

GALATIANS 3B PRIDE VS PROMISE

HOW PRIDE NEARLY KILLED ME – by Ben Schutte

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I found myself barely conscious, in an ice bath, on a Virginia Beach boardwalk.

How did I get there? It's simple. Pride. Well, that and a pretty girl.

Pride is a word that gets thrown around a lot—typically in a negative context—to try to explain why someone is selfish or rude. **Pride is essentially putting our confidence in ourselves and our abilities rather than God.** I don't know about you, but even though I try to follow Jesus, pride comes pretty naturally for me.

I care way too much about what people think of me. I do everything in my power to make sure that people like me and think of me in a specific way. This pride causes me to make some pretty unintelligent decisions in my life from time to time. And my pride is what brought me to Virginia Beach.

I had decided months prior, in an attempt to please a girl that I had a crush on, that I would run a half marathon. She was into running, and I was not. This would surely give me some big bonus points. And c'mon. How hard could it be?

I had heard stories of people waking up and running full marathons with no preparation at all so if I just got out and ran here and there, 13.1 miles would be a piece of cake. I had convinced myself that all of the energy and athletic ability from high school would come flooding back into my body as soon as I stepped up to the starting line at the race.

Boy, was I wrong.

In all honesty, the first seven or eight miles weren't all that bad. Sure, I was tired, but I expected that. However, all hell broke loose at mile nine. My head started spinning, I couldn't see straight, and I thought I was going to puke. I told the friends I was running with to keep going, and I'd catch up to them in a second.

Wrong again.

For the next four miles, I somewhat walked and somewhat ran towards the finish line. When I would get dizzy, I would walk. Then, as soon as I could see straight, I would start running again. Repeat this about ten times, and that was my last four miles.

It was a humbling moment for me. Turns out I wasn't Usain Bolt or any other world-renowned runner. I didn't have superhuman powers to allow me to run long distances with no training. I certainly wasn't my athletic high school self. I was Ben Schutte, an out-of-shape college kid from Cincinnati.

So here was my humbled self, stumbling across the finish line. As if on cue, my legs gave out, and I fell to the ground. I don't ever remember losing consciousness, but most of what followed was a blur.

I was helped to my feet by some race volunteers and guided to the medical tent. They laid me on a bed and took my core body temperature. Please feel free to look up the most accurate way to take a core body temperature; it makes it funnier. Immediately, the guy in charge yelled, "*He's at 107! Get him in the ice bath!*"

Now, you don't have to have a medical degree to know that a 107-degree body temperature isn't good. At around 108, the brain starts to get so hot that, in essence, it begins to melt and permanent brain damage occurs. I found out later that just two months before my incident, a University of Maryland football player died after his body temperature rose to 107 during practice. Of course, I knew none of this and cared little at the time it was happening.

Next thing I knew, I was being picked up by a bunch of guys and carried over to the other side of the medical tent. Once there, I was submerged from the neck down in freezing cold water. Every part of my body was tightening up. I couldn't move at all.

I think I might die. God, I don't want to die. Save me, God. Save me, God. Save me, God.

Those words were racing through my head over and over for the next 20 minutes as I was lying motionless in the ice bath. I was terrified, I was in pain, and I finally realized how helpless I was.

Everything leading up to and during that race was about me and the confidence I had in myself. It wasn't until that moment that I realized all of that confidence was fleeting, and the only thing left for me to put trust in was God.

Save me, God. Save me, God. Save me, God.

That was the only thought, the only words that could come out of my brain. I didn't know what was happening, and I couldn't do anything about it.

Thankfully, my temperature began to drop. I was eventually transported to a local hospital where my body was given fluids and returned to a comfortable 98.6 degrees (but not before dropping all the way down to 94 degrees at one point. They kept me in that ice bath way too long).

That day was a wake-up call for me. It's a cliché, I know, but I was reminded that every day really is a gift from God. I thought about what my mom used to say to me when I frustrated her as a kid (jokingly, of course): "I brought you into this world, and I can take you out of it just as easily!" The older I get, the more I realize that's a mindset that we should actually live by.

Every day is a gift. We have the opportunity to live our lives for a God who loves us and cares for us; who protects us even when we make dumb decisions (like running a half marathon without training for it); who loves us enough to sacrifice his son for us.

I frequently remember that day. I have my race poster hung up next to my bed as a reminder that the confidence I have in myself and my abilities will always fail me, but God remains strong when I am powerless.

As I look back, I've realized that I was doing all of this for a relationship that would never fully satisfy me instead of for a God whose love endures forever. I believed in my own abilities too much that day, but I'm thankful that I have a God who loves me so much that in those moments, he wants to fight for not only my life but my heart. And I believe he wants to fight for yours too.

I was in a helpless position, but I was not hopeless. I may not have been able to save my own life, but at that point, I had no choice but to have faith that God could. And He did. You don't have to wait until your body shuts down. Whatever is going on in your life, that simple prayer—*Save me, God*—can be all it takes.

The Apostle Paul is dealing with pride as well in Galatians 3. Some of the Galatians were still proud of themselves for keeping the religious rituals – So proud in fact that they equated the rituals WITH salvation.

Boy, were they wrong! Listen up Bro... V15

Galatians 3:15 **Brethren**, I speak in the manner of men: Though *it is* only a man's covenant, **(Like a last will and testament)** yet *if it is* confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it.

- **GUZIK** - But we shouldn't miss the first word of Gal 3:15: **Brethren**. As difficult and dangerous as Paul's opponents in Galatia were, they were

also his *brothers*. He confronts them and persuades them as *brothers*.

- The Apostle is making the point that the promises made to Abraham, and so to us, are permanent; irrevocable; irreversible; final; and to be counted on!
 - How many warranties have you purchased that turned out to be not as reliable as you were told when you bought them?
 - That WILL NOT happen with the Lord!

16 Now to Abraham and his Seed (**Capital S**) were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "AND TO YOUR SEED," who is Christ.

- We WANT the blessings promised to Abe, right?
- But his blessings DID NOT come from obeying the law BUT FROM having faith!
- Abe COULD NOT EVEN HAVE TRIED to obey the law.... WHY? Listen...

17 And this I say, *that* the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, (**Between Abraham's promise and the law of Moses**) cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect. 18 For if the inheritance *is* of the law, *it is* no longer of promise; but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise. **BY FAITH**

- The promise is that Jesus Christ would fulfill the law that NOBODY else could keep!
- AND that "Whosoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life..."
 - All done by faith... Proven by works, but not earned by works.
 - SO... Does the law have any useful purpose? You bet it does...

19 **What purpose then does the law serve?** It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed **JESUS** should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator.*

- **COURSON** - If our walk is to be based simply upon believing what God said, receiving His promise, and resting in what He's done, then why was the law given at all?
- Because of sin, the law was given until Jesus Christ—the Lamb of God who would take away the sin of the world—came on the scene.
- On Mount Sinai, the law was given to angels. Angels gave it to Moses; Moses brought it down to the people. In other words, the law was not directly communicated. The promise, on the other hand, was given without mediators or middlemen. It was given to Abraham directly and intimately.

PM ME, GOD

20 Now a mediator does not *mediate* for one *only*, but God is one.

- NLT - Now a mediator is helpful if more than one party must reach an agreement. But God, who is one, did not use a mediator when He gave His promise to Abraham.
- God SPOKE TO Abraham like a friend would... So, I have good news for you... God wants to be your friend too. I hope you consider Him your friend, beloved.

LAW OR LIFE – CHOOSE ONLY ONE

21 Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law.

- The law has always been impossible for mankind to keep.
- In the Garden of Eden there was only one commandment. THE COMMANDMENT. How did we do with only one commandment?
- The purpose of the law is similar to the bathroom scale... It simply tells us the truth – THAT... We need grace 😊 We need Jesus!

PROTECTIVE CUSTODY

22 But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. 23 But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. 24 Therefore the law was our tutor *to bring us* to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. **(Guard)**

26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

- We have a better Tutor now... The Holy Spirit.
- **COURSON** - The law was a schoolmaster with red pencil in hand, circling our mistakes. But once Christ came into our lives, the law is no longer to be a part of our lives. This is such a radical statement that if God didn't say it, I would be afraid to share it.

PUTTING ON CHRIST

27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

- So... Here is true justice... Social justice, spiritual justice, and moral justice brought to you by... Jesus Christ.
- Beloved, WE ARE ONE in the eyes of God. So, BE KIND to one another.
- Treat others as if you had a Jesus Jersey on!
- I am always amazed when I get bad service from someone wearing a bright yellow vest that says they are HERE TO HELP ME!
- What would MY vest say?
 - What would YOUR Christian vest say?
 - What keeps us from being the kind of people we should be? SIN... And mostly the sin of pride – like we started off today talking about pride... BUT LET'S END WITH A PROMISE...

MANY SONS HAS FATHER ABRAHAM

29 And if you *are* Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.