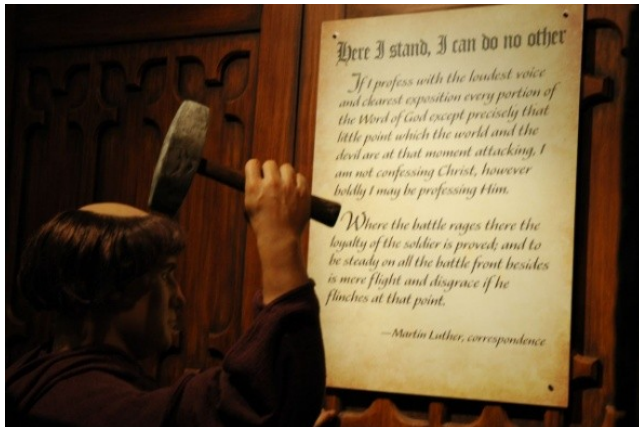


**Richard Baxter 1615-1691**



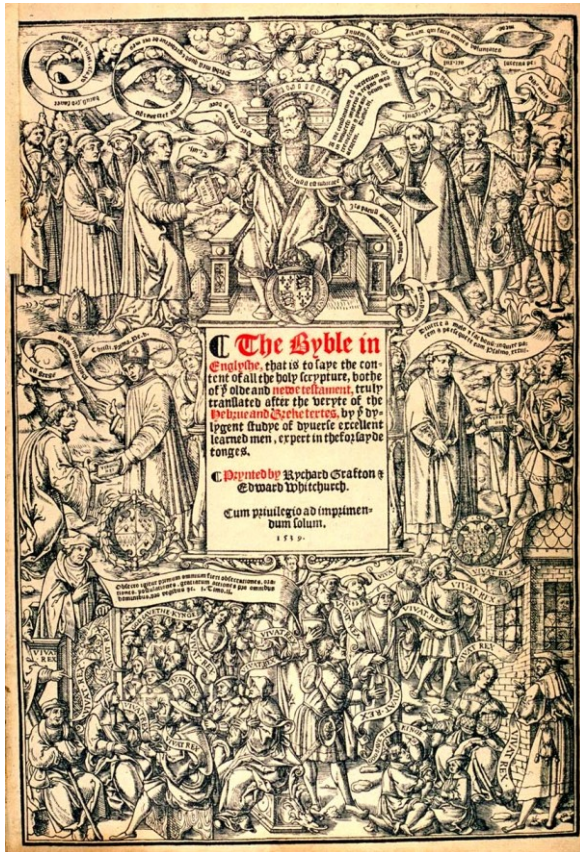
It's time once again for my annual Christian biography. On or around Reformation Day each year I present a biography of a significant person from our Christian history. Reformation Day commemorates Martin Luther's posting of his 95 theses on the door of the church at Wittenberg. From a historical perspective, this day marked the beginning of the Protestant Reformation, the rediscovery of the gospel of faith alone in Christ alone, the very thing we have been studying in the book of Romans. Here is the list of the past

eight years and this morning's person of interest.

- William Tyndale, b. 1536
- Ulrich Zwingli, b. 1484
- David Brainerd, b. 1718
- George Whitefield, b. 1714
- Amy Carmichael, b. 1867
- Dietrich Bonhoeffer, b. 1906
- Benjamin Rush, b. 1746
- Fanny Crosby, b. 1820
- Richard Baxter, b. 1615

Before we get started, let me remind you that we have three volumes in our church library called [Hero Tales](#). In all three volumes there are almost fifty different biographies of Christian

missionaries, pastors and people of influence. We have read most of these to our kids and I can testify that a child or adult of any age will find them enjoyable and inspirational.



Do you know the significance of the date 1611 in Christian history? That is the date that King James 1 commissioned the Authorized Bible, which we now call the King James Bible. King Henry VIII commissioned his own Bible and had it taken off, some of us would be carrying around the King Henry Bible and instead of “King James only” churches there would be “King Henry only” churches! We could be carrying around Bibles with the face of the king who chopped off the heads of two of his wives. But for some reason, the 1611 King James Bible became the standard for the next 300 years. This was the Bible that Baxter and everyone in his congregation would have used.

In case you are wondering, I asked Tony Baxter if he could possibly be related to Richard Baxter. Tony has dug deep into his genealogy but it turns out that most of the Baxters in his family line came from Scotland. Also, once I got further into my research I discovered that Richard Baxter never had any children so if anyone tells you they are descended directly from Richard Baxter, they

are telling a fib.

### 1. God can redeem anyone’s personal history for his glory and purpose.

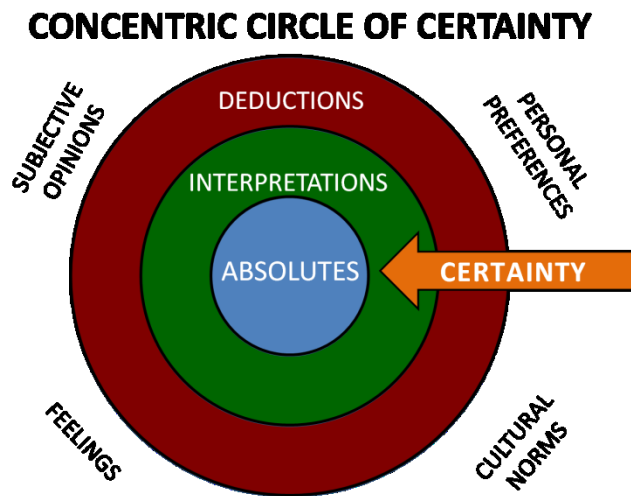
Many great men and women come from a strong Christian pedigree but not so with Baxter. His father was a gambler and his mother was in poor health so he lived with his grandparents until he was ten years old. It makes me wonder what people gambled with or about in those days—some kind of game of chance, I would guess—but it reminds us that sin never changes. His father was miraculously converted simply by reading the Bible on his own and became in Richard’s own words, “the Instrument of my first Convictions, and Approbation of a Holy Life.”<sup>1</sup>

The Baxters were not a wealthy family and most of his education was haphazard and poorly given. When he was 19, he began an intensive private study of his own which prepared him for his ordination into the Anglican Church at age 23.<sup>2</sup>

Many of you started your life with several generations of Christians and lots of love and Biblical training but others of you began your life in less than ideal circumstances. But no matter your circumstances, the mercy and grace of God can miraculously reach into the most horrible of circumstances and snatch a person out of the miry clay of sin. Hopefully this has happened to you and it is encouragement to us as we pray for our unsaved loved ones.

## 2. “In essentials, unity. In non-essentials, charity. In all things, Jesus Christ.”

I am quite sure that Baxter would have fit nicely into the EFCA. In addition to our [Statement of Faith](#), our denomination also has six very important [distinctives](#). If you are not familiar with them, these distinctive are vital to the way we functions as a movement and as churches and they can all be summed up with the phrase, “In essentials, unity. In non-essentials, charity. In all things, Jesus Christ.”



I drag this out every so often and it certainly applies here—what I call my Concentric Circle of Certainty. Absolutes are in the center of the circle and are beliefs about which we are so certain we are willing to die for them, but unlike the radical Muslims in the [Voice of the Martyrs video](#) we showed this morning, we are not willing to kill for them. To use Baxter’s phrase, the “essentials” are absolutes and we must have unity on these. As a church we cannot debate about such things as the deity of Christ or the exclusivity of salvation through faith in Christ alone. If absolutely necessary, I

would take a bullet for these beliefs so I don’t have time to argue their reality. If you personally are not yet convinced I will gladly spend time showing you these truths from the Scriptures, but as a church, we cannot tolerate anything but unity on these core beliefs. In other words, there is no room for diversity on essentials.

This is why Baxter referred to himself as a “mere Christian.” He wrote, “I am a CHRISTIAN, a MEER CHRISTIAN, of no other Religion; and the Church that I am of is the Christian Church, and hath been visible where ever the Christian Religion and Church hath been visible.”<sup>3</sup> Baxter coined the term “mere Christianity”<sup>4</sup> which C.S. Lewis later borrowed for the title of his most famous book.<sup>5</sup>

Baxter did not coin this phrase, “In essentials, unity. In non-essentials, charity. In all things, Jesus Christ,” but more than any other person, he popularized it, as it was his heartbeat.<sup>6</sup> Like Baxter, we must be able to separate the essentials from the non-essentials. Just because you hold dearly to a belief does not mean that it is a necessary belief for everyone. Take homeschooling, for example. The essential belief in homeschooling that every parent needs to hold fast is that the education and especially spiritual formation of your children is your responsibility and yours alone. If you choose to homeschool in order to obey this principle, then so be it, but it is not necessary nor a sin if you choose not to homeschool. Just this past week I had a conversation with a guy who believes that every Christian ought to be involved in demonstrating at the Options Clinic. For the life of me I could not convince him that while this is a good thing, it is certainly not a requirement for every Christian. I can name a dozen different ideas and beliefs to which we cling tightly and therefore mistakenly think they are essential beliefs. Some of the

things you believe may not even be Biblical let alone essential beliefs, so please be very careful how you hold onto them. Most conflicts within a church body, like the worship wars of recent past, have been fought over non-essentials.

### **3. Be a reformed Christian.**

Baxter was a Puritan.<sup>7</sup> Most of us think that the Puritans were just a bunch over uptight, overly strict people who wore funny looking hats. We would not know a Puritan from a Pilgrim. Let's watch this [short clip](#) which begins to explain the difference.

A Puritan was one who intended to purify or reform the Church of England from within. This was Martin Luther's original goal in the Roman Catholic Church. But eventually, some of the Puritans did not think they were reforming enough. Thus, as one person described it, "The 'Separatist' movement [was formed], a movement which later produced such leaders as John Smyth, John Robinson, William Brewster, and William Bradford. The latter three were directly involved in that group of Separatists which, in 1608, left England for the Netherlands, and then later decided to emigrate to the New World, landing at Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1620."<sup>8</sup> Baxter was five years old when the Mayflower landed at Plymouth Rock.

So in general terms, a Puritan wanted to remain with the church—in this case the Church of England—and purify the church from within. A Separatist had already given up on the church and left to begin a new, more purified and faithful church. Baxter eventually registered himself as "a mere Nonconformist," which was a technical term meaning "not Anglican", breaking with the Church of England mainly because he wanted to remove himself from a state controlled church.<sup>9</sup> So one can almost feel Baxter being pulled in both directions. He knew that the Church of England needed serious purification and but since he wanted to maintain unity, he stayed within the church. He did not want to go as far as the Separatists but he certainly did not fit nicely within the Church.

Baxter's story reminds me of Pastor Ethan Larson who pastured the Viroqua UMC for many years. He has been part of a Methodist renewal movement in Wisconsin and is currently serving as its president. Of course the faithfulness of the average UMC is largely dependent upon its zip code with most of the conservative churches being located in the southern states. Therefore, the battle is much greater and more difficult in the northern states. Ethan is solidly evangelical in every way but still feels called to remain with the UMC. In this sense, like Richard Baxter, Ethan is a "puritan" and perhaps even a non-conformist but he is not a separatist.

In 1662, Baxter was ejected from the Church of England by the Act of Uniformity, along with 2000 other clergy. Put in force through an Act of Parliament, it continued the problem of the state controlled church. Even though he served parliament as a soldier in the English Civil War for five years, the government, through the act of conformity, required clergy to renounce their Puritan ideals and submit to the dictates of the government. You wonder how long it will take the U.S. to pass legislation similar to this. Will you be ready when it comes?

The second and third principles go hand in hand. If you keep the essentials as your priorities, then you will continue to purify and reform the church, because as we all know, the church is like the second law of thermodynamics. The cultural pressures of this world and the ceaseless

work of the devil continually work against the church to send it into chaos, disarray and lack of gospel focus. Therefore, we must be reformed Christians.

#### **4. Suffer for the sake of the gospel and for others.**

Without the benefit of modern medicine, “He suffered throughout his adult life from a multitude of bodily ailments (a tubercular cough...frequent nosebleeds, migraine headaches...all kinds of digestive disorders, kidney stones, gall stones) so that from the age of twenty one he was ‘seldom and hour free of pain’ and expected death constantly through the next fifty five years on partial disablement...”<sup>10</sup> Even though Baxter wrote on medicine in addition to theology and Christian living, the medicine of his day was a farce. In fact, his wife Margaret died<sup>11</sup> at the tender age of 42 from repeated bleedings, which was thought to balance out the ‘humours’ in the body and restore health. Like can still be true in some cases today, the ‘cure’ was worse than the ‘disease.’

Baxter had personal visits with all 800 families in his church every year, visiting 14 families per week. Most of those visits were done at his house because he was too ill to move from house to house. Plus, it saved him a lot of time and helped him write almost 140 books in his lifetime. He was the most prolific English theologian of all time, having written more than 10 million words in all of his writings.

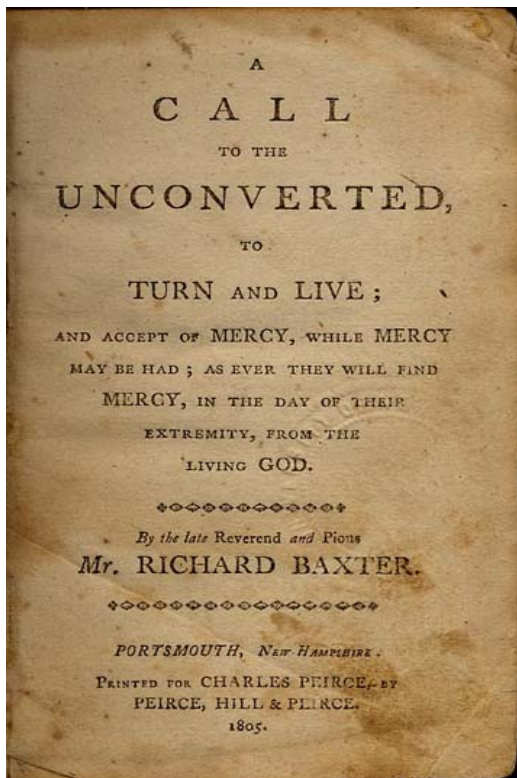
In addition to his lifetime of pain, at age 70 he was put in jail for 18 months on trumped up charges. Even there he labored ceaselessly for the gospel. "I preached as never sure to preach again...as a dying man to dying men."

#### **5. Shepherd well the people under your care.**

Baxter is best known for all of his books which we will look at in a moment, but Baxter was also a pastor's pastor. He pastored for 17 years at a parish in Kidderminster, England, about 100 miles NW of London. When he arrived at Kidderminster he found that “the towns 2000 adults were “an ignorant, rude and reveling people for the most part...they had hardly ever had any lively serious preaching among them.”

The townspeople were badly in need of the gospel and Baxter gave it to them in large doses. Years later he noted the change not just in the church but in the entire town.

The Congregation was usually full, so that we were fain to build five Galleries after my coming thither.... [The Church would have held about a thousand without the galleries.] Our private meetings were also full. On the Lord's Days there was no disorder to be seen in the Streets, but you might hear an hundred Families singing Psalms and repeating Sermons, as you passed through the Streets. In a word, when I came thither first, there was about one Family in a Street that worshipped God and called on His Name, and when I came away there were some Streets where there was not past one Family in the side of a Street that did not so; and that did not by professing serious Godliness, give us hopes of their sincerity. And those Families that were the worst, being Inns and Alehouses usually some persons in each House did seem to be religious.... When I set upon Personal Conference and Catechising<sup>12</sup> them, there were very few families in all the Town that refused to come. And few Families went from me without some tears, or seemingly serious promises of a Godly Life.<sup>13</sup>



In addition to his preaching, his evangelistic efforts were greatly helped by one of his most famous books, *A Call to the Unconverted*.<sup>14</sup> (Notice the full title. A CALL TO THE UNCONVERTED TO TURN AND LIVE; AND ACCEPT MERCY, WHILE MERCY MAY BE HAD; AS EVER THEY WILL FIND MERCY, IN THE DAY OF THEIR EXTREMITY ,FROM THE LIVING GOD. They certainly don't write titles like they used to!) This book sold more than 20,000 copies in the first year. He sold so many books that he could have become wealthy through book sales alone but in lieu of book royalties, every 15<sup>th</sup> book was given to him by the publisher which he then gave away to his congregation as he saw fit. Listen to a section of this evangelistic tract<sup>15</sup> and see if it doesn't sound an awful lot like the U.S. in 2013.

Ah! Lord, how heavy and sad a case is this, that even in England, where the gospel doth abound above any other nation in the world, where teaching is so plain and common, and all the helps we can desire is at hand; when the sword hath been hewing us, and judgment hath run as a fire through the Land; when deliverances have relieved us, and so many admirable mercies have engaged us to God, and to the gospel, and a holy life; that after all this, our cities, and towns, and countries, shall abound with multitudes of unsanctified men, and swarm with so much sensuality, as everywhere, to our grief, we see! One would have thought, that after all this light, and all this experience, and all these judgments and mercies of God, the people of this nation should have joined together, as one man, to turn to the Lord, and should have come to their godly teacher, and lamented all their former sins, and desired him to join with them in public humiliation, to confess them openly, and beg pardon of them from the Lord, and should have craved his instruction for the time to come, and be glad to be ruled by the spirit within, and the ministers of Christ without, according to the word of God. One would think that, after such reason and scripture-evidence as they hear, and after all these means and mercies, there should not be an ungodly person left amongst us, nor a wordling, nor a drunkard, nor a hater of reformation, nor an enemy to holiness, to be found in all our towns or countries.<sup>16</sup>

There can be little doubt that true revival fell upon that town as over time, most of the town was converted to faith in Christ, and it clearly showed in their daily lives. Furthermore, the effects of the revival were lasting as “almost a hundred years later, the famous preacher George Whitefield came to Kidderminster and said to a friend: 'I was greatly refreshed to find what a sweet savour of good Mr. Baxter's doctrine works and discipline remain to this day.'”<sup>17</sup> Baxter loved this pastoral work and said, “I find the benefits and comforts of the work to be such, that I would not wish I had forborne it, for all the riches in the world.”<sup>18</sup>

Baxter was a pastor's pastor, a shepherd's shepherd and reminds us that we all have people under our care—family and friends whom God has called to shepherd in some large or small way.

### **6. Choose your spouse with the utmost care.**

Historians agree that part of the reason that his pastoral work and his book writing was so successful was because he was single during all of that time. Baxter was 47 when he married a wealthy girl named Margaret who was only 21 years old.<sup>19</sup> So that it would not be a temptation for them, Baxter asked his wife to disavow her sizeable inheritance, which she did.

Margaret was a Godly woman and powerful partner to Baxter. "It was not the least comfort that I had in the converse of my late dear wife that our first in the morning and last in bed at night was a Psalm of Praise till the hearing of others interrupted it.' A husband and wife who began and ended each day with a 'Psalm of Praise' sung so heartily as to evoke a protest from the neighbours need no further testimony to their mutual content!"<sup>20</sup>

Margaret loved the gospel and her neighbors equally. "She had an earnest desire of the conversion and salvation of her servants, and was greatly troubled that so many of them (although tolerable in their work) went away ignorant, or strange to true godliness, as they came; and such as were truly converted with us she loved as children."<sup>21</sup>

Baxter had high praise for his wife's discernment.

Her apprehension of such things was so much quicker, and more discerning than mine... She would at the first hearing understand the matter better than I could do by many and long thoughts... Yes, I will say that... except in cases that required learning and skill in theological difficulties, she was better at resolving a case of conscience than most divines that ever I knew in all my life... Insomuch that of late years, I confess, that I was used to put all, save secret cases, to her and hear what she could say... and she would lay all the circumstances together, compare them, and give me a more exact resolution than I could do.<sup>22</sup>

Husbands, do you think you could manage a similar compliment to your wives this week? and don't just tell them that they are better cooks than you are. Find something that they do very well, probably much better than you could ever do, and make sure they know that you deeply appreciate them for it.

After he was removed from the Church of England, apparently Baxter stumbled at first and did not know what to do with himself, until his wife set to work. Margret rented a chapel in London so that Baxter could preach and later built one on a vacant lot. "At London, when she saw me too dull and backward to seek any employment till I was called...she first fisht out of me in what place I most desired more preaching. I told her in St. Martin's Parish, where are said to be forty thousand more than can come into the Church...where neighbors many live like Americans, and have heard no Sermon of many years."<sup>23</sup>

Even though Baxter was an amazing pastor, even in his day he was best known as a writer and it is his writing which endures to our day. His longest book was *A Christian Directory*, 1673, "a million word directory of Puritan teaching about Christian life and doctrine." This 948 page

volume which Dr. Timothy Keller deemed "...the greatest manual on Biblical counseling ever produced..."<sup>24</sup> The seventh chapter of his Christian Directory was titled, *The Mutual Duties of Husbands and Wives Towards Each Other*. Listen to his practical wisdom.

1. Choose a good spouse in the first place. A spouse who is truly good and kind. Full of virtue and holiness to the Lord.
2. Don't marry till you are sure that you can love entirely.
3. Be not too hasty, but know beforehand all the imperfections which may tempt you to despise your future mate.
4. Remember that justice commands you to love one that has forsaken all the world for you. One who is contented to be the companion of your labours and sufferings, and be a sharer in all things with you, and that **MUST** be your companion until death.
5. Remember that women are ordinarily affectionate, passionate creatures, and as they love much themselves, so they expect much love from you.
7. Remember that you are "one flesh"; you have drawn her to forsake father and mother, and to cleave to you;
8. Take more notice of the good, that is in your wives, than of her faults. Let not the observation of their faults make you forget or overlook their virtues.
9. Don't magnify her imperfections until they drive you crazy.

I checked that last one in several documents to make sure it was a direct quote because I found it surprising that people used this phrase in the 1600's—"they drive you crazy." How some things remain the same!

Another chapter from the same book is titled, *The Cure of Melancholy and Overmuch Sorrow, by Faith and Physic*.<sup>25</sup> "Physic" is shorthand for physician or medicine. This part of the book is basically useless as I said before, their understanding of the human body and medicine was very poor.<sup>26</sup> However, his spiritual and Biblical counsel is timeless. Here are some of his main points.

1. Listen to wise counsel.
2. Do you find that your troubles..make you fitter or unfitter to believe and love God?
3. Don't continually dwell on your depression
4. You must not be much alone, but always in some pleasing, cheerful company
5. Renew your mind with these four things:
  - The infinite goodness of God, who is fuller of love than the sun is of light.
  - Of the unmeasurable love of Christ in man's redemption, and of the sufficiency of his sacrifice and merits.
  - Of the free covenant and offer of grace, which giveth pardon and life to all that do not prefer the pleasure of sin before it, and obstinately refuse it to the last.
  - Of the unconceivable glory and joy which all the blessed have with Christ, and which God hath promised with his oath and seal, to all that consent to the covenant of grace, and are willing to be saved and ruled by Christ. These thoughts will cure melancholy fears.
6. Don't be a complainer and whiner.

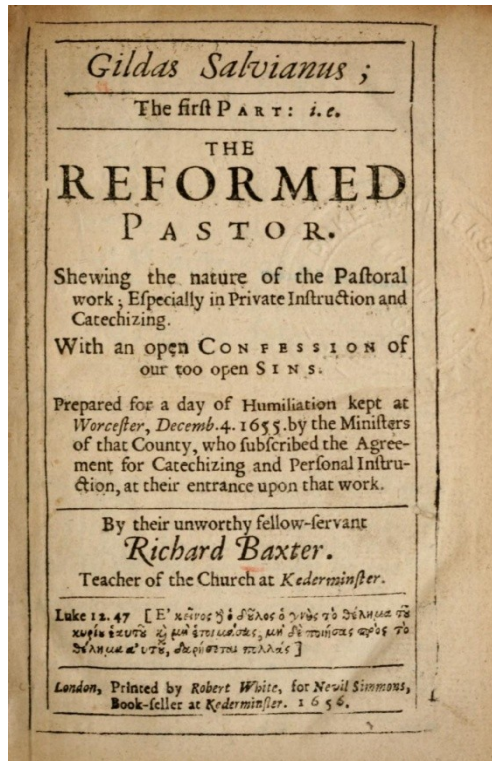
Although Richard and Margaret were never able to have children of their own, his grasp of parenting principles is nothing short of amazing. Tedd Tripp, author of "Shepherding a Child's



Heart, had this to say about his parenting wisdom. “In a day when many Christians are confused about the callings of Christian living in the home, Baxter gives clear job descriptions for husbands, wives, and even children.”<sup>27</sup>

- Understand and lament the corrupted and miserable state of your children, which they have derived from you, and thankfully accept the offers of a Saviour for yourselves and them, and absolutely resign, and dedicate them to God in Christ in the sacred covenant
- Train them up in exact obedience to yourselves, and break them of their own wills. The common course of parents is to please their children so long, by letting them have what they crave, and what they will, till their wills are so used to be fulfilled, that they cannot endure to have them denied; and so can endure no government, because they endure no crossing of their wills. To be obedient, is to renounce their own wills.
- Make them neither too bold with you, nor too strange or fearful; and govern them not as servants, but as children, making them perceive that you dearly love them, and that all your commands, restraints, and corrections tire for their good, and not merely because you will have it so.
- Labour much to possess their hearts with the fear of God, and a reverence of the holy Scriptures; and then whatsoever duty you command them, or whatsoever sin you forbid them, show them some plain and urgent texts of Scripture for it; and cause them to learn them and oft repeat them; that so they may find reason and divine authority in your commands;
- Speak always before them with great honour and praise of holy ministers and people, and with dispraise and loathing of every sin, and of ungodly men. For this also is a thing that children will quickly and easily receive from their parents. Before they can understand particular doctrines., they can learn in general what kind of persons are most happy or most miserable, and they are very apt to receive such a liking or disliking from their parents’ judgment, which hath a great hand in all the following good or evil of their lives.
- For sports and recreations, let them be such, and so much, as may be needful to their health and cheerfulness; but not so much as may carry away their minds from better things, and draw them from their books or other duties, nor such as may tempt them to gaming or covetousness.
- Use all your wisdom and diligence to root out the sin of pride.
- Speak to them disgracefully of the gallantry, and pomp, and riches of the world, and of the sin of selfishness and covetousness,
- Keep them as much as may be from ill company, especially of ungodly play-fellows. It is one of the greatest dangers for the undoing of children in the world; especially when they are sent to common schools: for there is scarce any of those schools so good, but hath many rude and ungodly ill-taught children in it.

Baxter viewed good Christian parenting as the key to the success, not only of families, but of entire churches. Listen to his sound counsel from his book, *The Reformed Pastor*.



Persuade the master of every family to cause his children and servants to repeat the Catechism to him, every Sabbath evening, and to give him some account of what they have heard at church during the day. Neglect not, I beseech you, this important part of your work. Get masters of families to do their duty, and they will not only spare you a great deal of labor, but will much further the success of your labors. If a captain can get the officers under him to do their duty, he may rule the soldiers with much less trouble, than if all lay upon his own shoulders. You are not like to see any general reformation, till you procure family reformation.

Chapter 30 of his Christian Directory bore the title, *Directions for a Peaceful Death*. Certainly believers in his day experienced sickness and death at a much higher rate than we do today and we can learn a great deal from him.

- Misunderstand not sickness, as if it were a greater evil than it is; but observe how great a mercy it is, that death has so suitable a harbinger or forerunner: that God should do so much before he takes us hence, to wean us from the world, and make us willing to be gone; that the unwilling flesh has the help of pain;
- Remember whose messenger sickness is, and who it is that calls you to die. It is he, that is the Lord of all the world, and gave us the lives which he takes from us; and it is he, that must dispose of angels and men, of princes and kingdoms, of heaven and earth; and therefore there is no reason that such worms as we should desire to be excepted. You cannot deny him to be the disposer of all things, without denying him to be God: it is he that loves us, and never meant us any harm in any thing that he has done to us; that gave the life of his Son to redeem us; and therefore thinks not life too good for us. Our sickness and death are sent by the same love that sent us a Saviour.
- Look by faith to your dying, buried, risen, ascended, glorified Lord. Nothing will more powerfully overcome both the poison and the fears of death, than the believing thoughts of him that has triumphed over it.
- Choose out some promises most suitable to your condition, and roll them over and over in your mind, and feed and live on them by faith. A sick man is not (usually) fit to think of very many things; and therefore two or three comfortable promises, to be still before his eyes, may be the most profitable matter of his thoughts.
- Look up to God, who is the glory of heaven, and the light, and life, and joy of souls, and believe that you are going to see his face, and to live in the perfect, everlasting fruition of his fullest love among the glorified. If it be delectable here to know his works, what will it be to see the cause of all? All creatures in heaven and earth conjoined, can never afford such content and joy to holy souls, as God alone! Oh if we knew him whom we must there behold, how weary should we be of this dungeon of mortality! and how fervently should we long to see his face!

- Look back upon all the mercies of your lives, and think whence they came and what they signify. Love tokens are to draw your hearts to him that sent them; these are dropped from heaven, to entice you thither! If God has been so good to you on earth, what will he be in glory!
- Remember (if you have attained to a declining age) what a competent time you have had already in the world. If you are grieved that you are mortal, you might on that account have grieved all your days; but if it be only that you die so soon, if you have lived well, you have lived long.
- Settle your estates early, that worldly matters may not distract or discompose you.



Not only did he write about how to die well, he actually did die well. In his final days, he said this to some of his visitors. “I have peace; I have peace.” “I was a pen in God’s hand; what praise is due to a pen?”<sup>28</sup>

Since his wife Margaret was 26 years younger than he was, and since he was so sickly all of the time, I am sure they both fully anticipated that she would outlive him by many years. Sadly, he grieved for his wife during the last nine years of his life and at the age of 77, he spoke his final words to his pastoral assistant, Matthew Sylvester. “Oh I thank him, I thank him. The Lord teach you to die.”<sup>29</sup>

This statue sits prominently in the square of Kidderminster, England and commemorates the life of Richard Baxter. I trust that we can all be inspired by the

life and writings of this Godly man.

Rich Maurer  
October 27, 2013

<sup>1</sup> Reliquiae Baxterianae, 1:2-4

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Joel Beeke and Randall J. Pederson, Excerpt from Meet the Puritans, ©2007.

<sup>3</sup> Baxter's Church-history of the Government of Bishops (1680).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, He did plead, certainly, for what he called 'mere Christianity'; that is, he was an advocate of a minimal rather than a maximal creed, and he was for ever saying that he would have been content to unite the churches on the basis of the Apostles' Creed, the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer. In this he was virtually alone among Puritan leaders...

<sup>5</sup> J.I. Packer, *A Man for All Ministries*, Reformation Revival Journal, Volume 1, No. 1, Winter 1992, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Fifty years later Richard Baxter, the Puritan pacificator In England, refers to the sentence, Nov. 15, 1679, In the preface to *The True and Only Way of Concord of All the Christian Churches*, London, 1680, In a slightly different form: "I once more repeat to you the pacificator's old despised words, 'Si in necessariis sit [esset] unitas, in non necessariis libertas, in charitas, optimo certo loco essent res nostrae.'"

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, pp. 3-4. “Puritanism, as Baxter understood it and as modern scholarship, correcting centuries of caricature, now depicts it, was a total view of Christianity—Bible-based, church-centered, God-honoring,

---

literate, orthodox, pastoral, and Reformational, that saw personal, domestic, professional, political, churchly and economic existence as aspects of a single whole, and that called on each person to order every department and every relationship of his life according to the Word of God, so that all would be sanctified and become “holiness to the Lord.”

<sup>8</sup> Samuel T. Logan, Jr., *The Pilgrims and Puritans* *Tabletalk* magazine, vol. 20, no. 11, November 1996

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/baxter>

<sup>10</sup> Packer, p. 7.

<sup>11</sup> <http://mylordkatie.wordpress.com/2012/06/21/margaret-baxter-a-high-calling/>, “She had pain in one of her breasts and believed that she might be dying of cancer. She prepared herself to die. Later the pain moved to her right kidney. She tried several remedies but only got worse. Finally, the doctors followed the common practice of bleeding her and she lost the last of her strength. After severe illness for twelve days, she died on June 14, 1681, aged only forty-two.”

<sup>12</sup> *Reliquae*, p. 85. Baxter said this of his meetings with the church families. “Some ignorant persons, who have been so long unprofitable hearers, have got more knowledge and remorse of conscience in half an hour’s close disclosure, than they did from ten year’s public preaching.”

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>14</sup> “The importance of the book is further heightened when we remember that it had a deep influence on George Whitefield. Those who are familiar with Arnold Dallimore’s *Life of Whitefield* will know that in the first volume he shows that Whitefield benefited greatly from reading Baxter’s *Call*. Then in the line of great preachers we have the words of C. H. Spurgeon to this effect: ‘I remember when I used to awake in the morning [he means as a child] the first thing I took up was *Alleine’s Alarm* or *Baxter’s Call to the Unconverted*. ‘Oh, those books, those books!’ exclaimed Spurgeon looking back, ‘I read and devoured them.’” (<http://www.puritansermons.com/baxter/baxter19.htm>)

<sup>15</sup> Here is how he intended this book to be utilized. “First, That you will seriously read over this small Treatise; (and, if you have such as need it in your families, that you would read it over and over to them; and if those that fear God would go now and then to their ignorant neighbour, and read this or some other book to them on this subject, they might be a means of winning of souls). If we cannot intreat so small a labour of men, for their own salvation, as to read such short instructions as these, they set little by themselves, and will most justly perish.”

<sup>16</sup> Richard Baxter, *Call to the Unconverted*, 1658, pp. 16-17

<sup>17</sup> J. I. Packer, Gary A. Parrett, *Grounded in the Gospel: Building Believers the Old-Fashioned Way*, Baker Books, ©2010, p. 67.

<sup>18</sup> Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, 1650.

<sup>19</sup> FREDERICK J. POWICKE, M.A., Ph.D. , *A PURITAN IDYLL, OR, THE REV. RICHARD BAXTER’S LOVE STORY*, p. 444. “When we were married,” writes Baxter, “her sadness and melancholy vanished: counsel did something to it, and contentment something; and being taken up with our household affairs did somewhat. And we lived in inviolated love and mutual complacency sensible of the benefit of mutual help. My dear wife did look for more good in me than she found, especially lately in my weakness and decay. We are all like pictures that must not be looked on too near. They that come near us find more faults and badness in us than others at a distance know.”

<sup>20</sup> *Reliquae*, p. 794.

<sup>21</sup> Richard Baxter, *Memoirs of Margaret Baxter: Daughter of Francis Charlton and Wife of Richard Baxter (1681)*, © 1826, p. 86.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, p. 76.

<sup>23</sup> J.I. Packer, *A Grief Sanctified (Including Richard Baxter’s Timeless Memoir of His Wife’s Life and Death): Through Sorrow to Eternal Hope*, Crossway Books, © 2002, p. 96.

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.pietyhilldesign.com/baxter/pages/bax10.html>

---

<sup>25</sup> See also this unpublished thesis: [COUNSELING THE DEPRESSED PERSON: THE PURITAN ALTERNATIVE TO SECULAR PSYCHOLOGY](#) by David P. Herding.

<sup>26</sup> One such example: “The matter which is the root and foundation is usually a depravation of the mass of blood, which is the vehicle of the spirits; and that is usually accompanied with some diseases of the stomach, spleen, liver, or other parts, which are for the due concoction, motion, and purification of the blood; which diseases are so various, that they are seldom the same in many persons, and hardly known to the wisest physicians. The spleen is most commonly accused, and often guilty, and the stomach, pancreas, mesentery, omentum, liver, yea, and reins, not rarely are the root, sometimes by obstructing humours, and that of several qualities, and sometimes by stones, and sometimes by various sorts of humours, and sometimes by vesicles; but obstructed, if not tumefied, spleens, are most suspected.” (Richard Baxter, *The Cure of Melancholy and Overmuch Sorrow*, by Faith)

<sup>27</sup> Book endorsement for *The Godly Home*, by Richard Baxter (Author) , Randall J. Pederson (Editor), Crossway Books, © 2010.

<sup>28</sup> J.I. Packer, *A Man for All Ministries*, *Reformation Revival Journal*, Volume 1, No. 1, Winter 1992, p. 21.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, p. 22.