



Blackfoot

Church of Christ

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That “Ugh” Feeling when Reading Scripture

By Doy Moyer

Don't pretend you don't have it. When reading Scripture there are people, events, and laws that make us gasp and, think, “really, how? Why?” and they cause repulsion. If they don't, then I'd think there is a problem with us. How can we read about what Cain did with Abel, what Ham did with Noah, what Judah did with Tamar, what David did with Uriah and Bathsheba, what Amnon did with his sister Tamar, and on we can go, without getting a bit of that “ugh, this is nasty” feeling?

Then, there are laws given under Moses that we look at and think, “I don't get it. Why this? Why would God accommodate that? Aren't some of these laws a bit brutal? Why didn't God just do it another way?” We feel uneasy, especially when unbelievers point to some of these laws as proof that the Bible is flawed and promotes evils like slavery and hatred of women. Do we just walk away at this point?

Then, we feel badly for getting that “ugh” feeling. Aren't we supposed to delight in the word of God? Isn't it supposed to be edifying and helpful? What are we missing here?

I'm going to suggest something here that may seem a bit odd, but here it is: we are supposed to feel this way about these things.

Yes, we are supposed to get that “ugh” sense when reading these things. Why?

Because all of it is a reminder of what sin does. The Bible is not intended just to make us feel good. It's not a nice little "have a good day" self-help book. It's gritty and shows the reality of evil. It opens up the wounds of life and we can see the gashes, the gore, the blood and guts of why sin is so bad. We naturally are going to resist. We don't want to see it. We think God's message ought to be roses without thorns, but that's not reality. Not even close.

I believe one of the primary purposes of the Law was essentially to say, "This is what it's like to be under sin. This is the best you get when sin has split asunder the fabric of creation. This accommodates a corrupted world, and it's not pretty." It's meant to cause people to think that this a burden they cannot bear. Isn't that what Peter indicated in Acts 15:10 when he spoke of the "yoke" that "neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear"?

Even though the Law contained glimpses of God's grace, and though many still found delight in that aspect of it (Psalm 1), the reality is that it was not the ideal at all. The Law wasn't meant to make everyone feel good. It wasn't meant to set the entire world straight. It wasn't meant to be the fix to a world of evil and corruption. It was meant to show sin for what it was. It was meant to be incomplete. It was meant to cause people to think that there must be something better. It was meant to keep the wound open for all to see so that they would long for a better way. That's one of the reasons I'm so amazed some of the people wanted to hang on to the Law so tightly. They weren't willing to give up what clearly was not ideal for the solution offered by God.

When we get that "ugh" feeling, the ugliness of sin is exactly what we are seeing and feeling. And we should feel it. The Law shows us the despair of sin, not the solution to it. Read Romans and Galatians.

However, when people see the Law isolated from the rest of the story, they see the broken, torn, wrecked visage of God's image, but they don't see the goal or purpose for which it was made. They don't see the ending. It's like watching a movie or reading a book part way in, just enough to see the plot go bad, and thinking that's all there is. The solution may not have presented itself yet, so they assume it's not there and they turn it

off. People do that with Scripture. They fail to connect the dots and see how it all comes together in the end. God was not giving laws that we're going to be left that way. They were temporary, until the seed promise would come.

The whole point was to show that there was indeed a need for something better and greater. The Law was not meant to be an end in itself. The people and events we see that demonstrate over and again how ugly sin is were not meant to present an idyllic setting that we are supposed to fall in love with. It's meant to be ugly so that we see the need for the greater solution.

God's plan was not complete in the Law or in the people who acted so badly. God's plan was to bring about Jesus Christ so that in Him that ugly monster of sin and its consequences can finally be buried in its own stench and ruins. Christ came to redeem and renew. He is the solution.

And the cross? Here is the culmination of what the horror of sin does. The One who came in the flesh, the perfection of God's image, is marred more than any man (Isa 52:14). Through His death, the image of God may be reclaimed and renewed, and we may share in it. Sins are forgiven. Purpose is renewed.

Do not think for a moment that the way Scripture is given is without purpose. Sin is presented before us in all of its ugliness, and the people and the Law reflect that. Yet it was all part of the plan to get people to see the need for a real solution. That solution would not be found in more laws. It would be found in Christ, where the grace and love of God is fully revealed. That uncomfortable feeling we get is meant to bring us to Christ.

Prayer Requests & Announcements

- We rejoice with Vicki Hernandez and her decision to be baptized this week
- Ben, Porters, and Empeys will be traveling this week
- Keep April in your prayers as she deals with health issues
- Tammy Woodward is suffering serious effects from cancerous brain tumors.
- Sister Bobby Adams is recovering from a stroke
- brethren from Nevada congregation
 - Theo & Holly's unborn baby health issues
 - Scott Boucher a relatively young man just underwent heart surgery and discovered he has cancer in his bones
- The Christians in the Philippines.
- Bible class tonight 6:00pm at Chad and Kass' on evangelism

For prayer requests, call or text

Chad @ (208) 221-2587 or Ross @ (208) 680-6590

Assignments

<p><u>Today</u> Bible Study – Ross Ward Song Leader – Ben Palmer Lord's Table – Larry Thompson Sermon – Ross Ward</p>	<p><u>Wednesday</u> Bible Study – Chad Mitchell Song Leader – Ben Palmer Invitation – Ross Ward</p>
<p><u>Next Sunday</u> Bible Study – Ross Ward Song Leader – Ray Mitchell Lord's Table – Chad Mitchell Sermon – Ross Ward</p>	<p><u>Next Wednesday</u> Bible Study – Chad Mitchell Song Leader – Ray Mitchell Invitation – Ross Ward</p>

Blackfoot Church of Christ
370 North Shilling Ave.
Blackfoot, Idaho 83221

Meeting Times:

Sunday Class 10:00AM
Sunday Worship 11:00AM
Wednesday Class 7:30PM



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