

Current Positional Truth: Review: Capacity & Spiritual Growth; Wirt's "No Excellence without Labor"; Divine Wisdom Delays Conveyance of Escrow in Time until Capacity is Reached: Potential plus Capacity equals Reality

- (8) We are saved by grace, we grow in grace, and we are sustained by grace. However, blessings from God are an overplus, a surplus, that is imputed to the believer who has the capacity for them.
- (9) Acquisition of that capacity comes from spiritual growth which requires interest in what the Bible teaches and exertion of the effort to learn its principles and doctrines.
- (10) What this amounts to is work. Post salvation, the believer must reach the point where he understands he is a bondservant for Christ and as such he must put forth effort in order to serve Him effectively and professionally.
- (11) There can be no excellence without labor, the labor of inculcation, retention, and application, a subject of an article in *McGuffey's Fourth Eclectic Reader* by William Wirt:¹

The education, moral and intellectual, of every individual, must be, chiefly, his own work. Rely upon it, that the ancients were right—both in morals and intellect—we give their final shape to our characters, and thus become, emphatically, the architects of our own fortune. How else could it happen that young men who have had precisely the same opportunities, should be continually presenting us with such different results, and rushing to such opposite destinies?

Difference of talent will not solve it, because that difference is very often in favor of the disappointed candidate. You shall see issuing from the walls of the same college—nay, sometimes from the bosom of the same family—two young men, of whom the one shall be admitted to be a genius of high order, the other, scarcely above the point of mediocrity.

Yet you shall see the genius sinking and perishing in poverty, obscurity and wretchedness: while on the other hand, you shall observe the mediocre plodding his slow but sure way up the hill of life, gaining steadfast footing at every step, and mounting, at length, to eminence and distinction, an ornament to his family, a blessing to his country.

Now, whose work is this? Manifestly their own. They are the architects of their respective fortunes. The best seminary of learning that can open its portals to you can do no more than to afford you the opportunity of instruction. It must depend, at last on yourselves, whether you will be instructed or not, or to what point you will push your instruction.

Of this be assured—I speak, from observation, a certain truth: THERE IS NO EXCELLENCE WITHOUT GREAT LABOR. It is the fiat of fate from which no power of genius can absolve you.

¹ William Wirt (b. 1772, d. 1834) was born in Bladensburg, Md. He was admitted to the bar in 1799, and afterwards practiced law, with eminent success, at Richmond and Norfolk, Va. He was one of the counsel for the prosecution in the trial of Aaron Burr for treason. From 1817 to 1829 he was attorney-general for the United States. In 1803 he published the "Letters of a British Spy," a work which attracted much attention, and in 1817 a "Life of Patrick Henry" (William H. McGuffey, *McGuffey's Fifth Eclectic Reader*, rev. ed. [Christian School Edition], 230).

Genius, unexerted, is like the poor moth that flutters around a candle till it scorches itself to death. If genius be desirable at all, it is only of that great and magnanimous kind, which, like the condor of South America, pitches from the summit of Chimborazo, above the clouds, and sustains itself, at pleasure, in that empyreal region, with an energy rather invigorated than weakened by the effort.

It is this capacity for high and long-continued exertion—this vigorous power of profound and searching investigation—this careering and wide-spreading comprehension of mind—and those long reaches of thought, that

“Pluck bright honor from the pale-faced moon,
Or dive into the bottom of the deep,
Where fathom line could never touch the ground,
And drag up drowned honor by the locks—”²

This is the prowess, and these the hardy achievements, which are to enroll your names among the great men of the earth.³

- (12) When Wirt’s article is viewed from the perspective of the grace apparatus for perception and resultant spiritual growth, it emphasizes the point that blessings to an individual match his capacity for doctrinal thought.
- (13) If Jesus Christ transferred a new believer’s escrow account to him at salvation, his lack of capacity would result in his misuse and abuse of them; he would become dependent upon or distracted by them rather than being blessed by them. This would neutralize him in the Invisible War.
- (14) Therefore, verse 15 concludes with the phrase, “Jesus Christ, who provided superabundance of blessings to the many who are mature believers.” These blessings are the existing results of a three-fold process:
 1. Potential for Blessings: this occurs at salvation with the imputation by justice of divine righteousness to the believer thus creating a grace pipeline through which logistical grace support is sustained and the potential of superabundance of blessings is established.
 2. Capacity for Blessings: Provision of the assets necessary for attaining capacity through the filling and teaching ministries of the Holy Spirit, the grace apparatus for perception, the completed canon of Scripture, the institution of the local church, the assignment of a pastor-teacher, and the basic freedoms of a client nation: (a) free exercise, (b) free speech, (c) free press, (d) freedom of assembly, and (e) freedom of movement.
 3. Reality of Conveyance: Once the believer attains capacity by advancing to spiritual maturity, then Jesus Christ conveys through justice escrow blessings to the winner’s imputed righteousness.

² The quotation is from Shakespeare’s “King Henry IV,” *Part 1, Act I, Scene 3*.

³ William Wirt, “No Excellence without Labor,” in *The Eclectic Fourth Reader*, 6th ed., ed. William H. McGuffey (Cincinnati: Truman and Smith, 1837; repr., Milford, MI: Mott Media, 1982), 238–39.

- (15) The emphasis of verse 15 is that the believer with capacity enjoys greater blessings than those lost by Adam in Eden. To quote Carla Barrows, "Greater blessing than the garden now in time is God's decree."
- (16) Principle: If God can do the most for us when we were spiritually dead, it follows, a fortiori – with greater reason – that He can do the less for us since we possess His righteousness.