

# The Berea Baptist Banner

"THOU HAST GIVEN A BANNER TO THEM THAT FEAR THEE,  
THAT IT MAY BE DISPLAYED BECAUSE OF THE TRUTH" Ps. 60:4

## "Preach the Word"

By Frank Beck  
(1917 - 1964)

Paul, in writing to a young preacher charged him, urged him, to **"preach the word"** (II Tim. 4:1-2). There can be no mistake as to what Paul the Apostle meant when he said: **"Preach the word."** Paul meant the Holy Scriptures, "which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (II Tim. 3:15). And here you see what preaching the Word of God will do. It will "instruct you for salvation."

Salvation! Salvation means to be saved! These sacred Scriptures will tell you how to be saved. And we are to **"preach the word,"** because the Holy Bible instructs, teaches us "salvation through faith in Christ Jesus." Here we are being taught already how to be saved, are we not? "through faith in Christ Jesus."

Not by working our way to Heaven. But "salvation through faith in Christ Jesus."



Christ Jesus."

The Word of God says, **"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved"** (Acts 16:31). Jesus Christ is the Saviour of us poor sinners. No one else. Nothing else. Christ is the only way to God (John 14:6).

It is to be assumed, then, when the Holy Spirit commands preachers to **"preach the word,"** the holy Scriptures, "which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus," that such preaching of salvation through

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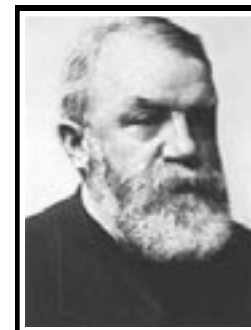
Not by trusting in your works of charity, not by trusting in your Church, not by trusting in your baptism, not by trusting in "any" one of "any" thing, but only "salvation through faith in

## Is the Old Testament of Value to the Christians?

By D. L. Moody  
(1837 - 1899)

I want to show how absurd it is for anyone to say he believes the New Testament and not the Old. It is a very interesting fact that of the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament, it is recorded that our Lord made quotations from no less than twenty-two. Very possibly He may have quoted from all of them; for we have only fragments reported of what He said and did. You know the Apostle John tells us that the world could scarcely contain the books that could be written, if all the sayings and doings of our Lord were recorded. About eight hundred and fifty passages in the Old Testament are quoted or alluded to in the New; only a few occurring more than once.

In the Gospel of Matthew there are over a hundred quotations from twenty of the books in the Old Testament.



In the Gospel of Mark there are fifteen quotations taken from thirteen of the books.

In the Gospel of Luke, there are thirty-four quotations from thirteen books.

In the Gospel of John there are eleven quotations from six books.

In the four Gospels alone there are more than one hundred and sixty quotations from the Old Testament.

You sometimes hear men saying they do not believe all the Bible, but they believe the teaching of Jesus Christ in the four Gospels. Well, if I believe that, I have to accept these hundred and sixty quotations from the Old Testament. In

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## Baptist Succession

By William W. Everts  
(1913 - 200?)

An American student, seeking from German scholars an account of the origin and history of the Baptist Denomination, was warily answered, "The history of that sect has never been written." While Baptist scholarship has lacked the interest, or opportunity to gather evidences extant in different languages



and localities of Europe, of a succession of apostolic, or Baptist churches, Pedobaptists scholars have no motive

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## The Child of God After Conversion

By Wayne Cox  
(1913 - 200?)

**"That I may know him"** (Phil. 3:10).

It goes without saying that the Apostle Paul was already acquainted with Christ. It could not therefore mean that the Apostle Paul wanted to get acquainted with Jesus in the sense that lost men come to know Christ, for he said: **"For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day"** (II Tim. 1:12).

Thus, on the one hand the Apostle Paul is declaring that he knew the divine Son of God and on the other hand he is saying, **"That I may know him."** Is Paul divided? Does one of these facts contradict the other? Certainly not. I believe with all my heart that the text found in Philippians 3:10 has to do with a more intimate relationship with Jesus

Christ. What the Apostle Paul is actually saying is, "That I might become better acquainted with Him---that I might come to know the Lord Jesus Christ more intimately."



Mrs. Cox and I were reared together, and I thought that I knew her and she thought she knew me. But we have been married twenty-five years, we have four grandchildren, and I am still learning about Mrs. Cox, and we are becoming more intimately acquainted as the days come and go.

When the Apostle Paul said, **"That I may know him. . .and the fellowship of his sufferings,"** he actually meant this, "That I might know Christ even better than I know Him---that I might become

more intimately acquainted with Jesus Christ.

### BORN AGAIN

I am sure all of you know that when the word "conversion" is used with reference to a child of God you quite naturally mean one that has already been saved, to one that has been converted from death to life---from the power of Satan unto the power of God---from a life of unbelief unto faith in Jesus Christ. I say this; I believe that men of God should be everlastingly conscious of their responsibility of telling all men how that men are saved, or how men become the children of God. We are not going to deal with the technical points of how men become the children of God, other than to say this that one who is a child of God by birth actually and literally becomes a child of God by faith in Jesus Christ.

Men are born, not by the will of the

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*We glide from one sin to another, even as a waterfall descends from rock to rock. As weeds multiply in the soil, so do sins spring up in our hearts. Like the pendulum, we swing to the right hand and then to the left. We err first in one way and then in another. We are ever inclined to evil. "...and the sin which doth so easily beset us" (Hebrews 12:1)*

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Editor: Christopher Cockrell

Staff: Sheron Cockrell, Marsha Kiser, Virginia  
Cockrell

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The purpose of the *Berea Baptist Banner* is as follows:

1. To honor God and to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. To preach the gospel to lost sinners.
3. To spread the whole counsel of God's Word.
4. To encourage God's preachers and to strengthen His churches in the most holy faith.
5. To motivate God's children to a closer fellowship around His Word.
6. To inform people of world events in light of Bible prophecy.
7. To condemn and expose error wherever it may rear its ugly head.
8. To stimulate Christian growth in grace.
9. To make the Devil and his demons as mad as possible.

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new address. The post  
office charges us \$.50  
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address.

## "Preach the Word"

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Jesus Christ is to be heard. How is it then that many who profess to adore Christ will not let us talk to them about Jesus, will not even read a gospel paper telling about salvation through faith in Christ Jesus? Is it because they have been taught since youth not to hear any religious preaching, nor to read any religious writings not approved by their religious leaders?

What would Paul and Peter and all the other apostles think of you? What does God think of you? And yet these same religious rulers tell you that you must do works to save your soul. That Christ is the Saviour---yes, but that you must also have the help of others, their merits to take you to Heaven. That Jesus Christ is angry with us---and that we cannot go to Him---although He invites us time and again in His Gospels. No! We must go to someone else and get that one to pray for us to Jesus before He will receive us!

I have sought to preach the Word of God to you now. We are telling you that "everlasting salvation" (Isa. 45:17) is yours here and now and forever, "through faith in Christ Jesus." Will you trust Him now to save you?



## Is the Old Testament

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Paul's letter to the Corinthians there are fifty-three quotations from the Old Testament; sometimes he takes whole paragraphs from it. In Hebrews there are eighty-five quotations, in that one book of thirteen chapters. In Galatians, sixteen quotations. In the book of Revelation alone, there are two hundred and forty-five quotations and allusions.

A great many want to throw out the Old Testament. It is good historic reading, they say, but they don't believe it is a part of the Word of God, and don't regard it as essential in the scheme of salvation. The last letter Paul wrote contained the following words: "And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (II Tim. 3:15).

All the Scriptures which the apostles possessed were the Old Testament Scriptures.

When skeptics attack its truths, these find it convenient to say, "Well, we don't endorse all that is in the Old Testament," and thus we avoid an argument in defense of the Scriptures. It is very important that every Christian should not only know what the Old Testament teaches, but he should accept its truths, because it is upon this that truth is based. Peter said the Scriptures are not given for any

private interpretation, and in speaking of the Scriptures, referred to the Old Testament and not to the New (II Pet. 1:20-21).

If the Old Testament Scriptures are not true, do you think Christ would have so often referred to them, and said these Scriptures must be fulfilled?

When told by the tempter that He might call down the angels from Heaven to interpose in His behalf, He said: "It is written" (Matt. 4:4).

Christ gave Himself up as a sacrifice that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. Was it not said that He was numbered with the transgressors? And when He talked with two of His disciples by the way, journeying to Emmaus, after His resurrection, did He not say: "Ought not these things to be? Am I not to suffer?" (Luke 24:26).

And beginning at Moses He explained unto them in all the Scriptures concerning Himself, for the one theme of the Old Testament is the Messiah.

In Psalm 40:7, it says: "In the volume of the book it is written of me."

"What Book?" says Luther, "and what Person? There is only one book---the Bible; and only one person---Jesus Christ."

Christ referred to the Scriptures and their fulfillment in Him, not only after He arose from the dead, but in the book of Revelation He used them in Heaven. He spoke to John of them on the Isle of Patmos, and used the very things in them that men are trying to cast out. He never found fault with or rejected them.

If Jesus Christ could use the Old Testament, let us use it. May God deliver us from the one-sided Christian who reads only the New Testament and talks against the Old!

**Editor's Note:** Recently I received a letter from a gentleman out West who wrote to tell me that the Old Testament was dead and gone. I happened to be reading through some old articles and came across this one by D. L. Moody. It sums up my opinion on the matter.



## Child of God After

(Continued from page 61) ◊

flesh, nor by the will of man, but by the will of God (John 1:13). This has to do therefore with the birth, and I declare without fear of contradiction that one who is a child of God by birth is a son of God by faith. The Apostle Paul says: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26).

Actually the word "children" comes from a little Greek word that means "a son"---not a child by birth, but a son by faith. It therefore has to do with position rather than relationship, while birth has to do with relationship.

The question is very frequently asked,

"How is it that men come to experience this birth?" My position is that God's Spirit uses the Gospel in producing the new birth. If I did not believe that, I would not believe the Word of God. For example, the Apostle Paul tells us: "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten (or actually born) you through the gospel" (I Cor. 4:15).

We are not like the Campbellites, who say that men are begotten or born again by the Word separate and apart from the Spirit of God. Neither are we Hardshells, taking the position that men are born by the operation of the Spirit of God separate and apart from the Word of God. The Word of God or the Gospel is the instrument and the Holy Spirit is the agent. The brother put it well when he said that one of the works of the divine Spirit of God is to give men ears with which to hear.

One of the great texts of the Bible that is so frequently overlooked is in John 6:45. It is a wonderful text and I have read that verse many times and never saw the truth of the verse until just a few years ago. The Lord Jesus Christ declares: "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."

Jesus declares here that the person that hears and learns of the Father cometh unto Christ. Now the little Greek word from which we get the word "heard" in John 6:45 is used many times in the New Testament, but only one time in the way or sense that it is used here. It actually means "to perceive in the soul the inner communications of God." Now that is the work of the divine Spirit of God. To do what? To perceive in the soul the inner communications of God. That is the work of the divine Spirit of God, and in the new birth the divine Spirit of God implants the very germ life of God. I say this without fear, that when men come to experience that birth from above, the divine Spirit of God implants the germ life of God in the man's soul.

In I John 3:9 the Apostle John said: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

The word "seed" means "the germ life of God," and so the Apostle John said in the new birth that in the man's soul the Holy Spirit implants the very life germ of God. That is why we read in II Peter 1:4 that we come to partake of the divine nature of the Lord Jesus Christ. That brings me to say this, the child of God after conversion, after he has been saved or in salvation itself, does come to possess the divine nature of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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## Child of God After

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In II Peter 1:4 the Apostle Peter had this to say concerning the new nature: **“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”**

Thus I say that every man, woman, boy or girl in this world who has experienced the birth which is from above has come to possess the divine nature of the Lord Jesus Christ. Of course I realize that there are many reasons why God’s people cannot burn everlastingly in Hell, but this is one of them. If it were possible therefore for a child of God to so sin as to be finally lost in a Devil’s Hell, then the very nature of the divine Son of God and the very life of God Himself would everlastingly be burned in a Devil’s Hell. That, beloved, I cannot accept, but will reject with all the fervor of my heart and soul.

I do not mean to imply that when one becomes a child of God by birth and a son of God by faith that the old man has become completely eradicated, but I do mean to imply that when one has come to know Christ, he receives the new nature from God. The old is in deadly conflict with the new. One wins sometimes and then the other wins in the everlasting combat that is ever going on. Some people raise the question, which wins more battles? The answer is, the one usually that is the older; and the old man is the older, of course. He jumps on the little man and strikes him down very frequently, but praise unto God, the little man gets up and dusts himself off and goes after the old man again. That is why the Apostle Paul tells us in Romans 6:6: **“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.”**

God reckons our old man to have died when the Lord Jesus Christ died upon Calvary’s Cross. God reckoned His people to have died in the person of the Lord. We therefore are to reckon just as God reckons. We are to reckon that the old man died upon Calvary’s Cross. And we are to be ever constant and everlastingly vigilant that he is not resurrected. That is why the Apostle Paul said in Galatians 2:20: **“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”**

The Apostle Paul said, “I am crucified with Christ on the one hand, and yet on the other hand I live.” He said, “It is not I that liveth, but Christ that liveth in me; and the life that I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God, or actually

the faithfulness of the Son of God Who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

In Galatians 5 you will notice both the fruits of the new man and the fruits of the old. In I Corinthians 6:10-11 the Apostle Paul points out that no drunkard, fornicator, liar, etc., could inherit the kingdom of God. Then he goes on to say: **“And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God”** (I Cor. 6:11).

There was a time when these men and women lived in fornication and lived ungodly lives, but they had been washed. They had been sanctified. That does not mean, however, that the old man had been completely eradicated. It is a fight that must ever go on. That is what Paul meant when he said that the Spirit begins to battle the old man, the flesh. They are contrary one to the other, that you cannot do the things that you want or desire to do.

### THE CHILD OF GOD AND THE CHURCH

Let us notice not only the nature of the man that has been saved, but let’s notice him in regard to the church. I believe with all my heart that the man that has been saved and taught the truth of God’s Word concerning a believer and his relationship to Christ’s church and then refuses to become a member of Christ’s church, is a liar. He is, in my opinion, not saved. I am not a Campbellite; I do not believe that baptism saves. But, I’ll tell you one thing: Campbellites have driven many Baptists off the ground of the doctrine of baptism. We have gotten to the place where we are afraid to preach it for fear that some man will call us a Campbellite, just as we are afraid to preach sanctification and holiness for fear that somebody will call us a Holy Roller. These are cardinal truths and we must declare them. We must, I say, proclaim the truth regardless of what men call us.

I say, therefore, that anybody who professes to be a child of God, and then refuses to become identified with Christ’s church in baptism, is not a child of God. I don’t believe that he is saved.

For example, the Lord in giving the divine commission to His church, said: **“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world”** (Matt. 28:19-20).

If baptism and church membership are unimportant, then why did Jesus declare that in making the disciples, we should baptize those disciples? I believe Mark 16:15-16 as strong as any Campbellite on this earth. In fact, I believe it stronger than a Campbellite, for he doesn’t believe 16 and I do. **“And he said unto them,**

**Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned”** (Mark 16:15-16).

I am not preaching baptismal regeneration, for certainly the Bible does not teach that: but I am saying that a man who has been taught the truth of God’s Word concerning baptism and then refuses to be baptized into Christ’s church is not saved, but he is lost. Jesus said that the man that hears the Gospel becomes a disciple of the Master: he believes in Christ and is baptized. I realize that if baptism were essential to his salvation, not being baptized would be equally essential to his damnation, and Jesus didn’t say that. I believe that the man who believes in God’s Christ is saved, but I also believe that he will submit to the ordinance of baptism.

When I was converted at the tender age of thirteen, I shall never forget that afternoon. The man preached on the saving power of the Lord Jesus Christ. I went down the aisle a barefooted country boy, and I made it known that God’s Christ had saved me. I could not wait to be baptized. I didn’t have extra clothes in which to be baptized and I had to borrow a pair of trousers. I borrowed those trousers and I almost drove the preacher, my people and everybody else crazy until I was buried in baptism like the Lord Jesus Christ and became identified with “Him” and with His church.

Jesus Christ walked miles---some say 30 miles, some 60---to be baptized at the hands of a Baptist preacher, according to Matthew 3:16-17. According to John 1:31, He was baptized that He might be made manifest to Israel that He was the Son of God. We therefore ought to be baptized into Christ’s church, be identified with Him and with His church that we, too, might be made manifest that we are the sons or the children of God.

In Acts 18:8, Paul, on one of his missionary tours, went to the city of Corinth and preached the Gospel, and it tells us that many of the Corinthians heard, believed, and were baptized. Every time, beginning with the Acts of the Apostles, that you find a conversion, you find a baptismal service immediately following.

In Acts 16:31---one of the greatest texts in all of the Word of God, which contains the greatest question that ever came from the lips of mortal men---the Philippian jailer, at the midnight hour, asked the Apostle Paul and Silas, **“Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”** the Apostle Paul said **“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”** The Philippian jailer believed in God, with all of his house, after he heard the Word of truth. Then they were baptized. Everyone that believed in God’s Christ was baptized the same hour of the night.

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I say, therefore, that when man is saved he ought to submit to the ordinance of baptism right then and there, because if when man dies he is not to be kept around. He ought to be buried. Certainly you are not going to bury a man in order to kill him. You bury that which is already dead. You know you can’t keep a dead thing around very long or it starts to stink up the place. Therefore you ought to bury the one that has died, immediately after death. That is the teaching of Romans 6:4.

### THE CHILD OF GOD AND THE WORD OF GOD

I have said this many, many times, and you will find this to be true, that if you have trouble concerning the declaration of the doctrines from the pulpit, it is with that man or woman who is not saved, for the individual that is saved will accept the Word of God. He will not question it. He will believe it. He will treasure it in his heart. Jesus Christ said in John 8:47: **“He that is of God heareth God’s words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.”**

The people that cause the most trouble because of doctrinal preaching in the pulpit are those that do not believe the Word of God and therefore are not saved. People that are lost should not be in the church, but probably 65 percent of all church members are without Christ. They will not accept the truth of God’s Word, and yet they are the quickest to say, “Oh, I am a spiritual man.” The Apostle Paul said: **“If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.”**

Brother, if you claim to be saved, accept the Word of God, If you claim to be full of the Spirit of God, accept the truth of God as evidence that you are a spiritual man.

I treasure the Word of God and when it is declared, sometimes it knocks me down. It skins me. I even skin myself, and I hang my hide on the highest tree in the Mississippi River bottom. I have had men to preach for me who have skinned me. I say that I love that kind of preaching.

I’ll tell you one thing that this world needs to hear is preaching with power of conviction, for preaching that will not convict is no preaching at all. We need to preach with power of conviction, but

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## Child of God After

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in this modern, materialistic age, the world doesn't want to hear preaching that is convicting. Rather they want to hear preaching that tickles their fancy. They want to hear preaching that tickles their ears. The only kind that will save men and change the lives and the hearts of souls, and the only thing that will save this country of ours is preaching from American pulpits in truth and with power of conviction. It is needed more today than ever before.

In the first chapter of Proverbs God said there was going to come a time when man would seek Him and they wouldn't find Him; they were going to call upon Him but He wouldn't hear them. Their trouble would come like a cyclone, and God said, **"I will sit in the heavens and laugh at their calamity."**

That time may be here my friends. I don't know. I tell you one thing: preachers, wake up! We have a great responsibility to declare the whole counsel of God. We must warn the lost to flee the wrath to come. We must warn God's people that they need to repent as Paul told the Corinthians to repent and as the Lord Jesus Christ commanded the churches of Asia to repent. It behooves you and me as preachers of the Gospel to command people everywhere to repent and to turn to God. God's people need to repent. I tell you, beloved, raw heathenism is not nearly so great an obstacle to the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ as a paganized Christianity. I say, therefore, it behooves us as ministers of the Gospel to declare to the world the whole counsel of God.

The moral standard has been lowered until it is dragging in the dust of the earth. We have forfeited every right as a nation to survive. Every time we put out a fire over here one breaks out over yonder. Every time we put down something here, something else breaks out some place else. We find that we are going around in circles and we are constantly asking ourselves, "Where do we go from here?" Well, beloved, there is only one place to go and that is to God. There is only one place to go and that is the throne of God.

You know, beloved, I love my country and I think the United States of America didn't happen by accident, but by the purpose of God. It has been a haven of refuge across the years for the downtrodden. Those that have been ill-treated in other lands have found a haven of refuge here. They have found churches that welcome them. They have heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ and have been saved. They have been blessed financially. They have been blessed spiritually. I would hate to see all that disappear. Wouldn't you hate to

see disappearing from this fair land the right of assembly as we have tonight? I tell you, you that are preachers need to wake up and preach with conviction.

### A CHILD OF GOD HAS SOMETHING THAT THE LOST DON'T HAVE

The child of God has an everlasting hope. He has many things the lost don't have, but this in particular. The Apostle Paul said in Romans, **"We are saved by hope."** An old preacher one time argued for thirty-five minutes with an elderly man on that one passage. The old man said that we are saved by hope. Actually, we are saved in hope. In hope of what? In hope of the resurrection.

I am not like a lost man; a lost man has no hope and he is without God in the world. He will be resurrected, but in his own sinful body. There is no change at all. He has to live in an everlasting Hell in that same old house, corrupt and filthy and sinful, but the child of God lives in hope of a better day, a fairer land, and where the sons of God shout for everlasting joy.

I have a crippled ankle. One time I was holding a funeral and people there didn't know I was crippled. I happened to mention the ankle. The man that had died was a saved man and professed to be a Christian. I said, "You know, there is coming a time when this man's hope shall be realized," and then I said, "Will you pardon me for making a personal reference. I, too, shall have my hope become a reality." I looked back in the back and there were several men whom I knew, and they were every one cripples. I said, "If you are a child of God, there is coming a time when the grave shall burst asunder and blossom as the rose, and the children of God shall rise. They shall look back to the yawning chasm that once contained all that was mortal of them, and they shall rise their voice in everlasting triumph as they shout the victory song, **'Oh death, where is thy sting?'** They shall be given new bodies like Christ. There will be no cripples, no blind, no halt, no maimed up there."

In I John 3:2-3 the Apostle said: **"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."**

The Apostle Paul said in Philippians 3:21: **"Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself."**

### CONCLUSION

Are all of you children of God? Have you experienced the birth that comes from above? Have you become sons of God by faith?

I was once preaching in a Conference in Michigan. The pastor there said,

"Brother Cox, when you preach, will you extend an invitation?" After the service I did. They sang one stanza and the invitation was closed. A little boy about 15 or 16 years old came to me. He rushed up to me and kept plucking at my sleeve. I looked down and he looked up with great tears rolling down his face, and he said, "Brother Cox show me how to be saved." I took him out of the auditorium, back down a hall and preached him a little sermonette, and God made it known unto me that he was a child of His. He revealed His Son in him.

If you are here tonight and God has spoken to your heart and revealed His Son to you and in you, will you come confessing Christ as your Saviour? If you are here and God has spoken to your heart, will you come confessing Him before men?



### Mini-Edition by Joseph Harris

Chairman of Biblical Studies  
Southeastern Baptist  
College, Laurel, Mississippi  
www.miniedition.net



## Unity or Purity?

The leavening of America, God's churches, the family and society has been underway for decades. In a sense, the leavening process has always been around as Satan has constantly tried to dilute and weaken the people of God and their influence in the world. Paul said in I Corinthians **"Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?"** The nature of leaven (yeast) is to permeate and spread throughout the entire lump of dough, causing it to rise. It only takes a small amount to change the entire lump.

What disturbs me does not always disturb others. In this fast paced age of change, I am disturbed by the change in attitude and philosophy of the average person. I am increasingly finding myself in the minority on issues of Bible doctrine, politics, and ethics. Yet, I haven't changed. I stand where I stood 27 years ago when surrendering to God's call to preach and teach His Word. I see the danger in a little leaven. The depraved nature of humanity leans toward sin and the path of least resistance and will exploit every inch given, hence the saying, "Give him an inch and he'll take a mile" is an absolute. Maintaining purity requires effort.

In the religious, political and cultural battles of today, purity has taken a beating. However, purity is essential. Consider the following: when given a choice, would you rather drink pure water or filthy water? Would you prefer a virgin for a spouse or a promiscuous

person? Would you choose dirty clothes over clean clothes for your body? Would you rather have a clean politician (I know this is an oxymoron, but bear with me) or a person of character as your representative? Any sane person would choose purity in these and other situations. But when the choice of purity may result in conflict, stress, and division, people will choose unity over purity 95% of the time.

*Look first at purity in the local church.* Concerning immorality in a church, it will usually be tolerated, when the other option is conflict through confrontation. It is not easy or pleasurable to confront sin and demand purity from ungodly church members who may also be family members, or influential in the community or big givers in the offering plate. Yet, the small amount of leaven will spread throughout the lump, affecting the whole. When we are more concerned with the smile of men, then we will have the frown of God and when purity goes out the window for the sake of unity, then God's churches lose the power and blessing of God.

*Consider purity of church doctrine.* Baptism and the Lord's table have taken a beating with pastors and churches caving in to the plea for unity rather than purity in the practicing of these ordinances. Only a scriptural New Testament church of the Lord Jesus has the authority to baptize new believers and administer the Lord's Supper and guard His table from non-members, unbelievers and the immoral and profane. These ordinances belong to the Lord, and He has given their care and stewardship to His church, which is local and visible, for their proper administration. Rather than stand for purity and cause contention, many are satisfied to sacrifice purity for unity, forgetting that unity with God through purity is primary. When a church adopts a purpose driven, seeker-sensitive philosophy, their main priority will be to please men and not God. Here is a novel idea: How about a God driven, Spirit sensitive church? It just might work.

*Look also at purity in church associations.* Ecumenism has taken hold and so many are willing to turn loose of Bible doctrines that "divide" in order to fellowship with those who disagree in doctrine. After all, we are all children of God, and why can't we just get along and love one another? True love often requires hard choices. Amos the prophet asked **"Can two walk together except they be agreed?"** They can walk, just not together, because those not of like faith will have different beliefs, different standards, different philosophies of ministry, different goals and different ways to achieve those goals. When pastors and churches do not associate and cooperate with others who are not of like faith, they are accused of being hateful and having no love for the

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brethren. Loving the brethren is not the issue, purity is the issue. Besides, we are commanded to love God before we are commanded to love others and maintaining purity is loving God. We are never commanded to fellowship with those who show a contempt for God by disobeying His Word. As Dr. Curtis Hutson used to say, "There are some things that cannot be sacrificed on the altar of love."

*Purity of the Word of God is important.* Concerning the Word of God, I believe in the purity of His Word. I believe the Scriptures were divinely inspired and providentially preserved. God divinely inspired the writers in the original manuscripts and providentially preserved these writings in the original languages of the Hebrew Masoretic text and the Greek Textus Receptus. I use the 1769 edition of the 1611 King James version, not because of "Thee's" and "Thou's", but because I believe it to be a faithful translation from these texts. The primary issue is not the English translation as much as it is the original language texts. The purity of His Word is essential since doctrine and practice are based upon the authority of Scripture. **"The words of the LORD are pure words"** (Psalm 12:6).

*Purity in the home.* Purity must first be established in the heart, otherwise, the outward appearance is a sham. However, after purity is a reality inward, further instruction is still needed concerning outward conduct and appearance. With standards of dress, entertainment choices and others issues in contemporary culture, most churches and parents opt for unity and peace in the congregation and the home rather than the unsettling, stressful conflict which comes from requiring standards of purity. Modern apparel is more important than modest apparel. A sloppy, unkempt, casual appearance has replaced a dignified, neat and tidy appearance, yet what is on the outside, usually reflects the attitude of the inside. Degrading movies and videos de-sensitize values concerning right and wrong over issues of sexuality, ethics and the role of men and women in the home. Ultimately, standards or lack of standards, go back to the home and the example set by the parents. Godly parents face intense pressure in the world and often from their church, over disagreement of standards, and parents too often give in to the pressure of their children, their church and other family members, who accuse them of being too hard.

*Consider purity in society.* Homosexuality and immorality have become more and more accepted through gradual exposure. To address someone's sexual lifestyle is considered an attack

on the individual. Homosexuality and immorality are both destructive to all who participate, ruining self esteem and respect, destroying families, and can end in death from disease. To warn of self destruction and promote sexual purity honors God and helps people experience full, and more satisfying lives. Sexual immorality affects everyone in society as a whole through broken homes, wounded children and adults and increased financial costs, resulting from choices that damage health.

May God give us the resolve to stand and be more concerned about maintaining unity with God, as we preach and practice purity in a culture that has an ever growing contempt for truth.



## Baptist Succession

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to trace as ecclesiastical succession which would prove their affiliation with Antichrist. Two works just published by the Baptist Publication Society, claim the antiquity of the Baptist church. "Baptist History," by Dr. W. R. Williams, in the title of one of its chapters, "Our Churches under the Ban of Antichrist," claims by all the authority of his great learning a "Baptist Succession." "The Church in the Wilderness," more explicitly claims the perpetuity of the Baptist or Apostolic Church, and points out different lines of its possible succession from the apostolic age to our own times. The question of such succession depends for its solution on the interpretation, as well as the discovery of facts. Jones, Orchard, Benedict, Cramp, and others, believe facts already established, sufficiently attest the perpetuity of the Apostolic Church, and the Baptist Denomination, generally have accepted their interpretation and conclusion. While others, with no fuller investigation, and no wider range of facts have been disposed to abandoned the claim to a Baptist Succession---even disparaging its importance. By Baptist Succession, we mean Apostolic Succession. The essential Apostolic church is the only accepted definition of the Baptist church. The local association of believers instituted by the apostles, is the only standard of ecclesiastical order and discipline, Baptists feel amenable to; only what was essential in those apostolic communities is properly distinctive of the Baptist denomination. If then the Apostolic church ever disappeared from the earth, Baptist Succession disappeared with it. But if the Apostolic church has always continued, Baptist Succession is proved. Let us consider the grounds on which this Succession may be claimed.

1. This claim is felt to be necessary to establish "apostolic authority." The Papacy bases her claim to apostolic

institution upon a supposed unbroken historical succession from the times of the apostles. Protestants, in the time of the Reformation to vindicate their ecclesiastical character, endeavored by learned treatises to trace for themselves an essential apostolic succession. And no historical denomination, unless Baptists are an exception, claim apostolic constitution who do not also claim apostolic succession. It seems to be generally conceded that a community unable to trace such a descent or indifferent to it, must lack apostolic order and sanction. That Christ's order and sanction must be derived through appointment and succession from Him. That any institution not deriving its order and authority through His appointment, is not His church. Hence all denominations to justify their present order have claimed for it as essential apostolic descent. It would seem strange that Baptists, the only people now having the apostolic order, and therefore the only people who could possibly have an apostolic succession, should be the only people to abandon this claim, or be indifferent to its sanction and prestige---the only people to admit their church is without apostolic descent---a mere modern institution. The Baptist denomination makes no such weak concession. If she did, in making it she would expect an early disintegration and absorption by some denomination who could trace and appreciate an apostolic succession and authority.

2. Assuming, as Baptists do, that the Apostolic church was a "Baptist" church, the presumption of its continuance is so great as to be set aside only by positive disproof. Pedobaptists denying the Baptist character of the Apostolic church; may, rightfully demand full positive proof both of the apostolic origin and succession of the Baptist church. But Baptists conceding the origin, the succession inevitably follows, unless shown to have been interrupted. But the proof of any interruption of that original order of churches has been challenged and waited for in vain. When and where did the last Apostolic church become extinct, breaking the succession of Baptist churches? In what century can it be shown there were not thousands of such churches sheltered in the wilderness from the rage of Antichrist? Who has the temerity to declare there was ever a time when not a single Apostolic or Baptist church remained on the earth? If then, the apostolic order of churches never ceased, the succession of Baptist churches was never interrupted. And we may continue to rejoice in apostolic succession as well as in apostolic origin and character.

3. Assuming further, the Apostolic or Baptist church, was an "institution," and not a mere casual assembly, and we have an additional presumption in favor of its

continuance, so strong that nothing less than positive disproof can set it aside.

If the original church was only a casual assembly, as claimed by some modern sectaries, its succession could no more be identified than a succession of casual political assemblies or extemporized social gatherings. But if the church was an "institution" as all historical denominations claim, and that institution was formulated by the ordinances of Christ, its succession may be traced in conformities to these ordinances. By the very force of instituted order its perpetuity is assured. As Civil Government is a divine institution and cannot cease to exist without civil anarchy, and as the family is a divine institution and cannot be abrogated without social disorder and misery; so the church was instituted as a permanent order of religion, and the force and fitness of its appointment assure its perpetuity. Any interruption of its order would be a reflection upon the wisdom and authority of the lawgiver. As sure as the Apostolic church was an institution, it must have continued in unbroken succession throughout the ages.

4. The succession of the Apostolic or Baptist church was assured by the promise of its Founder that, **"The gates of hell should not prevail against it."** This promise must have contemplated the church in her two-fold character as described in the New Testament, both as a spiritual fellowship and as an institution. There is no more reason for overlooking its application to the organized church than to the spiritual body. It can mean no less than that the rage of persecution shall neither exterminate the universal spiritual church, nor banish from the earth the instituted church of Christ. Though persecuted, it should not be destroyed. Though driven into the wilderness, it should survive there. If there was a time when the last church was overthrown and no covenanted fellowship of believers remained on the earth, divine promise must have failed. If, on the other hand, the promise was verified, the succession of Apostolic or Baptist churches never ceased.

5. The very simplicity of the Baptist, or Apostolic church as forcibly urged by the author of the "Church in the Wilderness," makes its extinction almost inconceivable without the extinction of Christianity itself. If Christianity continued, it must ever have tended strongly to assume its own prescribed and normal order. The Apostolic church was that normal organization. However dispersed, believers would ever be seeking reunion and organization, from external dictation, they would in the first effort of loyalty to Christ, restore His church. And where two or three in faith's communion united, observing the order and worship of Christ, there was the

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## Baptist Succession

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essential Apostolic, or Baptist church. It is hardly possible, therefore, to believe there has been any period of the Christian era when Baptist churches have not existed in great numbers in some part of the earth. While the extinction of the last of them seems to us altogether incredible, negative proof would avail nothing toward discrediting a succession of such churches. As well deny the perpetuity of civil government, because through some periods, no annals of states are found; or, deny succession of families because family tables have not been preserved, as to deny a succession of Apostolic churches, because Antichrist dispersed them, or destroyed their records. We no more doubt a succession of such churches, than we doubt the inevitable succession of families and states in the earth.

6. The uninterrupted operation of the spiritual forces, creating the Apostolic, or Baptist church, must inevitably have insured its succession. If the word and spirit of God created a particular type of church in apostolic times, and they create the same type of church in our time, so surely as these forces continued to operate through the intervening ages they must have produced the same type of church. If these forces never ceased to operate, the succession of the Apostolic, or Baptist churches never ceased. As the same plates produce the same book in the tenth or hundredth edition as in the first, so same typical spiritual forces must have produced the same order of churches in all ages. As we do not doubt the continued operation of these spiritual forces in some part of the earth, we believe in a succession of Apostolic, or Baptist churches to our own time.

7. The prevalence of Baptist principles throughout the centuries, as shown by scholars, proves a necessary succession of the churches those principles formulate. Those jealously maintaining the independence of the church; the sole authority of the Scriptures as the rule of faith and practice; the spiritual character and discipline and the baptismal order of the church, must have been Baptists. The churches they constituted must have been Baptist churches. To call them Pedobaptist churches while practicing, even suffering and dying for Baptist principles, would be a logical absurdity and a base calumny. Exceptional interpretation or observance can no more discredit their Baptist lineage and character than those of English, Scotch, German, or American Baptists. The reproaches heaped on Montanists, Donatists, Novatians, and earlier Waldenses, are no greater, nor from more unprejudiced sources, than those heaped upon Christ and His apostles, Luther and his coadjutors, Whitfield

and Wesley, our German Baptists, and all leaders of revivals. If there has been any succession of Christ's church, it must have been through the great religious bodies persecuted by Antichrist to vindicate a fictitious claim to apostolic succession. If there has been any apostolic succession, it must be traced through these great dissenting communities, or through Papacy. As no Protestant admits a succession through Papacy, it must be accepted through these Protestant bodies. But it is as certain that these bodies were AntiPedobaptist-anna-Baptist, as that they were Protestant. Any succession, therefore, through them must be "Baptist Succession." If it be urged, the evidences of their Baptist character are rather meager. We answer, the evidences of their Anna-baptism are not meager. And if Anna-Baptist, they were not Pedobaptist. Moreover, the evidences are not meager considering they have survived the destruction of annals by Antichrist, to vindicate her rival claim to apostolic succession. Besides the facts complained of as few, are formative, and demonstrate certain order and organization.

From a single bone, the naturalist determines a species of animal; from the classifications of a few fossils, he constructs a Museum of Natural History; from the study of fossils in different parts of the globe, he distributes the animal races in their several habitats over the earth and through successive periods.

So the candid ecclesiastical historian may find distinctive principles enough to identify and distinguish the Christian from the Anti-Christian communities through successive ages, and in different lands. The name Anna-Baptist, attributed as a reproach, has always identified Anti-Papal and Anti-Pedobaptist communities. And where we discover among them church independence, Scriptural doctrine, spiritual character, and baptismal order, we find Baptist churches. And our conclusion is based on, as certain grounds as that, on which the naturalist has reared the science of zoology, and distributed the habitats of the animal races over the earth, and through different periods.

The importance as well as the fact of the succession of Apostolic, or Baptist churches, has been overlooked. Only through them has the lordship of Christ been most signally maintained against Antichrist, and the regenerating power of Christianity most conspicuously illustrated. The greatness of England and America has arisen from the order and discipline of ten thousand independent homes. So throughout Christendom, the highest industry, thrift, contentment, social purity, charity and happiness, and the highest culture, freedom, and progress have emanated from independent Apostolic churches. The greatest, most comprehensive, and beneficent reform of the world would be the superseding

of all other religious institutions, state establishments, and hierarchies, by the simple, spiritual, independent order of Apostolic, or Baptist churches. The prestige of the divine appointment and perpetuity of the apostolic order of churches would greatly aid their restoration. The fictitious claim of Papacy challenges the devotion of millions. The true claim of Baptists, vindicated, will inspire a more intelligent, if not a more enthusiastic devotion. Let then, our apostolic succession be more confidently claimed and celebrated. Families boast of illustrious descent. States celebrate the names of their founders. All faiths canonize their prophets. The Hebrews never ceased to reverence Abraham and Moses. Our Lord came not to abrogate the law and the prophets, but to interpret and fulfill them. He recognized the inevitable succession of prophets, and dispensations of religion. We can no more find truth without antecedent utterance than a tree without roots. A theology, which has no affinities with the past, is an imposture. A church, without succession, is Antichrist. The true church is not a modern institution. It has descended from the institution of the apostles to our times. It can no more be discredited by loss of annals than a state by inability to identify an historical

succession of states from the Roman Empire, or the Hebrew commonwealth, or a family by inability to trace its descent through a succession of marriages from Paradise. In either case, an essential unbroken succession is certain. That succession we may magnify though all the historical connections may not be traced. Disparagement, or neglect of a noble ancestry, savors of ignorance, or self-conceit. Men may be flattered by the reputation of having founded a new party, or championed a new sect, who lack the humility or magnanimity to honor their predecessors. If the sentiment that has honored Luther in literature, song, painting and statue, through centuries is justified, should we not celebrate the name of Humeyer, his peer in learning and logic, and his superior in Christian character and loyalty to Christ? Is ignorance, of the heroic testimony and sufferings of Montanists, Donatists, Novatians, and Waldenses, through centuries hazarding their lives for the name of Jesus and the order of His church; and through Whom alone the Apostolic doctrine and order of Christianity have been preserved to us, creditable either to our intelligence or our professed devotion to the truth?



### From the Pen of a Country Preacher

Milburn R. Cockrell  
(1941 - 2002)



## God's Gracious Regard for His Saints

**"Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him"** (Mal. 3:16-17).

The Prophet Malachi lived in a time of gross spiritual delusion. In his degenerate age there existed a contempt for serious godliness. The ordinances of God had been corrupted by the priests (v. 7). The Lord had been robbed of His tithes and offerings (vv. 8-10). Everywhere men cried: **"It is vain to serve God"** (v. 14). Nevertheless, a small elect remnant faithfully served God. Jehovah took a gracious notice of the pious walk of this godly remnant.

### THE DISTINGUISHING MARKS OF THE SAINTS

First, it is written that they **"feared the**

**LORD."** This is not the fear of a cringing slave, but of a dutiful child. The fear of God takes in the whole of true religion. It is the beginning of all wisdom (Ps. 111:10). This Divine principle is wrought in the soul by the Spirit of God, according to the promise of the new covenant (Jer. 32:40). The unsaved have no fear of God before their eyes (Rom. 3:18). While others around this godly remnant were practical atheists, these believers felt the importance of true religion.

True Christians are like Obadiah, who **"feared the LORD greatly"** (I Kings 18:3). They are like Abraham of whom the angel said: **"I know that thou fearest God"** (Gen. 22:12). They are like Cornelius who was **"a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house"** (Acts 10:2). They **"stand in awe, and sin not"** (Ps. 4:4). They are afraid of displeasing God.

Second, it is written that this godly remnant **"thought upon his name."** They esteemed and prized God's holy name in

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contrast to those who despised it. This godly remnant took all care to avoid all things which would dishonor His name. To think on His name is expressive of faith in Him, love to Him, and reverence of Him. There is nothing better to think about than God. Indeed, those who think upon His name will be found speaking lovingly of Him (Mal. 3:16).

His name was sacred to them, a fruitful source of profound and edifying meditation. To them the name of the Supreme Being was God Himself in the plenitude of His power, omniscience, justice, goodness, mercy, and truth. How dear was His name to them! They were concerned for God's good name. They had a holy zeal to praise the name of the most High.

Third, they delighted in fellowship with other godly people. The text said: **"They spake often one to another."** Those who loved the Lord, loved one another, and felt their kinship in Him. They loved the temple where their brethren worshipped. They greatly desired all means for prayer and praise of the Lord. When they met each other, they talked of the Divine and spiritual things. They spoke of Christ and the glories of His kingdom.

The same may be said of the members of a true New Testament Baptist Church today. Those who know the Lord need to **"consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works"** (Heb. 10:24). The best way to do this is by assembling on the Lord's Day in church capacity. The psalmist said: **"We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company"** (Ps. 55:14). The man to be elected to take the place of Judas must have **"companied"** with the disciples (Acts 1:21). In such church meetings the unruly are warned, the feeble-minded comforted, and the weak supported (I Thess. 5:14). Christian fellowship in a New Testament Baptist Church can do much to cheer the brother of adversity, succor the tempted, and encourage the weary to persevere.

## THE CONSIDERATION OF GOD

First, I point out that Jehovah noticed their pious discourses as they met in a company: **"The LORD hearkened and heard."** While their meetings were secret to the world, they were fully known to God. The Lord hears the words which proceed out of the mouths of His elect. The world may not hear them. But God sees in secret and will reward them openly. To all of their pious discourses Jehovah was a third party.

The two disciples going to Emmaus talked about the events of the crucifixion of the Savior. Luke 24:15 tells us: **"And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with**

**them."** Is not this always the case? When we commune with each other and reason together about Christ, Christ will add His gracious presence to such meetings. He solemnly promised in Matthew 18:20: **"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."**

"If the Lord should not be with me when I preach," said one preacher, "I will speak well of Him behind His back."

"Christians may be poor and illiterate, their services very imperfect; they may be despised, and their worship and communion ridiculed by the children of this world, yet the Lord 'hearkens and hears' all their ministrations, their breathings of prayer, and their lisping of praise. Mean may be the place where they assemble, but the Lord loveth the gates of Zion. He taketh pleasure in the prosperity of His servants. Graciously He attends to the groanings of the prisoners, to the desires of the needy, and to the conversation of the pilgrims bound for Heaven. He knows and approves of the way of the righteous." (The comments of an old English writer on this expression whose name is not given.)

Second, it is said that God noticed their words and works. These were recorded in the journals of Heaven. Malachi said: **"A book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name."** The Scriptures often speak of the record book of God in Heaven. Psalm 56:8 says: **"Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?"** Here we learn that God has a book and a bottle for the tears of His elect. Job declared: **"Also now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high"** (Job 16:19).

"What a glorious privilege for Christians to have their names and their deeds written in the book of remembrance---never to be forgotten! They merit not such an honor, but grace gives it to them. To be remembered by one who is unable to do us any good, would answer but little purpose. Pharaoh's butler could do but little for Joseph while he was in prison; but, said he, **'When it is well with thee, remember me.'** To have a friend in the king's presence would be some advantage. Hence the prayer of the dying thief, **'Lord, remember;'** (Same

old English writer again.)

Why does God keep such a book of remembrance? Persian kings kept records to bring to mind those who deserved rewards for working for the good of the kingdom (Ezra 4:15; Esther 2:23; 6:1). Even so, God keeps a record of those who labor for the advancement of His kingdom for the purpose of future rewards. Hebrews 6:10 informs us: **"For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister."** At the Judgment Seat of Christ God will produce the book of remembrance which was written before Him, and He will read it in the presence of an assembly of angels and men.

Our God **"is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him"** (Heb. 11:6). He is all-sufficient, having at His command all the blessings of nature by which He can amply repair every loss we may sustain for His sake. He has all the blessings of grace by which He can abundantly recompense and console us under all our sufferings. He has many crowns and white robes awaiting us at the Judgment Seat of Christ. More than that, He has Heaven and great glory at His disposal. Be assured that our faithful God will remember prophets, apostles, martyrs, and all His servants at a future day.

## GOD'S SWEET PROMISES

How wonderful to know God takes notice of His people. There exists in this old world of sin and sorrow some people who get God's attention. We are in the book of His remembrance, if we fear Him and think upon His name. But it is more wonderful than all of this to contemplate His great and precious promises. They are threefold.

First, there is security: **"They shall be mine."** II Timothy 2:19 says: **"The Lord knoweth them that are his."** Psalms 4:3 reads: **"The LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself."** **"The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him"** (Nah. 1:7). The Redeemer knows them that He engaged to save in the Covenant of Grace. In John 10:14 Christ said: **"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine."**

The elect were given to Christ to save

by the Father in the everlasting Covenant of Redemption. Jesus referred to this love gift in His prayer in John 17:24 when He said: **"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am. . ."** The Son asked for these in the eternal counsel (Ps. 2:8). These were given to Christ, for the Redeemer spoke of them as **"all which he hath given me"** (John 6:39). Furthermore, He emphatically declared of them: **"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out"** (John 6:37). It is the work of Christ to make the elect His. They are His to save, to feed, to keep, to teach, to lead, and to glorify.

The effectual working of the Spirit of Christ will bring all the elect to own Christ as Savior and Lord in the time appointed. They will publicly claim to be the purchased heirs of Heaven. By regeneration they are already His by being in His family. Their bodies shall be made His at the resurrection of the just. Those who know themselves to be God's children shall be manifested such at Christ's appearing. Those who now own God as theirs, He will one day own as His. Christ will make them His forever at the Rapture (I Thess. 4:17).

Second, the Lord promises to treat them as His precious jewels: **"When I make up my jewels."** Believers are a valued possession to Jehovah. Pussey renders the Hebrew text here: "And they shall be to Me, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day which I make (or, in which I do this) a peculiar treasure." The seed of Christ is a **"pearl of great price"** (Matt. 13:46). **"The precious sons of Zion"** are **"comparable to fine gold"** (Lam. 4:2). The chosen of God are loved with a special love and watched over by a special providence. They are chosen out of the world and separated from others on earth. The rest of the world are considered tares, chaff, grass, and dung by God in comparison to them.

Third, special protection is promised to them: **"I will spare them."** This statement stands in contrast to God's dealings with the wicked. **"God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell"** (II Pet. 2:4). Likewise He **"spared not the old world"** (II Pet. 2:5). God did not spare the sinning Israelites: **"God spared not the natural branches"** (Rom. 11:21). God **"spared not his own Son"** when He suffered for our sins (Rom. 8:32). Nevertheless, He does spare His own people who trust in Him. Hence His people are given a favor denied to the fallen angels, the old world, the nation of Israel, and even God's own Son at Calvary.

God is gracious with His children. He **"will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."** He does not deal with us as we deserve. Well did

◊ (Continued on page 68)

*Tune in to the*  
**Berea Baptist Broadcast**

STATION	TIME	DIAL	WATTS
WFTA, Tupelo, MS.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.....	101.9.....	3,000 FM
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WCTT, Corbin, KY.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.....	680.....	5,000 AM
KARI, Blaine, WA.....	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m.....	550.....	5,000 AM
DXUM, Davao City, Philippines.....	Sunday 4:00 - 4:30 p.m.....	819 Khz.....	10,000 AM
DXDS, Digos City, Philippines....	Sunday 12:00 - 12:30 p.m.....	1161 Khz.....	1,000 AM

## Gracious Regard

(Continued from page 67) ◊

the psalmist write: **“He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him”** (Ps. 103:10-13).

If we serve God as obedient children, He will spare us with the tenderness and compassion of a father. He says: **“I will spare them,”** meaning I will spare them although they are wicked sinners before Me. I will spare them although they are bent to backsliding from Me. I will spare them even though they are poor and needy, weak and worthless. I will spare them because I spared not my only begotten Son on the cross.

### CONCLUSION

In this text we see the nature of true religion. It consists not in pomp and splendor, nor in rites and ceremonies. Rather, it consists in filial reverence for God, fellowship with the saints of God, and love for the great name of God. Those who do these things have pure religion before God. All other religions are false. They are nothing but a refuge of lies.

In every age of the history of the world God has had a witness. He had Noah before the flood came upon the earth. He had the prophets in Israel in times of apostasy. He had the Maccabees during the four hundred silent years. He had Simeon and Anna at the birth of Christ. He has the true churches in this present age. He will have the 144,000 Israelites during the seven years of coming tribulation. The Son of man will find faith on the earth when He returns in the hearts of a godly remnant, just as He found it in the days of the Prophet Malachi.

Dear Christian brother, let our conduct, through Divine aid, be such as will bear the scrutiny of God. May God's grace make us such as He will remember as the faithful remnant in our generation. May we anticipate **“the manifestation of the sons of God.”** Then all those who are accounted by the unsaved the offscouring of all things and the filth of the world, will be owned by Jesus Christ as His jewels. On that day all men shall know it pays to serve Jesus.



# The Idolatrous Family

By Paul Stepp  
of Indore, West Virginia

We live in a day and time when there are many distractions to our service to the Lord. And we live in a day and time when there is much to separate us from our God, or we might rather say, that there are many things which come between us and our God.

Let us read from our text in Jeremiah 7:17-18: **“Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger.”**

### WHOLE-HEARTED COMMITMENT TO IDOLATRY

In our text verses it is interesting to notice how the entire family works together to commit evil. We read that the children **“gather wood”**; the fathers **“kindle the fire”**; and the women **“knead their dough.”** All of this is done so that they can gather together to worship a false god at an idolatrous feast.

*Children* Have you ever noticed how that in our day and time, just as in the day and time of Jeremiah, the children of our nation and world seem to be devoted to nothing else but the satisfaction of the flesh? Brethren, in essence, this is what idolatry is--it is the satisfaction of the flesh at the expense of our service to God. Now, in the case of those that are unsaved, this idolatry is to be expected--it is not to be justified or tolerated on our part--but it is to be expected. However, in the case of those that are saved, and those that live in the families of the members of the churches of Jesus Christ, such idolatry must not be permitted.

The Apostle Paul had a lot to say about the Christian family, and its individual components. In Ephesians 6:1-3 the apostle said, **“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.”** And then, in Colossians 3:20 the apostle says, **“Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is wellpleasing unto the Lord.”** A key phrase here, in the first passage that we read, is this: **“Children, obey your parents in the Lord. . .”** Rather than concerning themselves with the lusts of the flesh, and the idolatrous feasts of Jeremiah's time, the children should be obedient **“in the Lord.”** Of course, as we will go on to see, it is the responsibility of the fathers and



mothers to see that the children are brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. However, this does not remove the responsibility of the children to be obedient to the Lord and to their parents, as far as they are in the Lord.

You know, the Apostle Paul said that this was **“the first commandment with promise.”** I think what he means, is that, out of the Ten Commandments, this commandment, number five, was the first commandment with positive conditions placed upon it, that were contingent upon the ability of the recipients to keep this commandment. In other words, there was good promised to those that would obey. This is very important for godly children in the families in the churches of Jesus Christ to consider. Do you know, children who are in the church, that the Lord has promised good unto you, if only you will honor your father and mother? We should stress this idea with our children. And we should expect that God will bless our children as they honor and obey their parents and their Lord. Certainly, we can at least say, that those who go about their idolatrous and ungodly practices, may not expect any of the least of God's favors.

*Fathers* As we consider the family in the time of Jeremiah, we find that as the children were gathering the wood for the idols and the idolatrous feasts, even so the fathers were responsible for kindling the fire that would burn at those idolatrous feasts. You know, the same is true today. The children go about partaking of evil, and the fathers inspire the children to even further evil.

The Apostle Paul had this to say about the duty of the fathers: **“And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord”** (Eph. 6:4). Most of the time, we as fathers, read this verse (coupled with Col. 3:21) and we think only of the fact that we, as fathers, are not to unduly provoke (tease, tempt, inspire) our children to the extent that they become angry. Well, this is certainly true and this is something that fathers must beware of. However, let me give you something else to think about. I think, especially considering the rest of this verse, and the context of this passage, that we could also understand this verse to be speaking of the motivation which we inspire in our children. In other words, we must not condone the wicked

tendencies of our children, and we must not tolerate or even motivate their evil intentions. For, as this verse tells us, if we do such things, then the end will be the **“wrath”** of God.

In the times of Jeremiah the fathers should have not encouraged their children to go out and **“gather wood”** to burn unto the false gods. Instead, the fathers should have instructed their children, bringing **“them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord”** so that they would know better, and they would fear to worship the Queen of Heaven or any other false god.

In our day and time we must do the same thing. We must **“nurture”** and admonish our children in the ways of the Lord, and we must not encourage those activities or emotions or desires that might tend to evil or wickedness. Instead, we as fathers must inspire and motivate our children to those activities and abilities and desires that will glorify God.

*Woman* The last member of the family in the time of Jeremiah that is mentioned in our text verses is the woman (or the mother). These women in these idolatrous families were not busy about the things of God, or even busy about the needs of their families. Instead, these women were busy kneading dough so they could then bake it upon the fire that father had kindled, which utilized the wood which the children had gathered, so that the family could worship the Queen of Heaven. How awful it is to consider the actions of these women! Consider that the dough which they were kneading came from meal or flour which was purely a result of the providence of God! Consider that they were then putting forth much effort so that they could consume the dough in a worship of a false god.

The Apostle Paul said this about women: **“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord”** (Col. 3:18). And he said this also: **“I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. For some are already turned aside after Satan”** (I Tim. 5:14-15). I suppose the two key phrases that I want you to notice are these: **“as it is fit in the Lord”** and **“give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.”** This is the role of the woman (mother) in the family. The woman must do what is **“fit in the Lord,”** and she must not give **“occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.”** What kind of witness do you think the woman was giving when she baked cakes to offer to the Queen of Heaven? And what kind of testimony does a woman offer today, when she influences and condones evil and wicked tendencies in her own household, and amongst her

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## Idolatrous Family

(Continued from page 68) ♡

own children?

I pray to God that He would give wisdom and understanding to the women and mothers in our Christian families today. I pray that God would help them and encourage them so that they would not influence their children and their husbands to indulge themselves in the sins of the world.

### MISDIRECTED EFFORT

Brothers and sisters, how apt is this description of the idolatrous family in Jeremiah's time, and also as a description of the idolatrous family in our place and time. Did you ever get the feeling that you, personally, or your family as a whole, are only spinning your wheels? Did you ever get the feeling that you're putting forth a lot of effort, but really just not getting anywhere good, and just not accomplishing anything worthwhile or commendable? Paul said this of himself, "For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. . . For the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. . . I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me" (Rom. 7:15, 19, 21). This is a situation that I find myself in very often. I will consider my ways, and the ways of my family, and I wonder, "What are we doing that is profitable in the service of God? What are we accomplishing that might justify the time and effort we are expending?"

Well, this situation is not unique to my family nor is it unique to your family. You see even as Christian families, we can from time to time, find that we let some earthly desire or emotion come between us and our God. There are times in our lives when we can read Isaiah 59:2, and relate it to our current condition before God: "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." This is what happens when a family, even a Christian family, will put something or someone between themselves and their God.

We have noticed how the family unit, in both Jeremiah's time and in our time is easily and greatly motivated to commit evil and wickedness. Isn't it amazing to notice how hard and diligently the family is willing to work when their labors are directed unto evil? In fact, we might even say that when it comes to idolatry and wickedness and evil deeds and desires, many families can work like a well-oiled machine. There is nearly nothing that is impossible for a family to accomplish as long as it is something that, in its wickedness, inspires every member of the family to labor.

Elsewhere in the Book of Jeremiah we read these words of the Lord: "For

my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge" (Jer. 4:22). The idolatrous families and peoples of this earth, in the time of Jeremiah, and in our time today, have a lot of wisdom and ability when it comes to doing "evil." But, when it comes to doing "good" then they "have no knowledge" or ability or "understanding."

I think it would be a marvelous and an amazing thing if we could see Christian families of today that would be just as motivated to do good and righteousness, as what the worldly family is motivated to do wickedness. In the parable of the unjust steward, which the Lord Jesus related to His disciples in Luke 16:1-13, we read this about the lord of the unjust steward, after that the unjust steward had sought favor from the debtors by reducing the amounts which they owed to the lord: "And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light" (Luke 16:8). The point I want to make from this verse, and this reference to this parable,

is the fact that we, in the world, will sometimes work very hard, and we will make very good and profitable decisions. However, sometimes our worldly abilities and successes exceed those abilities and successes that we manifest spiritually. It is a shame so much of the world and so many idolatrous families are more successful in their wicked and idolatrous efforts than what we are in our efforts for the Lord!

### CONCLUSION

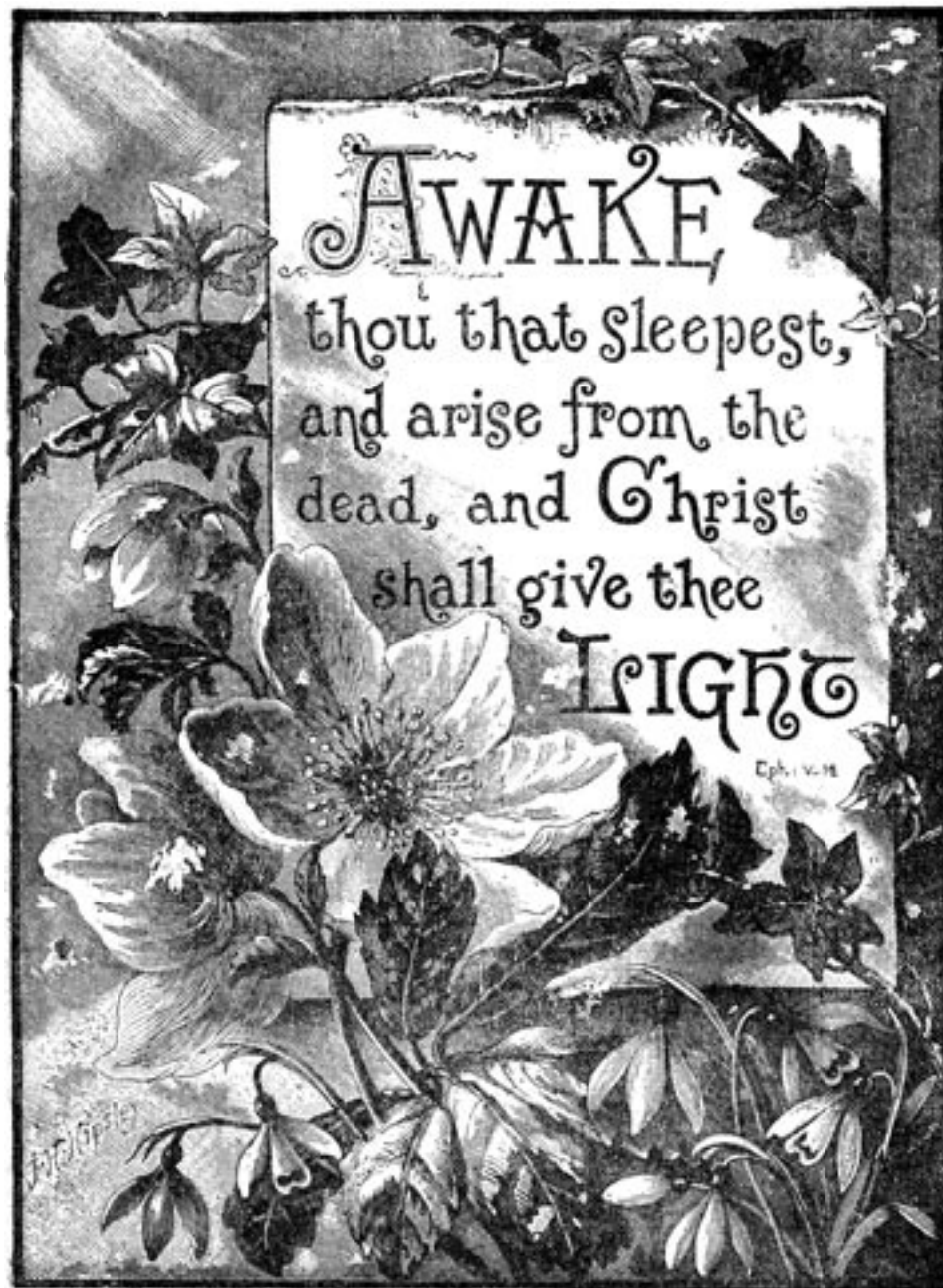
In conclusion let's read Jeremiah 5:30-31: "A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?" We spend a lot of time, as Christians, and especially as members of the churches of the Lord Jesus Christ, bemoaning the current state of affairs. We spend a lot of time complaining about the wickedness that is so prominent all around us. But are we willing to do the things that are necessary to stem the tide of wickedness? Are we willing to tell the world what is wicked and what is good? Are we willing to separate ourselves from these same wicked devices and desires that so

ensnare the world? In these verses we have just read, I want you to notice the phrase, ". . . and my people love to have it so. . ." You know, we say we are against evil and wickedness and the earthly lusts that so consume the world around us---and yet we "love to have" a part in some of these very same things. If we ever want to be credible and believable witnesses for good, then we must shun and decry the wicked.

Notice the end of the passage we have just read: ". . . and what will ye do in the end thereof?" There is an end coming of all of the wickedness of this world. When the end comes, will we be found to be partakers of that wickedness? Or, rather, will we be found to be preachers and teachers of righteousness, and men and women that abstain from the evil of this world?

Finally, let's read what the Lord Jesus had to say in Luke 18:8: "I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" Now we don't have time to get into much of a study of this verse, and the parable of which it is a part, but allow me to just pose the same question the Lord Jesus Christ posed: ". . . when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" Don't imagine for a moment that the answer to this question is unknown to the Lord God; and don't imagine for a moment that the Lord Jesus Christ was asking this question because He desired that someone would enlighten Him. But I believe the Lord Jesus Christ is asking this question for our own good. We must recognize that the faithfulness of even the children of God will wane from time to time. And we must understand that all of the saints of God will not always obey and be faithful unto their God. So with these thoughts in mind (and also in consideration of the persistence of the deprived widow which is referenced in the parable that the Lord had just spoken), let us be motivated and inspired to be the ones of the elect of God who will be faithful and obedient. When the Son of Man cometh, let it be our faith that He shall find on this earth. This should be our goal.

There is a lot of idolatry still yet in this world. And there are a lot of idolatrous families who still walk the face of this earth. However, let us and our families and our churches make a stand against idolatry. Let us make it clear to the world around us that there is nothing that we place between ourselves and our God; and there is nothing that we love more than our God. In fact, let me say this: faithfulness and obedience should be the very minimum that God can expect from those who claim to worship and serve Him.



END

## The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

### 1. Please explain Romans 9:21?

Mike DeWitt Sr.  
PO Box 950  
Springfield, OR 97477

Pastor  
Parkway Landmark  
Baptist Church  
PO Box 950  
Springfield, OR 97477



I am thankful for this question and this verse because it demonstrates the sovereignty of God in election. The weak doctrine that sometimes enters into the Baptist ranks concerning election is, that God merely passed over some and chose others. In reality God passed over the elect "... I will pass over you,..." (Ex. 12:13) and condemned those whom He chose to be reprobate. For the choosing of one necessitates the choosing of the other.

"(For [the children] being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)" (Rom. 9:11).

"The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil" (Prov. 16:4).

"But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand" (Isa. 64:8).

We are made from the earth, earthy, in essence clay. God is the potter. The potter reaches down and grabs the clay and begins to shape the clay into a vessel, (man), of honor, (election), or a vessel of destruction, (reprobate). The question is, does He have the right to do that? Well, what are you going to build with the materials that belong to you? Yep, that's right, what ever you want to because it's yours. God has, too. He has done whatever He wants with what He has created and what He owns. Salvation is of the Lord and not of works, for if it was by works then it would no longer be by grace.

MIKE DEWITT

Raymond F. Bennett  
Berachah Baptist Mission  
271 Gray Road  
Ithaca, NY 14850-8761

Missionary of  
Berea  
Baptist Church  
PO Box 39  
Mantachie, MS 38855



The immediate context of this verse pretty well explains the verses. "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou

that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" (Rom. 9:19-21).

The Apostle Paul appeals to two bases to refute the self-justifying arguments of humanistic thinking.

First, although he is addressing what we think to be a "Gentile church," we read in Acts 28:17-24 that the nucleus of the church which was at Rome was made up of believing Jews. "And it came to pass, that after three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together: and when they were come together, he said unto them, Men and brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans. Who, when they had examined me, would have let me go, because there was no cause of death in me. But when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Caesar; not that I had ought to accuse my nation of. For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you: because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain. And they said unto him, We neither received letters out of Judaea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came shewed or spake any harm of thee. But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against.

And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening. And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not."

These people would be familiar with the Old Testament. Paul, therefore, takes them back to Jeremiah's vision of the potter. Jeremiah 18:1-6: The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the word of the LORD

came to me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel."

God appeals to reason and logic, arguing with the Jews of that day. The Bible is always logical! Isaiah also appealed to reason and logic: "Come now, and let us reason together..." (Isa. 1:18). Paul also appeals to reason and logic, logic that stems from the fact of creation. "Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture" (Psa. 100:3).

In both the passage from Jeremiah and Paul's argument in Romans 9:21 the logic is the creator's right to do what He pleases with whatever He has created, according to His own pleasure and purpose. The Jews in Jeremiah's time were arguing that, as the people of God, they should be exempted from the attacks of Babylon, but they were conveniently ignoring the magnitude of their own sin.

God showed them that a mere human potter had the right and authority to throw away a damaged vessel and make a new one. He reminds the Jews, and by application all men, that we are His creation, He is not our creation. (Too many, even professing Christians, worship a god of their own creation instead of the God of the Bible.) As creator, God has as much sovereign right and authority over us as the potter has over the vessel which he is making.

Paul, by divine inspiration, takes that logic one step further. "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" The potter has the say about what vessel he makes. He may make one vessel to be used as a "chamber pot" and another vessel to be used to store fine wine. It is the potter's decision, not the clay's decision. "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"

Paul had already given an excellent example in Pharaoh: "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth" (Rom. 9:17) quoting from Exodus 9:16: "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth."

Then Paul goes on with another clear argument for the sovereign right of God to create as He pleases and for the purpose He pleases. "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory

on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory" (Rom. 9:22-23). Augustine put it this way: "He (God) thought it better, and more indicative of his power, to bring good out of evil rather than to prohibit evil altogether."

The argument which Paul is refuting here is the arrogancy of mortal man for accusing God with injustice for electing some out of the fallen race of man. The sovereignty of God forces man to humble submission. Those who are granted enough light to see themselves in the light of God's sovereignty and holiness will, like Job, (Job 42:5-6: I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.) willingly confess and submit to God, trusting in and thankful for His mercy.

Those who don't see and won't accept the sovereignty and holiness of God will rebel to the end, still cursing God while in the fires of hell.

RAY BENNETT

Tom Ross  
6339 County Rd. 15  
South Point, OH 45680

Pastor  
Mt. Pleasant  
Baptist Church  
6939 County Rd. 15  
Chesapeake, OH 45619



Romans 9:21 states: "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?"

God is the potter, depraved mankind is the clay. God the potter has authority over all of mankind as the Creator. The lump of clay represents all of fallen mankind in the federal headship of Adam. The vessels of honor represent the elect chosen before the world began in Christ. They are referred to as vessels of mercy in verse 23: "And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory" (cf. Eph. 1:3-7, II Thess. 2:13-14, II Tim. 1:9). Jacob was eternally loved by God and chosen in Christ and was therefore a vessel of honor (verse 13).

The vessels of dishonor represent the reprobates who are left in their sins to perish. They are referred to as vessels of wrath in verse 22: "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction" (cf. Joshua 11:18-20, Prov. 16:4, I Pet. 2:7-9, II Pet. 2:12, Jude 4). Esau was hated by God in Adam and was left in his sins to perish (verse 13).

As the potter, God has the power and the right to sovereignly determine which vessels are elect and which are the reprobate left in their sins. Before the

◊ (Continued on page 72)

## The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. What are some good Bible verses for youngsters to learn that will teach them wisdom as they get older?

Mike DeWitt Sr.  
PO Box 950  
Springfield, OR 97477

Pastor  
Parkway Landmark  
Baptist Church  
PO Box 950  
Springfield, OR 97477



I will start off by saying all of the verses in God's Holy Word will teach you wisdom. Study God's Word and attend it with much prayer. Go to church, don't miss any worship or prayer with the saints, and look forward to eating at the Lord's table. Honor your pastor, and study what he has preached, and make sure he is preaching what God's Word says and not adding to or taking away.

The Book of Proverbs is excellent for getting wisdom, and with all thy getting get understanding. Pray for wisdom.

Psalms Chapter 1, I like that, I need to study that more myself. Psalms Chapter 119, and two of my favorite verses for young men and women are these **"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word"** (Psa. 119:9). And **"Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment"** (Eccl. 11:9).

MIKE DEWITT

Raymond F. Bennett  
Beracah Baptist Mission  
271 Gray Road  
Ithaca, NY 14850-8761

Missionary of  
Berea  
Baptist Church  
PO Box 39  
Mantachie, MS 38855



This is a difficult, yet easy question to answer. It is good that the questioner seeks to implant a solid Bible based foundation for our younger generation. Unfortunately, the days of good Bible memorization are past. In today's proliferation of Bible translations, versions and perversions, memorization of Scripture verses can actually be a dangerous thing because it is too easy to memorize a verse that has either been wrongly translated or even deliberately altered to support a wrong doctrine.

I suggest, also, that the use of various Bible programs in our computers, as good and handy as they are, has seriously impaired Bible memorization because it

has become so easy to just type in a word and find the verse. Nevertheless, Bible memorization is an important part of establishing wisdom as our young people grow older.

I strongly recommend the King James Version even though it is so rarely used anymore. With rare exception it is the most accurate translation. Even the KJ21 and the New King James are often guilty of either a wrong translation (usually for interpretation reasons which should be better handled in the teaching by a knowledgeable Bible teacher) or simply making a change for change sake. Other translations often make what may well be an accurate translation change, in the name of making the Bible more understandable, but especially in regard to youngsters, in fact making it more difficult. For example, an eight year old knows what a crown is but when the translator substitutes "diadem" the child doesn't yet know what that word means.

Closely connected to the subject is the importance of teaching the "Bible stories" as both fact and with practical spiritual application to the youngster. Too many children have come up through our Sunday schools or home Catechism classes, knowing the historical facts and legalistic doctrinal positions but having made no personal application.

In more direct answer to the question, I have assembled eight Scripture references in three categories which I feel should make a good Biblical foundation and guideline. These are not in the chronological order in which they are found but in but in the recommended order of teaching them for the purposes of this question.

First, to teach the importance of both knowing and trusting the Word of God: Psalm 119:9: **"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed [thereto] according to thy word."** Psalm 119:130: **"The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."** Isaiah 8:20: **"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."**

Second, to teach the importance of faithful attendance where the Word of God is faithfully and accurately taught: Hebrews 10:25: **"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is..."** Ephesians 4:11-12: **"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the**

**work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:"**

Third, to teach the importance of getting one's life right with God while he or she is still young: Ecclesiastes 11:9: **"Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment."** Ecclesiastes 12:1: **"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them."** Galatians 6:7: **"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."**

RAY BENNETT

Tom Ross  
6339 County Rd. 15  
South Point, OH 45680

Pastor  
Mt. Pleasant  
Baptist Church  
6939 County Rd. 15  
Chesapeake, OH 45619



What an important exercise for all parents to ponder and practice! The responsibility to instill the virtue and importance of godly wisdom to their children through the precepts and principles of the Word of God. **"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up"** (Deut. 6:6-7).

First, all wisdom comes from God in Christ, through the Word. In order to truly be wise, an individual must know Jesus Christ as Lord. Jesus is personified as Wisdom in Proverbs 8:32-35: **"Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD."** Ever since my three children were in the womb I have quoted John 14:6 to them: **"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."** God has been pleased to make them wise unto salvation according to the truth of I Corinthians 1:30: **"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."** Life in Christ is the foundation of all true wisdom.

Second, understand that wisdom is a gift that God is pleased to bestow

through the application of knowledge obtained through the study of His Word. To gain wisdom all children must respect the Scriptures and search the Word of God diligently. Memorize and practice Proverbs 2:1-7 on a daily basis: **"My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly."** Children must be taught the earliest age to respect the Scriptures as God's Holy Word. Memorize and practice II Timothy 2:15 on a daily basis: **"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."**

Third, children must be taught that they can go to God in prayer and faith to obtain spiritual wisdom. James 1:5-6 states: **"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed."** I John 5:14-15 declares: **"And this is the confidence the we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have desired of him."**

Fourth, children must be taught the evil of sin and the importance of avoiding it. We must impress upon our children the great harm that will come upon them if they hang around with the ungodly. All my children were required at a young age to memorize Proverbs 4:14-15 and 18-19: **"Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away...But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble."** Proverbs 13:20 declares: **"He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed."**

Fifth, children must be taught the wisdom of keeping and obeying the commands of God. Jesus said: **"If ye love me, keep my commandments... Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you"** (John 14:15, 15:14).

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## Forum #1

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world began God chose a people in Christ to be saved. This naturally implies that there were others who were not chosen to be saved who are left in their sins. God sovereignly determined who would be elect and who would be reprobate before the foundation of the world. The doctrines of election and reprobation are set forth in other passages of Scripture side by side (John 13:18, Rom. 11:5-8, I Thess. 5:9, II Thess. 2:10-12). In fact election and reprobation are so intricately linked together you can't have one without the other. If God elected to save some in Christ before the world began, it naturally follows that He rejected others and left them to perish in their sin and unbelief by decree of damnation. Look up all the Biblical references cited above and neither truth can be denied.

Two human authors I respect had this to say about the doctrines of election and reprobation:

A. W. Pink: "Every choice, evidently and necessarily implies a refusal, for where there is no leaving out there can be no choice. If there be some whom God has elected unto salvation (II Thess. 2:13), there must be others who are not elected unto salvation. If there are some that the Father gave to Christ (John 6:37), there must be others whom He did not give unto Christ. If there are some whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life (Rev. 21:27), there must be others whose names are not written there." (page 100 in *The Sovereignty of God*)

Robert Haldane commenting on Romans nine: "The sum of the apostle's answer here is, that the grand object of God, both in the election and the reprobation of men, is that which is paramount to all things else in the creation of men, namely, His own glory."

TOM ROSS



## Forum #2

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The moral law as revealed in the Ten Commandments should be taught to children at the earliest of ages and posted on the door or walls of their room. Obedience to the commands of God ought to be done cheerfully and promptly. There are many blessings associated with obedience. Proverbs 13:13 states: "**Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed: but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded.**" Proverbs 19:23 declares: "**The fear of the LORD tendeth to life: and he that hath it shall abide satisfied; he shall not be visited with evil.**" Psalm 119:1-2 states: "**Blessed are the undefiled in**

**the way, who walk in the law of the LORD. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart.**"

Sixth, children should be taught the importance of diligence in labor and study. It is vital that children develop habits of discipline, industry, and diligence. We live in an age where work is not emphasized, but we must teach our children that labor is profitable and honorable. Proverbs 10:4-5 states: "**He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich. He that gathereth in summer is a wise son: but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame.**" Proverbs 13:4 declares: "**The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.**" Proverbs 14:23 states: "**In all labour there is profit, but the talk of the lips tendeth only to penury.**" Colossians 3:23-24 declares: "**And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.**"

Seventh, children should be taught the priority of serving the Lord through His New Testament Baptist Church all the days of their life. May God help us to instill loyalty, fidelity, and faithfulness to the Lord's church. Ephesians 3:21 states: "**Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end, Amen.**" Hebrews 10:23-25 declares: "**Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see that day approaching.**"

Eighth, children should be taught the importance of witnessing to the lost. All believers have a solemn responsibility to tell others what great things the Lord has done for them in saving their souls. Jesus commanded: "**..Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature**" (Mark 16:15). A spiritual and godly man named Paul wrote: "**For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek... Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory**" (Rom. 1:16, II Tim. 2:10). Oh, that the grace of compassion and a burden for souls would be planted within the hearts of our believing children!

Ninth, let us teach our children the value of virtue and honesty. I Thessalonians 4:12 states: "**That ye may walk honestly toward them that are**

**without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.**" Hebrews 13:18 declares: "**Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.**" I Peter 2:12: "**Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.**"

I have really only touched the surface of foundational truths and verses that will benefit our children all the days of their life. Perhaps one of the greatest impressions we can leave with our children is an example of godliness flowing from our own lives. May God help us to remember the truth of II

Corinthians 3:2-3: "**Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.**" May our lives be a spiritual letter of love written to our children revealing our devotion to the Lord so that we may honestly say: "**My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments: for length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee**" (Prov. 3:1-2).

TOM ROSS



## Lizzie Blake

The pretty village of Hillsley lies in a sheltered valley; and the breezy uplands, known by the name of the Downs, surround it on its northern, eastern, and western sides. To the south the valley slopes down to the sea, from which Hillsley is only two miles distant.

The village itself is like many other English villages. There is "The Green," the parade ground of many a fine flock of geese; the old church with its square ivy-covered Norman tower; and a pretty new schoolhouse, built by the late squire. Many comfortable cottages are dotted about; and two or three substantial-looking farmhouses. Their owners possess large flocks of sheep, which feed on the neighboring downs, whose fine short grass forms the best possible pasture for sheep. The South Down mutton is celebrated all over England.

Hillsley is a very quiet little place. It has only one shop, which goes by the title of "*The Shop*," and is the only one of the kind for two or three miles around. It does not look very large, yet it is astonishing what a variety of articles may be purchased there; but every one at all accustomed to the country, knows the wonderful capabilities of a village "shop," and how it combines, in what is often a very limited space, the trades of baker, grocer, haberdasher, hatter, and ironmonger.

We have said that Hillsley was a very quiet place. The only time when it was



not so, was the time of breaking up of the village-school. Then the Green was quite alive with the young of Hillsley, who spread over it in merry groups, until they dispersed to their several homes.

One fine afternoon in the month of May, all the children had left the schoolroom, except a few of the little girls, who were folding up and putting away their work. "Make haste, Rose," said one of the girls; "we shall not have too much time if we mean to go all the way to Beechcombe Woods."

"I have just finished, Lizzie," was the reply. The two children were about to leave the room together, when their attention was drawn to one of their companions, who was sitting upon a box

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## Lizzie Blake

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in the corner of the schoolroom, and was crying bitterly.

It was the custom at Hillsley for the girls to take turns to remain behind the others in order to sweep up the schoolroom, and put things straight, ready for the following morning; and it was Alice Parker whose turn it then was and who was sitting crying in a corner.

"Oh, my head, my head! It is so bad; it does so ache," cried Alice, pressing her hands to her forehead as she spoke.

Several of the other children had now come to the spot where Alice was sitting.

"Do not stay and do the room, Alice, if your head is so bad; let some one change with you," said several. "Whose turn will it be tomorrow?" asked Lucy Haines. "It will be Rose's turn," answered several voices.

"I'm not going to stay, I can tell you, so you need not settle it so quietly among yourselves," said Rose. "I am going to Beechcombe Woods, to gather hawthorn, with Lizzie Blake and ever so many of the girls."

Some of the girls suggested that Rose could go to the woods just as well the next day, and that one day could not make much difference; but, strange enough, no one offered to stay instead of Alice; and Rose did not seem disposed to change her intentions. The schoolmistress had departed as soon as school was over, as she wished to pay a visit to the next village. She was not on the spot, therefore, to be referred to; and it seemed more than probable that Alice would have to remain, ill as she was, and do the schoolroom, when Lizzie went up to her and said, quietly, "I will stay and do your work, Alice. You go home as fast as you can."

There was a murmur among the children.

"You, Lizzie! Why you did it yesterday?"

"It will not hurt me to do it again today," said Lizzie, as Alice looked up in her face with a grateful smile.

"Well, I did not think you would be the one to disappoint us, Lizzie," said Rose, in an ill-tempered tone; for she knew and felt that Lizzie's generous conduct was a silent reproach to her for her selfishness. "You know we want to gather hawthorn for Miss Mortimer; she said she should so like to have some."

"You can go without me," answered Lizzie.

Rose tossed her head as she replied, "You always make so much of Miss Mortimer, and pretend to be so fond of her; but you cannot really care for her, if you prefer staying to do the schoolroom rather than gather hawthorn for her."

Lizzie colored up at Rose's words. She,

was, indeed, very fond of Miss Mortimer, who taught the girls at the Sunday-school, and she did not like to have her love called in question. For a moment she was tempted to answer angrily, but better feelings prevailed, and she merely said, "I think Miss Mortimer would say I was doing right."

"Oh, we are setting ourselves up as pattern girls, are we?" cried Rose in a taunting voice. "Well, I never pretended to such goodness; so, if you are not coming, I shall be off at once." And she left the schoolroom as she spoke.

"I had rather you did not stay, Lizzie," said Alice Parker. "I dare say my head will get better, when I am quite by myself."

The little girl attempted to stand as she said these words; but was seized with a sudden giddiness, and would have fallen to the ground had not Lizzie supported her. By this time all the other children had left the schoolroom.

"I will help you home, Alice; you ought to be in bed, I am sure. Lean on me---there, that's it." And as she spoke, Lizzie drew Alice's burning hand through her arm, and led her out at the door.

Alice Parker lived at the other end of the Green. Her father was head man to one of the large farmers at Hillsley, and was much respected by his employer. The distance was not great, but Lizzie had great difficulty in getting poor Alice safe home. Her mother saw at once how ill she was, and with Lizzie's help, got her up stairs to bed.

"It is very kind of you, Lizzie," said Mrs. Parker, "to help Alice home. I am very much obliged to you. I do not know what the poor child would have done without you."

"And she has taken my place to do the schoolroom, mother," said Alice, "although she wanted to go to the woods with the other girls."

"Lizzie has learned the 'golden rule,' I see," said Mrs. Parker, with an approving smile.

"What is the 'golden rule,' mother?"

"To do to every one just as we would they should do to us, child. My old mistress used to say that if the golden rule could be kept, there would be no more wars, nor fighting, nor quarrelling in the world."

"O mother, that would be good!"

"Yes, Alice; that would be fulfilling the law of our blessed Saviour, 'Bear ye one another's burdens.' But I will not keep you any longer, Lizzie. Many thanks to you for your kindness to Alice; and if you should see my boy Willie over at the school, will you ask him to go for the doctor as soon as he can? I do not like to leave Alice alone, and it will be some time yet before her father comes in to his tea."

Lizzie bade Alice "Good-by," and hastened back to the schoolroom. Willie Parker was just coming out of the boys' school as she entered the gate. She

delivered to him his mother's message.

"I am not going to do any such thing," said he; "father will be home very soon, and then he can go. I want to go and gather stuff for my rabbits."

"Alice is very ill, Willie," said Lizzie gently.

"An hour cannot make much difference," muttered the selfish boy, "and Joe Willett has promised to show me a capital place to get food for rabbits, and he cannot go with me after today, as he is going away tomorrow morning."

"Your mother said it was of consequence that some one should go at once, as you know the doctor may be out if it is left until after tea."

"Well, I am not going, so that's enough; you had better go yourself, Lizzie, if you are so anxious about it."

"I would go in a minute, Willie---at least, I would ask mother to let me, and I know she would not refuse---but I have the schoolroom to do."

"A fine excuse, Lizzie! Come, I know better than that. You did it yesterday, for you know I came in and saw you; and I heard Rose Leigh say you were going with them all to the woods this afternoon."

"So I was, Willie, but---"

"But what?"

"I offered to take Alice's place as she was so ill; and that is why I cannot go to the woods."

A crimson blush of shame spread over Willie Parker's face.

"And you are staying to do the schoolroom?"

"Yes, Willie."

"And you wanted to go to Beechcombe all the time?"

"Yes, Willie."

"You are a good girl, Lizzie, that you are; and you have made me feel ashamed of myself. I will go for the doctor, and I will not wait for Joe, for fear he should tempt me to go with him after all; so when he comes here, just tell him, will you, that I was obliged to go away?"

"I will be sure and tell him, Willie," said Lizzie; and the tone of her voice was so changed that the boy looked in her face and saw a bright smile on it.

"Why, you look quite pleased, Lizzie!"

"I am pleased, Willie, to think you are going to do right."

"What an odd girl she is!" thought Willie to himself, as he left the schoolhouse in search of the doctor. He had more than a mile to go, but his heart felt very light, for he had the feeling of having been enabled to overcome a bad inclination. He was an honest-hearted boy, with all his selfishness, and he did not shrink from owning to himself that it was Lizzie's example which had been the means of making him do right.

Do we ever sufficiently realize the fact that even the simplest action of our lives may be the means of leading or misleading a fellow-creature. So great is the force of example; and so careful ought it to make

us, lest by our bad example we cause others to depart from the right way. How blessed, on the contrary, when, by God's grace strengthening us, we are enabled to lead an erring brother or sister back into the right path!

Willie Parker went whistling on his way, and soon reached the doctor's house. He found him just mounting his horse.

"Where do you live, my man---at Hillsley? That will do; I am just going within a quarter of a mile of it, on my way to Fordbridge, so I will come and see your sister at once. It was fortunate you just happened to catch me, for I shall most probably be detained at Fordbridge until very late."

"How glad I am that I came!" thought Willie, as he walked homewards.

The doctor saw Alice, and gave her some medicine which he had taken with him in his pocket, and which he said would make her better. He told her mother it was well he had been sent for in time, as Alice might have been seriously ill had she remained until the next day without advice.

Meanwhile Lizzie had been as busy as a bee over at the schoolroom. She had quite got over any little disappointment she had at first felt at not being able to go to the woods, and her countenance was bright and happy.

Our Saviour says **"It is more blessed to give than to receive"** (Acts 20:35). To a selfish nature this may at first appear a strange saying; but there is no one who, by God's grace, has conquered his natural selfishness, and has denied himself some pleasure for the sake of doing a kind action to a fellow-creature, but will freely own that the pure pleasure he enjoyed far exceeded what he would have felt in his own personal gratification.

So Lizzie went merrily about her work. She had a clear, sweet voice, and as she worked she sang one of her favorite hymns:

*"Our blest Redeemer, ere he breathed  
His tender, last farewell,*

*A Guide, a Comforter bequeathed  
With us to dwell."*

She had just finished the verse---

*"And every virtue we possess,*

*And every conquest won,*

*And every thought of holiness,*

*Are His alone,"*

when the door of the schoolroom suddenly opened, and Miss Mortimer entered. She had come to speak to the schoolmistress, not knowing she was from home.

"What, you here, Lizzie?" said Miss Mortimer. "I saw a party of girls pass our house a short time since, on their way to the woods, and I made up my mind you were among them."

Lizzie colored. It was a great temptation to her to tell Miss Mortimer why she had not gone with the others--it would set all right, and prevent Miss

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## Lizzie Blake

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Mortimer from thinking that she did not care to go and gather hawthorn for her; but then, would it not seem like boasting of what she had done? These thoughts passed quickly through the little girl's mind, and the result was that she only blushed, and was silent.

Lizzie was a favorite with her Sunday-school teacher, being a very attentive child, and remarkable for her regular attendance; so Miss Mortimer remained in the schoolroom, which Lizzie had finished sweeping, until the forms were put in order, and then told the little girl she might walk with her to her home, and fetch some needlework which she had promised to Lizzie's mother.

Going to Miss Mortimer's house was always looked upon as a sort of treat by the village children; for she had generally some kind word for her Sunday-scholars, and not infrequently sent for them into her parlor, to show them some pictures, of which she had a great number. So Lizzie, when she had washed her hands and face, smoothed her hair, and put on her clean pinafore, walked along with a pleased look by her teacher's side. They passed by Alice Parker's cottage on their way. Mrs. Parker was at the door.

"Good-day, Ma'am," she said, curtsying to Miss Mortimer; then, turning to Lizzie, she asked her if she had seen Willie, and if he had gone for the doctor.

"Oh yes," answered Lizzie, "he has been gone more than an hour. I should think Mr. Gray, would soon be here---that is, if Willie found him at home."

"Is any one ill?" asked Miss Mortimer.

"My Alice, ma'am; she is very bad, poor child! But I have got her to bed, and I hope the doctor will be here soon."

"I cannot stay to see her now," said Miss Mortimer, "for my father will be waiting for me at home; but I will look down in the course of the evening, and hear what Dr. Gray thinks of her."

"Why did you not tell me Alice was ill?" continued Miss Mortimer, as she and Lizzie walked along. "You knew it, did you not? I would have gone and seen her instead of waiting for you at the schoolroom."

"Yes, ma'am, I knew it; but---" Lizzie hesitated and stopped.

"You are a strange child," continued her teacher, "and did I not know you to be generally kind-hearted, I should think your silence in this instance rather unfeeling towards your schoolfellow."

"I did not mean to be unkind, ma'am," said Lizzie.

"I quite believe you," said Miss Mortimer; "it was a little thoughtless on your part; but we will say no more about it."

Lizzie felt that her teacher had misunderstood her, and even then she

might have explained all in a few words; but the same humble spirit which had from the first prevented her from boasting of what she had done, kept her silent now.

Miss Mortimer was somewhat puzzled, feeling that somehow she did not quite understand her little pupil; but it was all soon to be made plain. Miss Mortimer found the pony-carriage standing at the door, and her father waiting for her. They were going to visit a poor woman who was dying, and who lived some little distance off; she had, therefore, only time to give Lizzie the needlework, and told her she should see her again the next day.

They had not driven far along the pleasant green lane, which led from Hillsley to the breezy downs, when they met Willie Parker returning from his errand to the doctor's. The boy's face was flushed with exercise, for he had walked very fast. "Well, Willie," said Miss Mortimer, as her father stopped the pony, "Did you find the doctor at home?"

"Yes, ma'am, I was jut in time, another moment and he would have been off. Was it not a good thing I took Lizzie's advice?" Then, seeing Miss Mortimer's puzzled look, he added, "I forgot, ma'am, you did not know anything about it."

"But I should like to know, Willie, for I think it might help me to understand what has seemed to me rather doubtful; so tell me. What advice did Lizzie give you?"

"You see, ma'am, I wanted to please myself and go with Joe Willett after food for the rabbits; and it was Lizzie who made me change my mind, and go for the doctor instead."

"You are not always so ready to follow good advice, I am afraid," said Mr. Mortimer.

"It was not Lizzie's turn to do the schoolroom today, sir, because she did it yesterday; but when she saw how ill my sister was, she offered to stay and do it for her; although, all the time, she wanted very much to go to the woods with the girls to gather hawthorn. And, when I knew that---and so---I went; and that's all, sir; only that it was through Lizzie I did go."

"I understand all now, Willie," said Miss Mortimer, with a pleased look; "and I hope you will always have strength given you to follow good examples. There is more true happiness to be found in pleasing others than in pleasing ourselves."

"Good evening, my boy," said Mr. Mortimer, as he drove off; "I hope I shall often see you look as you do now."

Meanwhile Lizzie was coming along the Downs, after having been to see her aunt, who was Miss Mortimer's maid, when the gardener stopped her as she was going out of the gate.

"Have you any rabbits at home, Lizzie?" said he. "I have been rooting

up a good deal of parsley in the kitchen garden, and you are welcome to as much as you can carry, if you like it."

"I have no rabbits of my own," said she, as a bright thought seemed suddenly to strike her; "but if you will give me some parsley, I shall be very much obliged to you."

"Come along, then, and help yourself," said the gardener, as he led the way to the kitchen-garden, and pointed to a heap of parsley on the ground. He then gathered two leaves of the giant rhubarb, and Lizzie filled them with parsley. It made quite a large parcel, and Lizzie had the work to carry besides; but she did not seem to feel the weight, and thanking the gardener again for his kindness, she set off homewards. She had not gone far when she heard a quick step behind her, and, turning round, she saw Willie Parker.

"What, Lizzie, is it you? Where have you been?"

"To the great house for some work for mother. I have something for you, Willie! For your rabbits, at least." And she gave to him the bundle of parsley. "That will make up to you for not going with Joe, will it not, Willie?"

"Well, Lizzie, I will say that you are the very best---"

"Hush! Hush! Willie; good-by," cried the little girl, as she ran into her mother's cottage.

"I thought you were lost, Lizzie," said her mother. "Where have you been all the afternoon?"

Lizzie told her mother all about Alice's illness, and Mrs. Blake was pleased to find that her daughter had been ready to do a kind action.

Early the next morning, Rose Leigh, who had a good deal of taste, arranged the sprigs of hawthorn, which she and the other girls had gathered, very prettily in an open basket, along with some bluebells and fresh green moss, and brought it with her to school, intending to take it up to Miss Mortimer's when they broke up at twelve o'clock. In the course of the morning, however, the lady came into the schoolroom; and Rose asked the governess in a whisper to allow her to give Miss Mortimer the flowers then, instead of waiting till afterwards. Permission having been given, Rose and her companions left their seats, and fetching the basket of flowers, which they had placed out of doors in order that they should not fade, they presented them to Miss Mortimer.

The young lady thanked them very much for thinking of her, and admired the arrangement of the flowers; and there was a wild expression of pleasure on Rose's face, as she glanced towards the spot where Lizzie sat, her head bent low over her work. She could not help feeling sorry that she had not been one of those to give pleasure to her kind friend.

Miss Mortimer looked round the

room. "I have some one else to thank," she said. "Where is Lizzie Blake?"

"She was not with us, ma'am," exclaimed Rose eagerly, "She did not gather any flowers for you."

"I am quite aware of that," said Miss Mortimer gravely, "and that is the very reason I wish to thank her."

There was a look of surprise on every face; and even Lizzie looked up wonderingly from her work.

"I have to thank Lizzie," continued Miss Mortimer, "for proving to me, by her conduct yesterday, that my lessons to her have not been thrown away; but that God has in her blessed my efforts to be of service to my Sunday scholars. It is God "alone" Who can so change our sinful nature, that the word sown in it by parents and teachers may bring forth fruit. I have heard all that passed here yesterday afternoon. And truly grateful do I feel to Almighty God that He enabled Lizzie to practice self-denial; and at the same time gave her the humble spirit of a little Christian child. May God give Lizzie grace to go on in the right way; and may He also enable all of you to show the spirit of Christian charity. It would be well if every one would bear in mind that as gentleness, meekness, and kindness are sure evidences of the indwelling of God's holy Spirit in our hearts; so, envy, malice, and uncharitableness, are as certain proofs of the presence of that evil spirit who is the author of all wickedness."

It was not Rose's turn to hand her head, and hot burning tears of mingled shame and vexation rolled down her cheeks. Her conscience told her that all that had been said was true.

For some time afterwards there was a decided improvement in Rose Leigh; but whether the impression was deep and lasting will be seen in the next chapter of our story, when Lizzie and Rose are no longer children.

(Chapter Two in the next issue)



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Send them to The Berea Baptist Banner, PO Box 39, Mantachie, MS 38855-0039.

## SUPREME COURT REFUSES TO TAKE CASE ON TEAM PRAYER

(EP News)--The U.S. Supreme Court has rejected an appeal from a New Jersey high school football coach who wants to bow his head and kneel during prayers led by his players, The Associated Press reported. That means a ruling from a federal appeals court in Philadelphia stands, and Marcus Borden cannot join in student-led prayer. Bruce Hausknecht, judicial analyst at Focus on the Family Action, said the case should not affect other coaches across the country. "Coaches still should be able to respect their players' prayers as long as those prayers are student-initiated and student-led," he said. "As long as they follow those two simple rules, they will be fine."

## GAY COUPLES SUE OVER FEDERAL MARRIAGE LAW

(EP News)--Eight homosexual couples from Massachusetts have filed suit over the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), claiming it violates the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution. The task of defending the law falls to the Justice Department. But Brian Raum, senior legal counsel for the Alliance Defense Fund, said that could be a problem. "The administration has stated in no uncertain terms that they would like to see DOMA overturned," he said, "so it remains to be seen how vigorous the defense is from the Department of Justice." The Defense of Marriage Act, which defines marriage as the union of one man and one woman, was passed by an overwhelming majority in the House and Senate in 1996 and signed by President Bill Clinton.

## NINTH CIRCUIT UPHOLDS CHURCH'S CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

(EP News)--The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit reversed a ruling Feb. 25 that held a Montana church in violation of the law for speaking about the state's marriage amendment. Attorneys with the Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) filed a lawsuit in 2004 after the Montana commissioner of political practices investigated Canyon Ferry Road Baptist Church, following a complaint by a homosexual activist group. The group claimed the church was required to register as a political committee in order to speak about the marriage amendment. "Churches shouldn't be penalized for expressing their beliefs," said ADF Legal Counsel Dale Schowengerdt. "They should never be forced to forfeit their free speech rights just because the government decides to enact unconstitutional laws requiring them to

remain silent on social issues." The court ruled the law is unconstitutionally vague and its application in this case violated the church's First Amendment rights.

## SENATE VOTES ON SO-CALLED FAIRNESS DOCTRINE

(EP News)--The U.S. Senate voted overwhelmingly Feb. 26 to pass a ban on the so-called Fairness Doctrine. The archaic doctrine would force radio stations to offer opposing viewpoints on controversial issues. Sen. Jim Demint, R-S.C., sponsored the ban on the Fairness Doctrine, which the Senate passed 87-11. The Senate almost immediately also passed what could amount to a stealth fairness doctrine in the form of regulations on media ownership. All 57 Democrats voted in favor of the amendment. "Senate Democrats insist on keeping the idea of reviving the Fairness Doctrine alive, against the wishes of a majority of Americans," said Ashley Horne, federal policy analyst for Focus on the Family Action. In November, Zogby International found 96 percent of Republicans oppose censorship of the airwaves, as well as 75 percent of those who voted for President Barack Obama.

## NEW MEXICO PROTECTS BENEFITS OF MARRIAGE

(EP News)--The New Mexico Senate has overwhelmingly defeated domestic-partnership legislation that would have given same-sex couples many of the benefits of marriage. SB 12 failed by a vote of 25-17 after churches rallied against it. A similar bill is sitting in the state's Senate Judiciary Committee. Phil Sevilla, president of the Catholic Coalition of New Mexico, said this type of legislation could put the state on a dangerous path.

"It would lead to challenges in courts, where we wake up one day and find domestic-partner benefits (are) on equal basis with marriage," he said. "Marriage is respected as an institution that even predates Christianity. Common sense and reason (support) it."

## PRO-LIFE PROVISIONS FACE A BATTLE IN 2010 SPENDING BILLS

(EP News)--In the 2009 spending bill, Democrats did away with one key pro-life provision known as the Kemp-Kasten Amendment. In 2010 spending bills, it's likely to get worse for the pro-life community. Kemp-Kasten prevents taxpayers from funding coercive abortion and sterilization programs abroad. Sen. Roger Wicker, R-Miss., tried to restore the provision, but his amendment failed. Ashley Horne, federal policy analyst at Focus on the Family Action, said life advocates can expect a bigger battle

as 2010 negotiations begin. "Democrats didn't go for the jugular in 2009 spending, but you can bet they're gearing up to remove or severely dilute even more longstanding pro-life provisions in the 2010 spending bills," she said.

## CALIFORNIA SUPREME COURT HEARS ARGUMENTS OVER MARRIAGE AMENDMENT

(EP News)--Attorneys from both sides of the marriage debate pleaded their cases before the California Supreme Court March 5. The court is considering the constitutionality of Proposition 8, which defines marriage as the union between one man and one woman in the state Constitution. Dean Ken Starr of Pepperdine University School of Law presented the case for Prop. 8 and marriage. "We want to restore the traditional definition that has been in place since this state was founded," he said. Observers in the courtroom said family advocates made a good case. "I feel fairly confident we're going to win the war," said Joe Infranco, senior counsel for the Alliance Defense Fund. "It looks like the justices were very receptive to our arguments."

## ADF SUES AFTER TENNESSEE SCHOOL SCRUBS "GOD" FROM STUDENT POSTERS

(EP News)--The Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) filed suit March 3 on behalf of a group of Tennessee parents and students after their elementary school ordered "God Bless the USA" and "In God We Trust" to be covered up on posters before they could be displayed in hallways. The posters were hand-drawn by Lakeview Elementary students and their families to announce "See You at the Pole," a voluntary, student-led prayer event held every September. School officials ordered any references to God, prayer or Scripture be covered before they could be posted. "It's ridiculous as well as unconstitutional to cover up these references to God and prayer -- one of which is the national motto," ADF senior counsel Nate Kellum said. "The Constitution prohibits government officials from singling out religious speech for censorship, but this is exactly what Lakeview school officials did when they ordered these words to be covered."

## OBAMA TAKES AIM AT HEALTH CARE WORKERS' RIGHTS OF CONSCIENCE

(EP News)--President Barack Obama is wasting no time in his plan to get rid of rules that protect health care providers' freedom of conscience. President George W. Bush's Department of Health and Human Services put the regulations in place in December to reinforce federal laws that protect doctors from being forced to participate in abortion and other anti-life practices. The Office of Management and Budget announced Feb. 27 it is considering a proposal to do away with the regulations. "It sends a signal this administration doesn't want to protect the First Amendment rights of health care workers," said David Christensen, director of congressional affairs at the Family Research Council. The public will be able to

comment on the proposal after the Office of Management and Budget reviews it.

## SUPREME COURT ALLOWS LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONTROL OVER PUBLIC DISPLAYS

(EP News)--In a unanimous decision Feb. 25, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a landmark First Amendment ruling clearing the way for local governments to place monuments of their choosing in public places. The American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ) had asked the high court to overturn a decision by the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals that ordered Pleasant Grove City, Utah, to display a monument from a self-described church called Summum because the city displays the Ten Commandments in a public park. The Supreme Court concluded the city has the right to speak for itself. "The Free Speech Clause restricts government regulation of private speech; it does not regulate government speech. ... A government entity has the right to 'speak for itself.'"

## CONGRESS PASSES PRO-ABORTION SPENDING BILL

(EP News)--The U.S. House on Feb. 25 passed the 2009 omnibus bill, which includes language to undermine the Kemp-Kasten Amendment, the pro-life provision that prevents federal funding from going to organizations that support or participate in coercive abortions or sterilization. Democratic leadership blocked an attempt by a group of both Democrats and Republicans to offer an amendment to restore Kemp-Kasten. Nearly 200 lawmakers -- led by Reps. Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, Heath Shuler, D-N.C., Bart Stupak, D-Mich., and Chris Smith, R-N.J. -- had signed on to a letter calling on the House Appropriations Committee to include pro-life "riders" in the omnibus spending bill. Pro-life measures, called "riders," typically are added to spending bills and cover issues like taxpayer-funded abortions and abortions for federal prisoners.

## NC4MARRIAGE COALITION FIGHTS FOR N. C. MARRIAGE PROTECTION AMENDMENT

(EP News)--On Feb. 24, the General Assembly members and the NC4Marriage Coalition announced the introduction of the Defense of Marriage Act. The Act, if it becomes law, will give the citizens of North Carolina an opportunity to vote in 2009 to constitutionally amend the definition of marriage in North Carolina to be defined as the union of a man and a woman. With around 300 people in attendance, the announcement of this legislation took place in the Legislative Building in the state capitol of Raleigh. The primary sponsor, Sen. Jim Forrester, said, "We are sponsoring this legislation because we firmly believe that North Carolina's marriage laws are at risk of being redefined by activist courts to include same-sex couples." North Carolina is the only southern state that has not protected marriage through the state constitution. Thirty other states previously had the opportunity to vote to protect marriage in their state constitutions.

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In 2008, Massachusetts, Connecticut and California changed their state's marriage law to include same-sex marriages.

### POPE PELOSI CATHOLICS MUST OPPOSE ABORTION

(EP News)--In what some news reports called a "stinging rebuke," Pope Benedict XVI told House Speaker Nancy Pelosi in a Feb. 25 meeting that Catholics have a moral obligation to oppose abortion. Pelosi is a longtime abortion advocate. The pope told Pelosi, who is America's highest-ranking female politician, that Catholic elected officials have a duty to protect human life "at all stages of its development." Pelosi has been a longtime supporter of taxpayer funded abortions and she opposed a partial-birth abortion ban. Pelosi had a 15-minute audience with the pope. The meeting was closed to the media, but the Vatican released excerpts of Benedict's comments. Among them: Benedict reminded Pelosi of the Catholic Church's teaching "on the dignity of human life from conception to natural death."

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### OBAMA CREATES INCENTIVE TO DESTROY HUMAN EMBRYOS

(EP News)--As promised, President Barack Obama has overturned his predecessor's policy and created an incentive to destroy human embryos for federally funded research. "The latest government bailout was announced as Obama will now attempt to bailout the morally bankrupt and failing industry of destructive embryonic stem-cell research," said Carrie Gordon Earll, senior bioethics analyst for Focus on the Family Action. "Americans deserve the very best investment of our tax dollars, and embryonic stem-cell research doesn't make the grade. After years and millions of dollars in research, no patient has been successfully treated with human embryonic stem cells."

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### NEW HAMPSHIRE CONSIDERS 'BATHROOM BILL'

(EP News)--New Hampshire's House Judiciary Subcommittee voted 3-2 to pass a bill that would open all public restrooms and locker rooms to people of the opposite sex. Family advocates are concerned that by adding the words "gender expression" into the list of anti-discrimination laws, it will make New Hampshire's public bathrooms a haven for sexual predators. Last June, Colorado passed a 'bathroom bill,' and shortly thereafter reports came in from women who were uncomfortable that men were using their restrooms. Pennsylvania is considering a similar bill.

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### CHRISTIAN DOCTOR FIRED FOR TIES WITH CHRISTIAN GROUP

(EP News)--The city of Minneapolis suspended Dr. Michael Campion, a psychologist who administered employment testing for the city, after officials learned of his affiliation with the Illinois Family Institute, a pro-family, Christian organization. In 2006,

the city hired a testing company to evaluate Campion. Though the results showed no evidence that his work was flawed or biased, the city still terminated its relationship with Campion. Jim Campbell, litigation counsel for the Alliance Defense Fund, was disappointed by the city's actions. "The government shouldn't penalize Christian contractors for their beliefs," Campbell said. "When the city of Minneapolis terminated their relationship with this doctor for no reason other than his affiliation with a pro-family group, it clearly violated his constitutional rights."

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### FERTILITY CLINIC CANCELS PLANS TO OFFER 'DESIGNER BABIES'

(EP News)--A Los Angeles fertility clinic that claimed last month it would help couples create "designer babies" is backing off its plans in response to criticism. Fertility Institutes announced plans to allow couples receiving fertility treatments to – in addition to screening embryos for genetic disease – select both gender and physical traits in their babies, including eye and hair color. Embryos that don't meet the genetic or physical criteria are often discarded in favor of the preferred embryos. Though Fertility Institutes officials claimed they had no problem with "cosmetic medicine," they announced that, due to negative feedback, it will no longer proceed with the project.

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### GAY ACTIVISTS WORK TO UNDO CALIFORNIA MARRIAGE AMENDMENT

(EP News)--Gay activists in California are working to undo California's marriage amendment, known as Proposition 8, through two proposed initiatives for the 2010 elections. One would repeal the marriage amendment; the other would do away with civil marriages. Jordan Lorence, senior counsel for the Alliance Defense Fund, said they want to replace the term "marriage" with the term "domestic partnership" throughout state law. "It's sort of like, 'If we can't redefine marriage to include same-sex couples, then we're going to wreck it for everybody,' Lorence said. A poll released this week shows only 45 percent of Californians want same-sex "marriage," which is no change since Prop 8 passed.

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### MISSOURI HOUSE PASSES STRICTER ABORTION BILL

(EP News)--The Missouri House passed a bill Friday, 115-43, that bans coercing pregnant women into getting abortions. The bill also enhances the state's informed-consent laws by providing women with information about the pain their baby may feel during an abortion and allowing women to view their ultrasound images prior to an abortion. Charmaine Yoest, president and CEO of Americans United for Life (AUL), said she was pleased by the House's actions. "No woman should be forced into getting an abortion by a husband, boyfriend, or employer," she was quoted as saying on AUL's blog. "Too many times in our country, pregnant women do not have adequate recourse when they are being coerced." The bill now heads to the Senate.

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### OBAMA'S ABORTION STAND DISAPPOINTS HISPANIC LEADER

(EP News)--During the campaign, then-candidate Barack Obama claimed he would reduce abortions. Rev. Samuel Rodriguez, president of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference, said that is a major reason why he backed the Democratic nominee. "I believe there is a definitive contradiction between campaign rhetoric and campaign promises and public-policy execution," Rodriguez said. Rodriguez's frustration stems from Obama overturning the Mexico City Policy that prevented U.S. taxpayer dollars from funding international groups that promote or provide abortions. He also expressed concern about Obama's decision to remove restrictions on tax-payer funding of embryonic stem-cell research. "I do believe that our president will be more successful in engaging the American electorate if he governs from the center," he said. "My prayer and my hope and my push back is that President Obama will ... find some common ground with conservatives and evangelicals."

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### HOSPICE CHAPLAIN RESIGNS OVER "GOD" BAN

(EP News)--A hospice chaplain in Florida has resigned in protest to a ban on use of the words "God" and "Lord" in public settings. Rev. Mirta Signorelli had worked for seven years at Hospice by the Sea in Boca Raton. Signorelli said the chaplains were told in February to "cease and desist from using 'God' in prayers." The hospice CEO said the ban on religious references only applies to staff meetings, but Signorelli claims the ban will also force her to censor her words while leading prayers in the chapel and when meeting patients. "If you take God away from me," Signorelli told the South Florida Sun-Sentinel, "it's like taking a medical tool away from a nurse."

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### MINNESOTA INTRODUCES MARRIAGE AMENDMENT

(EP News)--Minnesota House members will introduce an amendment this week to define marriage as the union of one man and one woman. The move comes after gay activists boasted same-sex "marriage" would be legal in three years. Tom Prichard, president of the Minnesota Family Council (MFC), said, "We're very concerned, and we realize that we need to begin to work now to educate legislators on the importance of this issue and ensure that they are supportive of protecting marriage. People need to be involved, vigilant, and be engaged with your state senator and representative. They need to know where you stand." Gay activists have introduced several bills and filed a lawsuit pushing for recognition of same-sex marriage.

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### RESEARCH SHOWS KIDS LEARN RIGHT, WRONG AT A YOUNG AGE

(EP News)--Human beings' sense of morality begins early, National Public Radio (NPR) recently reported. In fact, researchers say, children as young as 2 know the difference between right and wrong. Dr. Judi Smetana, professor of psychology at the University of

Rochester, is researching the development of children's moral and social knowledge. "The moral universe begins very early for young children," Smetana told NPR. "We are born with some very rudimentary sense of empathy hardwired in."

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### FLORIDA'S ADOPTION LAW FACES ANOTHER DAY IN COURT

(EP News)--The Liberty Counsel is preparing to appeal a ruling from a circuit judge who struck down the state's 30-year-old adoption law in November. Judge Cyndi Lederman, a Miami-Dade County circuit judge, ruled homosexual couples have a constitutional right to adopt children. Mat Staver, founder of Liberty Counsel, said children need a stable home environment with a mother and a father. He said he's confident the 1977 law, which has faced numerous challenges, will be upheld this month by the Third District Court of Appeal. Meanwhile, the Florida Bar Board of Governors has filed a brief against the 1977 law. The Liberty Counsel filed suit with the Florida Supreme Court in late February to force the bar to remain neutral on the issue.

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### GEORGIA SENATE BILL PROTECTING HUMAN EMBRYOS

(EP News)--On March 13, the Georgia Senate passed SB 169: The Ethical Treatment of Human Embryos Act. Dan Becker, president of Georgia Right to Life said, "We have always supported adult stem cell research, which to date has 70 documented cures to its credit. We are opposed to destructive Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research and applaud the Georgia Senate for passing SB 169." The act allows advancement of scientific research while addressing the ethical questions regarding the debate about Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research. It supports scientific research and discoveries found in adult stem cell research, but limits the creation of new embryo in Georgia for destructive, scientific purposes, such as human cloning and chimeras. "It is a step in the direction of constitutional Personhood for all humans from fertilization to natural death," said Becker. SB 169 is a victory for those who oppose the unjustifiable purpose of destroying human life.

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### ILLINOIS CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS CANNOT PRAY BEFORE SPORTING EVENTS

(EP News)--The Illinois High School Association has decided Christian schools cannot broadcast prayers or religious announcements over their public address systems on days they host state sports tournaments. Several Christian schools complained about the policy to the Alliance Defense Fund (ADF). "Not only does it not violate the Establishment Clause, but it violates the free-speech rights of private schools," said David Cortman, senior legal counsel for ADF. The Alliance Defense Fund has offered to represent the state free of charge if it changes the policy and is challenged in court. The Illinois High School Association

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said it would reconsider its policy in light of this offer.

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### NORTH CAROLINA UPHOLDS ABSTINENCE MESSAGE

(EP News)--At least 24 states and the District of Columbia are moving from abstinence instruction to a more condom-based approach, a massive shift away from the wait-until-marriage method promoted heavily by the Bush administration. Many states adopted abstinence education and received federal funding when Congress designed the programs in 1996, Fox News reported. Some states want to continue to uphold abstinence until marriage. John Rustin, director of government relations for the North Carolina Family Policy Council, points out that out of 115 school districts in the state, just 10 teach something more than abstinence. "We think that sends a pretty strong message that the vast majority of school districts are very pleased and content with abstinence-until-marriage education," Rustin told Fox News. "It is effective and provides a great deal of information to students about sexual activity."

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### RELIGION IN AMERICA IS ON THE DECLINE

(EP News)--In a 2008 study, 15 percent of Americans said they had no religion. That's an increase from 8.2 percent in 1990, according to the American Religious Identification Survey from Trinity College in Hartford, Conn. "Americans are slowly becoming less Christian. The challenge to Christianity does not come from other world religions or new religious movements, but rather from a rejection of all organized religions," said the report. In the latest survey, three out of four Americans called themselves Christian. In 1990, the figure was closer to nine out of 10. The most notable declines in the report came from mainline Protestant churches.

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### SENATE CONFIRMS PORN LAWYER AS DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL

(EP News)--The Senate confirmed David Ogden as deputy attorney general in early March by a 65-28 vote. Ogden opposes restrictions on abortion and pornography, and has represented Playboy and Penthouse in court. He previously filed a brief before the U.S. Supreme Court in support of child pornographer Stephen Knox, who possessed sexually explicit videos of children. Ogden argued that, because the children's genitalia were partially covered by clothing, such exploitation is protected by the First Amendment. Tom McClusky, vice president of government affairs at FRC Action, was disheartened by the confirmation. "It's very disappointing in the case of David Ogden," McClusky said. He said Ogden had a "casual attitude towards pornography and protecting minors when it comes to abortion."



# Compassion

By M. de Pressense

"Weep with them that weep" (Rom. 12:15).

There is another kind of suffering, not less noble and not less holy than that of martyrdom, namely compassion. None can be more disinterested or more generous; for it takes us wholly out of ourselves, and brings us into thorough association with the sufferings of our brethren. It is the outcome of all that is purest in the Christian's soul, of the Divine love which lives by self-denial. There is no virtue more Divine than that of compassion, for by it we achieve the nearest approach to the character of the Redeemer. *Compassio est passio*, "Compassion is passion," said Origen with profound truth. Perfect love in Jesus involved infinite suffering, because He thoroughly identified Himself with all the disgrace and sorrows of humanity. The more we love, the more shall we feel the deep sympathy which unites us with all that suffer. Suffering at this elevation is a pure flame, bearing to Heaven the holiest incense of earth. On the other hand, wherever this Divine pity is absent the altar is extinguished and the Spirit of Christ has disappeared. A Church which does not love those who are hurrying downwards to ruin, which cannot weep over human misery, whose only care is for itself and its privileges, is not a Church; for it resembles its Head in nothing but the name, and it bears His name only to dishonour it. May I be able to convince you that no Christian grace should be more eagerly sought after than this broad and expansive love, which is inseparable from deep sorrow.

Let us, first of all, clearly understand what compassion is. Let us not confound it with a merely natural pity, with a sensibility which is easily aroused but still more easily comforted. All know what it is to feel a painful shock when brought into contact with some great suffering; there are scenes of destitution and despair which call forth tears from the most selfish; but this is sensation rather than a sentiment, an excitement of the nerves or of the most superficial part of the soul, a passing excitement which does not survive the immediate cause which produced it, and from which recovery is very speedy when help is promptly given or a kind word is spoken. It may be a purely passive emotion. As in still water the reflection of a stormy sky follows that of a clear one, so the misfortune of others is reflected in our souls but in the same way as the passing cloud; these tears of instinctive pity dry up very quickly. Do not let us deceive ourselves; the world does not like sufferers, it does not like to weep with those who weep, it turns

away from such, it creates a solitude around them, except in the case of some illustrious mourner whom it desires to flatter or court. It is perfectly true that in the present day much incense has been offered to suffering, but always on condition that it presents itself like Rene in magnificent mourning apparel, and that with Byron and Musset it sheds eloquent tears. In fact, the unfortunate are in the world's estimation like beggars; they are sources of trouble and annoyance. The usages of society do not permit us to dwell on the terrible reality of suffering: as a matter of good taste, it must be passed by in silence; it must be avoided like a contagious disease, and our duty in regard to it is thought to be discharged by a few commonplaces of sympathy. You know what they are worth, you who have been stricken amid the whirl of fashionable life; you know in what a terrible solitude you have found yourselves, irritated and exasperated by a polite insensibility, and nowhere discovering a heart that really bled for your wound.

Christian compassion rises as far above instinctive pity as Christianity rises above the world. It is not the effect of a natural sensibility; no, it has that stamp of the extraordinary which is the very impress of Christianity. To exercise compassion is, as the word signifies, to render the affliction of another one's own, to enter fully into it, to feel it as he feels it, to bear his burden with him, to bend beneath his cross, to be desolate as he is desolate, to be distressed with him. True love is far-reaching, like the love of God, embracing all sufferers, penetrating like his to the very depths of grief; it shares in its duration, for it neither grows weary nor vanishes like a passing emotion of the soul.

Compassion has a double effect: on the one hand it takes us out of ourselves, and makes us partakers of all that is most affecting in Divine mercy; it thus becomes the superior form of piety. On the other hand it imparts to us the greatest moral power for doing good to man, it opens our hearts, and we may regard it as the most effective method of conveying truth; it melts the thickest ice, and triumphs over the most inveterate prejudices. He who really weeps with those that weep displays in his sympathy a really persuasive eloquence. A comforter who has no tears of compassion is simply an unbearable talker; but he who has truly suffered from the ills which he desires to alleviate speaks in inimitable tones; the miserable listen to him with eagerness, they feel themselves loved; and once more afflicted ones, attracted by the secret charm, are seen following close after him wheresoever he leads them: happy are they, for they are led to the feet of Christ. Compassion therefore combines the most excellent graces. Let us earnestly promote its growth in

ourselves; and, in order to this, let our eyes be fixed on the High-priest Whose mercy was infinite; let us traverse along with and after Him the circles of human suffering in which we are called to exercise the loving ministry of consolation.

Compassion deems no kind of distress beneath her notice. There are sufferings of an inferior order, affecting more especially our frail bodies which are so soon to return to the dust. Let us beware of disdain such, because we pretend to a more exalted and spiritual piety. Let us remember the day when Jesus Christ surrounded with innumerable multitudes who had followed Him into the wilderness and listened to Him for many hours, "**was moved with compassion toward them, because they were hungry.**" He not only had pity on the poor man; He also placed Himself at his side and identified Himself with him, that He might more thoroughly help and raise him. Be sure of this, that if Jesus had not begun by showing compassion towards human privations and distresses He would not have had a single hearer, even though He should have displayed all the treasures of His consolation for higher sorrows. The poor man felt that he was understood by the Saviour, that he had His tenderest sympathy; and so he confided in Him, after being often so discouraged, rejected, and spurned by others. He will not return to the Christian Church till He find the same sentiments prevailing in it. We also are surrounded by a great and hungry multitude; it is massed together in our cities, it is thrust in between the bare walls of the most wretched abodes, its life is one of privation and anguish, with no security for the morrow, hardly earning a meager livelihood, and ever exposed to lose even this. The gulf of poverty has been opened before the eyes of our terrified generation, and the cry of distress rising from it has made the most indifferent turn pale. The useless palliatives of a powerless or chimerical empiricism have only enabled us to measure its depths. Do you know the best means of filling it up? Descend boldly into it with Christian compassion; rise above a mere passing pity, and learn what poverty is by sharing in its sufferings. A man of real heart has shown us, in a book of eloquent simplicity, (M. Jules Simon, in his work entitled, "The Workwoman," *L'Ouvriere.*), what in our advanced civilization is the most ordinary condition of woman among the labouring classes, in the manufactory, the workshop, or in the solitary labour of the garret; he has shown us what in her case the life of the family and of the heart has become in the midst of the privations, the feverish activity, and the cruel necessities which leave no time for lighting the fire on the domestic hearth or keeping up the pure flame of the home affections. Christian women who have

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## Compassion

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read those pages, respected wives, happy mothers, who have time to love and enjoy all the delights of home, have your hearts been pierced as with a sword as you have reflected on this state of things? Have you felt compassion? In other words, have you associated yourselves with the sad condition of your sisters? Has it seemed to you that it was yourselves, yourselves in person, who had to earn your bread at this cost, to start off before daylight and leave your children behind you, to enter the vast workshop of luxury, where all your womanly feelings would be wounded, to return by-and-by to a cold and dull abode where weariness leaves no room for the sweet exchange of sentiment. Has it seemed to you that it was yourselves, you in person, who under the pressure of want had to work on wearily through the night, in order to gain a few pence in return for so many hours of toil?

Observe that I have thus far spoken only of ordinary circumstances in the career of the poor woman. What should we find it to be in what she calls hard times, when work fails, and the workshop is closed, and temptations assail her? Oh! if we had Jesus Christ's bowels of compassion, how great our anguish would be! We should not be able to endure the thought of these hungry multitudes, who in consequences of their hunger are so often led to ruin their souls; for that is one of the most frightful features of our civilization. The debauchery of the well-to-do classes has taken hunger into its service, for the purpose of keeping up the number of its victims. Who therefore can pretend that we live in a world where everything is in order? There is a God above Who beholds these things; and all these souls, treated with contempt by a world that has bought them only to pollute them, will be required by those on whom the responsibility rests. But in fact these horrible deeds are being perpetrated, they are increasing, close to our very doors, and yet we Christians remain quite at ease! And so we shall remain until we feel the burning compassion that is at present quite a stranger to our base and cowardly hearts; but from the day when we sally forth from our abodes, where everything smiles upon us, and get into contact with these terrible sufferings,--from the day when we feel them intensely, when this frightful burden weighs us down,--then in spite of every difficulty, in spite of the astonishment and mockery we may excite, we shall do something extraordinary in the matter of charity; we shall go and seek all who are lost.

(*The Mystery of Suffering and Other Discourses*, 1869).



## The Rainmaker

By Milburn Cockrell  
(1941 - 2002)

**"Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? . . . art not thou he, O LORD our God? therefore we will wait upon thee: for thou hast made all these things"** (Jer. 14:22).

Who controls the weather? Is it in the hands of chance, time, and the environment? Does man in some way cause it to rain upon the earth? Some people believe by use of huge bursts of radio waves the Russians make it rain. Others would say rain is caused by the dropping of dry ice in the clouds. Some others think that rain is caused by some savage doing a rain dance. Still others hold too much or too little rain determined by how much the preacher is paid. All atheists contend that rain is a matter of blind chance.

I find all these human explanations unacceptable. My text gives the most satisfactory explanation. The covenant God is the Rainmaker. Heathen gods cannot make it rain upon the earth. Not even Pluvius, the so-called rain god, can make it rain. Baal could not make it rain in the days of Ahab and Jezebel. Only God can make it rain. Even the lightning, the wind, the clouds, and evaporation are mere secondary causes of rain. The efficient cause is the amazing Rainmaker.

### THE PROPRIETOR OF RAIN

What is rain? Rain is the water that falls out of the clouds in drops upon earth. Moisture is constantly being taken up into the air from the earth's surface. This process is called evaporation. This water vapor can not be seen. It is mixed with other gases in the air and carried upward by the wind. When this moisture-loaded air rises it cools. As air rises and cools, the amount of water vapor it can hold decreases. If the rising and cooling continues long enough, the air will become saturated. If the air is cooled below that point, it is said to reach the dew point. Then the water vapor condenses into tiny particles of water dust. This water dust is seen in the form of clouds. A still greater cooling of the air will cause the tiny particles to unite into drops so large and heavy that they fall to the earth. This is the manner in which God sends rain upon earth.

Job declared: **"Behold, God is great, and we know him not, neither can the number of his years be searched out. For he maketh small the drops of water: they pour down rain according to the vapour thereof; Which the clouds do drop and distil upon man abundantly"** (Job 36:26-28). The Lord asked Job later in the book: **"Who hath divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder; To cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is; on the wilderness, wherein there is no man; To satisfy the desolate and waste ground;**

**and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth? Hath the rain a father? or who hath begotten the drops of dew?"** (Job 38:25-28).

Well did the psalmist write: **"Sing unto the LORD with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God: Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains"** (Ps. 147:7-8).

God forms the clouds and makes them have the various degrees of density. Out of these clouds He prepares the rain with His eye on the fields on earth. He sends down the rain drops upon Goshen's fertile plains and the heights of Carmel. He causes the rain drops to be the irrigators of the meadows and mountains. He does all of this because He alone is the mighty Rainmaker.

In the Book of Job, the oldest book in the Bible, we find that lightning or electricity causes rain. **"When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder; Then did he see it, and declare it; he prepared it, yea, and searched it out"** (Job 28:26-27). Only within the last 30 years have meteorologists learned that electricity causes droplets of moisture to combine into raindrops. This is why the lightning and thunder are associated with rain. The Bible is not out-of-date; it is the only book in the world which is always up-to-date.

Other Old Testament passages mention lightning or electricity as a secondary cause of rain. **"He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his treasuries"** (Ps. 135:7). In Jeremiah 51:16 it is written: **"When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens; and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth: he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures."**

No man can prevent the rain upon the earth. A mere mortal cannot wish for a shower and cause it to suddenly rain. Rain fall is something which resides within the sovereign will of God. **"If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth"** (Eccl. 11:3). The Lord asked Job: **"Who can stay the bottles of heaven?"** (Job 38:37). This question from God showed that He was the Rainmaker. Neither men nor angels can prevent God from giving **"rain upon the earth"** and **"waters upon the fields"** (Job 5:10). Even the sins of men cannot prevent rain from falling when God is determined to send it. The Scripture says that God **"sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust"** (Matt. 5:45).

### THE PEDIGREE OF RAIN

Until Noah entered the ark, there had never been any rain upon the earth. Genesis 2:5-6 relates: **"For the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the**

**ground. But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground."** As originally created, the earth's daily water supply came from local evaporation and condensation. Doubtless the change in temperature between daytime and nighttime was adequate to energize daily evaporation and its condensation as dew and fog each night. But when Noah entered the ark, God sent a mighty rain, drowning the world that then was.

The drops of rain from Heaven are so common to us that we take them for granted. But God is not confined to just sending water from Heaven. It is within His power to literally cause it to rain cats and dogs! In extraordinary cases He has been known to send rains of strange sorts. Genesis 19:24 reveals a time when God **"rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire."** In Psalm 11:6 the Lord warns the wicked that He will at some future day rain fire and brimstone on them.

During the wilderness journey of the children of Israel, the Lord **"rained down manna"** and **"flesh"** (Ps. 78:24, 27). When Israel was slaves in Egypt, **"the LORD rained hail upon the land of Egypt,"** killing plants, animals, and people (Ex. 9:23-25). In the coming day of the great battle of God Almighty, Jehovah will destroy the Russian invaders of Palestine with **"rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone"** (Ezek. 38:22). The Rainmaker can make it rain whatever He wants it to rain from Heaven.

It is within the power of the Rainmaker to send either a small or large rain: **"God thundereth marvelously with his voice; great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend. For he saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth; likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength"** (Job 37:5-6). Rain is at all times under the command of God. His will and power are seen as much in a small summer shower as in a spring flood.

The sovereign Rainmaker sends 200 to 600 inches of rain on the southern slopes of the Himalaya Mountains in India in a year; and He sends no rain in the deserts in the southwestern United States. The Rainmaker sends 223 thunder storms a year on the island of Java, and none on the deserts of western Australia. It is Jehovah's prerogative to send a flood or a drought. He could drown the whole world in our generation, just as He did in Noah's day. But thank God for His rainbow which is a sign that He will never destroy the world again by water (Gen. 9:11-17).

### THE PURPOSE OF RAIN

The Rainmaker sends rain for a threefold purpose: to judge His people, to bless His people, and to water His land. This is seen in Job 37:10-13: **"By the breath of God frost is given: and the breadth of the waters is straitened. Also by watering he wearieth the thick cloud: he scattereth his bright cloud. . . . He causeth it to come, whether for correction, or for his land, or**

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# The Rainmaker

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for mercy" (Job 37:10-13).

Rain fall is essential to agriculture and plant growth. God promised the nation of Israel: **"Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit"** (Lev. 26:4). The farmer depends upon the needful rain at the proper season for his fall harvest. When rain comes in its proper season it causes the trees to yield their fruit and the fields of grain and the vineyards of grapes to grow and mature well. Rain from Heaven is God's blessing upon the land.

In a sermon in Acts 14:15-17, Paul said: **"God...left no himself without witnesses, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."** Rain and fruitful seasons are not by chance. It is not even the heavens which give us rain, but God Who gives us rain from Heaven. Rain is from the Rainmaker. If it were not for the Rainmaker, earth would become one wide scene of desolation.

The Rainmaker causes the rain to come down in a mighty flood to drive men and beast to shelter for rest and relaxation. Elihu mentioned the **"great rain"** that **"sealeth up the hand of every man"** when even **"the beasts go into dens, and remain in their places"** (Job 37:6-8). Often a man will plan to work his fields, to paint his house, or to do something else, only to be prevented by God sending a mighty rain. Ezra wrote of such a time when he said: **"It is a time of much rain, and we are not able to stand without."** Man makes his plans, but the Rainmaker disposes.

## THE PRAYER FOR RAIN

As we have already seen in Job 37:13, the rain is used by God for corrective purposes. The Antediluvians were judged by means of a rain which lasted 40 days and nights (Gen. 7:11-12). In the days of Samuel the prophet, **"the LORD sent thunder and rain"** to convince Israel of her wickedness against God (I Sam. 12:16-18). These are two examples of corrective rain.

There are times when God withholds the rain because of the immorality of his people. In Isaiah 5:6 Judah is pictured as a vineyard. Due to Judah's rebellion, Jehovah declared: **"I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it."** In an attempt to restore backsliding Israel the Lord God said: **"And also I have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest: and I caused it not to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered"** (Amos 4:7). To bring Israel to repentance, God sent them **"scattered showers."**

When there is a lack of rain men grumble and complain about the providence of God. Even professed Christians are not free of

this sin. When God withholds the rain because of our sins, He has promised to send rain upon our confession and repentance. **"When the heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; yet if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou dost afflict them; Then hear thou from heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, when thou hast taught them the good way, wherein they should walk; and send rain upon thy land, which thou hast given unto thy people for an inheritance"** (II Chron. 6:26-27). At times the lack of rain to purify the air and to water the ground is due to our unconfessed sins and prayerlessness!

In Palestine the former and latter rains are very important to agriculture. The former rain fell at seed time, in autumn, and the latter rain fell in the spring, between March and May. If either rain failed, it was bad for the grower of crops. The Lord promised Israel that He would give them the former and later rains to make their land fruitful. Nevertheless, He directed them to pray for these rains: **"Ask ye of the LORD rain in the time of the latter rain; so the LORD shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field"** (Zech. 10:1). They were not to ask the clouds, nor stars, for rain but the Rainmaker. They were bidden to ask Him to fulfill His promise. While they would be engaged in asking, He would **"give them showers of rain."**

The Prophet Elijah realized it would take something drastic to turn the hearts of the children of Israel back to God. Ahab and Jezebel had filled the land with idolatry and murdered God's prophets. Elijah **"prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit"** (James 5:17-18). The prophet prayed definitely, perseveringly, and successfully. The Lord answered Him in a great way, because He is the great Rainmaker!

Have you ever observed God's weather cycle? It is as old as the world. The weather is fair, and then as it warms up the rain comes. Then **"the north wind driveth away rain"** (Prov. 25:23). The cool weather follows the warm and wet season, and then the whole cycle repeats itself. How stupendous is the work of the Rainmaker!

## THE PROSPECT OF RAIN

Depraved men refuse to concede that God is the Rainmaker. Even professed Christians who believe God controls the weather gripe and grumble about either too much or too little rain. God is soon to silence these critics by the judgment of a three-and-a-half year drought. Following the rapture of the saints, the two witnesses will smite the earth with devastating droughts. Revelation 11:6 reveals concerning them: **"These have power to shut heaven, that**

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Grace Baptist Church of Rural Hall, NC would like to invite all in the area, and any who can, to be with us during our spring meeting. The meeting will begin on Wednesday evening May 13 through Sunday the 17th. The service times will be 7:30 each evening Wednesday through Saturday and on Sunday at 9:45; 10:45 and after, lunch provided by ladies of the church around 1:00 PM. Elder Matthew Stepp, pastor of Big Creek Baptist Church of Wayne, West Virginia will be preaching for us during this time. Please come if possible and pray for the meeting that God will be pleased to make it a true revival in the life of Grace Baptist Church and each member in particular.

For any information regarding this please call Pastor Gene Kiger at (336) 377-9808.

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Elder Larry Killion, pastor of The Lord's Baptist Church in Tacoma, Washington, would like to announce that he has completed two books that might be of interest to our readers.

*Traveling for God* is a personal journal of missionary trips that the author made to Siberia, Philippines and one that was planned to the Ukraine.

*The Thessalonian Doctrine* is a serious study of an important doctrine in Christianity. He writes with a "matter of fact" style and presents the Thessalonian Doctrine of the Second Coming of the Lord from a Pre-mill, Pre-trib point of view using the King James Bible as the final authority on the matter.

Both books are available from [www.xlibris.com/Killion.html](http://www.xlibris.com/Killion.html).

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The Berea Baptist Church of Mantachie, MS will be hosting a Spring Fellowship meeting on April 4<sup>th</sup>.

Services will begin at 10:00 a.m. Scheduled speakers are Elders Ted Tweet, Todd Bryant and Steve Martin. The church will be providing a meal after the services.

All are invited to attend for a good time of fellowship around God's Word.

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The Berea Baptist Church Bookstore is in the process of moving and updating the books available on the internet. Our new store can be accessed from our regular website or at [www.bereabaptistchurchbookstore.com](http://www.bereabaptistchurchbookstore.com).

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The Berea Baptist Church has reprinted and added several tracts to those that are available. Anyone wishing to receive a sample pack of those that are currently available need only to request one.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 2-1-2009 to 2-28-2009

Beginning Balance .....	\$7,380.84
<b>RECEIPTS:</b>	
Amazing Grace B. C., Stockdale, TX...	25.00
B. C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL .....	23.79
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS .....	200.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL.....	60.00
Berea M. B. C., West Point, TN .....	150.00
Bethel M. B. C., Pasadena, TX.....	100.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV .....	300.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY...	150.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL.....	25.00
Faith M. B. C., Lynn, AR.....	25.00
First B. C. White Plains, KY.....	100.00
Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME .....	20.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY.....	100.00
Grace B. C., Marion, IL.....	50.00
Grace B. C., Winston-Salem, NC .....	100.00
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK.....	35.00
Joseph Jurzec, Richmond, IL .....	25.00
L. H. Farrell, Des Allemands, LA.....	100.00
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM.....	100.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH.....	100.00
New Testamnet B. C., Bristol, TN.....	10.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN .....	50.00
Ocoonita M. B. C., Keokee, VA.....	40.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL.....	100.00
South Park M.B.C., Seattle, WA .....	25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Columbus, MS .....	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL.....	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Wake Forest, NC.	100.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA .....	25.00
Walnut Creek B. C., Centerburg, OH...	50.00
Subscriptions .....	267.00
Anon.....	141.00
Dividing Checks .....	150.00
Sub Total .....	\$2,871.79
TOTAL .....	\$10,252.63
<b>EXPENDITURES:</b>	
Printing.....	581.71
Postage .....	1,026.77
Wages .....	2,000.00
FICA .....	153.01
Dividing Checks .....	150.00
Total Expenditures .....	3,911.49
ENDING BALANCE .....	\$6,341.14

### BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 2-1-2009 to 2-28-2009

Beginning Balance .....	\$13,394.82
<b>RECEIPTS:</b>	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS .....	225.00
Berea M. B. C., West Point, TN .....	50.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY...	100.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY.....	100.00
.....	475.00
TOTAL .....	13,869.82
<b>EXPENDITURES:</b>	
Radio Time .....	1,700.00
Postage .....	96.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES .....	1,796.00
.....	\$12,073.82
Interest .....	+0.99
.....	12,074.81
Less Corbin, KY des. ....	-1,690.92
ENDING BALANCE .....	\$10,383.89
<b>CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT</b>	
Beginning Balance .....	\$1,690.92
<b>RECEIPTS:</b>	
.....	1,690.92
<b>EXPENDITURES:</b>	
.....	1,690.92
ENDING BALANCE .....	\$1,690.92

# It's Only A Prayer Meeting

Many of our churches are confessedly not prosperous: in accounting for this too obvious fact, the blame is usually thrown upon the minister. Most frequently he is pronounced wanting in eloquence, learning, or tact; some declare he does not "study," others that he does not "visit enough;" the most opposite and contradictory allegations are made and repeated, each accuser in the mean time believing that he has found, in the real or supposed deficiencies of the pastor, ample reason for the absence of those happy seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, which, in former days, gladdened the hearts of his people. Hence the press teems with elaborate essays on ministerial preparation and training; hence, every destitute church is supremely solicitous to obtain a talented ministry; hence in every religious circle a primary topic of conversation is the ministry we need.

Without at all undervaluing the vast importance of an able and efficient ministry, it were only an act of cruelty both to pastors and people, to permit a continuance of the delusion that the cause of this want of success is mainly, and in all cases, to be looked for here. To another quarter we turn for the solution of the supposed mystery, and find it in the ominous expression so often heard on the lips of professing Christians, -- "It's only a prayer meeting;" we find it in the poor, meager, scattered remnant that constitutes, and the cold heartless formality that characterizes, the assembly for social prayer.

Every Christian acknowledges the importance of public and private prayer. Its efficacy cannot be doubted; for the promises of God are many and sure. We are commanded **"always to pray, and not to faint;" "to come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."** We are exhorted to prove God herewith, and see if He will not give us a blessing. We know that we cannot advance in holy things, or in spiritual knowledge, unless we possess and cultivate a spirit of prayer. God's blessings on His people, on His ministers, on His Word, on the unconverted around us, and on the far off heathen, is essential to real success. But He has told us that He will be **"enquired of by the house of Israel, to do these things for them."** He has assured us that the way whereby we may approach Him is prayer; that if we ask aright, nothing doubting, our supplications will be heard, our requests granted. Every true disciple of Christ will readily confess that if this privilege were taken away, there would be nothing to depend upon but a broken reed. How is it, then, that the prayer meeting is the most thinly attended of

all the services of the church? How is it that so few are there found lifting up their hearts to God? How is it that the least trifle is considered a sufficient excuse for absence from the place where prayer is wont to be made? It is painful to listen to the manifold excuses made for non-attendance on this means of grace. Pleas of absence are put in, that would not be allowed in case of a mere visit of ceremony; --how then must they appear at the judgment-seat of God?

"Brother A., Are you going to the meeting tonight?" --- "No, I believe not," is the reply; "it has the appearance of rain, and I don't feel very well. Besides, you know 'it's only a prayer meeting.'"

"Brother B., Are you going to the prayer meeting tonight? I fear there will not be many present; the church seems in a cold state." --- "I know it," is the answer; "but I have some friends from the country visiting me, and I must pay them that attention which they deserve. I should like to go, but no matter, 'it's only a prayer meeting.'"

"Come, Brother C., it is time we were going; I never like to be late at meeting, for it disturbs those who are already there, and is a bad example to those who are at all inclined to be dilatory." --- "I don't think of going this evening, brother; I have been hard at work all day, and had thought to stay at home this evening, and rest a little. I hope you will have a good time; I believe, however, 'it's only a prayer meeting!'"

"Brother D. cannot go, for he is behind-hand in writing up his books, and is consequently pressed for time. He spent an idle hour in the morning in the ----gallery of paintings. It is impossible for Brother E. to attend, for he has a previous engagement. Brother F. is to make one of a select party at the house of Sister G.; and thus it runs on. This one cannot go, and the other will not go; and what is the result? The prayer meeting is thin; the church languishes; vital religion is not cherished; and the hearts of the members become cold. The pastor finds himself comparatively alone; labours and strives to do his duty, but there are few

to hold up his hands! 'It's only a prayer meeting!'"

God is not called upon for His blessings, and no wonder that His Spirit is not shed abroad in the hearts of the people. How, then, should there be success?

Reader, if you have neglected to associate yourself with the assembled brethren and sisters at the hour of prayer, ---do so no more. From the prayer meeting goes forth a power that rests not upon earth, but ascending, calleth down high and holy influences from Heaven. In the abounding of prayer, is prosperity.

(*Baptist Record and Biblical Repository*, Vol. I, 1844).



## The Rainmaker

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**it rain not in the days of their prophecy?"**

In Revelation 11:3 we learn their ministry is to last 1260 days or three and a half years according to the Jewish calendar. Elijah is one of the two witnesses, and he may repeat what he did in Ahab's day.

Droughts and famines will reach an all-time high in the Great Tribulation. But when Christ returns and establishes the kingdom of God on earth, the scene is to undergo a sudden change. The Millennium is going to be a time of ideal rain fall. The Rainmaker is destined to demonstrate to all men in a more direct fashion than ever before His amazing power over the weather. Joel discloses: **"Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil. . . .And ye shall eat in plenty"** (Joel 2:23-26).

The abundance of rain will restore the fertility of the land of Canaan. Palestine was once like the garden of Eden. But for long centuries the latter rains were withheld, making the land barren and desolate, scarcely able to sustain its scattered population. In our time the latter rains have returned in such a measure to make agriculture once more flourish. This is a mere drop in the bucket

in comparison to what will happen in the thousand year reign of Christ. In that day the vineyards, olive yards, fig orchards, and types of food-producing plants will reach a new height in production. The blessings upon the land of Palestine will be so great **"the plowman shall overtake the reaper"** (Amos 9:13).

Even in this time of proper rain fall, those nations who refuse to keep the Feast of Tabernacles will have no rain. Zechariah 14:17-19 declares: **"And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles."**

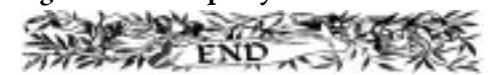
The whole Millennial Reign is compared to rain coming down from Heaven. **"He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth. In his days shall the righteous flourish: and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth"** (Ps. 72:6-8).

### CONCLUSION

In Hosea 10:12 it is written: **"Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you."** This soil of man's heart is unopened and unbroken. By nature man is impenitent and destitute of grace, and he needs the renewing of the Holy Spirit. Before the gospel seed can be planted, the Holy Spirit must break up the sinner's fallow ground and cause him to seek the Lord.

The coming of Christ into the world was like rain. Hosea earlier declared how the Lord would come **"as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth"** (Hos. 6:3). Christ came down from Heaven to give life to us. When we were dried and parched and withered, Christ came to open our hearts as a farmer opens the soil of his field with the plow. He came to prepare us to receive His Divine precepts as the ground that is ploughed is to receive the seed. He sends His Holy Spirit to rain peace and pardon by Him. The Savior causes the elect to hunger and thirst for the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Do you desire God's mercy? Do you hunger for acceptance before God? Do you long to reap righteousness? Do you think it is time to seek and to serve the Lord? Then the lines have fallen upon you in pleasant places. The Spirit of grace is at this moment come to **"rain righteousness upon you."**



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