

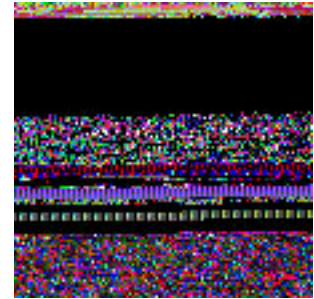
The Broom or the Shovel?

When approaching Scripture, there are two approaches in our world: the shovel and the broom, and you can learn much about a church by watching what tool they use.

The broom can only scratch the surface, and it's usually used to brush things under the rug. This is, sadly, the most common tool used in our society among Christians. The most obvious example of the broom is the "ecumenical" movement, which emphasizes unity over truth. The basic idea is that we can all get along if we just ignore our differences, arguing that St. Paul warned against divisions in the church. Yet looking at those warnings in context, we find that the cause of division is false doctrine, not standing for the truth.

A little closer to home, you may find yourself using the broom to dust off or brush up on God's Word, but stopping there. Typically going to church on Sunday is seen as a "weekly duty." Once you "check off" church from your to-do list, the broom, as well as the cross, get put in the closet for a week or more, rarely to be seen during the week. It's like finding out you have buried treasure in your yard and not bothering to find out what's there.

The shovel digs deep and finds the riches within. When you approach Scripture by digging for those nuggets of truth and insight from God, your lives are transformed, like Jed Clampett discovering his "bubbling crude." You suddenly have access to the wisdom of God, and His insight can change the way you see the world. You can more easily recognize sin for what it is, as well as more clearly seeing God's loving hand in all areas of your life. The hard times become easier, and the good times get better, and when you dig yourself into a hole, the Way out is that much easier to find.



Shovels are also good for burying your old Adam, the sinner in you who keeps dragging you away from God's perfect will for you. We can't hide our sin from God, but in His Word, you'll find that He has nailed your sin to the cross and buried it. And unlike you, your past sins will never rise again.

It's only because you are in sin so deep that digging will take you up, leading you to the only One Who can pull you out, but by being firmly grounded, you don't need to fear being "swept away" by the world.