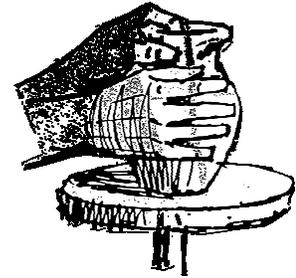


His Workmanship: Westside

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works."

—Ephesians 2:10



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Isaiah 64:8

Looking Like Your Passport, by Jeff Strite

Unless we look like the picture God describes for us in 1 Peter, the world will reject our message. What does God say I need to look like? How can that help win others to Jesus?

How many of you have ever had a passport? You realize that when you visit a foreign land, you must have a passport, because without that document you cannot move around inside that country. The passport says who you are, what nation you belong to—and it has a picture of you inside.

One report notes that there's a universal loathing of passport photos. Everybody seems to hate his own photograph. Some people even believe that the passport office employs the same people that take your pictures down at the DMV. One person complained "I look like a convicted and unrepentant mass murderer." Another said, "I look like a very happy pig." Most seem to agree. They don't think they look like their picture. But whether they like their photograph or not, they have to look like that picture, because if they were to travel abroad and cross a border into another country, they are asked to present their passport to the proper authorities. And if they don't look like their photo, they're not going anywhere.

Peter called us "strangers/pilgrims/sojourners in this land," 1 Pet 1:1. We're travelers. Thus we must have a passport. He described the picture that the world

will look for on our passport—a picture he insisted that we must look like—because if we don't look like that picture, we're not going anywhere for Jesus.

That picture is our passport in this world. That picture tells people who we are and Whose kingdom we belong to. The world knows what that picture is supposed to look like. In fact, if we don't look like that picture, people have a word to describe us. Hypocrite! A hypocrite is someone who tries to look like someone that he is not. God says: "this picture I'm showing you in 1 Peter is your passport to this world. This is what you are supposed to look like."

So what are we supposed to look like? First, we are told we should "be holy, because (God is) holy," 1 Pet 1:16. Does that strike you as being odd—the idea that we can be holy? I thought only God is holy. But God is all powerful, and He can make us holy. God said we can be holy. In fact, we are instructed to "be holy in all that [we] do," 1:15. But how do we do that? How can we be holy? It helps to understand that holiness is a simple concept. Holiness means to be "set apart" or "separated for a special purpose." The Greek word for *holiness* comes from the same root word as "saint" and "sanctify," and it means consecrated for special use. When we become Christians we are "set apart" for God's special purpose; He intends to use us in a particular way, just for Himself.

For example, the young men in the back of the auditorium where we worship who flip the music for the songs are "separated" from the rest of us by a partition. They are "holy" or "set apart" for the special work of helping us sing together.

Holy. Now holiness is a two-step process: Step 1, God makes us holy. When we became Christians, God set us apart from rest of the world. We were moved "over here" from "over there," just as a pilgrim uses a passport to pass across the borders from one country to another. We are headed to heaven; they aren't—not because we are more righteous than they are, but because we accepted God's free gift of salvation. Step 2, now that we are Christians, we are to behave, think, speak, and live differently from people in the world. That's what Peter meant by "be holy in all that you do." Don't go down to the bars. Don't join in the foul jokes and the cursing. Don't watch the same movies/TV shows or read the same books. "Set yourself apart from this world."

A popular book called *50 Shades of Grey* is on the best seller list and has been made into a movie. The news media has touted it as the next great novel—amusing, intriguing, and powerfully "erotic." It may be erotic. It may even be well written and intriguing. But it's just an evil story in fancy language.

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“I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your transgressions, and like a cloud, your sins. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you,” —Isaiah 44:22

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It's an evil novel, written by an evil person, and it is an evil movie. There are many evil novels on the market, and there are many evil movies in theaters. But I chose this particular book because of its title, 50 Shades Of Grey. What the author, E.L. James, is implying is that there are 50 degrees of “naughtiness,” or more literally 50 different shades of evil. But God says to you, “Don't go there. Don't accept 50 shades of evil as if it were normal.” God says, “I don't want you to accept 50 shades of grey. I want you to discern good and evil, black and white. I want you to embrace one shade of white, one shade of purity.”

Peter said, “*Do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance,*” 1:14. Paul said it this way: “*You must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more,*” Eph 4:17-19. Don't be like these people who are ignorant of God's holiness! Don't live like them! Don't think like them! Be holy and set apart from this world. We may not be able to do holiness perfectly all the time, but that's our objective, that's our life goal.

Now, we could get someone else to monitor the movies and TV shows we watch. We could get someone to police the shelves in our home for books we would be permitted to read. But would that do any good? It wouldn't work for someone else to do it—after a while we'd come to resent that person's presence and start hating and avoiding him. Holiness is not something someone else can do for us. We've got to be the one who decides to be holy. We're the person who has to decide to separate from this world. If we don't love Jesus enough to do that, then someone else can't help us. God tells us that we've got to decide to “*be holy for I AM holy.*” So the first thing is to be holy.

Redeemed. Second, we need to live

as someone who is redeemed. Holiness is all about how we live. Being redeemed is about why we should live holy lives. Peter said: “*You know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect,*” 1:18-19. We should be holy because Jesus paid a high price for us. We belong to Him, and we live in holiness because we love Him.

We are often shocked by how people in this world behave. We hear a non-Christian tell a foul joke and get offended. We get annoyed by insulting and offensive bumper stickers and other decorations on their vehicles. We see porn magazines at the grocery store and get upset. A person is rude to us, or insults us, or hurts us in some way, and we're surprised. They do that stuff because they don't belong to Jesus. Why shouldn't they behave like that? One atheist said, “*There is no one here but ourselves to suffer for our sins, no one to redeem us but ourselves: we are obliged to settle our own disputes and do what we can. We need no holy guide books, only a very human moral compass,*” Polly Toynbee in Guardian Unlimited. If people in this world don't belong to Jesus they live by their own moral compasses.

Their bad behavior is simply a reflection of where their compass points. My friend Sue's boss recently got upset with her and cursed at her. Not only was the problem not my friend's fault, but in the midst of the cursing, the boss took God's name in vain. Sue found that deeply offensive. I asked her if her boss went to church, and she said, “*No. He lies a lot, and he even lives with his girlfriend.*” I replied, “*Well then, why shouldn't he curse? I mean, he doesn't belong to Jesus. He doesn't look to God for approval or acceptance. He's just acting the way he feels. His cursing is offensive, and his lifestyle is immoral because he doesn't have Christ.*” Many Christians are more worried about someone's immorality than about his

soul. We often don't seem to realize that some people's lifestyle is simply a symptom of a disease within them. The disease is sin, and the result of their sin will be an eternity in hell. We should be more concerned about a lost soul than about his offensive behavior. That boss doesn't belong to Jesus. He lives by his own “*very human moral compass.*” There could be external forces that might make him live a more moral life: peer pressure, punishment, his own employers, loss of his job, etc. But none of those forces actually change who he is—because he's the god in his life. He's the one who sets the compass settings. He belongs to himself. He answers only to himself. Until we come to grips with the fact that these people don't need more morality in their lives—but that they need Jesus and His Lordship in their lives—they will continue to go to hell without the hope that God offers them. The world is not holy because the world is not redeemed. We are redeemed, and so God tells us in I Peter that we need to make the choice that we belong to Jesus. If we belong to Jesus, then we will live holy lives because we know that “*[we] are not [our] own; [we] were bought at a price. Therefore [we] honor God with [our bodies],*” 1 Cor 6:19-20.

Born again. One more part of our passport photos we need. Peter said we need to be holy and we need to realize we're redeemed, but we also need to remember that we are born again. “*For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God,*” 1:23. To be born again, we need to hear the “*living and enduring word of God*” and believe it—believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God. That word tells us that we “*have sinned and come short of God's glory,*” Rm 3:23, and that we need to repent of those past sins, Ax 2:39; Lk 13:3, 5. That word needs to work in our hearts and convict us to make Jesus the Lord and

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God makes my heart clean in 2015 “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.” —Ps 51:10

Look Like Passport, from p. 2
Master of our lives and allow ourselves to be buried in the waters of baptism and rise up a new creature, Rm 6:3-14.

What does being *born again* look like? How will the world recognize that I'm *born again*? Peter answered that question in these words: “Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth, [now that you've set yourself apart to be holy/pure/righteous] so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart. For you have been *born again*,” 1:22-23. In other words: the mark of our being *born again* is showing love to one another. If we do not show that we love one another, then the world will not believe we're born again. And they'll have good reason to doubt us. John said it this way: “If anyone says, ‘I love God,’ yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, Whom he has not seen,” 1 Jn 4:20.

Peter talked about the need for us to be holy in an unholy world because we've been redeemed/bought by God. But then he implied that it's impossible to be holy without being loving. It's impossible to be moral and have hatred in your heart. It's impossible to practice righteousness if we think or say or do nasty things to/about a person. God tells us what we need to do to remove the obstacles of true love: “Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind,” 1 Pet 2:1.

That means that a true Christian can look at someone who has offended him and say: “I don't like what you've done, but because you are made in the image of God, I'll love you anyway.”

Now answer this question: Have you

Discipleship Here At Home

CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Logan Corray; Addison Tope; Christian Harrod; Rocco Jr; Tim Huelsman—asthma
Bill Dennis—adjusting pacemaker and meds
Nell Free—pacemaker, heart; back pain
Autumn Hadders—epilepsy; celiac disease; **Jonathan Hadders**—RA
Danielle Huelsman—vertigo, CV syndrome
Hannah Huelsman—polycythemia, thickening of blood; heart murmur, acid reflux, chest pain
Kirk Johnson—MS
Menards—aging; **Lloyd**, diabetes, weak; **Virginia**, macular degeneration; high BP
Sandra Perry—neuropathy from diabetes; heart valve issues recently diagnosed
Cheryl Reames—diverticulitis; fibromyalgia
Judy Sartin—spinal stenosis; arthritis
Lynda Szymanski—COPD, lung weakness makes recovery longer

ever had an argument with someone you love and respect? Did you still love him? Paul tells us how to deal with people who want to argue with us: “Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful,” 2 Tim 2:23-24. Have you ever gotten resentful of someone in the midst of an argument? Me, too. “Those who oppose him he must gently instruct,” 2 Tim 2:25. *Gently instruct*.” That means we don't abandon our principles or our holiness or our commitment to God. Instead of trying to beat people over the head with truth, we *humbly teach* them in the hope that “God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth,” 2 Tim 2:25-26. Why shouldn't we argue? Because we trust God. We don't worry about winning an argument, because we trust the Spirit to “convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment,” Jn 16:8. We don't have to convict anyone. That's the Spirit's job. We don't have to change people. God will do that. We just need to present the word of God. We do it in the hope that God will soften a heart. He will work through us when we decide it's more important to show love than to win an argument. We are Christians who look like our passports. We are committed to holiness, we have been redeemed by Jesus and belong to Him, and we show love so that it is obvious that we have been born again.

PRAY FOR healing, protection, help

·**Frank Savarese**—recovering from surgery on salivary gland last week
·**Tracy Corray**—double kidney infections, stones, very high fever, severe pain
·**Samantha Harrod**—recovering from drainage of cyst infection, pain; may need further surgery
·**Bill Dennis**—in St. Anthony's Hospital for infected knee drainage; weak heart; pseudo-gout
·**Ed Fink**—illness; chemo depresses immune system; prostate cancer; treatment for brain tumors
·**Emma Carlson and Marie Sangellino**—virus; Emma ear infection and croup, Marie back muscle pain and chills
·**Frances Blackwelder**—stent Tues to remove clot in leg; from Grand Junction, staying with Campbells
·**Kaylee Chavez**—age 10, at St. Jude's in Memphis for brain cancer treatment; donate at www.youcaring.com, type her name at top
·**Hannah Huelsman**—allergic reaction to penicillin
·**Judy Strand**—hep C; on liver transplant list
·**Liz Kosik and kids**—flu and upper respiratory
·**Chris Bennett**, former member—all tools for biz stolen; recovering from fall, fractured pelvis
·**Buford Wrather, Cheryl Reames's dad**—stroke, complicated by Parkinson's; in CO Springs
·**Christine Adams**—recovering from ankle surgery, using cane; has returned to work 1/2 days
·**Lloyd Menard**—unable to walk, memory failing
·**Sylvia Chapman, Brett's grandmother**—third stage pancreatic cancer; chemo
·**Judy Sartin**—rotator cuff injury and leg bruising from fall
·**Brittany Tope's mother**—breast cancer in spine; pain in broken ribs which tumor has injured; grandmother—on dialysis
·**Pat Wilkes**—knee pain; bursar impingement and torn tendon on right shoulder causing pain
·**Sharon Rupinen, Sandra Perry's sister**—surgery recovery
·**Jennifer Clayton**, former member—severe Lyme disease; heart, spine, neuro issues; slow recovery
·**Kenny Boyd's coworker Kim Phillips**—asks our prayers for heart problems
·**Rick Robbins**, friend of Howells—brain surgery
·Remember **Greg Geiss, Paul Alfaro, and Elaine Isbell**, who need prayers, support
Travel Jonathan and Sarah Hadders are celebrating their 10th anniversary in the Virgin Islands.
Directory Today is **Caleb Howell's** last Sun-day; moving to Tulsa Tues. **Michelle Francke's** new address: 451 Golden Cir, Apt 252, Golden 80401. **Mark Reingrover** asks to be removed from directory and our prayers for help, support.



Exposing current thoughts & trends *abortion*

House Passes on Pain/Unborn Child Protection Act

Last Thursday, on the 42nd anniversary of the sad decision of Roe v. Wade and while millions participated in the March for Life, Congress delayed a vote on the "Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act" (H.R. 36), legislation that is essential to stopping late abortion.

Opponents of the bill did everything they could to distract from the painful killing of unborn children at 20 weeks or later. Instead, the House passed H.R. 7, the "No Taxpayer Funding of Abortion Act," which would ensure taxpayer dollars stop flowing to the abortion industry through ObamaCare. The good news is that this measure will put into law a longstanding ban on federal funding for abortion known as the "Hyde amendment," which has been attached to appropriate bills for the last 40 years. The bad news is that it is likely that the President will veto it.

Sadly, the opportunity to vote for the "Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act" was the moment every pro-life member needed to act, to speak on behalf of legislation that would stop so-called doctors, like the now imprisoned Dr. Kermit Gosnell, who are willing to allow babies be born alive in order to kill them if the abortion doesn't work. But the moment was squandered by bickering over rape language. House Members were under immense pressure to abandon the bill. Reps. Renee Ellmers (R-NC) and Jackie Walorski (R-IN) withdrew their co-sponsorship, despite a clear majority of Americans opposing abortion on babies old enough to feel pain.

This issue is not up for debate. Medical experts have testified that unborn children can feel pain as early as 20 weeks after fertilization, which is about 4 1/2 months. Anesthesia is given during prenatal surgery precisely because scientists have come to realize that, as Dr. Kanwaljeet Anand testified before Congress,..."*The human fetus possesses the ability to experience pain from 20 weeks gestation, if not earlier, and the pain perceived by the fetus is possibly more intense than that perceived by term newborns or children.*"

H.R. 36 also protects mothers from the physical and emotional dangers of late-term abortions. This bill is an important step in getting us closer to a point where every human life is protected and valued. The House plans to take up the bill at a later time this session. With new conservative majorities in both the House and Senate, legislative momentum at the state level, and Americans increasingly identifying with the pro-life movement, 2015 is still a year for hope. Contact your Congressman about this issue!



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Assembly Schedule

Sunday

Bible classes	9:00 am
Morning assembly	10:00 am
Afternoon assembly	1:30 pm

Wednesday

Bible classes	7:30 pm
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Sunday morning

- **adult Bible class**, Lesson 2-3, "I Have Become A Christian! Now What?" Jim Reingrover

- **Sermon**, "Lessons from First Peter," Jim Reingrover

Sunday afternoon

- **Singing**

Wednesday night: Daniel: Determined to Walk with God, Lesson 5, chapter 4.

Feeding on His Word Reading

Everyone is invited to an open Bible reading of Romans this evening at 4 pm, pizza to follow, at the Boyds' home. See **Joel Walker** for schedule.