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Viewpoints

Viewing life as Christ's cross-scarred hand points out the blessings he's overseeing.

Pressure Cooker Truths - April 19, 2013

After the Boston Marathon bombings, my way of thinking of a pressure cooker is tainted. You might agree.



For under thirty bucks at Macy's, you can buy this cooking device that promises to "put meals on the table in a flash" while retaining "50% more vitamins and minerals for a healthier approach to each and every dish." Sounds good. Or I should say, it used to sound innocent and innocuous. But because the perpetrators of the Boston bombings used pressure cookers to make their Improvised Explosive Devices, my feelings about a pressure cooker are poisoned by the images of blood—lots of blood—and of the maimed, the murdered, the mourning.

In and of itself, the pressure cooker is a convenient kitchen appliance. It's a gift of God, bringing goodness to your dinner table because the Creator and Designer of Everything blessed mankind with the DNA to "subdue the earth and rule over it" (Genesis 2:28). Science, technology, manufacturing, marketing—these abilities that enable us to use pressure cookers in our kitchens are blessings from God.

When a Christian uses a pressure cooker, he or she uses it in righteousness and holiness. Because of our faith in Christ, who's atoned for the sins of the world, the God who justifies the wicked considers a Christian's use of the pressure cooker to be perfectly innocent, employed in pure thanksgiving. **Thus the pressure cooker is a harmless kitchen appliance that's neither good nor evil, and is used righteously by the Christian to bring glory to God.** "*So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God*" (1 Corinthians 10:31).

When a non-Christian uses a pressure cooker, because he does not believe in Christ who's atoned for the sins of the world, that person's sins are still counted against him. The natural sinful impulses of all people, such as selfishness, poisons how he uses the pressure cooker. For example, a well-prepared meal coming out of the pressure cooker could tempt the daughter-in-law to inwardly gloat: "My mother-in-law is going to be so jealous that I know how to prepare such a fine meal!" **Thus the pressure cooker is a harmless kitchen appliance that's neither good nor evil, but is inwardly employed for sinful purposes by**

the unbeliever who's ignorant of his sin and his great need for Jesus. "Without faith it is impossible to please God" (Hebrews 11:56).

When the terrorists used pressure cookers at the Boston bombings, they were outwardly using the pressure cookers for evil purposes. The terrorists knowingly and brazenly broke the law to inflict death and carnage among civilians gathered at a sporting event. **Thus the pressure cooker is a harmless kitchen appliance that's neither good nor evil, but was outwardly employed for sinful purposes by unbelievers brazenly breaking civil laws.** "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter ... who deny justice to the innocent. Therefore, as tongues of fire lick up straw and as dry grass sinks down in the flames, so their roots will decay and their flowers blow away like dust; for they have rejected the law of the LORD Almighty" (Isaiah 5:20-24).

The appliances, tools and devices of this world, like a pressure cooker, are neutral things. It's the attitudes and actions of the human who handles them that determines whether they're employed for godly or ungodly purposes. And so, in time, with the power of Scripture's truth, I will relearn that a pressure cooker is a good gift from God... just like the gun, the internet and alcohol are good gifts from God.

Yes, there will be hell to pay for everyone and anyone who uses a pressure cooker for sinful purposes. There's the eternal punishment of hell for the terrorist who outwardly uses the pressure cooker to inflict murder and mass carnage. But the eternal punishment of hell is what every unbeliever also faces for his inwardly sinful use of the things of this world. And the eternal punishment of hell is what we believers once faced, until Jesus broke into our lives and implanted himself through faith into our hearts.

The difference between the righteous use or wicked use of a pressure cooker is only Jesus, just as he's the only difference between heaven and hell. But don't take my word for it. Hear the words of Jesus himself:

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life... Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son" (John 3:16,17).

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Blessings to you and your loved ones, Pastor Mike Nitz

