what lies before us where we have been placed “for such a time as this”? Sometimes it’s a very visible role we are called to fill. Others seem ordinary. Yet our willingness to take that next step of obedience is crucial to accomplishing the Godhead’s purposes in our lives and our world.

Note

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Wait on His Great Exchange

Pastor McCarty

In Isaiah 40:31, we are told, "They that wait upon/put their expectations in the Lord will renew their minds." The Hebrew word for "wait" means we have expectations only in Him—not in ourselves, or others, or in the situation being changed...ONLY HIM! It is THEN that our minds are renewed. The word "renew" in Hebrew can literally mean "to exchange".



Ventures News

Pastor McCarty to be Honored at Football Game

On October 5, 2024, Pastor McCarty will be honored by the University of Arkansas as a Military Hometown Hero. During the game against Tennessee, he will be recognized for his service in the Air Force. We're very excited about this honor for him! You can call the office (see contact information below) for more information or email hdm@venturesforchrist.com. We'll also post information about the event on the website including pictures.

New Content Available

This month, we launched a new blog series on the website. Titled *The Gospel Today*, the series will focus on applying the gospel of Jesus to our world today. The blog can be found at venturesforchrist.com/thegospeltoday/.

Thanks for subscribing to *The Hidden Treasures of Messiah Jesus*! If you are encouraged by the teachings of Pastor McCarty and Ventures for Christ, please share it with your friends! If you would like to update your contact information or change your subscription options, just go to venturesforchrist.com/contact-us.

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