

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

The Master of the World

By Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 – 2002)

"Wherefore David blessed the LORD before all the congregation: and David said, Blessed be thou, LORD God of Israel our father, for ever and ever. Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou are exalted as head above all. Both riches and



honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all" (I Chron. 29:10-12).

In these days of Arminianism and Pelagianism verses like these have been ignored. The pulpits of our land preach a defeated

◊ (Continued on page 2)

The Appearance of Grace

By Paul Stepp
of Indore, West Virginia

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a



peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:11-14).

I am going to take the title of my sermon from the eleventh verse. In that verse, Paul tells Titus that the "grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." Most folks look at this verse and contend that "salvation" hath appeared to all

◊ (Continued on page 9)

Believing Unbelievers

By Curtis Pugh
of Poteau, Oklahoma

That God's true sons and daughters genuinely believe is a glad and glorious fact. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him," is another truth from God's Word. The other side of that statement is that with faith it is possible to please God! That ought to set all sorts of joyful thoughts soaring through the minds of believers. To be able to please the



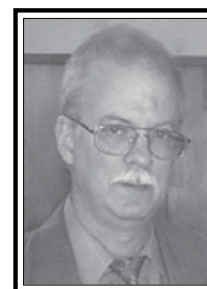
God of all grace who loved us thoroughly depraved sinners: is this idea of pleasing God not the heart's desire of all God's saints? Faith is that sustaining connection which, along with repentance, God has "granted" to those whom He saved. In the days

◊ (Continued on page 5)

The Millennial Kingdom As A Testimony to the Depravity of Man

By Lucien J. Le Sage Jr.
of Pride, Louisiana

Much has been written about the Millennial Kingdom of Christ. By Millennial we mean a period of one thousand years. Those of the A-Millennial camp say that we are in the Millennium now. While I do believe Jesus Christ has a spiritual kingdom now, it is hard for me to read Scripture and



not come to the conclusion that Jesus Christ will reign visibly on the earth for one thousand years (Rev. 20:4-6).

In the whole scheme of things this makes perfect sense to me.

◊ (Continued on page 17)

**Carry an appetite to God's house,
and you will be fed.**

The hearer sometimes complains, "There was no food for my soul," when the truth is, there was no soul for the food.

April 5, 2015
Volume XXXV, Number 4
Whole Number 429

Editor: Christopher Cockrell

Staff: Sheron Cockrell, Marsha Kiser, Virginia Cockrell

THE BEREBA BAPTIST BANNER (UPS 546470) is published monthly for \$6.00 per year by the authority of the Berea Baptist Church, 3881 Highway 363, Mantachie, Mississippi 38855. Periodical Publication postage paid at Mantachie, Mississippi.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE BEREBA BAPTIST BANNER, P. O. Box 39, Mantachie, Mississippi 38855-0039.

PUBLICATION POLICIES: All matter for publication should be sent to the editor. All manuscripts are to be typed and double spaced. All such material becomes the property of BBB and will not be returned unless requested by the writer. We reserve the right to edit and condense all materials sent to us for publication.

The publication of an article does not necessarily mean the editor is in complete agreement with the writer, nor does it mean he endorses all this person may have written on other subjects.

COPYING PRIVILEGES: Unless otherwise stated any article published in this paper may be copied by other publications, provided they give proper credit line stating that such was copied from this publication, and the date of publication; provided that such materials are not published for profit. If we are not on an exchange list with the publication copying, it is requested that a copy of the issue containing the article be sent to our address. All copyrighted materials may not be copied without written consent.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY with paid circulation in most states in the U.S.A. and some foreign countries.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES - U.S.

One year.....\$6.00
 Two years.....\$10.00
 Five years.....\$24.00

SUBSCRIPTION RATES - FOREIGN One Year \$45

PLANNING TO MOVE? Notify us three weeks in advance. The post office will only forward periodical mail for 90 days. They charge us \$.70 for each "change of address" they have to send us. Please save us this expense and the post office time.

BUNDLES TO ONE ADDRESS: These are sent for \$4 per paper for a year. An example: 10 papers for one year at \$40 or 20 papers for one year at \$80.00.

LOCATION OF PUBLISHING CHURCH: Our church is located on state highway 363 about one mile south of Mantachie, Mississippi. Readers are always welcome to visit our services.

CHURCH PHONE: 1-662-282-7794.

A PAPER WITHOUT SUBSCRIPTION: Some times people write to us and say that they did not subscribe for the BBB. They are receiving our paper because someone else has paid for their subscription.

We trust the BBB will be received as an outstretched hand to you. Take what you find helpful and discard what you cannot use. If you do not want to receive such a gift subscription, please write to us. We are happy to cancel such a subscription. We do not want to go where we are not wanted.

DISCLAIMER: The Editor assumes that the articles submitted for publication in the BBB are written by the person whose name they bear, unless otherwise indicated by a quote from another writer. However, the Editor cannot personally guarantee that this is the case in all articles which appear in the BBB.

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 strength-en His churches in the most holy faith.
5. To motivate God's children to a closer fellow-ship 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.

Tune in to the **Berea Baptist Broadcast**

STATION	TIME	DIAL	WATTS
WCNA, Myrtle, MS.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	95.9.....	3,000 FM
WCTT, Corbin, KY	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	680.....	5,000 AM
WFTA, Tupelo, MS.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	101.9	3,000 FM
KARI, Blaine, WA	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m.	550.....	5,000 AM
KPRV, Heavener, OK	Sunday 8:30 - 9:00 a.m.	92.5	6,000 FM
WQRL, Benton, IL.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	106.3	12,500 FM

Berea Baptist Banner
 PO Box 39

Mantachie, Mississippi
 38855

(662) 282 - 7794

www.bereabaptistchurch.org

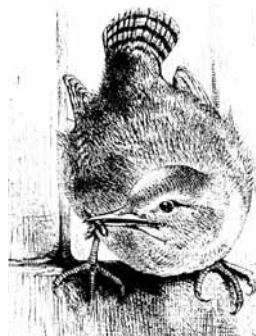
request@bereabaptistchurch.org
 bbchurch@nexband.com

Planning a move?

Please let us know your new address. The post office charges us \$.57 for each returned wrong address.

DID THE BIRDS EAT YOUR PAPER?

Look at your mailing label on the front page of this month's paper. If you see above your name "Expires 4/2015" then this will be your last issue. So don't complain if your reading basket is empty! Renew now so you won't miss next month's *Banner*.



The Master of

(Continued from page 1) ♦

God, a disappointed Christ and a defenseless Holy Spirit. Man has been deified and God dethroned. Most Baptist preachers today hold to the theory that man is a free agent and the determiner of his own destiny. God has been relegated to the background.

The God most people believe in has benevolent intentions, yet He is unable to carry them out. He wants to bless men, but they will not let Him. The average churchgoer thinks Satan has gained the upper hand, and that God is to be pitied rather than worshipped. Modern preaching is so lopsided that when we mention God, people immediately think of a babe in a manger, or a dead man on a cross. Much Christian service is rendered to get God out of an embarrassing situation. The God of popular Christianity has a weak smile and a halo.

One will search in vain in the Scripture for the God of modern day preaching. The Bible knows nothing of a defeated, disappointed, and defenseless God. The God of the Bible is the **"Almighty God"** (Gen. 17:1) Who has all power in Heaven and on earth (Matt. 28:18). With Him nothing is impossible (Luke 1:37) or too hard (Jer. 32:17).

Too often we try to confine God to the limits of human logic. We are prone to modify our remarks about God to such things as the carnal mind of men can comprehend, or the wisdom of this world will approve. In this message I am going to speak of the eternal, immutable, sovereign God of all creation. The God of the Holy Writ is the Master of the World.

JUST WHO IS GOD?

The God of the Bible is the Supreme Being in the universe. He is **"the Highest"** (Ps. 18:13; Luke 1:35; 6:35). He is over all; He is the most High, higher than the highest. He has no superiors and no equals. He speaks through the pen of Isaiah: **"To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be alike? . . . Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me"** (Isa. 46:5, 9). It is absurd to compare God with any creature, for God is infinitely above the noblest creature.

Notice the magnificent description of God by David in our text. David spoke with awe and reverence of the perfections of God. First, he calls attention to **"the greatness"** of God. The greatness of God is immense and incomprehensible, and all angels and men are nothing in comparison to Him. **"All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity"** (Isa. 40:17).

Second, King David magnifies God's **"power."** Psalm 62:11 says: **"Power belongeth unto God." "Great is our LORD, and of great power"** (Ps. 147:5). Job said: **"Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: he is excellent in power"** (Job 37:23). The power of God is almighty and irresistible. All the power of the host of creatures is derived from Him and depends on Him (John 19:11).

God does whatever He pleases or wills. His counsel always stands, and He ever does His good pleasure; otherwise He would not be Almighty. **"Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things,**

♦ (Continued on page 3)

The Master of

(Continued from page 2) ♦

that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth (Isa. 40:26). **“But how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand”** (Job 26:14)?

Third, he mentions **“the glory”** of God. The Bible declares that **“His glory is great”** (Ps. 21:5). **“The Lord is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens”** (Ps. 113:4). His glory extends **“above all the earth”** (Ps. 108:5) and **“the heavens”** (Ps. 57:11). His glory never changes: **“The glory of the LORD shall endure for ever”** (Ps. 104:31). All the glory we can give Him with our hearts, lips, and lives comes infinitely short of what is due Him.

Fourth, to God is ascribed **“the victory.”** Jehovah transcends and surpasses all. He is able to conquer and subdue all things unto Himself. His victories are uncontestable and uncontrollable. When human history has run its course, God will have the victory. Eternity will demonstrate Him as the mighty Conqueror and the Master of the World.

Fifth, there is reference to **“the majesty”** of God. This speaks of His sovereign power, authority, and dignity as Master of the World. The majesty of the most High is inexpressible and inconceivable. All created things are at His disposal: **“All that is in heaven and in the earth, is thine.”** **“The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all”** (Ps. 103:19).

God is God. He does as He

pleases, only as He pleases, always as He pleases. **“He is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth”** (Job 23:13). Agreeing with this is Psalm 115:3: **“But our God is in the heavens: he has done whatsoever he hath pleased.”** As the Master of the World He declares: **“My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure”** (Isa. 46:10).

God is the Supreme Being and the Sovereign of the universe. He exercises His power as He wills, when He wills, where He wills. **“He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou”** (Dan. 4:35)? All popes and potentates, men and minerals, rocks and rivers, trees and treasures are His servants: **“For all are thy servants”** (Ps. 119:91).

GOD GOVERNS ALL HIS CREATURES AND THEIR ACTIONS

The events that take place on earth do not take place by chance, or fate, or luck. The so-called accidents are not even incidents with the Master of the World. God did not stretch out the north, and balance the earth upon nothing, without a design or purpose. It is not by chance that the **“heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork”** (Ps. 19:1). He numbered the hairs of our head and noted the sparrow’s fall in eternity past by His **“determinate counsel and foreknowledge”** (Acts 2:23). The Master of the World set the bounds of our habitation on earth. The number of our months is with Him, and our days are appointed to us as the days of an hireling who cannot pass his

bounds (Job 14:5).

The Master of the World restricts the wickedness and ungodliness of men. He has so foreordained human actions that **“the wrath of man shall praise thee, the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain”** (Ps. 76:10). **“The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil”** (Prov. 16:4). In Proverbs 20:24 it is written: **“Men’s goings are of the LORD.”** When the ten kings of the revived Roman Empire destroy the Great Whore, it is said: **“For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled”** (Rev. 17:17). This is not fatalism; it is the doctrine of Divine providence.

There is one thing for certain. God controls all things or nothing. He must either rule, or be ruled; sway, or be swayed; accomplish His will, or be thwarted by His creatures. He is not obligated to leave the affairs of this world to be governed by chance, or the will of sinful men. To charge God with creating and sustaining all things without a purpose is to charge Him with being an idiot, or a blind force.

If we admit that God absolutely governs all things according to the counsel of His own will, then we admit that He has determined what shall and what shall not transpire in time and eternity. To deny His universal control of all things is to deny His eternal power and Godhead. If He has not the power and wisdom to determine all events, how can He cause all things to work together for good to them that love God (Rom. 8:28)? How can prophecy come to pass, if God is not in absolute control of the

government of all His creation?

God is holding the helm of the universe and regulating all events. All events are of Him as to their cause through Him as to their course; and to Him as to their climax. The Apostle Paul said: **“But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him”** (I Cor. 8:6). The Master of the World **“worketh all things after the counsel of His own will”** (Eph. 1:11).

What a blessing it is to know all things are of God and are under His control. Nothing exists unless God created it. Nothing can continue to exist unless God wills it for His glory. All events, whether good or evil, are according to God’s will of pleasure, or God’s will of permission. Colossians 1:16-17 declares: **“For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.”**

OMNIPOTENCE REIGNS OVER THE NATIONS

Back of the rise and fall of nations is a just, all-wise God Who reigns in righteousness. In Revelation 15:3 God is referred to as the sovereign **“King of the nations”** (improved translation). Psalm 22:28 says: **“For the kingdom is the LORD’s: and he is the governor among the nations.”** It is the Lord who **“increaseth the nations and destroyeth them: he enlargeth the nations, and straiteneth them again”** (Job 12:23). Let us

♦ (Continued on page 4)

The Master of

(Continued from page 3) ♦

rejoice that the Supreme Being rules the nations **“and hath determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their habitation”** (Acts 17:26). The godless nations of the world will go no further than God wants them to go. **“Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth”** (Rev. 19:6).

The Master of the World says: **“I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me”** (Jer. 27:5). The Prophet Daniel said it was God Who **“removeth kings, and setteth up kings”** (Dan. 2:21). Four times it is said in the book of Daniel **“the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever he will.”**

THE FALL OF MAN

The entrance of sin into the world was no unprovided-for event with God, because to His eyes sin, death, and Hell have no covering. The Bible says that **“times are not hidden from the Almighty”** (Job 24:1). Before the deep foundation of the earth was laid, God understood what He was about to do and the result of His actions. The sun would remain in the heavens, the earth revolve on its own axis, nations rise and fall in quick succession; man would become a rebel to His government and authority; that Christ would die on Calvary; some would believe, and others reject Him; and that Heaven would be peopled with the saints and Hell with the damned. All of this passed before the mind of the Master of the World.

The great God foreordained

and foreknew the fall of Adam as He did all events. Acts 15:18 informs us: **“Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.”** This must be so. Otherwise God could not have declared **“the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done”** (Isa. 46:10). The Master of the World declares in a voice that has the sound of many waters: **“Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them”** (Isa. 42:9). The God with whom we have to do **“calleth those things which be not as though they were”** (Rom. 4:17).

If it had been God's pleasure to have prevented sin from entering this world, can we doubt His power or wisdom or ability to do so? If sin entered this world in opposition to His will, what assurance have we that it will not enter the world to come? The truth is, God predetermined the fall of man. He permitted it for a purpose known only to Himself. The eternal purpose which God purposed in Himself before the morning of time was sufficiently perfect and comprehensive enough to include all that could possibly transpire in time and eternity.

The Father did not just up and decide to send Christ into the world, just before the crucifixion. The death of Christ was no accident or incident; it was predetermined. Jesus Christ **“was foreordained before the foundation of the world”** as the Saviour of His people. The Father foreordained Christ to be a propitiation for His people (Rom. 3:25). Peter said that when Christ was crucified at Calvary those men did whatsoever God's hand and **“counsel determined**

before to be done” (Acts 4:28).

GOD ORDAINED OUR SALVATION

We are told in Ephesians 1:4-5 that the Father chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world and **“predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.”** We learn from II Timothy 1:9 that we were saved and called, **“not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”** In Titus 1:2 we are informed that God promised us eternal life **“before the world began.”**

Man's salvation is owing to God's appointment and Christ's atonement: **“For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ”** (I Thess. 5:9). The elect are **“vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory”** (Rom. 9:23). God will call, justify, and glorify all which He did foreknow and predestinate (Rom. 8:30).

It is lawful for God to do what He will with His own. Romans 9:18 says: **“Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.”** God saves some, to the praise of His glorious grace, while He leaves others to their just condemnation, to the praise of His glorious justice. Dare any poor, finite worm of the earth to dispute the sovereign right of God to do all His pleasure among the inhabitants of earth! **“Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus”** (Rom. 9:20)?

Someone may say, “You are making God the author of sin.” No, I am not. But let me ask a few questions. Against whom

is it possible for God to sin? Is He amendable to any law above Himself? If so, by what law can He be indicted, and in what court can He be tried and convicted? It is God's eternal right to do all His pleasure. He is not accountable to any of His creatures. Job 33:13 declares: **“He giveth not account of any of his matters.”** In Romans 11:33 the Bible says God's ways are **“past finding out!”**

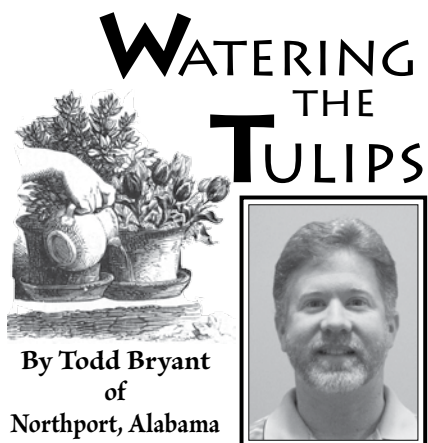
IS GOD TRYING TO SAVE THE WORLD?

If God is trying to save the world, He is losing the battle to Satan. To hear the average sermon, one would get the impression that God is standing on the side line, weeping, because men will not permit Him to save them from Hell. You would think that God has a will to do good, yet how to perform that which is good, He finds not. The religious world needs to get God off the charity list!

To suppose in the slightest that God has failed, or that He has been defeated, is the height of foolishness and the depth of impiety. During the present dispensation God is taking out a people for His name (Acts 15:14). His eternal purpose is being worked out. Everything is going according to His plan, and all things are under His control. Satan has not defeated God, nor has the Devil taken Him by surprise.

The Lord is not conducting broken-hearted appeals. He is not struggling desperately to plead, argue, or beg people to repent. He does not need to bargain or beg men. The Master of the World does not even need man, but man needs God. He does not need to plead with you---you need to plead with

♦ (Continued on page 5)



The Duty of Every Church

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 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. Amen" (Matt. 28:18-20).

This is the work of the Lord's churches. There is no other work. Without a doubt, we must constantly be reminded of this. When a church stops doing the above work, she should stop referring to herself as a church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Simply, the Lord's churches do the work of the Lord. It is to this purpose that we have been called.

Notice clearly, the first part of this mission is to "make disciples." The Greek wording here can mean nothing else! We are to be making disciples – that is our duty. If we are not doing the first part of our mission, we certainly cannot expect to do the next two parts. We are to "make disciples" by preaching the Gospel to them in hopes that the Holy Spirit will open their hearts to believe it (Romans 1:16; Acts 16:14). We are to preach this message to "all

the nations" indiscriminately. If we are not doing this, we are not functioning properly as one of the Lord's churches.

When somebody comes to faith in Jesus, we are to baptize that person. They are not baptized in order to get into Heaven. They are baptized because they have borne the fruits of having been saved (Acts 10:44-48). We certainly do not mean to lessen the importance of baptism. Jesus walked from Nazareth in Galilee to John the Baptist at the Jordan to be baptized. This is better than 60 miles! So, baptism certainly must be important. That point should be stressed. Baptism is a prerequisite for church membership (Acts 2:41). It is part of our work, as one of the Lord's churches.

A church should be a place of learning. Evangelism should occur in the daily lives of the membership. And certainly, the pastor may preach an evangelistic sermon from time to time. Without a doubt, the Gospel must ever be the foundation of everything that we do in church capacity. But, every service cannot be set up merely for evangelism. If they are, we are not "teaching them to observe all things that [Jesus] has commanded." Churches are to be places of learning. In the assembly, believers should be given clear, Biblical instructions on how they can serve God in their daily lives – "in to learn, out to serve." If we are not teaching, we are not doing our work. Let it be noted, this "teaching" must be Bible teaching. We cannot get hung up on "pet doctrines." God's people need to be taught truths from Genesis to Revelation. It is all God's Word and must be taught in context.

Today, churches have often become a stench to the

unchurched. Hopefully, some of this is due to our godly lifestyles, not our hateful attitudes. Without a doubt, some of it is due to churches getting into things that we have not been commissioned to do. If we are spending our time fulfilling the Great Commission, we will not have time for other things.



The Master of

(Continued from page 4) ♦

Him. Each sinner is completely in the hands of God to save or to damn to Hell fire. It is you, dear unsaved person, who needs to sue for God's mercy, lest He let you go to Hell, then **"a great ransom cannot deliver thee."**

THE PRACTICAL EFFECT OF THIS DOCTRINE

First, this doctrine puts God in His place. He is the Master of the World. It teaches that all the Father gave to Christ in the Covenant of Grace in eternity past shall come to faith in Christ (John 6:37). All that God has ordained to eternal life shall believe (Acts 13:48), and Jesus Christ shall **"give eternal life to as many as"** the Father gave Him (John 17:2).

Second, such a doctrine causes a person not to worship at the shrine of free will. The grace of God causes the unwilling sinner to receive the Christ of the gospel. Of the Lord's covenant people it is written: **"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power"** (Ps. 110:3). One is brought to see that the Master of the World works in man **"both to will and to do of his good pleasure"** (Phil. 2:13). Man has spiritual life because God wills that he be begotten with the Word of truth (Jas. 1:18). We seek Him because

He first sought us. **"We love him, because he first loved us"** (I John 4:19). We have nothing to boast about. It is only of **"the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed"** (Lam. 3:22).

Sinner, you are in the hands of a sovereign God. If He does not perform a work of grace upon your heart, you are doomed and damned without remedy. All you can do is throw yourself upon His mercy and grace. As Elder J. A. Brown wrote in the old hymn: "I've placed my life in Jesus' care . . . I'm depending on Him . . . I trusted Him and left it there . . . I'm depending on Him to save . . . 'Tis not by works that I have done . . . I'm depending on Him . . . 'Tis grace that saves through faith alone . . . I'm depending on Him to save."



Believing

(Continued from page 1) ♦

of the apostles there is recorded for us a most instructive incident. The group within the Jerusalem congregation that favored law-keeping confronted Peter because of his actions. This pro-law group was called by Luke **"they that were of the circumcision"** in Acts 11:2. These contended with Peter for his having gone into the home of a Gentile named Cornelius. Such an act was not forbidden in the Old Testament, but was contrary to the rules of their tradition. After Peter rehearsed in their hearing what God had done, we read: **"When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life"** (Acts 11:18). This was something new! The idea that God would save Gentiles apart from Jewish

♦ (Continued on page 6)

Believing

(Continued from page 5) ♦

circumcision and law-keeping was unheard of! It is important that we understand that “repentance unto life” is something that is “granted!” It is not “up for grabs.” Later Peter would write, **“According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: 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”** (II Peter 1:3-4). We cite both verse 3 and 4 here to show that the phrase **“all things that pertain unto life and godliness”** does not refer to natural things that God gives us such as food and clothing. Rather the **“all things”** here refers to spiritual things. God “grants” repentance and bestows **“all things that pertain unto life and godliness.”** How? “through the knowledge of him that called us to glory and virtue” - that is how! Translators struggle with the Greek word “knowledge” for in that language there are different kinds of knowledge. The highly competent Greek scholar W. E Vine says the word knowledge here expresses “a greater participation by the ‘knower’ in the object ‘known.’” Did you notice the word “participation” in his comment? This kind of knowledge is not mere head knowledge: it is the knowledge of experience or “participation.” To have this kind of knowledge of God a person must have had an experience of grace. They must have had in essence “a Damascus road experience!” They must

have had all their religious “props” knocked from under them. They must have come to see that they were hopeless and helpless unless God would intervene on their behalf. They must take their rightful place before God as filthy, ugly sinners devoid of anything which would commend them to God. They must enter Bunyan’s “Slough of Despond” that the Bible calls “godly sorrow.” As spiritually dead sinners they must be recipients of God’s gift of spiritual life. They must be recipients of the “all things” that God bestows upon His sheep. Oh that Baptists in America could see that God’s gift of these “all things” includes saving faith! Oh that they understood that their pitiful little repetition of “the sinner’s prayer” is not some kind of mechanical trigger that trips God’s salvation spring causing Him to look with favor upon them and save them because they prayed.

Recently there came into my hands a small religious tract. It was printed on both sides of a business card. The following is the quotation exactly as it appears: **“PLEASE PLEASE Don’t Die Without (Jesus) With or without Jesus, Eternity is Forever. If you have already Accepted Jesus (Great) (Over-->) If you haven’t please Don’t wait, Jesus died for you. He loves you so much, all you have to do is pray The Sinner’s Prayer PRAY Dear Jesus, I am a sinner. I am sorry, forgive me of my sins. Jesus cleanse me with your blood that you shed on the cross. Come into my heart right now and be my Lord.”** This quotation is supplied to the reader as proof of what we contend: i.e. that the gospel has been perverted by today’s Arminians – even Baptist Arminians. The essential elements of the gospel comprise the good news: the message of the

death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ as God’s sacrifice. (See I Corinthians 15:1-4). Instead of preaching the gospel and leaving the results in God’s hands, men have done a terrible thing. They have changed the gospel of the free grace of God into a works religion. They have added a requirement of human effort or works to the gospel. They will deny doing such a thing, but that is what they have done. When they wrongly assure lost people that God loves them, they do a thing no New Testament era preacher ever did in the Bible. They say that Jesus died for all those whom they address. This is another thing no New Testament era preacher ever did in the Bible. They say that praying “the sinner’s prayer” is the way a sinner gets God to act and save them. This, too, is something no New Testament era preacher ever did in the Bible. Of course they deny that repeating the magical formula is works for salvation. But the Bible speaks of praying as laboring (Colossians 4:12) and as serving (Luke 2:37). Oh dear friends, prayer is so much more than just repeating words! But these Arminian men and women, full of self confidence, think that anyone can repeat a few words and be assured of their eternal salvation based upon the fact that they did something – especially if they were sincere. Of course they can never know if they were “sincere enough:” a thing that haunts many of them. They deny that faith is a gift of God sovereignly bestowed. Their whole religion is based upon the lie that the natural or unsaved man can do something to please God. They think that their homemade faith can please God. That this is a lie is clearly shown by Paul in Romans 8:8 where the Holy Ghost through him wrote, **“So then they that are in the flesh**

cannot please God.” Multiplied thousands of people in our own country believe this lie about the ability of lost people to come to Christ and obtain salvation without Divine intervention. They deny the truth spoken by the Lord Jesus who said, **“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day”** (John 6:44). They believe that if they can persuade a lost person to “pray The Sinner’s Prayer” as this tract says, or “make a decision” or otherwise “exercise their free will,” the sinner has come to Christ. God is therefore obligated to save that person. And regrettably, it is American “missionaries” - Baptists of many sorts – who have spread this lie around the world.

What is the result of this lie? We have a multitude of people in many countries around the world who have been “evangelized” with this false gospel. They are, as our title says, “Believing Unbelievers.” That is, they are professing believers. They are intellectual believers. But they have never had an experience of grace. They have no inkling what an experience of grace is. Their hard hearts have never been broken: their blind eyes have never been healed: they have done religious things expecting their efforts to be rewarded. They have been told that they are saved because they have done something. No doubt at some time in their lives they were told that God loved them and wanted to save them. They were persuaded this weak God who desires to save everybody, but cannot, would save them if only they would let Him. All they had to do was pray the magical sinner’s prayer and Heaven would be their eternal home. This they believed

♦ (Continued on page 7)

Believing

(Continued from page 6) ♦

with their minds only. Their heads have believed, but their hearts have not for God did not operate on them. The existence of such people as we have called "Believing Unbelievers" is not new. They are as old as Christianity. They existed in the days when our Lord Jesus Christ walked upon the earth among His little congregation. In John 6:64-69 we read about some of these folk. Consider this incident where the Lord Jesus said to many of His disciples, **"But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."** There are important things to be learned from this brief account. (1) Here we see once again the Lord Jesus was omniscient; (2) we see also that our Lord always spoke the truth even if it cost Him popularity; (3) we see that men hate and reject the idea that they cannot save themselves by making a choice to come to Christ; (4) and we see in contrast to these people the faith of true disciples as shown in Peter's statement. Here is another instance when the Lord Jesus preached the sovereignty of God in salvation with the results that **"many of his disciples**

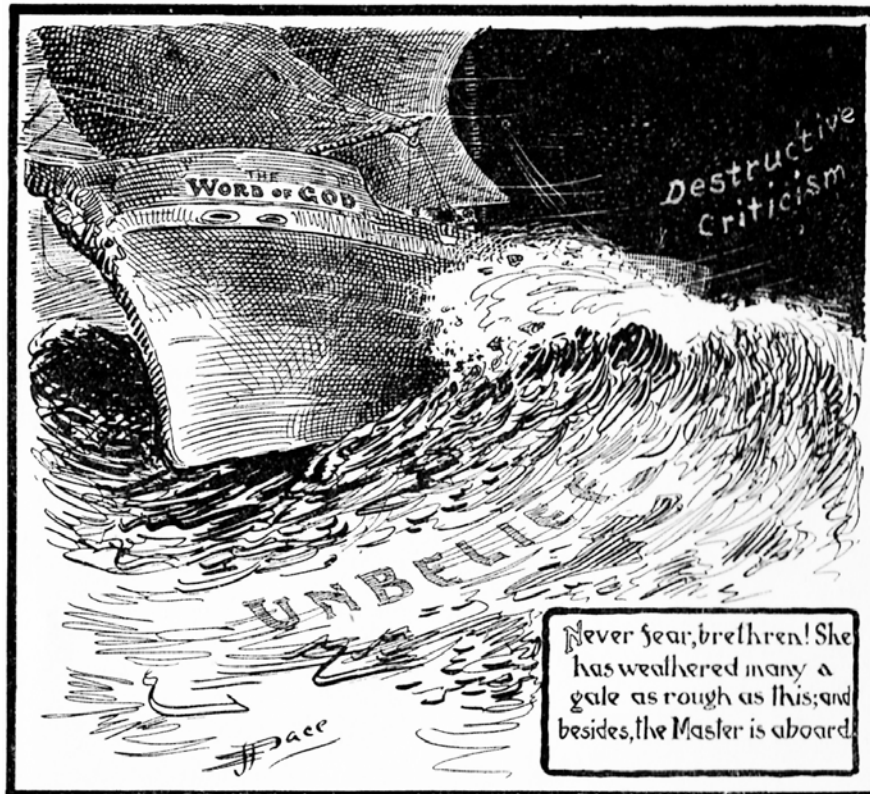
went back, and walked no more with him." Sometime after this incident the Lord Jesus would say, **"If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed"** (John 8:31). Continuing in God's Word is the mark of a genuine disciple! Let us look at the incident where the Messiah spoke those words. In John 8:30-37 we read as follows: **"As he spake these words, many believed on him. Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free,**

ye shall be free indeed. I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you." In the context preceding these verses Jesus had spoken to His hearers of His Father who had sent Him and of His relationship with God. As a result **"many believed on him."** That they "believed" without understanding is clear from John 8:27. There it is recorded that **"They understood not that he spake to them of the Father."**

Jesus spoke of the freedom that knowing the truth brings. He was speaking to them of freedom from the slavery to sin into which all men are born. He said, **"whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin."** Their spiritual blindness and dishonesty is seen in that they denied ever being in bondage. Their claim is the most absurd and bold-faced lie conceivable! At that very moment they and all Israel were under the iron heel of Rome. Their nation had experienced captivity in

Babylon in the days of Daniel and other prophets. Their fathers had slaved some four hundred years in Egypt before God used Moses to deliver them from bondage. And yet these "disciples" - "believers" - denied their own nation's history, their own present condition and proclaimed their own so-called freedom. But they were not free. Is there not a parallel here? Does not the Arminian crowd proclaim the (supposed) freedom of each person to "choose Christ" or to reject Him? Free will has been defined as "the ability to make choices without any prior prejudice, inclination, or disposition." Is this not the claim of today's Arminians? Do they not deny that all men are born slaves to sin because of their inherited sin nature? Do they not deny that every part of man was evilly affected by the fall? They claim "free will" really exists as if the will of man was not affected by the fall - as if it is somehow separate and unaffected by man's sinful nature. Whether they say it or not, whenever they proclaim vocally or in print that "all you have to do is pray The Sinner's Prayer" or meet some other requirement, they are basing their words upon a lie. That lie is the false idea that men and women yet in their sins have the ability to please God. They think that to believe on Christ, or come to Christ, or accept Christ, choose Christ or have faith in Christ by human effort and apart from Divine intervention, is pleasing and acceptable to God. The Jews said, **"We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man."** Today's Arminian - be he Baptist or Protestant in name - by his actions and in his thoughts says, "we human beings have freedom of our wills and

♦ (Continued on page 8)



Believing

(Continued from page 7) ♦

can do as we please about Christ." They deny that they have within them a sin nature. They have never been made to see their awful condition. Their eyes are blind to their spiritual deadness. They are dead men who do not know they are dead! They have never grieved over their sinful condition in what the Bible calls "godly sorrow" - that kind of sorrow that **"worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of"** (II Corinthians 7:10). The words **"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed"** mean little or nothing to them. Why? Because they are spiritually dead and bound by their inherent sin nature and have never experienced either spiritual life or freedom. Life is something in which a dead man does not participate. Freedom to a person born in slavery is only a thing to be imagined. Neither a man born dead in sins nor a man born in slavery knows by participation anything of life in the one instance or of freedom in the other example. A man born in slavery has never participated in freedom. Similarly, a man born dead in sins has never participated in life on a spiritual plane. And so our Lord Jesus Christ said to these "disciples," **"I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you."**

The modern Arminian believes that he or she is saved. They believe this because they have become Christ's "disciple" by means of praying "the sinner's prayer." What do we mean by the term "modern Arminian" as we use it? Basically, an "Arminian" as we use the term today is one who does not believe in the total

inability of a lost person to come to Christ in a saving way. He thinks that every man, woman, boy and girl has the ability to be saved by their being sorry for their sins and doing something about it - praying a prayer, being baptized, confessing with his mouth, etc., etc. That is their foundational doctrine. Their confidence is in their ability. Their faith is in their "doing something about it." Those of us who believe that God is sovereign and that He saves whom He wants to save, whenever He wants to save them, sail in a small boat upon the sea of Arminianism. We say this because of the immense popularity of the Arminian view today in contrast to the small number of people who believe in God's absolute sovereignty. We find that we must be diligent in bailing to keep the seas of Arminian ideas from filling our little boat. Those who have been made free by the sovereignly bestowed grace of God walk among men and women who are bound with invisible chains of ignorance of the truth, blindness, hardness and confidence in their flesh. We live in a morgue populated for the most part with spiritually dead persons whose eyes are blind and their hearts hardened. Those who are "disciples indeed" - those truly born again - live in the midst of "disciples" who have converted themselves. Have they not? They walk in the light of the sparks of the fire they have kindled (see Isaiah 50:11). They have "made a decision," or "exercised their wills," or "chosen Christ," or some such thing and think this saves them. They are "believing unbelievers" in many instances we fear. Lost men and women just do not understand that freedom from sin and its penalty must come from Christ who said, **"If the Son**

therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." They think that their "sinner's prayer" will make them free or somehow kick-start God so He will make them free. It has repeatedly been said that all men are naturally born Arminians. Yea, verily! And those Arminians who continue to reject the truth of God's sovereignty usually attack those who bear witness to that truth. This is exactly what happened to our Lord Jesus. He knew what was simmering on the back burner of the hearts of these very Jews. He said to them, **"I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you."** Remember, Jesus spoke these words to some of His "disciples." We think they were "believing unbelievers!" We do not doubt their sincerity. What we doubt is their salvation. So it is we have called these folk "Believing Unbelievers." We fear for many that believe on Christ, but are not "disciples indeed" - they are not genuine disciples. They think they have birthed themselves into God's family by praying "the sinner's prayer." They think that the exercise of their so-called free wills has bought them favor with God. They dare not put these ideas into words because they profess to believe that salvation is by grace. Rooted in their false notion of human ability, they know nothing of seeing themselves as hopeless and helpless sinners. That they are sinners to one degree or another they will admit. That they are hopeless and helpless they will not admit at all. They have no real concept of the necessity of God doing the saving. When someone speaks the truth to them regarding such things as human inability, the need of Holy Spirit regeneration or the new birth, these modern

Arminians look at such speakers "like a calf looking at a new gate." Are not all men welcome to enter God's spiritual superstore and freely choose whether or not they want to go to Heaven? Is it not up to the (ordained) salesmen in that great superstore to persuade men that making a decision for Christ is better than going to Hell? Does not God offer grace at a greatly discounted price to all men and women? Can they not accept God's grace or trample upon it - whichever they wish? Has not God fixed it so that it is up to spiritually dead sinners whether or not they make a decision for Christ? And if they make such a decision are they not therefore qualified to receive grace? Is not salvation the possession of all "disciples?" What about the "many" who "believed" upon Christ, but whom He said **"ye seek to kill me?"** Think about these questions in the light of the verses and passages cited in this article. Can you escape the fact that there really are "believing unbelievers" who are not true disciples?

Are you a "disciple indeed?" Is your faith "the faith of God's elect?" Are you one who has experienced the grace of God that produces **"godly sorrow [that] worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of?"** We remind the reader of words from the old Baptist hymn which says, "O beware of trust ill-grounded; 'Tis but fancied faith at most, To be cured, and not be wounded; To be saved before you're lost." We urge and beseech you not to trust in anything you have done, nor in your sincerity. You must experience the grace of God in order to be saved. **"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."**



The Appearance

(Continued from page 1) ♦

men, maybe even having in mind that the Gospel of Jesus Christ has been carried to the Gentile, as well as to the Jew. While it is true that the salvation which comes from God has appeared nearly everywhere that the Gospel has been carried, I believe that the Apostle Paul is mostly referring back to the “grace of God” (which does bring salvation), and observing that this “grace” hath appeared to all men, or been made manifest in the presence of all men, through the salvation of the souls of God’s elect and chosen people. Of course, this grace is the root cause and the beginning of salvation; but, it is the grace of God that the Apostle Paul says **“hath appeared to all men.”** And, in this New Testament age, this grace of God shines forth more clearly, and brightly, and farther, than ever before.

I want us to consider the effect that grace has, when it appears in our lives. I want us to ponder the difference that grace makes in our lives. I want us to marvel at the abundance of God’s grace, and how His grace manifests itself in the lives of His people, as our lives are transformed by “The Appearance of Grace” in our lives.

If you notice, my text passage consists of four verses, but is comprised of only one sentence. As you read the text passage, you are reading four verses which make up one sentence which in turn expresses one complete thought. The grace and salvation of God are mentioned in verse eleven, and then Paul goes on to express a lengthy thought as to the affect that the grace of God and salvation from God has upon those who are saved. As I progress through the sermon, I am going to use Paul’s

succeeding words as an outline, as to what happens when the grace of God makes an appearance in the lives of His chosen ones.

TEACHES US

We notice in Titus 2:12 that the grace of God is effective in **“Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.”** Once a person is exposed to the grace of God – especially as we consider a newly saved individual who is brought near to Christ through and by the grace of God – that person will, inevitably, be taught by the grace of God. God’s grace is a teaching grace. The grace of God – and the salvation that accompanies that grace – does not leave us helpless, blind, and wandering. Rather, that grace of God will teach us everything we need to know in this life, in order that we can successfully live a righteous and godly life before God and the world.

We can say this, at least: every person who is brought to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, will be taught that his salvation is accomplished through and by the grace of God. Each of God’s children will be made to know that we are nothing in ourselves, and we are in desperate need of a Saviour, and that Saviour is Jesus Christ. Every one of us will be granted the understanding that our salvation is not based upon our works, but on the words and works of Jesus Christ. There is no salvation in works! There is no successful salvation based upon the efforts or worth of any man! Only Jesus Christ can save us! If you have never been taught these things, then the grace of God has never appeared in your life. This is a basic tenet which is revealed to every person unto whom the saving grace of God is revealed.

Further, the grace of God will teach us that we should properly serve the Lord Jesus Christ through a denial of the affections and the lusts of the flesh. I know that this flies in the face of much of religion, but the grace of God will actually teach us not to sin, instead of indulging in sin based on the fact that the grace of God has already allotted us (and promised us) salvation. I know that some will teach that once grace reigns in our lives, we can live any way that we want, since we are guaranteed salvation. But this is not the real and true grace which comes from God! Charles Spurgeon said, “Wherever the grace of God comes effectually, it makes the loose liver deny the desires of the flesh; it causes the man who lusted after gold to conquer his greediness; it brings the proud man away from his ambitions; it trains the idler to diligence, and it sobers the wanton mind which cared only for the frivolities of life. Not only do we leave these lusts, but we deny them.” The grace that Paul is telling Titus about, is a grace that teaches us not to sin, and teaches us to abstain from the **“worldly lusts,”** and to live **“soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.”** As the evidence of their lives will prove, many folks who claim to be saved, have never seen an appearance of this true, saving, and teaching grace in their lives!

John the Beloved said, **“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever”**

(I John 2:15-17). As one grows in the grace of God, and as one is taught by God’s grace, one realizes that the world is temporary, as are the things and the desires of the flesh. And, as one becomes better acquainted with God and His grace, one realizes that the eternal things, and the Words and Purposes of God are far higher and far more desirable than are the world and all that is in the world. **“And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight”** (Col. 1:21-22).

Far from giving a license to sin, grace teaches obedience, service, holiness, and a righteous and morally upright life. **“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God”** (Rom. 12:1-2). The man who is endowed with grace, and leans and trust upon that grace, is far better equipped to live uprightly, than is that man who is a legalist, and who seeks to justify himself by his own works.

INSPIRES US

We read in Titus 2:13, **“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”** So, the grace of God brings to us certain knowledge and a certain understanding – both of salvation, and of our Saviour. Well, it seems apparent that the grace of God will also inspire

♦ (Continued on page 10)

The Appearance

(Continued from page 9) ♦

us, revealing to us the **“blessed hope,”** which is the return of our dear Saviour, Jesus Christ. The grace of God will inspire you and me to anticipate the **“glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”** After all, what manner of salvation would ours be, if we did not have the hope of Jesus Christ’s Coming to inspire us in this life? What manner of salvation would ours be – how miserable would be the grace of God – if the salvation and the grace of God did not extend beyond this life? Paul once told the Corinthians, **“If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable”** (I Cor. 15:19).

I think that one of the greatest attributes of the grace of God, is that it brings hope unto men. In reality, mankind is in a hopeless condition. The religions of the world might only bring a temporary or a mortal hope. But, true Christianity – the grace that God gives to men, and which appears in the lives of the truly saved – will give men hope of a Living Saviour and an eternal life to come. Paul reminded Titus that the Saviour will return, and that our salvation will one day be completed, when the Lord returns to bring us unto Himself. The Lord Jesus Christ told His disciples, **“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know”** (John 14:1-4). Our Christ did die,

but He is alive again, and He is ascended into Heaven. One day, He will return for us.

Because of this hope, we contend that our life here is temporary. **“For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come”** (Heb. 13:14). We look for the coming of our Saviour. **“For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ”** (Phil. 3:20). And our lives in this temporary abode are spent anticipating, hoping for, and preparing for the return of Jesus Christ. **“I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ”** (I Cor. 1:4-8). When you were first saved, the grace of God appeared to you and inspired you to hope. Before you had none – now you have a blessed hope that is joined with the faith that has been granted unto you.

SEPARATES US

Finally, let me refer you to Titus 2:14, **“Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”** Once exposed to the saving grace of God, every child of God will forever be affected by that marvelous grace. The grace of God takes us as we were, and transforms us into someone that God would have us to be. The grace of God establishes a difference between us and the world, so that there is now a tendency, in

our saved person, to gravitate towards God and Heavenly things, rather than the world and fleshly things. The grace of God is so wonderful and so real in our lives, that the evidence of that grace can be seen as the world and other saints behold the lives that we live. In other words, the grace of God – as that grace makes an appearance in our lives – will separate us from the world, and join us to the holy calling of service unto Jesus Christ our Lord. The Apostle Paul told the Corinthians, **“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new”** (II Cor. 5:17). Grace makes us new creatures in Christ Jesus. The appearance of grace in our lives causes the old things to pass away, and brings to light those things that are new and eternal.

We already noticed how that the grace of God will teach us to abstain from earthly and fleshly desires which might conflict with the Holiness of God. Now, Paul is telling Titus that those persons unto whom the grace of God has appeared, will be the redeemed of God, and will be purified and set apart as a **“peculiar people, zealous of good works.”** It is no small thing when the grace of God makes an appearance in the life of a lowly human being! Something magnificent is bound to happen! That person is being set apart and called unto God’s service and unto God’s family! That person is being transformed from a person obsessed with the works of the flesh into a person who is **“zealous of good works”** – especially, the works and ministry of God! Paul told the Ephesians, **“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him**

in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.” (Eph. 1:4-6). The separated and peculiar and holy lives that we live now – before God – are a result of the appearance of the grace of God, and redound to the **“praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”** Don’t imagine that you are to be given the credit for any sanctification or pious service rendered in your life! It is to the glory of His grace, if there is any sanctification or diligence or obedience to be found in our lives.

We read what Paul had to say in his second epistle to Timothy, **“Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel”** (II Tim. 1:8-10). Once the grace of God appears unto us, let us be devoted unto God, and His Son, Jesus Christ. If we are going to be ashamed any more, let us be ashamed of the things of the flesh. If we are going to be afflicted any more, let us be afflicted according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is He that has saved us and separated us unto His cause. He did not save us based on our own works or worth, but He saved us according

♦ (Continued on page 11)

The Appearance

(Continued from page 10) ♦

to His own design, and His own grace. The grace of God – which once was hidden – has now appeared unto us, and it brings us salvation, it inspires us to hope, and it separates us unto the purpose and cause of Jesus Christ.



Saul Persecuting the Church

By Curtis Pugh
of Poteau, Oklahoma

Such a little article as this is necessary only because of the influence of both the Papists and the Protestants on Biblical theology and thought. Historically the Papists have claimed their hierarchy composed the “universal visible church” outside of which there is no salvation. The Protestants, seeking to reform Rome and having no success, found themselves outside that body. Thus, according to their old theology, they were now lost and bound for eternal punishment since there is no salvation outside the “universal visible church.” So the Protestants dug up an old idea of Augustine, dusted it off, and twisted it around a bit and claimed that they were still saved because they were in the “universal invisible church.” Just changing “visible” into “invisible” solved their theological dilemma. In this way they continued to teach that salvation is in a church – just a different kind of church.

Historically, Baptists have taught that salvation is not in a church at all. Salvation is in Christ, they said, and we concur noting that

acceptable service and worship is in a church – a church that is Christ’s. In the 1800’s here in the U.S. many Baptists began to drink at the fountain of respectability, going so far as to hold union meetings with Protestants. Pulpit affiliation (allowing baby-baptizing Protestants to preach in Baptist meeting houses) became quite popular in some places. Of course certain truths had to be ignored in order for this to take place. When Baptists unionized with the Methodists, as was often the case, the doctrine of sovereign grace in all its five points could not be mentioned by the Baptists, nor could the requirement that candidates for baptism be believers, nor could the security of the believer even be mentioned. All of this because the Methodists were baby-sprinkling Wesleyan Arminians and of course violently opposed to what they regarded as “Baptist doctrine.” But their ideas of free-will-ism began to influence the Baptists as did the Protestant doctrine of a church that was “universal” and “invisible.”

Never mind that there is not a single verse in the Bible that teaches that the Greek word “ekklesia” means anything other than a (local) gathering or assembly of people. The idea of a universal church of any kind is not a Biblical necessity, but a theological one. And that theological necessity is that salvation is in a church. Baptist theology (Bible theology) does not need a universal church!

Now this brings us to Saul of Tarsus and his persecution of “the church.” We often hear that phrase bandied about. We think many who say it and many who hear it think that Saul persecuted some kind of “universal church” - an oxymoron if ever there was one. An oxymoron is a contradiction in terms. It truly is an oxymoron

to put the words “universal” and “assembly” together. (Of course the KJV translators admitted to using the old Romish word “church” rather than “congregation” in their introductory material, but nobody reads their introduction any more). Actually is is a misquote to say that Saul “persecuted the church.” Here is what Acts 8:1 & 3 actually says: **“And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles;”** and, **“As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.”** Now the Holy Ghost through Luke made it clear that the church that Saul was involved in persecuting was “the church which was at Jerusalem.” It was this congregation of which “he made havock.”

Why, one may ask, was the Holy Ghost so careful to point out that the congregation which was being persecuted was the one that was located in Jerusalem when there was not another? We think it is because there had once been another: the one that was the first traveling church – the one that Christ called to be with Him and of whom He was the “poimen” - the Shepherd – the Pastor. That was a mobile congregation. (Those acquainted with Baptist history may know of other “traveling churches” - i.e., congregations on the move whether in Europe or the Mediterranean area or from Wales to Pennsylvania or from Virginia to Kentucky). But that first traveling church settled in Jerusalem. Our point is that nobody should ever think that when someone says “Saul persecuted the church” he

or she means that Saul persecuted some kind of universal something or other.

The plain fact is that nobody ever persecuted the “universal invisible church” since no such thing exists. It never held a meeting, never heard a sermon, never called a pastor, never sent out a missionary, never took an offering, never prayed together, never carried out either one of the ordinances, and never worshiped together. We often suggest that those pastors who are high admirers of the “universal invisible church” take their salary and expenses from that so-called “body.” It has often been noted that otherwise intelligent people often believe the most foolish and unbiblical things. Some believe that when a priest says hocus pocus over bread and wine he changes them into the body and blood of Christ. Others believe that the obviously sovereign God who created all things cannot save whom He has planned from before the foundation of the world unless they exercise their free will and take the first step toward Him. Still others believe that a “church” - a “congregation” can be both universal and invisible – a logical impossibility without basis in the Bible – and contrary to all the metaphors which picture the Lord’s ekklesia.

We would challenge any person to provide us with even a single verse that teaches that such an “universal invisible” creature exists – to date no one have even tried. And we hope that whenever someone says that “Saul persecuted the church,” both the speaker and the hearers will understand that it was a real, Biblical, local congregation of Christ’s that was being persecuted. The same kind of ekklesia that serves and glorifies Christ today.



The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. Should a Landmark Baptist Church grant a letter to another Baptist church that believes in close, not closed, and/or open communion?

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

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



It should be stated at the outset that each New Testament Baptist Church should be considered as being independent and autonomous. As such, one church cannot dictate to another church regarding their doctrine and or practice. Our church can disagree, break fellowship, and refuse to grant or receive letters with another church, but we cannot presume to dictate another church's polity or practice.

I think there has been a lot of confusion regarding the terms close, closed, and open communion. I prefer the term restricted communion which gets right to the point. We restrict the Lord's Supper to members of our church who are in good standing. Thus we do not open the table to disciplined members who have lost their privilege of partaking due to a disorderly walk. Nor do we invite Baptists from other churches to observe the ordinance with us. We do not open the table to anyone who professes to have been immersed. We do not open the Lord's Supper to anyone who says they are saved. We believe that the Lord's Supper is strictly a local church ordinance to be observed only by the members of our church who are not disciplined. Anything

less than restricted communion for members only is in reality some form of open communion whether you call it open, close, or intercommunion. It has always been the practice of our church not to grant a letter to a church that practices open, close, or intercommunion.

The Scriptures are crystal clear regarding the terms of participation in the Lord's Supper. I Corinthians 5:11-13 declares: **"But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.** (the Lord's Supper, v. 7-8 TWR) **For what have I to do to judge them also that are without?** (outside of the local church body TWR) **do not ye judge them that are within?** (members of the local church body TWR) **But them that are without** (nonmembers) **God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."** (Comments in parentheses are mine identified as TWR). A church can only extend the Lord's Supper to those who are within the local church's authority to discipline, thus is it for members only. When a church invites those outside of its membership to partake of the Lord's Supper it is violating the principle of I Corinthians 5:11. If a person is not a member of that local body, how does the church know for sure that person is not a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard,

or an extortioner? The church could very easily be guilty of being a **"partaker of other men's sins"** (I Tim. 5:22) if it chooses to practice open or intercommunion. How illogical and inconsistent is it for a church to not permit a disciplined member to partake of the Lord's Supper on the one hand, and yet invite a nonmember they know little about in most cases to partake?

I have often wondered why people make such a fuss about not being invited to partake of the Lord's Supper in a church they are not even a member of! If you want to partake of the Lord's Supper with our church simply submit to scriptural baptism and apply for membership in our body. Otherwise be content to observe the Lord's Supper with the church you are a member of.

A church that practices open, close, or intercommunion should also openly invite everyone in attendance to also participate in their business meetings. If you extend the right to communion to a nonmember, in the spirit of consistency you should also allow them to make motions and vote in your church business meetings. Even the most liberal of churches would not think of allowing a nonmember to participate in their business meetings. Yet a business meeting is not one of only two ordinances we are commanded to keep.

I like the observation of J.R. Graves in his treatise, "The Lord's Supper: A Church Ordinance":

"It is admitted that the Supper can only be enjoyed by one-- 1. Who has been scripturally baptized; and thus, 2. Has become a member of a scriptural church; and 3. Is in hearty fellowship with its doctrines; and 4. Is walking in Gospel order. I wish in this tract to show-- That the Lord's Supper

is a church ordinance, and, as such, can only be observed by a church, as such, and by a person in the church of which he is a member."

Even E.T. Hiscox, an advocate of intercommunion had to acknowledge the truth in his *New Directory for Baptist Churches*:

"Strictly speaking, however, the privileges of a Church are coextensive with the authority of the Church. A right to the communion therefore, is limited to those over whom the church exercises the right of discipline; that is, its own members" (p. 139).

TOM ROSS

Mike DeWitt Sr.
PO Box 950
Springfield, OR
97477

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



The only thing I can say is, apparently the pastor and the church have not done their duty in teaching the doctrine of closed communion. Why someone would want to leave a closed communion church for an open communion church is beyond me, unless they are not in harmony with the church they belong to.

I have found that most close and open communion churches are not sovereign grace landmark Baptist churches. Thus, I would assume the one desiring the letter to an open or close communion church does not share the same convictions with the church they belong to.

The church I pastor would try to find out why they desire to leave and what are their convictions toward the gospel and the Lord's church. When all the information is gathered and the member still desires to leave, then

◇ (Continued on page 14)

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. What is the importance of using the proper elements for the Lord's Supper?

Roger Reed
20 Ledgewood Dr.
Mansfield, Ohio 44905

Missionary of
West Jefferson
Missionary Baptist
Mission
90 E. Main St.
West Jefferson, Ohio
43162



The importance we must see in using the proper elements is that NO "Leaven" is to be used. Once we understand that, then it becomes apparent what the proper elements are to be used, and their importance. There are 20 verses found in the KJV that talk about leaven, and if the student of the Bible does not understand that "Leaven" is a type of sin and God says not to use it, then they have a serious problem, in my opinion. I will only use five verses here, two from the OT and three from the NT. Believe it or not, but I had a Baptist preacher tell me one time that "Leaven" in the NT was the Gospel. We never agreed on much anyway, but that was over the top for me, I never could understand how he came up with such nonsense!

"Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel" (Ex. 12:15).

"And Moses spake unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar and unto Ithamar, his sons that were left, Take the meat offering that remaineth of the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and eat it

without leaven beside the altar: for it is most holy" (Lev. 10:12).

"In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy" (Luke 12:1).

"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" (I Cor. 5:7).

"Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (I Cor. 5:8).

"A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (Gal. 5:9).

There has always been more of a fuss about the wine issue than the bread but both are just as important. As you can see from I Corinthians chapter 5 "leaven" is a type of sin in connection to the Lord's Supper. Unleavened bread represents the sinless body of Christ. I think that is important, do you not? If we use bread that has "leaven" (sin) in it how in the world could that honestly represent a sinless Saviour? I just never understood those who try and make Christ's body sinful!

I do not understand either, those who use wafers and/or crackers as the one loaf in the Lord's Supper to represent the unity of the church. I will not spend much time here but will recommend two books *Wine, Worship, & The*

Word by Milburn Cockrell and A Systematic Study Of Bible Doctrine by T. P. Simmons. There are many others but these two are sufficient.

One can jump up and down and pitch a fit for what I am going to say next, but if anything is used but wine in the Lord's Supper to represent the Lord's Blood it is absolutely wrong, and those that use anything else can have no honest answer to this statement. I mean no disrespect to any but they are absolutely and positively wrong if they use grape juice for a symbol of the Lord's Blood. They can argue until the cows come home, but there will never be any validity in their argument. It is false in every sense of their thinking that it makes no difference, and grape juice is all right to use. It is very elementary that wine has NO "leaven" in it and grape juice has loads of "leaven." How inconsistent for anyone (church) to use unleavened bread and then choose to use leavened grape juice in the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's whole body and His blood had not one ounce of sin "leaven" in it. Therefore it is vitally important to obey Him and use the proper elements to represent and symbolize His precious person, **"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:26-28).**

May God help our Baptist churches to see the importance of the elements that are needed to be used to represent Him. God Bless!

ROGER REED

Matthew Stepp
286 Big Creek Road
Wayne, WV 25570

Pastor
Big Creek
Baptist Church
286 Big Creek Road
Wayne, WV 25570



"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened BREAD of sincerity and truth" (I Cor. 5:7-8) (Emp. TMS). The word "bread" in the last phrase is a supplied word (in vs. 8, but not 7) that in this passage may be distracting from the intended application to BOTH elements in the Lord's Supper. Both the wine and the bread are to be UNLEAVENED, to picture Christ's pure body and blood that made the PICTURE PERFECT sacrifice for our sins. Selah! Think about it!

If we were to use a polluted element, such as any form of grape juice (still has yeast/leavening agent) or any form of baked bread with yeast/leaven- it would be an abomination to the Lord's sacrifice. Listen to His own words, **"Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees" (Matt. 16:6).** He goes on to tell them that the REAL danger was the leaven of their doctrine! Our elements in the Lord's Supper are the doctrine of the New Testament Baptist churches! **"For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28).** What God has given, we are required

◊ (Continued on page 20)

Forum #1

(Continued from page 12) ♦

yes, give them a letter. There is nothing wrong with giving a letter to another church who does not hold to the same doctrines. The thing is, that does not mean that the Landmark Baptist Church is in anyway bound to receive a letter from an open or close communion church.

MIKE DEWITT

Matthew Stepp
286 Big Creek Road
Wayne, WV 25570

Pastor
Big Creek
Baptist Church
286 Big Creek Road
Wayne, WV 25570



The question comes down to whom can a Baptist church grant/receive letters from? Certainly a Baptist church cannot receive letters from a "non-church" or alien denominational assembly, such as a Catholic, Methodist or Mormon congregation. That has been a hallmark of "AnaBaptist" assemblies down through the ages. The only entrance for these cross-over believers is Immersion, as called so many times "Re-Baptism". Selah! Think about it!

But what about all the different kinds of Baptists out there? Which apostasy and errors will cause a true sovereign grace, landmark, independent Baptist church to decline to receive a letter? Well, that is exactly what those adjectives that I put in front of "Baptist" and after "true," are for! For us to receive a letter from another Baptist church, we will send them a questionnaire to verify their status as a Baptist church of like faith and order. If they still teach (AND PRACTICE) the doctrines of grace and they still teach (AND PRACTICE) church

truth (landmarkism) and can verify their mother church, then we will consider their authority and can probably grant /receive letters from them.

The question of whether we can receive a letter from another Baptist church that practices open communion is not so clear-cut, in my mind. This is a gross error concerning the Lord's Supper, but is usually a symptom of deeper error. The question must be asked, "Why did they open the communion to visitors and nonmembers of their church?" Since all Baptist churches were historically closed communion for the purpose of the supper (purity of the elements and purity of church discipline), they must have changed at some point. Typically, the erring church has gone off on universal church, which heresy would require open communion. Also they likely have started accepting alien baptism, which heresy also acknowledges the authority of unscriptural churches and/or denominations. And that would lead to lowering the high standards of our Head and Master to allow a mixed multitude of unexamined hearts into the precious Lord's Supper (Ezek. 44:7-9; I Cor. 11:26-32). Selah! Think about it!

If they are in error on universal church or alien baptism, then a true Baptist church will NOT be able to grant nor receive a letter. We cannot receive a member from such a church, because their baptism has become polluted with the aliens taken in, and we cannot be certain that any member from that church has had scriptural baptism. Of course, we know not when the LORD will remove the candlestick from ANY Baptist church (Rev. 2:5), but with such gross error concerning the ordinance of Baptist authority,

we CANNOT take the chance of polluting our own church's baptism, which God has given us the responsibility to maintain (I Cor. 11:2; II Cor. 11:2). Likewise if the requesting church is off on sovereign grace, we could not be certain we are not taking in arminians that have only professed salvation through easy believism, but are not possessors of salvation. Again, this would entail us taking in unscripturally baptized members (lost).

Both of these paramount doctrines involve baptism, which is the safe-guard of church authority. But what if the addressed Baptist church is NOT off on one of these two, but off on something else, such as the elements in the Lord's Supper, the woman's headcovering, Catholic holy days, tithing, modern liberalism in its various forms, divorced/remarried preachers and/or using modern perversions/translations? While these are all gross error, they do not affect the authority of the church itself. The Lord, if He would be gracious unto them (us?), might send a letter via the Apostle Paul, or He might send a faithful minister to correct the church from their errors and bring them back into the truth as He has done so often down through the ages! Praise Him for His mercy and grace! We must submit ourselves to His authority and His Word (Rev. 2:21-26).

There is a difference then, in the receiving of a letter, and granting of a letter to such a church. We could receive a letter from such a church, that is founded correctly, and thus far has not damaged its authority, but we could NEVER send one of our sheep over whom God has given us responsibility into the danger of apostasy. An incoming member, we can lovingly teach, but we have no authority to

send with our departing member a list of instructions for the other church to teach. Such a member should SERIOUSLY hesitate to join themselves to a church that we cannot grant a letter unto. How important is the real truth to the departing member? If circumstances dictate a departure anyway, they should be aware that their church will have to discipline them for departing the faith. Nothing personal against the member, but just a loving desire to inform all participants of the Baptist church's responsibility to be the pillar and ground of the truth! What kind of love would we have for our members if we lettered them off without a deep-rooted concern for their future! "How much error is acceptable?" Can a true Baptist really ask such a question of their own church? Once started down the slippery slope, the world will give enough encouragement to such a person and/or church without the aid of a Baptist church that will not stand up for the safety, security and edification of her members! Selah! Think about it! **"In that ye have brought into my sanctuary strangers, uncircumcised in heart, and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in my sanctuary, to pollute it, even my house, when ye offer my bread, the fat and the blood, and they have broken my covenant because of all your abominations. And ye have not kept the charge of mine holy things: but ye have set keepers of my charge in my sanctuary for yourselves. Thus saith the Lord GOD; No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel"** (Ezek. 44:7-9).

MATTHEW STEPP

♦ (Continued on page 15)

Forum #1

(Continued from page 14) ♦

Roger Reed
20 Ledgewood Dr.
Mansfield, Ohio 44905

Missionary of
West Jefferson
Missionary Baptist
Mission
90 E. Main St.
West Jefferson, Ohio
43162



Oh my, this sounds like an “opening a can of worms question”!?! But I will answer the question and then throw a wrench into the mix. But before I answer the question I wish to recommend three books that I will make some quotes from, *The Lord’s Supper A Church Ordinance* by J. R. Graves, copyright 1881, *A Systematic Study of Bible Doctrine* by T. P. Simmons, and *Close Communion and Baptist: or The Practice of Restricted Communion Defended, and Shown to be Scriptural, Logical and Consistent* by Elder J. H. Grime, printed in 1888.

In answering the question I hope to show that there is only one answer. However, I will tell you I am not fond of the term “closed,” because I do not believe it is correct, even though I must use it as it is the term that is most used today to show what a true New Testament Baptist church believes in who the Lord’s Supper should be given to, who is allowed to take it, and who we (True Baptists) should or should not grant letters to. Also, I use it because that is the term my church uses and I will always stand by what my church believes. But with that said, I will also try to show that the word “closed” is used today, and understandably so, not for lack of understanding of my church but because between now and roughly more than a 100 years ago it got changed. I will explain

that later in the answer. But as I said, for people to understand our (Baptist) position the word “closed” must be used whether I and others like the term or not. I am not alone in this as there are other Baptist preachers who believe as I do.

Before we continue, let me give the correct answer to the question without using the three terms that are used today, “closed,” “close,” and “open.” In fact, let me just state my church’s statement from their “Declaration of Faith:” “We believe that the Lord’s Supper is one of the two Ordinances of the church. Of which the members of the local church, by the use of unleavened bread and wine show their Lord’s death till He comes. We further believe this is restricted to the members of the local assembly, (CLOSED LORD’S SUPPER). I Corinthians 11:2; I Corinthians 11:23-24; Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Acts 2:42.”

So here is what needs to be determined; does the church that is being considered to grant a letter to believe this: “We further believe this is restricted to the members of the local assembly”! NO one can take the Lord’s Supper unless they are a member of that LOCAL CHURCH. I do not care what word they use “closed,” “close,” and “open.” Those words are not in the Bible when referring to the Lord’s Supper; but it is very plain that NO ONE other than the eleven partook of that first Supper and that is what needs to be maintained.

Let me prove my point this way, let me say that my church’s statement of faith reads this way; “We believe that the Lord’s Supper is one of the two Ordinances of the church, of which the members of the local church, by the use of unleavened bread and wine,

show their Lord’s death till He comes. We further believe this is restricted to the members of the local assembly, (OPEN LORD’S SUPPER). I Corinthians 11:2; I Corinthians 11:23-24; Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Acts 2:42.” As you can see I replaced the word “closed” with the word open. But nothing has changed; they would be simply stating that it is only open to the members of that local assembly, and NO ONE else. So in my opinion it is a matter of definition, not interpretation. Now if my church simply stated we believe in open Communion, then there would definitely be a problem because we should know what that means. Because we understand that “OPEN” Communion means that anyone that is in the service at the time of the Lord’s Supper can partake of the Supper like the Catholics and others believe. That has been the cause of much debate and many Baptist have been put to death because true Baptists DO NOT believe, nor does the Bible teach “OPEN” Communion.

It is a shame that we have to use certain words to describe Bible (Baptist) Doctrine. I hate to take the room here but hopefully the editor will allow me some leniency because the Lord has really burdened me with this question and I want to try to give a complete answer which I think this question deserves.

I would like to quote from a few other New Testament church’s statements of faith. I have compiled almost a dozen, of which many say the very same thing. I will not mention each church by name, but can assure you that they could be granted letters from my church. I have already given what my church believes so I will only give three others, well four actually because the last one is not

a true Baptist church and you will see why when you read it. I had to laugh even though it is not really a laughing matter; it is actually very sad.

Here is the first one: “Churches are commanded to observe the Lord’s Supper in remembrance of Christ’s death. The unleavened bread and wine symbolize the sacrifice of His body and blood. Members individually and churches collectively are to examine themselves before observing the ordinance, for those who do so unworthily bring judgment upon themselves. The ordinance should be administered only to members of each particular church.”

The second one: “We believe that the Lord’s Supper is not a sacrament, but a solemn symbolic ordinance placed in the church by our Lord (Matt. 26:26-30), in which the members of the one church observing the ordinance (I Cor. 11:18, 20, 22-23), by the use of unleavened bread and wine, commune not with one another, but the Lord (II Cor. 10:16); that it shows forth not their love for one another, but their Lord’s death till He comes (I Cor. 11:24-26); that the one loaf of the supper points to the unity of the body observing it (I Cor. 10:17), which unity is essential to the scriptural observance of the ordinance (I Cor. 11:18-34).”

The third one, this one has used both words “open” and “closed,” not wanting any misunderstanding of what they believe: “We believe that the Lord’s Supper is not a sacrament, but a solemn symbolic ordinance placed in the church by our Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 26:26-30), in which members of one church observing the ordinance (I Cor. 11:18, 20, 22-23), by the use of

♦ (Continued on page 16)

Forum #1

(Continued from page 15) ♦

unleavened bread and wine (not mere grape juice) (Ex. 12:15; 13:7; Num. 28:7 Isa. 65:8; Matt 26:29; I Cor. 5:7-8), commune not with one another but with their Lord (II Cor. 10:16); that it shows forth and commemorates the Lord's death until He comes (I Cor. 11:26); that the unity and purity of the church should prevail when it is administered (I Cor. 11:18-34); and, that it should be preceded always by solemn self-examination (I Cor 11:23-31). We heartily reject open communion because it is not scriptural and is destructive to the purity and preservation of the local body. We strictly practice closed communion."

And the last one, my church could not; nor would they grant a letter to this church even though it has the name Baptist: "We believe that the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ for commemoration of His death, whereby members of the universal church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming." This is a good example of "OPEN" Communion; as long as you claim to be a Christian this church would allow you to partake of the Lord's Supper.

My last point in answering this question is going to be on the word "CLOSE" which as I said earlier is what I believe was, and should be today the term used to show that only a church member of their particular local church is permitted to the table. But let me make it clear once again, I am in total agreement with why my church has chosen to use the word "closed." But before I

elaborate on the word "close" I want to quote from his book *The Lord's Supper: A Church Ordinance* by J. R. Graves which can be purchased from the Berea Baptist Church Bookstore if they have any copies and if it is still in print. Here is the quote: "Definition of church ordinance.—The Supper demonstrated to be a church ordinance—1. Each church absolutely independent under Christ; 2. Each church is made the guardian of the ordinances, and enjoined to prevent the disqualified from partaking of them; 3. The symbolism of the Supper determine it beyond question to be a church ordinance, since it symbolizes church relations with the body celebrating the rite.—Christ appointed it as a church ordinance—could not have allowed His churches the right to contravene it.—The churches of the first ages observed it as a church ordinance.

It is admitted that the Supper can only be enjoyed by one—1. Who has been scripturally baptized; and thus, 2. Has become a member of a scriptural church; and 3. Is in hearty fellowship with its doctrines; and 4. Is walking in gospel order. I wish in this tract to show—That the Lord's Supper is a church ordinance, and, as such, can only be observed by a church, as such, and by a person in the church of which he is a member."

There should be NO doubt to this point that true New Testament Baptist churches, my church included, would not grant a letter to a church that does not believe that only a member of that local church can partake of the Lord's Supper. This is the statement that needs to be made, whether you use the words "closed," "close," and "open."

Now to the meat of the question "should a landmark Baptist

church grant a letter to another Baptist church that believes in close, not closed, and/or open communion? If they believe what I just stated above concerning the term "close," than yes, but if their term "close" means anything else then no, they cannot grant the other church a letter. That is why I want to elaborate on the word "close" because I have to believe that there are still true churches out there that believe that their word "close" is the same meaning as my church's use of the word "closed."

As I said, it is a matter of definition, not interpretation. And I did not contradict myself when I said a church could use the word "open" in their statement of faith as long as they defined it. We do not believe in NO way, shape, or form in "open" communion because by definition in other organizations it means ALL Christians can take it anywhere and in any place that it is given. And some believe you do not have to be a member, or even be baptized.

Now let me finish the answer and begin to examine the word "CLOSE." In the January 1965 issue of *The Baptist Banner* the editor printed an article by the late T. P. Simmions 1898-1969 (many readers of the Banner knew Brother Simmions personally). The article was titled "Why Baptist Have Close Communion!" I need to interject something here. In all my studies, on this subject, there has been no mention of the word "closed" only "close" and "open," does that not spark some concern or at least perk your interests? Strangely enough the editor took this article from *The Baptist Examiner*, May 30, 1953, is that not interesting? Brother Simmons states, seven reasons "Why Baptists Have

Close Communion" (I am going to ask the editor if he would not mind reprinting this so the reader can read it for themselves) and he opens the article by saying, "An Associated Press report on the recent meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention at Houston, Texas, stated that ninety per cent of Southern Baptists have abandoned close communion. I am sure that this is a gross exaggeration. However it is true that throughout Christendom there is an age-old drift away from the truth, and Baptists have not been immune to it (my point exactly-RR). This is a good time, therefore, to reconsider the Baptist position on the Lord's Supper." What Brother Simmons is showing in this article is that "open" communion is a sham!

Now Brother Simmons does not bring it out in this article, but if you go to his book *A Systematic Study Of Bible Doctrine* (pages 400-401) he states, "Because the Lord's Supper is a local church ordinance. The meaning of this statement is that it is to be observed by the members of one local church. Not all Baptists recognize this. But it is recognized by most of the stricter Baptists. And where it is recognized, it becomes the most conclusive proof of close communion. In proof of this proposition two proofs are offered: (1) The one loaf in the supper symbolizes the unity of the body. For a discussion of this, see division two of this chapter. Now, for others, than the members of the church observing the supper, to partake is incongruous with this symbolism. (2) There are certain classes that a church is commanded not eat with. See I Cor. 5:11. When a church invites those outside its membership to partake of the supper, it is boldly

♦ (Continued on page 17)

Forum #1

(Continued from page 16) ♦

disregarding this injunction; for it cannot know that some of those invited are not of the classes mentioned in I Cor. 5:11."

Another article was printed in the BBB January 5, 2000 "Consistent Strict Communion and Inconsistent Loose Communion" by William Ashmore (1821-1898?) Ashmore states, "Close communion or strict communion is simply a close and strict adherence to the above-named principle and practice handed down from apostolic times." I believe "the above-named principle and practice" means "The Communion was instituted by Christ..." which is his opening statement.

Because of the length of this answer I am going to quote just one more writer, Elder Tom Ross from his book *Outlines of Systematic Theology* (on page 126-127) he states, IV. CLOSE COMMUNION VINDICATED "Close communion is a historic Baptist practice. No practice of Baptists is better grounded in the Word of God than close communion, yet, perhaps no other practice is more misunderstood and more opposed. Baptists do not deny the salvation of Christians from other assemblies, but do not believe they have been Scripturally baptized. Baptists practice close communion:

(1) Because Christ instituted close communion. Only the 11 original members of the first church participated in the first observance of the Lord's Supper when it was instituted by Jesus Christ. No other people were invited to partake.

(2) Because the scriptural order observed on Pentecost

and thereafter leads to close communion. The order is as follows: (1) faith; (2) baptism; (3) church membership; (4) the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:41-42).

(3) Because of the interests of scriptural church discipline demand the practice of close communion. One who has been disciplined is not fit to partake of the Lord's Supper. To open the table to everyone would mean the possibility that disciplined members could partake of the ordinance, thus nullifying the purpose of discipline and destroying the unity of the church.

(4) Because it is impossible to observe the Lord's Supper by open communion. The Supper cannot be observed when divisions are present.

(5) Because the Lord's Supper is a local church ordinance. It is only for the members of the local church in which it is being observed. Two proofs for this:

(1) The one loaf in the supper symbolizes the unity of the one body that is observing the Supper.

(2) There are certain classes that a church is commanded not to eat with (I Cor. 5: 11). When a church invites those outside its membership to partake of the supper, it is boldly disregarding this injunction for it cannot know that some of those invited are not of the classes mentioned in I Cor. 5: 11."

Notice again that these men never mentioned the word "closed." So I do not know where it came from, but I know they do use it instead of "close" as I have showed. In fact a couple years ago I was questioning why are churches starting to use the word "closed" instead of "close?" So I contacted a good friend and Brother Preacher that was once the former pastor of my church and asked him this question,

"Am I correct in saying that the proper term has always been "close communion," but because of lack of understanding of the word many churches have gone to the word "closed" so there will be no confusion?" And he said, "Yes, that is correct."

I think what has happened, and I found this maybe to be the problem that some writers on the subject of "close communion" as did Elder J. H. Grime put so much emphases on, you must have been Baptized into a Baptist Church before you can be able to take the Lord's Supper that they really did make it clear that only a church member of his/hers own local church can eat at the Lord's Table. Again I do not know, but suddenly the word "closed" stated appearing.

So "Should a Landmark Baptist Church grant a letter to another Baptist church that believes in close...?" Find out what they mean by "close" and then you will know. If they give you any other definition than I, and others, have stated in my answer then I would say no, you can not grant them a letter. I am repeating myself here, but if they say that their meaning of "close" communion is that only baptized members of their local church can partake of the Lord's Supper, then yes a letter can be granted.

Just one last thought. In February of 1998 the BBB ran a 4 part article "A Discussion of the Lord's Supper" by B. H. Carroll (1843-1914) who I hold in high regard. The article ran until May and was very well presented. There was two major points to the article "open" and "close" communion. Never once were the words "closed communion" used. Brother Carroll made it clear that true Baptists practiced "close" communion and the Arminian

held to "open" communion, which he named many, but I will only mention two as being champions of the practice of "open" communion, John Bunyan and C. H. Spurgeon. Yes, that is right, Spurgeon was the world's greatest and most influential "open" communion Baptists, well, not a true Baptist, at that time.

I know the answer to this, but I pose a question, if all the old True Baptist preachers held to the Bible Doctrine of "close" communion, then when was it changed, and who changed it to "closed" communion, when it never once was mention in Baptist History? God Bless!

ROGER REED



The Millennial

(Continued from page 1) ♦

EVERY PAST AGE

In every age since the fall of man it has been evident that man is utterly sinful. As Isaiah tells us, **"the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores"** (Isa. 1:5-6). In the Antediluvian age men became so wicked that God destroyed the whole earth with a flood except Noah and his family. And yet after such a great judgment men were soon worshiping idols and every false god under the sun. We see God later confounding the languages of wicked men, and so evidently nothing has changed with man since before the great flood. A worldwide flood has not changed the heart of fallen man one bit.

Later we see that God calls Abraham and from him sprung

♦ (Continued on page 18)

The Millennial

(Continued from page 17) ♦

a great nation. When that nation was in bondage in Egypt God called Moses to lead "his people" out. The Lord worked great miracles at the hand of Moses in their sight. He gave them His holy law and met with them in the wilderness. They beheld the pillar of the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. He met with Israel above the mercy seat in the tabernacle in the wilderness, and He supplied all their needs and yet for all of that they murmured. Thus the Lord declares, **"How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, which murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me"** (Num. 14:27).

MESSIAH'S FIRST ADVENT

So it came to pass when their Messiah came on the scene that the majority of the people of Israel rejected Him in the face of the mighty works that he performed. They declared, **"We will not have this man to reign over us."** And thus Jesus declared to them and their city, **"For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation"** (Luke 19:43-44). Thus we see that a whole economy of law could not save. So Paul rightly tells us **"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh"** (Rom. 8:3).

THE GOSPEL AGE OR NEW TESTAMENT TIMES

Now we enter what is commonly called the Gospel age. I would point out that in every age since the fall of man, salvation has only been by grace. There is nothing short of regeneration by the Holy Spirit that can cure the fallen and depraved nature of man. This fact will be declared in the end. Paul tells us that even we who are saved, **"were dead in trespasses and sins"** and that God had quickened us to life together with Christ. (See Ephesians 2:1-5). Religious men have all but denied the total depravity of man. Evidently they do not take Paul at his word when he says that lost men are dead spiritually and that those who are in the flesh **"cannot please God."** Death is total and the word **"cannot"** confirms total inability. Men seem to think that there is some spark of spiritual life already in them that will enable them to come to God of their own will, yet Paul declared that **"there is none that seeketh after God"** (Rom. 3:11). In our day men are religious but without God. Paul spoke of men in the last days before the coming of Jesus Christ as **"lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God"** and **"having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof."** With all the religious people in the world you would think that our society would be a holy and righteous society, but instead it loves pleasure more than God and only has a form of godliness. It sees no need for the power of God in the regeneration of sinners who are dead in their sins. **"Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth"** (Luke 18:8)? We see this age ending with the world accepting the **"man of sin,"** the very **"son of perdition"** as he is

called in the Scriptures. Paul tells us that because men **"received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved"** that God would **"send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness"** (II Thess. 2:10-12). So we see that man will never be able to set up a just kingdom on this earth that is governed in righteousness. Only the Lord Jesus Christ when He comes again has the power and righteousness to do such a thing.

THE GOLDEN AGE OR MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

Now we come to a time yet future. A time when the Lord Jesus Christ will be present on the earth and reigning as King of kings and Lord of lords. A time which is referred to as the Millennial Kingdom of Jesus Christ; the reason being is because it will last one thousand years. It will begin after the destruction of the antichrist and the false prophet and after Messiah defeats the nations that come against Israel in the latter days. It will be preceded by a day in which the Lord will **"make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people"** but **"all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it."** He goes on to say that **"it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn."**

(Read Zechariah chapter 12 for more detail).

What will be the nature of this future kingdom we might ask? It will be one of peace and justice. Concerning Jesus Christ, Isaiah tells us that **"the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever."** It will be a time in which Jesus Christ will sit on His throne in Jerusalem and will rule the entire world in righteousness. The nature of this government will not be a democracy but a theocracy. A. W. Pink says, "Many have been the experiments of politicians and reformers for the establishing of a government that should be equitable, stable, and pure; but all have been in vain. Ever since the flood, four thousand five hundred years ago, God has allowed man every opportunity to develop his schemes, but ancient and modern, Oriental and Occidental, monarchies and republics, all have served only to demonstrate that man is a colossal failure. The record of human government is tyranny and oppression, greed and discontentment, war and bloodshed. How all this serves to show the crying need for One who has all power and yet all compassion, One who is God and yet Man. Under the rule of Christ shall be solved every problem of capital and labor, wealth and poverty, war and peace." [End Quote from *The Golden Age*].

During the time of this kingdom

♦ (Continued on page 19)

The Millennial

(Continued from page 18) ♦

men will live long lives for Isaiah tells us that **“there shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed.”** If a person were to die at an age of one hundred he would be considered yet a child. The animal kingdom will also be at peace for we are told that **“the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them”** (Isa. 11:6). Isaiah goes on to say in chapter 65 that **“the wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent’s meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD.”**

Now that we have looked briefly at the nature and government of this kingdom, what about the occupants of it? Are they all saints in glorified bodies? The answer is a definite no. There will be sinners in this kingdom and sinners who are not saved nor ever will be saved. How can I make such a statement? Because the Bible is very clear on this matter. But please hear me. This does not mean that Christ fails in any way. The Christ of the Bible is no failure and has never failed. The fact that there are sinners during the Millennial reign of Christ is proven from the fact that Jesus rules the earth with a **“rod of iron.”** If everyone is in love with God, in love with holiness, and in love with righteousness, then there is no need to rule with a rod of iron as we are told by the

Bible. **“And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God”** (Rev. 19:15). This will be a time of law as Isaiah tells us **“for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.”** That sinners will be rebuked during this time is clear from Micah who says, **“And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the LAW shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall JUDGE among many people, and REBUKE strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more”** (Micah 4:2-3) (Emp. LL). Glorified saints in the eternal kingdom, which will follow the millennial kingdom, do not need to be governed with a **“rod of iron”** and there will be no need to **“rebuken”** them for they will all be without sin like unto their Savior. Paul tells us that **“the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners”** (I Tim. 1:9).

A. W. Pink says concerning this time that “unregenerate human nature will remain unchanged. Sin will still be present, though much of its outward manifestation will be restrained. Discontent and wickedness will not be eradicated from the hearts of men, but will be kept beneath the surface by means of the ‘rod of iron.’ Multitudes

will yield to Christ nothing but a ‘feigned obedience’ (Psa. 18:44, margin). This ‘feigned obedience’ will be the product of power, not of grace; it will be the fruit of fear, not of love.” [End Quote from *The Golden Age*].

Men, especially the godless liberals, have said that men sin because of the environment and social conditions they live under. The latest nonsense out of Washington is that Muslims are committing Jihad because they need jobs. I admit that men in poor neighborhoods steal more perhaps but this is still sin in the heart of man. Rich men steal as well. Well educated men do the same. During the Millennium Kingdom, God, in the person of Jesus Christ, will rule as King over the entire earth. This will be the first truly righteous King that has visibly ruled. There will be peace on earth for one thousand years. Men will beat their swords into plowshares. Even the animal kingdom will be at peace. But, why do men beat their swords into pruninghooks? Is it because they are born again? Is it because they love the Lord their God with all their heart, soul and mind and their neighbor as their ownself? No, not at all. It is because the King of kings is ruling. Oh, sin will be greatly reduced perhaps because Satan is bound these one thousand years as Revelation chapter 20 verse 2 tells us, but the heart of man remains unchanged apart from regeneration.

THE END OF THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

But what happens when the thousand years has ended? Has the only truly utopia since the fall changed man? Has anything short of regeneration by the Holy Spirit changed man? Can anything short of the New Birth

fix man? No, a thousand times no. Man is under the curse of sin. And although the curse will be greatly removed from the earth during the Millennial reign, yet man, though his depravity will be kept in check, is still dead in his sins. Dead is dead, and without spiritual life being given even seeing the King of kings will not bring life. Without the quickening of the Holy Spirit men remain lost and dead in sin.

THE PROOF OF AN

UNREGENERATE HEART

After the thousand years has expired we are told in Revelation 20:7 that **“Satan shall be loosed out of his prison.”** And what do men do? Do they reject Satan and follow Jesus Christ? Or do they rebel? And if they rebel how many take part in this rebellion? A few or many? Is it one nation or many? Is the rebellion from one location or is it global in nature? The answer is almost beyond comprehension when we understand the righteousness and just rule that has gone forth from Jerusalem. **“And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them”** (Rev. 20:7-9). You will see the term **“the number of whom is as the sand of the sea”** used in Scripture to mean a number so great that it cannot be numbered. This great multitude of the future **“went up on the breath of the earth”** which

♦ (Continued on page 19)

The Millennial

(Continued from page 19) ♦

suggests a number so great that it covered a wide extent of the earth according to the lexicon. And this great number will come from every corner of the earth.

CONCLUSION

What a testimony this is to the depravity of man and the necessity of the new birth. Brother Leon King says, "Even with the Lord present as visible king on the earth, men must be subdued with a rod of iron." Quoting A. W. Pink again he said, "Thus will be fully and finally "demonstrated" the incurable evil of the human heart. Even a thousand years of millennial blessedness, with Satan away from the earth, will not effect any change in man. Let Satan be loosed and allowed to go forth once more and deceive the nations, and it shall be seen that the carnal mind is still at enmity against God, and prefers a murderer to the Lord Jesus. Nothing avails short of a new creation. Miracles, a beneficent environment, temporal blessings - nothing without, can alter fallen and depraved human nature." [End Quote from *The Golden Age*].

"Ye must be born again" (John 3:7).



Forum #2

(Continued from page 13) ♦

to keep pure without any qualifications! **"Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"**

For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:29-31). The judging of God's people will be much more strict than that of the ignorant and lost! We have God's Word and God's Spirit- we have no excuse for not being obedient! **"Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body"** (I Cor. 11:27-29). The Lord's body IS the church! If we only had this verse, it would show the paramount importance of the elements of the Lord's Supper!

The Bible says that leaven (at least of the Pharisees) is hypocrisy. Something hidden (or covered). To use leaven (as grape juice) is to be hypocritical of the supper's cup. The blood needs to be as pure as the body, so the wine is as necessary as the unleavened bread. **"...Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known"** (Luke 12:1-2). Just set out the cups of wine and grape juice and it will soon be revealed which is the pure, unleavened fruit of the vine with NO secret agent. The grape juice will rot and mold in a matter of days.

Wine is:

1. Unleavened, with no secret, altering agent picturing the sinless perfection of Christ (Matt. 16:6-

7; 11 12: I Cor. 5:6-7).

2. Pure, with no rotting, molding, etc. An appropriate picture of the incorruptible blood of our Saviour (I Pet. 1:18-20).

3. Invigorating, with life-giving power (John 6:53-58; SofS 7:9)!

4. Intoxicating, enabling a "living under the influence" (I Cor. 11:20-22; Eph. 5:18; Acts 4:8, 31)!

5. Refined, being trampled, tested, tried and found worthy (Isa. 25:6; Matt. 21:33; Heb. 5:8-9)!

6. Aged, matured, eternal! Grape juice is only good for the now and present, but wine made in Abraham's time is as good for us as it will be for generations to come! Grape juice would only be a good picture of a yearly atonement, not an eternal reconciliation (Heb. 9:22-26)!

7. Cleansing, healing agent (Luke 10:34; Heb. 9:11-14)!

Last, but not least, unleavened bread and wine are, without question, the Passover elements. What Jesus Christ used, we, as Baptists, will use. Or else we are not celebrating His Supper any more. Like the rebuked Corinthians, you are just celebrating your own supper. **"When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper"** (I Cor. 11:20-21). Any questions? Selah! Think about it!

MATTHEW STEPP

Mike DeWitt Sr.
PO Box 950
Springfield, OR
97477

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



What is the importance of doing anything correctly? If your

definition of proper elements is wine and unleavened bread, then it is very important.

If your definition is grape juice and unleavened bread, then my question is, why not bread with leaven in it?

It is easy for me to see that leaven represents sin. Jesus was sinless, should we not use elements that represent the sinless blood, and body of our Savior?

MIKE DEWITT

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

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



The elements of the Lord's Supper are unleavened bread and wine. The unleavened bread symbolizes the undefiled and sinless body of the Lord Jesus Christ that was offered as a sacrifice for our sins. The wine represents the precious and pure blood of Christ that was shed on our behalf to put away our sins and to justify us before a holy God. Every time we observe the ordinance through the symbolism of the elements we are remembering our Lord Jesus Christ, His perfect life, sacrificial death, glorious resurrection, and His promise to return. I Corinthians 11:23-26 declares: **"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he**

♦ (Continued on page 21)

Forum #2

(Continued from page 20) ♦

had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread,

and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." Therefore the proper elements are important and essential in the observance of the Lord's Supper.

TOM ROSS



THE BIBLE AND THE NEWSPAPER

Readers of the BBB are urged to submit religious news items which they may read in their local paper or some other publication. In sending these please give the name of the publication as well as the date it was printed. We will not be able to print all which are submitted, but we welcome any item you may feel we should read.

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

GALLUP: AMERICANS WANT STRICTER ABORTION LAWS

(WNS)--Americans are not satisfied with the nation's abortion laws, and it is not because they are too strict. According to a recent Gallup poll, most of the 48 percent of Americans who are not happy with current regulations want stricter laws. The poll results surfaced as pro-life Republicans scuttled a vote on a bill that would have banned abortion nationwide after 20 weeks. Only 34 percent of Americans expressed satisfaction with current laws, the lowest percentage since Gallup started asking the question in 2001. It represents a 4 percent drop from last year.

COLORADO LAWMAKERS REJECT ASSISTED SUICIDE LEGISLATION

(WNS)--A legislative committee in Colorado voted down a bill in February that would have legalized assisted suicide in the state. The sensitive topic brought hundreds of people to the debate on Friday, filling the Capitol's largest hearing

room and the overflow room, according to *The Denver Post*. The committee waded through 11 hours of testimony from more than 100 people on both sides of the issue, finally rejecting the bill 8-5. Four states currently allow doctors to help patients end their lives: Montana, Oregon, Vermont, and Washington. New Mexico is fighting a court ruling that legalized assisted suicide earlier this year in one county. Colorado's bill was modeled after Oregon's law, requiring patients to get two doctors to sign off on their request to die after proving they are mentally competent to administer the life-ending medicine themselves.

WHAT MAKES MILLENNIALS STAY IN CHURCH

(WNS)--For millennials who grew up attending church, having a strong Christian faith and practice today is linked to the quality of their relationship with their parents. That's a conclusion from a new online survey of young adults between the ages of 18 and 38 who attended church as children or teenagers. The survey

also found that frequent church attendance and homeschooling were linked to stronger Christian beliefs and behaviors as adults, including believing Jesus is divine and avoiding co-habitation. Young adults who said their fathers explained "Biblical principles" to them on a daily or weekly basis growing up were significantly more likely to say they lived by typical Christian behavior as adults by praying, volunteering, reading the Bible, and attending church frequently and avoiding pornography, marijuana use, abortion, and co-habitation.

COURT RULES SAME-SEX MARRIAGE RIGHTS TRUMP FLORIST'S RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

(WNS)--A Washington state judge ruled in February that a Christian flower shop owner is required under state law to provide full services for same-sex wedding ceremonies, even though it violates her faith. Barronelle Stutzman sold flowers to gay couple Robert Ingersoll and Curt Freed for more than nine years, and considered Ingersoll a friend. But when he asked her to create the flower arrangements for the couple's wedding in 2013, the great-grandmother said she could not because of her "relationship with Jesus Christ." She referred them to another business for assistance. The Washington state attorney sued Stutzman for allegedly violating the Washington Law Against Discrimination and its Consumer Protection Act. Ingersoll and Freed soon filed their own lawsuit against Stutzman. The ruling settles both suits by summary judgment in the plaintiffs' favor, preventing the case from proceeding to trial. Voters in Washington legalized same-sex marriage on Nov. 6,

2012.

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE SENDS GOVERNOR 20-WEEK ABORTION BAN BILL

(WNS)--The West Virginia state Senate passed a 20-week abortion ban earlier this week by an overwhelming 29-5 vote, sending the bill to Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin. Although the Democratic governor has threatened to veto the legislation, the Republican-controlled statehouse likely has enough votes to override him. The bill is one of three Pain Capable Unborn Child Protection Acts introduced in state legislatures so far this year. If it is signed into law, West Virginia would become the 11th state to enact a ban based on model legislation championed by the National Right to Life Committee (NRLC).

ALABAMA SUPREME COURT: STOP ISSUING SAME-SEX MARRIAGE LICENSES

(WNS)--The Alabama Supreme Court is taking on the federal judiciary, ordering the state's probate judges to stop issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples. In January, a federal judge struck down the state constitutional amendment approved by voters in 2006 that defines marriage as between one man and one woman. The U.S. Supreme Court declined to issue an emergency stay of that ruling, allowing same-sex marriage to begin on Feb. 9. But Alabama Chief Court Justice Roy Moore ordered the state's probate judges not to follow the federal court order, declaring it did not have the authority to overturn a state law. Most judges followed Moore's

♦ (Continued on page 22)

Bible & the Newspaper

(Continued from page 21) ♦

order until another federal judge said they did not have to.

POLICE OFFICER, SUSPENDED OVER GAY PRIDE PARADE, DEFENDS RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

(WNS)--A former Salt Lake City police officer who was put on leave and later resigned after he objected to riding in the motorcycle brigade at the front of a gay-pride parade spoke out for his religious rights last week "I felt that by being an actual participant in the parade, I would be perceived to be supporting certain messages that were contrary to who I am," Eric Moutsos told the *Deseret News*. "I will protect their parade. But I just do not want to be in the parade." In June 2014, the Salt Lake City Motorcycle Squad was assigned to participate in the Utah Pride Parade, performing choreographed maneuvers as they led the parade route. Eric Moutsos, a member of the exclusive unit, was scheduled to ride but requested to swap assignments because he felt uncomfortable in the role at the front of the parade.

ARKANSAS BANS WEBCAM ABORTIONS

(WNS)--Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson signed a bill in March banning remotely administered abortions, a preemptive strike designed to protect women's safety. The legislation was a top priority for pro-life advocates in the state. The now-banned procedure, known as telemedicine or webcam abortions, allows an abortionist in one location to administer abortion-inducing drugs by remotely unlocking a drawer in the pregnant woman's

location. But the distance between the abortionist and woman places the woman at risk should complications occur, said bill sponsor state Sen. Missy Irvin. "This is about the safety of the mother," she said. "I think this is a serious operation, a serious procedure, whether it is surgical or by chemical."

INDIANA CONSIDERS DROP BOXES FOR ABANDONED BABIES

(WNS)--Indiana could become the first state to legalize infant drop boxes, a controversial method for parents to safely and anonymously surrender a baby they might otherwise abandon. The bill, sponsored by state Rep. Casey Cox, R-Ft. Wayne, unanimously passed the Indiana house in late February. Cox said his legislation is a natural extension of infant safe-haven laws in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Under those laws, parents are able to relinquish custody of an infant at designated locations—most often hospitals, fire stations, and police stations—with no questions asked and no legal ramifications. States shield parents from prosecution for abandonment or neglect as long as the child is surrendered without any signs of abuse.

8TH CIRCUIT HALTS SAME-SEX MARRIAGE IN NEBRASKA

(WNS)--The 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has put a stop to same-sex marriage in Nebraska, at least for now. The federal appeals court halted a lower court's ruling that overturned the state's voter-approved marriage laws earlier this week. That decision would have forced the state to issue same-sex marriage licenses. "We are glad the court has granted the

stay because it provides current stability in Nebraska's marriage licensing process," said Attorney General Doug Peterson, who appealed the lower court decision.



The Short Pews



Brief
Articles
by Curtis
Pugh

LOOKING AT THINGS FROM GOD'S VIEWPOINT

Do you look at things from the human viewpoint or do you look at them from God's perspective? How can we human beings understand things from God's viewpoint? Only by going to God's Word, His Book, and there learning what He has to say about things. When we go to God's Book, we ought to be prepared to be offended and shocked. Why? Because there we read things that are absolutely contrary to the things human beings have figured out for themselves. But should that not be expected? After all, the Bible tells us **"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD,** (Isa. 55:8). We human beings are limited in what we can think and do. Because of this we do not see the whole picture. So our thinking is faulty.

But God says, **"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all**

my pleasure" (Isa. 46:9-10). The Bible is consistent in its records: God does as He pleases. The testimony of the king in Daniel 4:25 is this: **"...all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"**

From these two verses (and many others) the Bible teaches us that God is in absolute control. He does as He has purposed to do from eternity. No one can question Him or stop Him from doing His will. Men may refuse to do what He commands them to do (His prescriptive will), but cannot stop His decreed will. Even in the sin they do, they accomplish God's will as is made clear in Acts 4:26: **"For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."** Even in the torture and murder of the Son of God, wicked as it was, it was **"determined before to be done."** This does not make God the author of sin. Someone said, "God's hand is always in the action where the sin is, but never in the sin where the action is." God says, **"My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."** If we look at things from God's viewpoint, we begin to understand that He is working all things together for His purpose. To deny this is to deny the Bible and to see no purpose in life and its events. Think God's thoughts after Him and understand that He is working

♦ (Continued on page 23)

Short Pews

(Continued from page 22) ♦

out His plan and purpose in all things. We can safely trust Him.

THE FOOLISHNESS OF HUMAN WISDOM

The Bible says, “...the foolishness of God is wiser than men...” (I Cor. 1:25). God is not foolish, but if He were, His foolishness would be wiser than men. And yet men think themselves wise. Their supposed superior intellects and learning lifts them up with pride just like the Bible says: “**Knowledge puffeth up...**” (I Cor. 8:1). This wicked human pride manifests itself in many ways. Many people criticize the Bible and refuse to follow its teachings. Interestingly enough, most of those who object to the Bible have never read it. They rebel at it because they do not want to be accountable to God. God fixed it so that men by their human wisdom did not know God. It was His wisdom to fix it that way. This is clearly stated in I Corinthians 1:21 where we read: “**...in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God...**”

Even professing Christians often attribute salvation to the wisdom of men. Sometimes, for example, around the winter solstice, you may see bumper stickers saying “Wise Men Still Seek Him,” referring to sinners coming to Christ. But that is not the case. Human wisdom may bring folk to religion, but not to Christ. In fact, not many wise people are saved! Paul wrote that in I Corinthians 1:26-29. There the Bible says: “**For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many**

noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence.” The last eight words tell us God fixed it so that His glory is shared with no man. The Bible says “**not many wise men after the flesh**” - not many who have human wisdom - come in a saving way to Christ. They may come to a false religion that mimics true salvation in Christ, but God has “**chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.**” Men are so foolish as to

think that their eternal destiny is in their hands, but the Bible says all people and things are in God’s hands to do with as He pleases. God says, “**...I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy**” (Rom. 9:15-16). That great truth is contrary to human wisdom, but it is God’s truth. Man in his puny wisdom rebels at such an idea, but it is the plain truth nevertheless. Only when God bestows grace in the new birth can man say “amen” in his heart to this great truth and see himself as a sinner unworthy of God’s salvation.



BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST

Financial Report

2-1-2015 to 2-28-2015

Beginning Balance	\$7,525.07
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	100.00
Calvary Ind. B. C., Everson, WA	100.00
Interest06
.....	425.06
TOTAL	7,950.13
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time	363.98
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	363.98
ENDING BALANCE	\$7,586.15

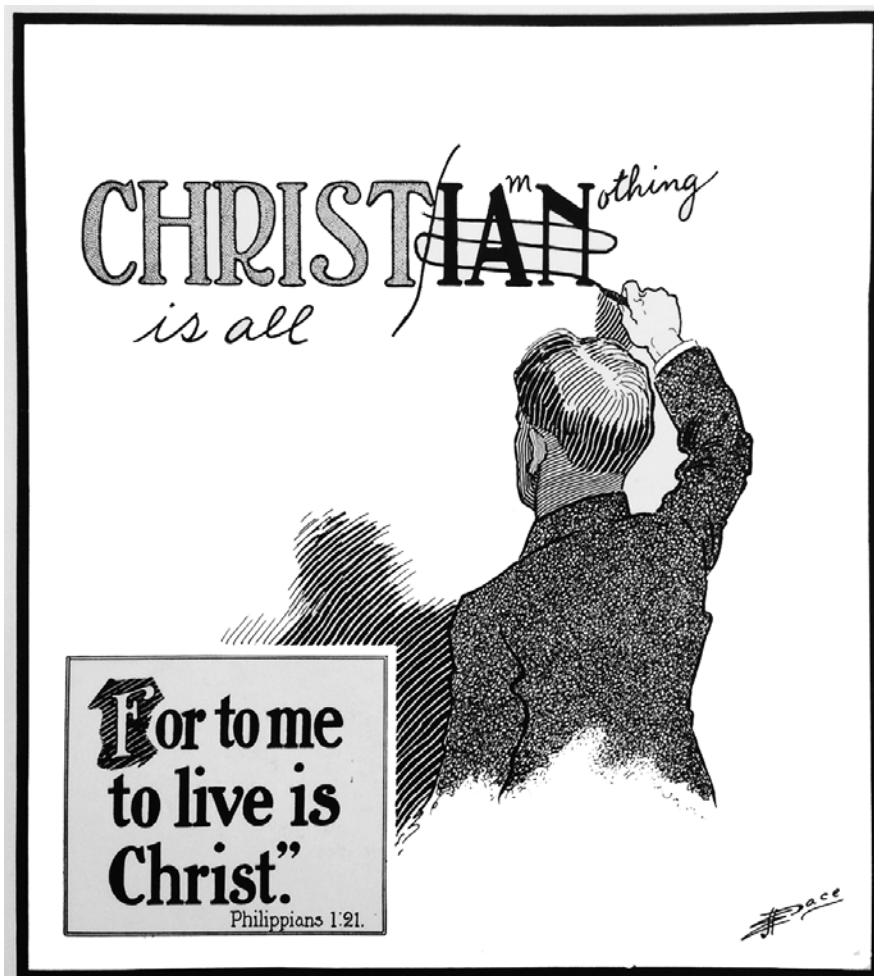


BEREA BAPTIST BANNER

Financial Report

2-1-2015 to 2-28-2015

Beginning Balance	\$2,568.82
RECEIPTS:	
Amazing Grace B. C., Stockdale, TX	50.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	300.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL	60.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX	100.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	150.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV	313.45
Carol Willett, Edgewater, FL	50.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL	25.00
Faith B. C., Leighton, AL	500.00
Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME	20.00
Grace B. C., Winston-Salem, NC	50.00
Grace M. B. C., Marion, IL	50.00
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK	35.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV	100.00
The Lord's Church, Goose Creek, SC	50.00
Michael Sherman, Ashland, KY	25.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH	100.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN	50.00
Parkway Landmark B. C., Springfield, OR	100.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	100.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR	50.00
Providence S. G. B. C., Tupelo, MS	200.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS	25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX	30.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	25.00
Subscriptions	70.00
Anonymous	1,220.00
Dividing checks	150.00
Sub Total	\$4,098.45
TOTAL	\$6,667.27
EXPENDITURES:	
Printing	490.00
Postage	671.62
Wages	2,300.00
FICA	175.96
Dividing checks	150.00
Total Expenditures	\$3,787.58
.....	2,879.69
Bank Charge	13.00
ENDING BALANCE	\$2,866.69



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Living Stone Baptist Church of Barboursville, WV, would like to announce their Annual All Day Fellowship on Saturday April 11th. Services begin at 10:00 a.m. Lunch will be provided for those attending.

Scheduled speakers are Elders Bob Patton, Bill James, Joe Collins and John Osburn.

For more information contact Richard Chadwick at (304) 522-9428.

The Big Creek Baptist Church of Wayne, WV, and pastor Matthew Stepp would like to announce Revival Services April 27 thru May 1st. Service time is 7:30 p.m. nightly.

Scheduled speakers are Elders John Lybrook (Monday), Tom Hysell (Tuesday), Bob Patton (Wednesday), John Fry (Thursday), and Rex Smith (Friday).

Also, included Friday is the Area Fellowship. Dinner on the grounds will follow the evening service and is provided by the ladies of the church.

For more information please contact Pastor Stepp at (304) 807-5063 (M) or (304) 522-1261 (H) or by Email at bigcreek@frontier.com.

The Berea Baptist Church of Mantachie, MS would like to announce their Spring Fellowship meeting on May 2nd. Scheduled speakers are Elders Eldon Joslin of Birmingham, AL, and Paul Stepp of Lizemores, WV.

Services begin at 10:00 a.m. and a noon meal will be provided by the church.

All are invited to attend.

The Berea Baptist Broadcast can

now be heard on WQRL 106.3 FM in the southern Illinois area at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings. The program is being sponsored by the Grace Missionary Baptist Church, 306 North Vicksburg St, Marion, IL 22959. If you enjoy the program let them know by calling them at (618) 841-0228.

The newly built Meadow Creek Baptist Church in Parrottsville, TN would like to announce that is now holding meetings every Sunday from 10-11 am. The Church holds to Baptist truths, including the Doctrine of Grace.

Also, we are in need of a heat pump A/C unit which we can purchase for \$2500 including installation. Your prayers are needed that the Lord will bless us.

For more information, contact Pastor Gerald Looney (formally Pastor of Providence Baptist Church of New Port Richey, FL.) at 423-237-0191 or meadowcreekbaptist@gmail.com.

A new mission work has begun. The Providence Baptist Church located at 1115 Jones Mill Road, Cartersville, GA 30120, is an outreach of the Tibet Baptist Church of Ludowici, GA. Service times are Sunday School at 9:45 a.m., Morning Worship at 10:45 a.m. and Evening Worship at 5:00 p.m.

For more information please contact Bro. Bruce Allen (502) 468-6563, Email: providencebc30120@gmail.com or on Facebook under Providence Baptist.

The Windsor Baptist Church of Windsor, IL is seeking a qualified candidate for pastor. They are small in number but rich in truth. Candidate should meet the qualification in I Timothy 3. For more information please contact Brother John Gregory at (217)728-9966 or Email windsorbaptist.grace@gmail.com.

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Galena, OH is in need of a pastor. Any interested candidates possessing the qualifications and traits concerning the office as found in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 are asked to contact either of the following: Bro. Randy Coffey at (614) 871-2406 or email recoffeypot@aol.com, or Bro. Joe Vass at (614) 846-8699 or email jamijoe@wowway.com.

The Glade Creek Baptist Church, Summersville, WV is in need of a pastor. This church believes and preaches the doctrines of grace and church truth. Any interested Elder should call Bro. Rodney Perkins

at (304) 742-3050 or Bro. Allen Frame at (304) 742-5775.

The Faith Missionary Baptist Church of Cobbitty, South Wales, Australia is in need of a pastor. For more information please contact David Jackson at 4 Station Street, Thirlmere, NSW 2572, Australia or Email: shellie45@bigpond.com.au.

The Victory Baptist Church of Chehalis, Washington is in need of a pastor. Any interested brother may call Gerry Greisen at (360) 985-7975, or Mark Fenison at (360) 751-2929.

The Grace Missionary Baptist Church of Marion, IL is in need of a replacement pastor. Elder Raymond T. Ellis is the current pastor, but due to his age, is needing to resign. The church believes and preaches the doctrines of grace and the local church. Any interested Elder may contact Elder Ellis at (618) 983-8697 or Bro. Gary Ratley at (618) 841-0228.

The Twinbrook Hills Baptist Church of Hamilton, OH is prayerfully seeking a pastor. Organized in 1938, the church holds to historic Baptist truths, including the Doctrines of Grace. Please visit the church's website at <http://twinbrook.net> to view the Church Constitution and other items that describe our beliefs and show what the church is doing today. Please contact Bro. Chris Willis at Elohimfirst@gmail.com for more information.

Any church that is without a pastor, please feel free to send your information in regards to the pastoral position for publication in these announcements.

ARTICLE INDEX

The Appearance of Grace by Paul Stepp	p. 1
Believing Unbelievers by Curtis Pugh	p. 1
The Bible and the Newspaper	p. 21
Forum	pp. 12-13
The Master of the World by Milburn Cockrell	p. 1
The Millennial Kingdom As A Testimony to the Depravity of Man by Lucien J. LeSage Jr.	p. 1
Saul Persecuting the Church by Curtis Pugh	p. 11
The Short Pews	p. 22
Watering the Tulips - The Duty of Every Church by Todd Bryant	p. 5