

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 Power of Example

By Tom Ross
of South Point, Ohio

"For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: So



that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad;

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The Cross and Crucifixion

By Curtis Pugh
of Poteau, Oklahoma

We do not doubt that the Lord Jesus Christ, God's Lamb, was nailed to a wooden instrument of death which was set upright in a hole in the ground. He was left there to die. Neither do we doubt His burial and resurrection. What we do doubt are the baseless Catholic-pagan traditions - false ideas - that have grown up around this event.



While we expect to be opposed by some because of this article we feel compelled to tell what we have learned on this subject. My Bible says: **"And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was**

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Moved with Compassion

By Paul Stepp
of Indore, West Virginia

And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick" (Matt. 14:14).



I want to talk about the phrase in the middle of our text verse, **"moved with compassion."** I want us to consider, "What does it mean, when a person is moved with compassion?" I want us to consider, "What happens, when a person

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The Two Natures of Christ

By Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given" (Isa. 9:6).

The redemption of man from sin was to be affected through a Mediator Who could unite in Himself both the human and divine natures. When the Second Person of the Godhead became incarnate, there was a uniting of God with man. There was a combining of an infinite Person with a finite being. This is one of

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"This Do in Remembrance of Me"

By Timothy J. Hille
of Ashland, Illinois

Luke 22:14-20

The greatest memorial which we have as saints of God and members in a New Testament missionary Baptist church is the ordinance which Jesus instituted on the night of His betrayal, the Lord's Supper. A memorial is that which serves to remind us of something great, something of importance and worth, something without which our lives and the things that are of greatest

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God breaks the cistern to bring us to the fountain.

Our creature comforts fail us, and then we go to the Creator Himself.
Gainful are the losses which bring us nearer to God.

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise" (Psalm 51:17).

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

1. To honor God and to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. To preach the gospel to lost sinners.
3. To spread the whole counsel of God's Word.
4. To encourage God's preachers and to 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.

Power of Example

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so that we need not to speak any thing"

(I Thess. 1:5-8).

Paul the apostle, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, commends the members of the church at Thessalonica for their godly example and influence. The Greek word for

"ensample" is *tupos* which denotes the making of an impression, a mold, or a pattern. Paul is, in effect, stating that the church at Thessalonica offers us a model, a pattern, an example of a congregation that honored God. The church at Thessalonica demonstrated their faith by their actions. They were a loving, caring, compassionate church. They were also patient and steadfast in the midst of sore trials and afflictions.

They had turned from their idols and were actively serving God and anticipating the soon return of the Lord Jesus Christ. The church at Thessalonica made such an impression by their active faith and sacrificial service that their example and influence soon spread to other congregations. Every New Testament Baptist church ought to be a shining example of what Christianity is all about. Jesus instructed us to: **"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven"** (Matt. 5:16).

New Testament churches are made up of saved individuals who have been added to the body by the leadership of the Holy Spirit and submission to the ordinance of scriptural baptism. When we followed our Lord in baptism we were, in effect, symbolically declaring that we were dead to our

old way of life, and raised anew to faithfully follow and serve the Lord in His church. We made a vow before God, the angels, and the church to surrender ourselves to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. As individual members we each have a solemn responsibility to provide a proper example of Christ-likeness to everyone within our sphere of influence. I challenge you to consider what kind of impression your life is leaving upon others. I pray God will stir your heart to carefully determine what kind of example you are demonstrating by your manner of life.

YOUR PERSONAL EXAMPLE INFLUENCES EVERYONE AROUND YOU

1. Every day all of us are setting an example for others to see. Our example may be good, evil, or mediocre. Make no mistake about it, we are influencing the lives of others by the way we think, speak, and act on any given day. What a solemn truth! Your life is having an impact on others.

2. You and I are touching and influencing people in every area of our lives. We set an example either for good or bad in our homes. Moms and Dads, little eyes are watching you. Dads, your sons will one day model the way your treat your wife. Moms, one day your daughters are going to model the way you treat your husband. Parents, you are leaving a lasting impression upon your children that in all probability will be perpetuated for generations. What are we teaching our children and one another by our example? Do we love and respect one another? Do we honor the Lord and exalt His Word by faithful obedience to its precepts? Are we slothful or diligent? What we do is often

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Power of Example

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more powerful than what we say in our homes. Psalm 128:1-6 declares: **“Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways. For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee. Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table. Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD. The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life. Yea, thou shalt see thy children’s children, and peace upon Israel.”**

John Balguy wrote:

“Whatever parent gives his children good instruction and sets them at the same time a bad example, may be considered as bringing them food in one hand, and poison in the other.” (*The New Dictionary of Thoughts*, p. 188)

When you go into the workplace what kind of example are you setting for your coworkers? Are you lazy, divisive, and full of complaints? Or do your coworkers see someone who is committed and consistently aiming to add value to the workplace? Is your speech truthful, edifying, and encouraging? Do your habits reflect the worthy name of the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you inspire others to work hard and do their job to the best of their ability? Colossians 3:22-24 declares: **“Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye service, as men pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto**

men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.”

Lewis Dilwyn said:

“One watch set right will do to set many by; one that goes wrong may be the means of misleading a whole neighborhood; and the same may be said of example.” (*The New Dictionary of Thoughts*, p. 187)

When you go to church people are observing your attitude and behavior. They are listening to your speech. They are monitoring your faithfulness or unfaithfulness. Someone may object and say “People at church have no right to monitor my behavior!” That is where you are wrong. We are all members of one another in the local body of Christ. If one member suffers all the members suffer according to the illustration provided in I Corinthians 12. We are all accountable to God and one another for the way we live our lives. What kind of example are you setting for the other members of the church? Are you spiritual or carnal, content or contentious, loving or lukewarm? What if every member modeled your personal testimony? What if everyone in the church read and applied the Scriptures to their lives like you do? What if everyone witnessed to the lost as much as you do? What if everyone paid their tithes as faithfully as you do? What if everyone prayed for the pastor, the church, and the missionaries like you do? Solemn and searching questions! II Corinthians 3:2-5 states: **“Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit**

Little Hills By Nathaniel Hille of Caldwell, Kansas



The New Birth—#1

The Necessity of Every Man, Woman, Boy, and Girl

“Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again”(John 3:7). The word “must” tells us that “born again” is required. The Lord Jesus Christ was speaking to Nicodemus, a very religious man, when He said this. Nicodemus was a Jew—of the nation Israel. Nicodemus was a **“ruler of the Jews”**(John 3:1)—probably a member of the Jewish religious council. Nicodemus was also a **“Pharisee”**(John 3:1)—who were the most religious group among the Jews. Jesus

spoke of the Pharisees saying, **“... except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven”**(Matt. 5:20). Nicodemus was also a **“master,”** or teacher, of Israel. None of these things gained Nicodemus favor with God.

An individual may have many great things, riches, religion, Bible knowledge, education, citizenship in a nation, even as great as the United States, but if that individual has not been born again, they are hell-bound. Have you been born again?

of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.”

3. When you begin to see how your example affects your world, your sphere of influence, you begin to understand just how important your testimony really is. May God give us grace to follow the admonition of Micah 6:8: **“He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”**

4. When you take an honest look at modern day society you have to conclude that the power of good and godly examples are sadly deficient or non-existent. This is true in every facet of society, including homes, churches, and government. We live in a world of violence, immorality, ungodliness, disrespect for authority, deception, and political corruption. High ranking political

figures and their operatives routinely lie, cheat, and cover up in order to maintain their power. Homes are falling apart because parents are not committed to training their children in the way they should go. Churches stand for very little because they fear they will lose money and members. Employers have little or no loyalty to their employees. We are in the midst of a moral crisis that is accelerating. Many people are modeling the examples provided by reality stars, Hollywood hustlers, and political pimps. Young minds are being corrupted by dope smoking, immoral, liberal, atheistic professors. An old Spanish Proverb states: “Live with wolves, and you will learn to howl.” Look at our communities and you will find folks without a moral compass howling like wolves with rapacious appetites for that which is unclean. **“This**

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know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good. Traitors, heady, highminded, loves of pleasures more than loves of God: Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away...But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (II Tim 3:1-5, 13).

We have lost a sense of urgency about the kind of example we are providing and following! Matthew 5:13 declares: **"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and trodden under foot of men."** Unless Christians in general, and the Lord's churches in particular come to grips with their responsibility to provide a righteous and godly example by way of a consecrated testimony, we will continue to see the moral decay of our world. Dear believer are you even the least bit concerned that your attitudes, speech, and actions are influencing others either for bad or good on any given day? Oh that God would stir each of us with a renewed sense of personal responsibility to model the life of our Lord Jesus Christ as an example to others! I John 2:3-6 declares: **"And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and**

keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked."

BAD EXAMPLES FROM SCRIPTURE

1. The Old Testament example of Lot provides us with an illustration how a man can ruin his testimony and destroy his family. Lot was the nephew of faithful Abraham. The details of his life are set forth in Genesis chapters 13, 14, and 19. Through covetous desires Lot separated from faithful Abraham. He lusted after the well watered plains of Sodom without giving any thought how such a move would affect his family. His eyes were fixed upon the prospect of material prosperity. God saw Sodom very differently as Genesis 13:13 records: **"But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly."** Sodom was filled to the brim with homosexuals who had violent and perverted intentions (Gen. 19:4-11; cf. Rom. 1:24-27; Jude 7). Lot first lifted up his eyes upon Sodom, then he pitched his tent toward Sodom, before too long he was living in Sodom. He willfully led his family into an atmosphere of wickedness and perversion.

When God determined to judge Sodom and Gomorrah, faithful Abraham interceded for Lot in prayer. God agreed to spare Lot and his family from the coming judgment. Two angels were dispatched to Sodom to retrieve Lot and his family. Lot relayed the message of judgment to his family. Genesis 19:14 states: **"And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his**

daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law." Because of Lot's hypocritical example and fruitless testimony his family mocked him. His wife was so enamored with her life in Sodom she looked back at the city as God rained down fire and brimstone upon it. She was turned to a pillar of salt. Only Lot and his two daughters escaped the wrath of God poured out upon Sodom. The two daughters concocted a plan to get their daddy drunk and have sex with him so that they could have children. The result of that unholy union were the Ammonites and Moabites, who became the sworn enemies of Israel for centuries.

One man's sinful example not only ruined his testimony and cost him his family, his illegitimate and incestuous descendents did much harm to God's chosen people. The power of Lot's example led to the embrace of evil and wickedness in his family. What a warning for parents, and especially Dad's! Your example is shaping your family. Where you live, how you act, what you say, and how you think is leaving a lasting impression upon your wife, children, and grand children!

A. W. Pink in *Gleanings in Genesis* commented on the worldly example of Lot and his miserable end:

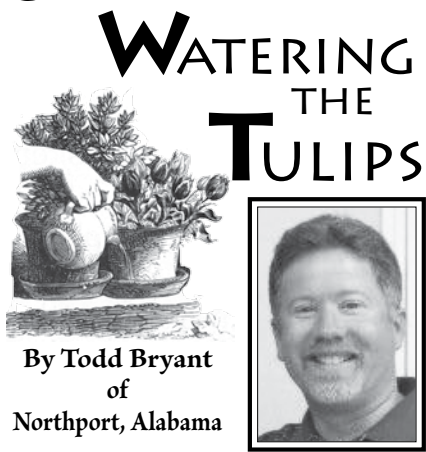
"Lot seems to be a type of that class of Christians who aim to make the best of both worlds, who are really occupied more with the things of earth than the things of heaven. Lot was a man who sowed to the flesh, and of the flesh he reaped corruption. Temporal prosperity was what he sought, but in the end he lost even his worldly possessions. His life

on earth was a wretched failure, made up entirely of 'wood, hay, stubble.' There was no witnessing for God and no blessing of God upon his family. Lot is a concrete warning, a danger signal, for all Christians who feel a tendency to be carried away by the things of the world...Wretched, indeed, must have been the closing days of Lot--cowering in a cave, stripped of all his earthly possessions, his sons in law destroyed in Sodom, his wife turned to a pillar of salt, and he left face to face with the fruit of his own awful sin." (p. 154)

2. The wicked kings of Judah and Israel demonstrate how an evil example by leaders can have a devastating effect upon the people of their country. Jehoshaphat was a king of Judah who failed to remove the high places where people offered sacrifice to idols and he made a peace pact with Ahab, the wicked king of Israel (I Kings 22:41-44). Jehoshaphat's compromise with Ahab ultimately led to his son (Jehoram) marrying the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel (II Kings 8:16-18). Jehoram led his subjects in the practice of evil and idolatry, following the wicked example of his father in law, Ahab. Ahab hated God and His true prophets. Jezebel is one of the most wicked women to ever live. Jehoram followed their example and brought judgment upon his people. Unholy alliances can have dire consequences!

The story of Manasseh, king of Judah, and his son Amon is told in II Kings 21. Manasseh reigned 52 years. He was a wicked idolater. He even sacrificed one of his sons as a burnt offering and sought the counsel of wizards who were involved in the occult. In spite of Manasseh's gross wickedness it appears that God humbled

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By Todd Bryant
of
Northport, Alabama

The Permanent High Priest

"And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:23-25).

The writer of Hebrews spends much time discussing the priesthood of Jesus and how much better it is than the former priesthood. The passage before us is crucial in such a study.

No matter how well intentioned an Old Testament priest was, he was "prevented by death from continuing in office." Therefore, he was unable to be a permanent priest. He may very well have been willing to continue eternally as a mediator between God and men. Nonetheless, his willingness did not equate to ability. Priest after priest died and were replaced. On this point alone, the priesthood could never be fully perfected. The system was good. The servants were inadequate.

Enter Jesus. His priesthood replaced theirs. Unlike them, He is **"...a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek"** (Ps. 110:4; Heb. 7:17). In great contrast to the priests of the old covenant,

Jesus walked out of the grave three days after being buried and showed Himself victorious over it. Death has no hold on Him. He is "exalted at the right hand of God" even today (Acts 2:33).

Consequently, He is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through Him. Jesus is the only way into fellowship with the Father. Remember His words, **"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me"** (John 14:6). Only through the greatest priest ever can men approach God. The duty of a priest was to build a bridge between God and man. Yet, no other priest was able to do this except Jesus Christ. As long as the Old Testament priests served, the temple curtain remained in place, which made access to God impossible. When Jesus died, **"...the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom"** (Matt. 27:51).

Not only did Jesus pave the way to God through His sacrifice for our sins, but also He continues making intercession for us. He has saved us **"to the uttermost!"** It is not that we are somehow saved by the skin of our teeth. **"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us"** (Romans 8:37). Jesus (being the perfect, permanent priest) saves entirely and eternally. If He stands between you and God, you are completely saved. Because of this, the believer is said to now have laid hold of eternal life (John 3:36).

Are you seeking fellowship with God through some other means than Jesus today? Are you hoping to get there by your good works? It is past time that you forsake such a hopeless cause and look to the only One that makes eternal fellowship with God a certainty.

Jesus has built a bridge between God and man. He is the Bridge. Our prayer is that God grants you faith to believe this truth today.



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him and saved him late in life (II Chron. 33:11-20). However, his example of wickedness still prevailed in his kingdom and his son, Amon followed in his wicked ways. Amon exceeded the wickedness of his father and was assassinated by his household servants. The laws of sowing and reaping are always in effect. It is also interesting to note that depraved children often follow the worst habits of their parents. Manasseh was saved late in life, but Amon followed his father's wicked ways instead of humbling himself before God.

The evil example of these kings of Judah and Israel not only affected their immediate family and ancestors. Their influence was modeled by the citizens of their kingdom. Consider Jotham and his son Ahaz to see how the power of an evil example corrupts both families and nations. It is said of Jotham: **"And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Uzziah did: HOWBEIT HE ENTERED NOT UNTO THE TEMPLE OF THE LORD. AND THE PEOPLE DID YET CORRUPTLY"** (emph. TR). Jotham actually did some good things (II Chron 27:6), however his son, Ahaz followed after the wickedness of the kings of Israel: **"For he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also molten images for Baalim. Moreover he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and burnt his children in the**

fire, after the abominations of the heathen whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel. He sacrificed also and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree" (II Chron. 28:2-4). Jotham would not go into the temple of the LORD and his son became one of Judah's worst idolaters.

Consider carefully what our leaders in America have done. Our nation now worships at the altar of evolutionary theory. We have thrown off the authority of God, His Word, and the moral law. In 1973 our godless Supreme Court legalized the ruthless murder and extermination of children. In the Summer of 2015 the same court unilaterally decided that the perversion of homosexual marriage was lawful. Our political leaders have created an underclass dependent upon government welfare that insures the recipients will keep them in power. We actually have a confirmed socialist running for the Democrat nomination for president of the United States. We have an immigration crisis that is costing trillions. We are ceding our sovereignty and influence to the United Nations. We have accepted false science under the guise of climate change. Our education system is in shambles. Our economy is weak. The racial divide and bitter animus created by crooked politicians has probably never been greater since the 1800's. There is little or no respect for law enforcement or any moral authority, for that matter. The downward spiral of America can be traced to the power of ungodly examples from our leaders in every facet of society. Psalm 9:16-17 states: **"The LORD is known by the**

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judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands...The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."

GOOD EXAMPLES FROM SCRIPTURE

1. Even with all of his flaws, Abraham is considered to be a good example of a man of faith and a responsible father. He had a zeal for God and an enthusiasm for following the Lord. God commended Abraham in Genesis 18:19: **"For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him."** Abraham is one of the most influential men in Scripture. His exercise of saving faith and service to God are set forth as a pattern for believers in the Old and New Testaments (Romans 4; Hebrews 12:8-19; James 2:20-24). God used Abraham as the human vessel whose seed would ultimately blossom into the nation out of which the Messiah would come. Abraham's name and testimony is respected by Jews and Gentiles the world over. His example is a testimony to the fact that God can raise up a single man who influenced his family, his community, his nation, and ultimately the world for good.

2. Timothy's mother, Eunice, and grandmother, Lois are forever memorialized in Scripture as godly women who had a profound influence for good in the life of the young preacher. They exemplified the characteristics of the Proverbs 31 woman who is considered as a paragon of

virtue, piety, and service to her family. Paul the apostle reminded Timothy of the godly influence his mother and grandmother had on his life: **"When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also... But continue thou in the things which thou has learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus"** (II Tim. 1:5; 3:14-15). Praise God for godly mothers and grandmothers who follow in the steps of these virtuous women! The influence a godly wife and mother can have upon her family is priceless and will be greatly rewarded at the judgment seat of Christ. Proverbs 31:25-30 declares: **"Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. She openeth her mouth with wisdom: and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised."** Praise God for women who shun the advice and accolades of the world to be fully committed to God and family. If you were to dig deep into the history of great awakenings and revivals, you would find that they probably started at the knees of godly mothers who were instructing their children in the

truths of Scripture and prayer by precept and practice. Oh, that God would raise up a holy band of godly mothers to influence their children for good in our day! Whenever the sacred duties of motherhood are neglected in a society, you can be sure that immorality, immorality, and ungodliness will prevail.

Jean Paul Richter reveals the importance of a godly example in the raising of children:

"The conscience of children is formed by the influences that surround them; their notions of good and evil are the result of the moral atmosphere they breathe." (The New Dictionary of Thoughts, p. 188)

3. Paul the apostle is one of the greatest examples of a man who was fully surrendered and committed to God. He was one of the most prolific writers of Scripture. He was one of the most zealous missionaries the world has ever known. Paul loved the Lord Jesus Christ and was willing to go anywhere and do anything for the glory of God. His was a life of selfless sacrifice to further the cause of Christ. He pressed on in spite of beatings, stonings, shipwrecks, imprisonment, false accusations, privation, and a host of other difficulties. Paul was steadfast in service until the day he died as a martyr at the hands of wicked Nero. What a valiant soldier of the cross! I think the distilled essence of his consecrated life is expressed in Philippians 3:8-15: **"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which**

is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death: If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before. I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you." Oh, to be thus minded in following the example of the devoted apostle! He urges us to follow his example in I Corinthians 11:1: **"Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."**

4. The greatest example we are called upon to emulate and follow is that of the Lord Jesus Christ. In all of human history there has never been anyone to excel the glories or match the magnificence of Jesus. His name is above every name and His holy example is unsullied, undefiled, and perfect. Even though He is the eternal God He was willing to identify with those He came to save. The Lord Jesus, the Second Person of the sacred Trinity condescended to become a man. He walked among sinners with no sin of His own. He went about doing good. He healed lepers, caused the blind to see, raised the dead, comforted

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Power of Example

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those who were cast down, fed the multitudes, taught the truth with authority, and spread compassion every where He went. There is no one like Jesus! He willingly went to the cross to die in the stead of others as the only perfect and qualified sacrifice. He suffered, bled, and died for others! He was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimethea for three days and just as He said He would, He rose from the dead conquering sin, death, hell, and the grave! The power of the Living Christ has literally changed the course and history of mankind. There has never been a more transformative person in all of history! His followers were so impressed with His finished work they took His commission to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature seriously. Those who were saved by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ turned the world upside down. Their message was simple and to the point: **"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus"** (Acts 4:12-13). They were empowered by the presence and example of the Lord Jesus Christ. As they preached His worthy name as the only way of salvation with courage and boldness, others perceived that they had been with Jesus! They were His followers! His life and example had changed their life and they wanted to tell everybody about it! This is the ultimate illustration of the power

of example. All of us are called to follow the Lord Jesus Christ! I Peter 2:21-23 states: **"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps. Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously."**

There is not a more worthy or noble cause than that of emulating the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. The desire to be conformed to His blessed image in this life and in the life to come ought to be the aim of every believer who has been transformed by the power of God. Oh, to be more like the Lord Jesus! This should be our daily prayer and determined practice! What a powerful transformation would take place in individuals, homes, churches, and the world

if only we were serious about following the Lord Jesus Christ.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD EXAMPLE

I Timothy 4:12-16: **"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."**

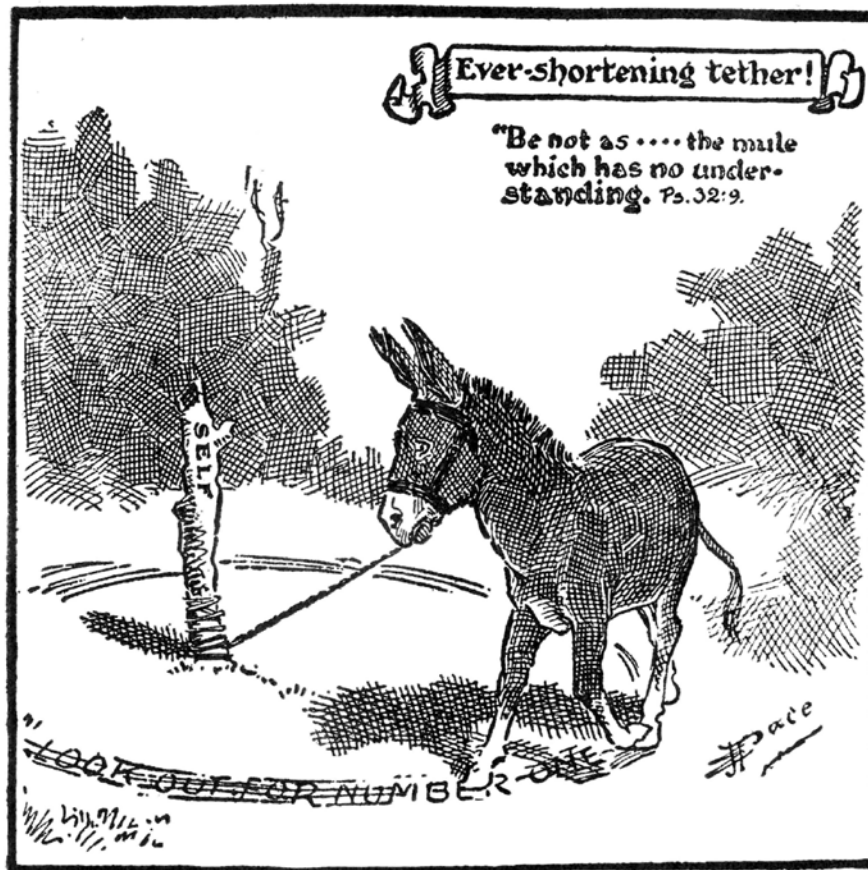
This passage of Scripture was written to exhort Timothy and all other God called preachers to provide the right kind of example

to those they minister to. The characteristics of a good example listed here are so concise and dynamic I believe we can use the passage to exhort all believers to make application in their lives as well.

1. In this passage Paul makes it clear that age should not be a determining factor when it comes to setting a right example. Timothy was a young preacher, but Paul admonished him to be an example to others despite his youth. This serves as a reminder to all of us that no matter where we are in life we ought always to be cognizant of the power of example in young and old alike. Those of us who are getting a little age on us should not be so arrogant as to think we cannot learn from young people who love the Lord and are committed to serving Him! May God be pleased to raise up an army of young Timothy's in our churches to serve as examples of godliness!

2. In order to be a good and godly example to others we must govern our tongue. Our speech must glorify God. Ephesians 4:29-30 states: **"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."** What a holy standard for our speech! Nothing corrupt, putrid, rotten, filthy, dirty, or unseemly is to proceed out of our mouth! Rather, our speech should edify and build up. It should be gracious and wholesome. Dear reader, what kind words are coming out of your mouth on any given day? Are you mean spirited, critical, hurtful, or unwholesome in your

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Power of Example

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speech? Do you use your words for good to share the Gospel, encourage others, demonstrate love and respect for members of your family?

The only way to insure obedience to the above text is to examine the condition of your heart, mind, and conscience. Your words reveal the condition of your heart according to Matthew 12:34-37: **“O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.”**

Our words have a huge impact on others! What we say and how we say it is of utmost importance. Colossians 4:5-6 declares: **“Walk in wisdom toward those that are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.”** I Peter 3:10-11; 15-16 commands: **“For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it...But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear. Having a good conscience; that, whereas**

they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.” When we govern our tongue and use our words for good it gives evidence that we have been taught of God according to Isaiah 50:4: **“The LORD GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned”** (cf. James 3:1-13).

Isaac Barrow, the English Puritan wrote:

“A constant governance of our speech, according to duty and reason, is a high instance and a special argument of a thoroughly sincere and solid goodness.” (*The New Dictionary of Thoughts*, p. 636)

Another Puritan, Thomas Watson gave a scathing warning about the improper use of the tongue:

“Some care not what they say in their passion; they will censure, slander, and wish evil to others. How can Christ be in the heart, when the devil has taken possession of the tongue?... Passion disturbs reason. It is *brevis insania*, a short frenzy...Let them whose tongues are set on fire, take heed that they do not one day in hell desire a drop of water to cool them.” (*A Puritan Golden Treasury*, pp. 296-297)

3. A good and godly example will be manifested in our manner of life, character, and behavior. The Greek word *anastrophe* is translated **“conversation”** which simply means your way of life. In order to be a good example to others, our conduct must reflect a sincere reverence for God and obedience to His commands. Ecclesiastes 12:13 declares: **“Let**

us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.” What do people see when they examine your life? Does your life exemplify the character of the Lord Jesus Christ? Do others see **“...Christ in you, the hope of glory”** (Col. 1:27)? Are you honest, faithful, compassionate, generous, and diligent? Is the fruit of the Spirit evident in your life (Gal. 5:22-23)? Each and every day we ought to live our lives with the understanding that God sees our conduct and the example we are setting forth. Hebrews 4:13 declares: **“Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked, and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.”**

4. A good and godly example will be marked by charity, the highest and most noble demonstration of genuine love and concern for others. Genuine love is much more than a sentiment or a verbal expression of affection. The love of Christ is deep, powerful, constant, unconditional, and sacrificial. God so loved us that He sent His only begotten Son to die in our stead. Christ Jesus loved us so much He was willing to give Himself as a living sacrifice for our sins. **“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God...”** (I John 3:1). In the work of regeneration the Holy Spirit fills our new hearts with the love of God (Rom. 5:5). From that moment on we are called upon to provide an example of charity and extraordinary love toward others. Some of the most beautiful characteristics of this kind of love are expressed in I Corinthians 13:4-8: **“Charity suffered long,**

and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth...” May God be pleased to fill us with His Spirit so that we may be an example of grace and love. May Christ's love be reflected in and through us as we seek to be a blessing to others.

5. A good and godly example will be marked by having a spiritual attitude. How is your attitude, dear reader? Are you filled with pride, selfishness, arrogance, and self righteousness? If these kind of attitudes are being displayed in your life you can be sure that you are setting a poor example. We are called to follow the Lord Jesus Christ who had a gracious, honest, humble, meek, and loving disposition. Matthew 11:29 declares: **“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”** Even in times of great distress and danger our Lord expressed an attitude of resignation and humility regarding the will of the Father: **“Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, Who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously”** (I Pet. 2:22-23). Oh, to have a spirit like the Lord Jesus Christ!

Our attitudes are shaped by what we think about and how we perceive things. If we are to have godly attitudes we must keep our minds upon the Lord

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and what pleases Him. Isaiah 26:3-4 states: **“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength.”** When our minds are taken up with the glory, strength, and power of God we will walk humbly before Him, trusting Him to guide us in a way that is right, and peacefully resting in His grace. When our affections are set upon things above (Col. 3:1-3) our attitudes will be marked by grace and humility. There will be no room for arrogance, pride, or self seeking. I Peter 5:5-7 declares: **“Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him: for he careth for you.”**

6. A good and godly example will be marked by faith in God and faithfulness to His cause. Dependence upon God and a commitment to His way are examples of faith and faithfulness that are sorely needed in our day! It is impossible to be a man of faith and faithfulness apart from a determined commitment to God's Word. We must search the Word, claim the promises, walk in the precepts, and apply its principles if we hope to display an example of faithfulness. Let us labor to lead others in the way of unswerving commitment and faithfulness to God. We have been entrusted with a sacred

responsibility to follow Christ wholeheartedly. I Corinthians 4:2 declares: **“Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.”** We will be rewarded in this life and in the life to come if we are consistently faithful: **“...be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life”** (Rev. 2:10). Oh that we may lead a life of faithfulness so that we may hear our blessed Lord say: **“...Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord”** (Matt. 25:21).

7. A good and godly example will be marked by purity in thought, word, and deed. God is supremely holy and those who are called by His grace are likewise called to live a life that aspires to holiness. I Peter 1:14-16 declares: **“As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”** Holiness is loving what God loves, and hating what God hates. Holiness involves walking with the Lord in the light of His countenance in agreement with His precepts. I John 1:5-7 expresses the essence of a life of holiness: **“This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”** A life of purity requires us to shun and separate

from the darkness of sin. Holiness also requires us to embrace and delight in those things that please God.

In a world that is dominated by impurity, immodesty, and immorality God's people must consistently strive against the temptation to get sucked into a cesspool of ungodliness. We must guard our eyes and our minds from the assaults and suggestions of Satan, the world, and our own base, fleshly lusts. Psalm 101:3 states: **“I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me.”** The man who was inspired to write that Scripture knew full well the dangers of allowing wickedness to come into his eyes and mind. David allowed his flesh to seduce him in the matter of Bathsheba and his life was really never the same. Psalm 119:9-11 must be applied if we are to enjoy purity of heart and holiness in our daily walk: **“Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word. With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.”**

I love the definition of holiness written by Richard Baxter:

“Nothing else but the habitual and predominant devotion and dedication of soul, and body, and life, and all that we have to God; and esteeming, and loving, and serving, and seeking Him, before all the pleasures and prosperity of the flesh.” (*A Puritan Golden Treasury*, p. 139)

CONCLUDING REMARKS

1. In I Timothy 4:15-16 we have an exhortation aimed at practical application of the characteristics

of a good and godly example. Meditate, think deeply upon these things and then saturate your life with the practical application of godly principles. If we are faithful to live a life wholly devoted to God our profiting will appear to all within our sphere of influence and beyond. I see a direct correlation between these verses and Psalm 1:1-3: **“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”**

2. Is there a more noble pursuit in life than to serve God and please Him? Add to that a desire to provide an example of virtue and godliness to others and you will have a testimony the Lord can use. What joy should flood our souls in knowing that God could use our life and testimony as the means of pointing others to Christ and His salvation! Oh, that our spiritual profiting would indeed appear to all!

3. The solemnity of the power of example must be felt personally on a daily basis. If we are to lead others in the way of salvation, truth, and godliness we must first begin with ourselves! We must take heed to ourselves and to the doctrine, the teaching of God's Word if we are to provide a lasting legacy for good. May God be pleased to stir us to meditate upon these weighty truths and then sincerely and consistently act upon them.



Moved with

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is moved with compassion?" Of course, you and I know that men are passionate creatures. We know that mankind was created by God to be emotional and full of feelings. As we live, we experience and feel our surroundings. And, as we live, we act upon the impulses that our feelings and passions relate to us. The passions that move us can be noble, or they can be evil; they can be positive, or they can be negative; they can be profitable for ourselves and others, or they can be destructive in so many ways.

I suppose that much good has been done, while men and women are motivated by the more noble passions – love, kindness, mercy, pity, gentleness, goodness, honesty. Charitable deeds have been performed. Peace has developed between neighbors, and friendships have been formed and preserved. Families have shown their devotion to each other – mothers and fathers loving each other and their children; and the children loving their parents and each other.

However, much evil – certainly far more than the good – has been done, as men have acted upon the evil passions which are common to mankind – hatred, lust, envy, wrath, pride, covetousness. Men have hated and fought with each other. Wars have been waged. Families have been broken up, and brothers have killed brothers, and parents have killed children, and spouses have killed spouses. Men and women have envied what others have had, and have stolen from each other and sought to destroy the livelihoods of others. Fornication and adultery have been rampant, and have resulted

in the destruction of the family many times over. In mankind's history, the places and times wherein men have indulged in unbridled passions, normally, sin, destruction, and death will soon follow.

I want us to consider one of the noble passions, a passion which was demonstrated by Jesus Christ in our text passage – that is **"compassion."** Merriam-Webster defines "compassion" this way: "sympathetic consciousness of others' distress together with a desire to alleviate it." I suppose that the compassion of Jesus Christ could be described as sympathy for others' distress, combined with a desire and a will and a purpose to alleviate that distress. This is something that is evident throughout the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ.

I reckon that compassion is a motivating force in the lives of many persons. I suppose that compassion is even a noble emotion or passion, and generally a good and proper reason upon which to base our actions. But, no man has ever been moved with compassion, and done so many great deeds, as the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is a compassionate Saviour. Our God in Heaven is a compassionate Father to His people. The Holy Spirit is a compassionate comforter, guide, and protector of the children of God.

It is a wonderful thing that Jesus Christ was (and is) compassionate towards the people that He ministered unto. This thought becomes more wonderful still, as we consider that He has not only the heart of sympathy and the desire to alleviate our suffering – He also has the power and the ability and the authority to act upon His desires and His intentions and His compassion.

For the rest of this article, let us notice some of the ways that Jesus Christ demonstrated compassion, and then let us consider how we should follow Him and the pattern of compassion that He has established.

HEAL THE SICK

We read in our text verse, **"And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick"** (Matt. 14:14). In his commentary on this passage, William Burkitt said, "Those that came to Christ for healing, found three advantages of cure, above the power and performance of any earthly physician; to wit, certainty, bounty, and ease. Certainty, in that all comers were infallibly cured; bounty, in that they were freely cured, without charge; and ease, in that they were cured without pain." These are remarkable aspects of the compassion and the healing prowess of Jesus Christ. He could not only heal, but He could heal in an invincible fashion. Not only were His healing powers invincible, but they were also accomplished without cost to the patient. And, these persons were healed without having to go through the pain and the processes of recovery which might be normally expected. The compassion and the healing powers of our Lord are great and gracious, indeed!

Later on, when the Lord had crossed the Sea of Galilee, and had come into a new place, the people would again be healed. **"And when they were gone over, they came into the land of Gennesaret. And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were**



"... be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another..." (I Peter 3:8).

diseased; And besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole" (Matt. 14:34-36). It was a part of the Lord's compassion, that He would, inevitably, heal bodies as He walked this earth. Wherever He went, the bodies and minds of men and women were, inevitably, healed. This was a part of His ministry, and a part of His compassion.

However, even more than the healing of the bodies, Jesus Christ intended to bring life and health to the spirits and the souls of men. He always kept, as a focus, the deliverance of men from the bondage of sin. He did something that only the Great Physician could do: He granted eternal life to men, and healed the souls of those men and women who were ordained unto eternal life. **"But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not**

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Moved with

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sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Matt. 9:12-13). His earthly ministry is a record of the physically and mentally sick being healed; and, even more glorious, His earthly ministry provides a record of the sin-sick being healed.

We read these words, when the Lord sent out His disciples to minister to the Jews: **"And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where"** (Luke 9:6). Just as in the case of Jesus Christ, the disciples intended to heal both the bodies and the souls of men. They would heal men of their infirmities, but they would also give them the necessary Word of God so that souls could be saved, lives could be mended, and God and His Son would be praised.

I think a very good synonym for "compassion" is the word "mercy." During the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord Jesus Christ told His disciples, **"Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful"** (Luke 6:36). And, in the Old Testament we are told, **"This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness"** (Lam. 3:21-23). Often, when we refer to this passage in Lamentations, we remind ourselves that the "compassions" of the Lord will not fail – they will continue throughout our lives. But, we ought to also consider the fact that the "compassions" of the Lord will not fail – they will not lose their potency, they will not be

overcome by some other power; they will not fail to accomplish the intents and purposes of God. His compassions are powerful – omnipotent – just as He is. His compassions cannot be diverted, thwarted, or hindered by any man or any power of Hell.

When we consider the compassion of Jesus Christ – especially His compassions which were evident during His earthly ministry – what better compassion (or mercy) is there, than to heal the sick and to seek the good of men's souls? The Lord Jesus was always there for the people He ministered to. The Lord went about healing, and saving souls. In our day and time, the Lord is always there for us, to heal bodies and to save souls. He is always there to give strength to the weak, to encourage the discouraged, to lift up the down trodden.

We, too, should be compassionate, and should help those who are weak, guide those who are lost, and give hope to those who have no hope. Though we are powerless in ourselves, we are commissioned, as churches, in the cause of Christ. Our greatest tool in this endeavor is the Word of God and the application of the Holy Spirit. Through the Word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit we can help and save others. We should show compassion, just as our Saviour did (and does) show compassion. We should give others strength through the Word of God. We should seek to edify and build up others. We should seek to encourage the discouraged. All of this can be done through a proclamation of the Word of God. We do not have the power to miraculously heal bodies; but, we do have the power – through the preaching of the Word – to heal the souls of men.

We can bring life to the lifeless; health to the sick; strength to the weak; courage to the fearful; and hope to the hopeless.

FEED THE HUNGRY

Secondly, as we consider the importance and the power of true compassion, let us consider what else the Lord Jesus did in our text chapter. **"And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals. But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes. He said, Bring them hither to me. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children"** (Matt. 14:15-21).

The "feeding of the five thousand" is the focal point of this passage, which is our text. And, the compassion that the Lord showed in filling the hungry bellies of these five thousand men, beside women and children, was a noble and kind compassion. It is good to help those who are in need. The true child of God should reflect these high qualities and this noble compassion of our Saviour: **"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the**

love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (I John 3:17-18). The love of God in our hearts will (or at least should) have an effect on our words and our actions. Just like Christ, we should be **"moved with compassion"** towards those who stand in need.

It is good to share what we have with others. It is good to help those who are in need. It is good to show compassion in the mortal realm, and in the physical affairs of men. Our contributions to the world should not be confined to the spiritual realm; if we have opportunity, we should help in whatever ways the Lord will permit us. We read in the Book of James, **"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world"** (James 1:27). There are opportunities and responsibilities given unto us, to minister in the flesh. But, as this passage also reminds us, we ought to keep ourselves **"unspotted from the world"** – show ourselves to be faithful servants and followers of Jesus Christ. I believe that it is our duty to remind others of their spiritual needs – just as much, and maybe even more, than it is our duty to visit and help the orphans, the widows, and the hungry. The Lord Jesus Christ said, **"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled"** (Matt. 5:6). Who will feed these, who hunger and thirst after righteousness, if not the Churches of Jesus Christ? Perhaps we can help some in the flesh, and perhaps we can alleviate the mortal and physical hunger of a few persons on this earth.

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. In Ezra 4:6-7 we read of Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes. Is it possible that these are the same person? Maine

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No, it is not possible that Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes are the same person.

Ahasuerus's [uh-haz-yoo-EE-russ] (the son of Darius I the great) true name was Xerxes [zurk-seez] and was the king of Persia mentioned in Ezra 4:6 and the Book of Esther and reigned between (485-465 B.C.). The confusion that Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes may be the same person is because Ahasuerus was an official name of the Persian kings. This king was the famous Xerxes [zurk-seez] who invaded Greece and Egypt.

After he divorced Vashti [vash tigh] (who was a very beautiful Queen in which her name implies), Xerxes married Esther who became the new Persian Queen in (468 B.C.) and saved her people from being massacred in (473 B.C.). Xerxes (Ahasuerus) was ultimately murdered by Artabanus, the captain of the guard, and his chamberlain at night in his bed (465 B.C.).

Artaxerxes [ahr-tuh-zurk-seez]- Artaxerxes I Longimanus, who reigned over Persia forty years, 464-424 B.C. In the seventh year of his reign he commissioned Ezra to return to Jerusalem, granting large privileges to him and those accompanying him

(Ezra 7:11-26), (457 B.C.) About thirteen years later (445 B.C.) he granted permission to Nehemiah to assume control of the civil affairs at Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2:1-8). Artaxerxes I Longimanus died (424 B.C.).

So, again, (unless my information is incorrect) Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes are not the same person. God Bless!

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For questions like this, I usually consult John Gill, Matthew Henry, and Matthew Poole who all wrote exhaustive and complete commentaries on all the books of the Bible. Gill, a Baptist expositor, pastor, and theologian is my favorite go to commentary. From what I could gather all agree in some degree that Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes are indeed the same man. He is also identified as Cambyses by secular historians. According to Poole, Ahasuerus was the Chaldean name, and Artaxerxes was the Persian name for the same individual. He was the successor of Cyrus.

Matthew Henry wrote: "... In which his successor was Ahasuerus (v. 6), called also Artaxerxes (v. 7), supposed to be the same that in heathen authors is called Cambyses..." (Vol. 2, p. 1041).

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"Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building, And hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia. And in the reign of Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign, wrote they unto him an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem. And in the days of Artaxerxes wrote Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel...unto Artaxerxes king of Persia..."

(Ezra 4:4-7). In the context, we see a possible consecutive sequence of the Kings of Persia listed, from Cyrus to Darius (skipping over two inconsequential kings: Cambyses and Bardiya). Verse six continues to Ahasuerus, then finally to Artaxerxes in verse 7. These last two are generally considered (by many fine scholars!) to be Xerxes and his son, Artaxerxes the Great (Longimanus). This makes it unlikely that they are the same person, but... Selah! Think about it!

The repetition of names can be confusing. The Darius mentioned in Ezra 4, was a Persian of the house of Hystapes, (Darius I the Great). He is not to be mistaken for Darius the Mede of Daniel 6 and the famous Lion's Den! Darius the Mede conquered Babylon for the Median Empire, which Cyrus the Great later merged into the Persian Empire.

As we stated before, there is a

second option for the chronology, partly based upon secular histories and more particularly, upon the Biblical inferences (you know which one I am leaning toward, now!). There is a real possibility that our text verses are referring to ONLY two kings, the aforementioned Cyrus and Darius. Just as Pharaoh became the TITLE of Egyptian rulers, so too, was Ahasuerus the TITLE of KING in the Persian language. Many artifacts bear this out, as well as the repetition of the name in the Bible. If we add to that fact that "Artaxerxes" means "King of Kings" (cf: Ezra 7:12- **"Artaxerxes, king of kings..."**), it may have been used as a title for Darius the Great in Ezra 6:14-15, **"...according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia. And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king."** If the Hebrew word separating the name Darius and Artaxerxes means continuance, it might well be reading of TWO kings, not THREE kings in the passage. And Darius the Great might well be the one and the same: Esther's husband and the preparatory benefactor of later Jews in Persia, such as Ezra & Nehemiah. This makes more sense than mentioning another "Artaxerxes" and then jumping back to point out a house built by Darius.

To further uphold this interpretation of Scripture is the chronology of Ezra 4-5, in particular. There are many references in these two chapters to "Artaxerxes," which is almost interchangeably used for Darius the Great. If we limit this TITLE to that of Xerxes' son Longimanus, two Persian kings later, then it

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. Who was **"Simon the leper"** mentioned in both Matthew 26:6 and Mark 14:3? Could he have been the father of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus? Maine

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According to these passages, Simon the leper lived in Bethany of Judea, as did Martha, Mary and Lazarus. Research I did on the town of Bethany finds the meaning to be "House of the Poor" or "House of Misery." Likely, it was called such, as it could have been the location of a "Hospice House" (hospital for the poor) just outside of Jerusalem (15 furlongs, or about 2 miles). Lepers (such as Simon) could find medical attention and potential lodging provided by the caretakers.

The Bible is silent on Simon's background, but given that the Lord was lodging with him the last week before the fateful crucifixion/Passover; it would only be natural that Simon had been a leper that Jesus had previously healed and who now had become a Christian caretaker for the "poor and miserable" of Bethany (and Jerusalem).

The crux of the question concerning his connection to Lazarus and his sisters, is found in comparing the above passages in Matthew 26 and Mark 14 with John 12:1-8, **"Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. There they**

made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? ...Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this. For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always."

I used to think that this was a separate event from our text passages, but as I got to studying it, I noticed that BOTH have several distinct events, that really could not be reasonably repeated, especially within a week's time. First notice that the Synoptic Gospels are in the same time period as John's account. **"After two days was the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread: ...And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head"** (Mark 14:1-3).

Now, although one account mentions the Lord's head and the other His feet, neither account precludes the continuing on to anoint more extensively. And while there could no doubt have

been multiple anointings this week of our Lord, notice the response of the disciples in Matthew 26:8-9, **"But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor."** Now, what are the odds that Jesus would have to rebuke His disciples twice in one week for the same peculiar fault? The second time, they might have still not understood, but surely they would have held their tongues. Selah! Think about it!

The second parallel incident that cannot be missed is the conclusion the Lord gives them for the propriety of Mary's actions. **"And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me. For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always. She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying"** (Mark 14:6-8). It is just inconceivable to me that these are separate events, such as the Luke 7:36-50 account, where the woman anoints Christ (in Galilee) without the comments about His burial or the poor. There, it was the salvation of the woman mentioned and the anointing was more of the Master as Living Saviour.

All this to show that Simon the leper and the three siblings that Christ loved were in the same "house," that last fateful week. This leads to one of two conclusions. 1) A private home owned by Simon the leper, but Martha doing the serving; it is "likely" that he was the father of Martha, Mary and Lazarus. 2) A public hospice, again owned by Simon, then they were probably all just co-workers who lived (or

at least dined) on the premises. It would be a "likely" place to serve the Lord and if He was wont to go where He was needed, what better place to go, than to a hospital. Selah! Think about it! I always wonder why Benny Hinn and other modern healers do not follow this example, and go empty out the hospitals. With the facts of Scripture, we can go no further with our deductions and conclusions. But whether Simon the leper was their "father" or "co-worker," they certainly knew each other and loved the same Lord!

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There is nothing we can find to support that **"Simon the leper"** was the father of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. There does seem to be a disagreement among scholars as to Mary in John 12:3 and the woman in Matthew 26:7, Mark 14:3 and Luke 7:37. Also, the woman that is mentioned in Luke 7:37 was found in Simon the Pharisee's house not in **"Simon the leper ('s)"** house. A further study is implied here.

Also, there is a question raised why no father or husband is mentioned. Some think the two girls were either too young (maybe orphans), or too old to be married, or may have took some vow to serve the Lord and stayed unmarried, but again nothing is said about a father or husband that we could find.

I know this does not help answer the question, but we have exhausted our resources and

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Forum #1

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makes no chronological sense to keep referring to Darius, as the one searching for the decrees of Cyrus to validate the Jews' right to build the temple. The temple, by the way, which was completed some 30-40 years before "Artaxerxes Longimanus" was even born.

What makes the MOST sense to me, is that these "titles" in our text verses are referring back (like predicate nominatives) to Cyrus the Great and Darius the Great. Cyrus is referred to as Ahasuerus and Darius as Artaxerxes. These words that had been "titles," seem to have been taken as official names, by the following kings known as Xerxes and Artaxerxes Longimanus... Selah! Think about it!

If this is true, it would likely make Esther's husband Darius the Great, and he is rightly called Ahasuerus throughout that Book, as he held the title of King/Pharaoh/Ahasuerus/etc. Then, as we come back to the books of Nehemiah and Ezra 7-10, we have the correct timeframe for the Artaxerxes Longimanus to appear on the scene, probably some 45 years after Esther's coronation as Queen of Persia to Darius the Great. In my mind, this is the best chronology that confirms the Biblical timestream of our heroes and their contemporaries. The first half of the book of Ezra is an historical accounting of Zerubbabel's venture under Darius (Artaxerxes) and the latter half is his personal venture under Longimanus (Artaxerxes).

But, since both theories seem to have the backing of gifted Biblical scholars, it makes it difficult for me to dogmatically deny either claim. In due course, history will agree with the Bible, as well as the

Bible will agree with history! After all, it is, finally and completely- HIS STORY. Selah! Think about it!

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Forum #2

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could not find anything that even hints to "Simon the leper" being the father of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. God Bless!

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It appears that "Simon the leper" was one of the lepers that Christ had healed and cleansed. Since he had been known as Simon the leper up to the healing, he is still identified as the same after the healing as well. He must have been appreciative of Christ's gracious healing hands and offered to host a dinner in his home. He is called Simon the leper to distinguish him from other Simon's in the Gospel narratives (Simon the Pharisee and Simon Peter the apostle, and others). The fact that Mary and Martha were present in the home does not necessarily mean that they were the daughters of Simon the leper. It was not uncommon for disciples of Christ to gather for meals in homes other than their own. It was also not uncommon for women to pitch in and help with the serving of meals and clean up. Since there is no definitive declaration that Simon the leper was the father of Mary,

Martha, and Lazarus we cannot speculate that he was.

TOM ROSS



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But, these deeds will only have an effect in the temporal realm, and will not help these persons in the next life; and, these deeds can be performed by others in the world, perhaps more efficiently than by the Churches of Jesus Christ. However, if we will seek to satisfy the spiritual hunger – if we will labor in the spiritual realm to feed and fill the sinners who seek after life, then we can have an effect in the salvation of souls, and in the eternal matters of the spiritual realm.

We might be able to feed a few in the flesh, but we can feed an untold number in the spirit. John Calvin said, "Matthew makes no mention of any thing but miracles, because they were of great importance in establishing Christ's reputation; but it may naturally be concluded that he did not leave out doctrine, which was a matter of the highest importance." Good and godly words should accompany our good deeds that we perform. Teaching, preaching, and edifying through the doctrine of the Word, should accompany our every endeavor. The compassion to feed and nourish, both physically and spiritually, should be a motivating factor in our relationships with men. **"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you"** (Eph. 4:32).

"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness,

humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful" (Col. 3:12-15). It is good to fill the mortal belly, and to be a blessing to each other in material and mortal matters. But, the spiritual affairs of the soul are far more important. And, the requirements and the necessities and the daily needs of the inner man ought to be treated with the utmost diligence. As an institution, only the Churches of God are qualified to labor in this endeavor – to feed the spiritually hungry. It is in the Word of God that we can find this necessary spiritual nourishment. The Word of God is the real food – the bread of life – that we should share with the world.

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life" (I John 1:1). Jesus Christ, as He is shared through His blessed Word, is the means to satisfy the most desperate needs, and the most persistent hunger that men can experience. Dare we say, that even the "feeding of the five thousand" in our text chapter, serves as a picture of the Spiritual Bread (Jesus Christ) which all the world stands in need of? **"For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto him, Lord,**

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evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (John 6:33-35).

GUIDE THE LOST

Finally, I want you to see how our compassionate Saviour was a Guide to the lost. In our text passage, we find that the Lord had pity and compassion on the people that followed Him into the desert place. The people who followed Him were a picture, I believe, of the plight of the whole of humanity. The world is full of people who have no guidance and who have no compass to guide them. These folks will wander around in a spiritual quandary – with no clear destination, and with no proper understanding of the danger that they are in. In a spiritual way, we can see how Jesus Christ was a guide unto these, and how that we, too, should be eager to show compassion – eager to deliver, teach, and guide the lost multitudes of mankind among whom we live.

In the parallel accounts of this miracle, both Mark and Luke mention the teaching and preaching aspect of this miracle, though Matthew seems to focus on the miracles of healing and on the miracle of the Feeding of the Five Thousand. We read in Mark's account of the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand, **"And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things"** (Mark 6:34). And then, we read in Luke's account, **"And the people, when they**

knew it, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing" (Luke 9:11). The Lord Jesus – while He was healing and feeding these people – spent much time – probably the entire day – teaching them **"many things"** and speaking **"unto them of the kingdom of God."** In other words, His compassion towards them was not just in the mortal things, but also in the spiritual and heavenly things. **"I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses. For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old"** (Isa. 63:7-9). We, too, should **"mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD."** We, too, should proclaim and teach concerning the **"kingdom of God."** Though we may not be all that we ought to be; still, God would have us – the members of the Churches of Jesus Christ – to guide the world of men in the truths of God's Word.

I am certain the Lord desires that His people be compassionate towards each other, our families, our friends, and those we live amongst. **"Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer**

sin upon him. Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD" (Lev. 19:17-18). I am also certain that the Lord Jesus Christ desires that His people would be compassionate towards the world of men at large. **"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect"** (Matt. 5:43-48).

The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia has this to say about "compassion": "In Jesus Christ, in whom God was "manifest in the flesh," compassion was an outstanding feature (Matt. 9:36; Matt. 14:14, etc.) and He taught that it ought to be extended, not to friends and neighbors only, but to all without exception, even to enemies (Matt. 5:43-48; Luke 10:30-37)...The God of the New Testament, the Father of men, is most clearly revealed as "a God full of compassion." It extends to the whole human race, for which He effected not merely a temporal, but a spiritual and eternal, deliverance, giving up His own Son to the death of the

cross in order to save us from the worst bondage of sin, with its consequences; seeking thereby to gain a new, wider people for Himself, still more devoted, more filled with and expressive of His own Spirit. Therefore all who know the God and Father of Christ, and who call themselves His children, must necessarily cultivate compassion and show mercy, "even as he is merciful." Hence, the many apostolic injunctions to that effect (Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:12; Jas. 1:27; I John 3:17, etc.). Christianity may be said to be distinctively the religion of Compassion." Look at the world around us; look at the discriminating and even violent religions of the world. Which religion is the compassionate one? Is true Christianity not the only hope, the only haven, the brightest light, and the most compassionate cause on the face of the earth?

I believe that as we fulfill the Great Commission, perhaps the greatest compassion that we can show the world, is to give the world the Word of God, especially the gospel of Jesus Christ. The world is full of lost souls, dying, and bound for Hell, except God would intervene through the power of the gospel. The world may hate us and despise us; but, the Churches of Jesus Christ, and the gospel which has been committed to us, is the only hope for the lost and dying world. If we would do any good in this world – if we would show any true compassion – then we must begin by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Repent! For the kingdom of Heaven is at hand! **"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature"** (Mark 16:15).



The Cross and

(Continued from page 1) ♦

spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots" (Matt. 27:35). Are you willing to take an honest and deeper look at what the Bible actually says here? If not, cease reading now as you will likely only become angry at both the message and the messenger. If you are thus willing, read on as this preacher has tried to share what he sees to be the truth on this matter.

First of all, notice the word "crucified" in the above verse. It comes from Latin. This Anglicized word was first used sometime in the 14th century according to the Merriam Webster Online Dictionary. If that is true, then all earlier translations of the Bible into English must have used a different word. "Crucify" and its kindred words did not exist then. This Latin word brought over into English means to fasten to a cross. But does the Bible teach that a cross was involved in the death of Christ? What does the Bible teach? Did the Romans ever use or always use two-beamed crosses? Are the Catholics right? Were the old painters who have portrayed a two-beamed cross right? Or did the Romans use a simple upright stake? Why does it really matter how Christ was killed? And why do some Baptists oppose the use of cross symbols in their homes and meeting houses today? Why do some Baptists make it a point to have nothing to do with crosses?

Coming into use relatively late – in the 14th century – obviously means that these Latin-based words were not used by earlier English speakers and writers. How did they come to be in English, having a Latin origin? Many words from different languages have been

brought into English. This was done through usage. For example our word "booze" comes from the Dutch no doubt through contact with that nationality and language. Who, we ask, would have used these Latin-based words back in that time in jolly old England? The answer seems obvious. Latin has been the language of the Catholic Church since its development sometime after A.D. 300. We know how they came to be used in Catholic England. Here is how. King Henry VIII (28 January 1457 – 21 April 1509) pulled the English Catholic churches out from under the control of Rome. After proclaiming himself the head over the English churches, the English clergy continued using the same old (Catholic) church words. The words cross and crucify are two of those old church words that the King James Translators kept. They wrote about their continued use of old church words in their introductory material. This introductory explanation of how and what the translators did in their translation work formerly appeared in the front of all King James Bibles. In that important part of the King James Bible, the translators told how they were not so scrupulous as other translators and kept the old Catholic words such as church (instead of congregation) and baptism (instead of washing – more accurately rendered dipping). While they only gave two examples, they kept other old church words also, cross and crucify being two of them. They were Anglicans (also known as Episcopalians or Church of England) and their mother was Roman Catholicism. When they came out of Romanism, they brought a considerable amount of Romish baggage with them – crosses included!

Was Christ's cross a simple

upright pale or pole, or was it made of two or even three pieces of wood somehow fastened together as most people think? And does it matter? If so, why? These are all important questions, we believe. They are important if we would worship God in an acceptable way. We say this because the Lord Jesus said, **"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth"** (John 4:23-24). We want our worship to be acceptable to God. We want to be **"true worshippers"** and not false ones. Therefore the truth is important. Pagan lies are not acceptable to God! Remember Cain's sin! Cain was not punished by God for worshipping a false god. Cain's sin was the false worship of the true and living God. Shall we follow Cain and do as we please and call it worship, or shall we worship God **"in spirit and in truth"**? The last quoted verse above says we **"must"** worship in spirit and in truth if we would worship God. Worship is a purely spiritual matter and must be according to truth to be acceptable to God. After all, God is not **"worshipped with men's hands"** (Acts 17:25).

The first avenue of research that we will pursue is archaeology. The Romans hung multiplied thousands of people on pieces of wood, leaving them to die. This mode of execution was followed throughout the Roman Empire over hundreds of years. Sometimes they impaled their victims. This would necessitate the use of a simple upright piece of timber. Other times they fastened them to wooden uprights. In both instances they were left hanging to die a slow and painful death. But here is an

amazing fact! Get this! There is not a single ancient Roman "cross" ever found by archaeologists anywhere in the world! Think of that! You would think there would be a multitude of crosses, skeletons and other evidence as to how crucifixions were carried out. The following is an amazing quote from a Jerusalem-based online newspaper, The Times of Israel: "It is therefore an odd fact that archaeological evidence of this punishment — crosses, for example, or perforated skeletons — has never been found anywhere in the world, with one exception: the stone box containing Yehohanan's remains." (Source: <http://www.timesofisrael.com/in-a-stone-box-a-rare-trace-of-crucifixion/>) That article goes on to point out that the young Jewish man, Yehohanan, who was crucified likely had his hands tied to the cross as there is no evidence of his hands having been nailed. What is even more interesting is that his feet were not nailed one atop the other as portrayed in religious paintings. Rather his heels were placed one on each side of the upright pole and a huge nail or spike driven through each heel from the side. Thus his feet were fastened one to each side of the "cross." So archaeology is not of much help to us since it provides only one example of a crucified body. However, it does show that in at least one instance the mode of crucifixion differed from that portrayed by Catholic-tradition-influenced painters. We know from the Bible that the "hands" of the Lord Jesus were nailed to the cross in some fashion, but whether to the sides or front of the upright is unknown. One thing for sure: we ought not to accept carte blanche the claims of Rome and the paintings of men influenced by her!

In this study we would do well

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The Cross and

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to learn the meaning of the Greek words translated as “crucify” and “cross.” After all, the Greek words are the inspired Words God moved upon holy men to write. The two Greek words translated “cross” and “crucify” are related. First let us look at the word “Crucify” which comes from “stauroo.” That word, according to the universally accepted Methodist scholar James Strong, gives the primary meaning as “to stake, drive down stakes.” The secondary meaning is “to fortify with driven stakes, to palisade.” Most Americans are familiar with early day palisades or forts built by placing tree trunks upright in the ground. That is the idea here except it would refer to single upright posts. Only after giving these meanings does Mr. Strong introduce the word “crucify” into his definition based upon the old church word usage. However, Mr. Strong is well known to follow tradition in some instances rather than staying strictly with original meanings. Our point being: we must always be careful not to take the words of men, but to do our own research. By the way, the King James translators consistently translated “stauroo” as “crucify.”

Next let us look at the word for “cross.” The word for “cross” is “stauros” - just one letter short of the word for “crucify” as shown above. This word denotes an upright pale: nothing more. Church of England Greek scholar W.E. Vine has done admirably well in pointing out that there is no etymological reason - no reason in the words used - to think that the Christ’s “cross” was anything other than a rough upright pale, or post. In his dictionary he devotes considerable space to proving this. His action puts Mr. Vine quite at odds with

his church since Anglicanism is replete with crosses! The evidence must have been compelling to cause such a scholar to go against his own church in this matter.

Whether or not Christ’s cross was square hewn or not is unclear. Personally I doubt that the Romans expended much labor or much expense on preparing “crosses.” History tells us that Crassus crucified 6,000 of Spartacus’ followers. It is doubtful if his soldiers took time for the manufacture of “T” shaped crosses in that event. Very probably in some cases conveniently located living or dead trees were used. Roadside trees, or trees located in other public places, served their purpose well. After all, their purpose was to make a public display of their brand of violent justice. They wanted to instill fear of their authority in the peoples they subjugated. They were not seeking to make a beautiful monument or an attractive public edifice when they executed people in this way.

What does the Bible specifically say about the thing on which Jesus died? Five times the Bible says the thing upon which Christ was crucified was a tree. Those five places are as follows. **“The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree”** (Acts 5:30). **“And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree”** (Acts 10:39). **“And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre”** (Acts 13:29). **“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree”** (Gal. 3:13; see also Deuteronomy 21:22, 23). **“Who his own self bare our sins**

in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed” (I Peter 2:24). Now a two-beamed cross and a tree are not the same thing. Who will dare say they are?

There are two Greek words that are translated “tree” in our King James New Testaments. One word, “dendron,” is found 19 times in the Greek New Testament and always means a tree, whether living or dead. It is always translated that way in our King James Bibles. It is thought to have come from the Greek word for oak. But the word that is used in the above five quoted verses speaking of the tree upon which Christ was nailed is a completely different word. It is “xulon” and is found 19 times. It is translated ten times as tree, five times as staff, three times as wood and one time as stocks. We know what a tree is - generally thought of as tall and straight. A staff, of course, is a long more or less straight heavy walking stick used also as a weapon. The word wood refers to expensive wood such as boards and containers made from such things. Stocks were notched straight wooden beams fixed to come together as one so as to hold the feet of prisoners secure as in Acts 16:24. So we have it then: the word “xulon” means a straight piece of wood. The word “stauros” (translated cross) means an upright pole or paling. What does all this prove? It means there is no reason in the words used in the Bible to cause us to think Christ was nailed to a two or three beamed cross. None whatsoever!

If you and I had never been told about such a two-beamed device or seen a picture painted by some man who lived hundreds of years after Christ’s death, the idea of a two-beamed cross would never enter our minds just from reading

the Bible. There is just no Bible evidence at all for that Catholic idea which was later popularized by Renaissance painters. (These Renaissance painters, coming as they did out of the Dark Ages, also painted a long haired, fair complexioned, blue eyed Jesus, female angels and portrayed Daniel’s three friends dressed in long tight hose and other garments such western European men of their times wore. The facts are these: in spite of the paintings, Jesus was a Sephardic Jew and they are of dark complexion, dark hair and eyes. Angels are always spoken of in the Bible as masculine. And Daniel and his friends did not dress like King Henry VIII of England!)

So someone asks, where did the two or three beamed cross idea originate? While a great host of authorities could be cited, we furnish just one paragraph from *The Encyclopedia Britannica*: “From its simplicity of form, the cross has been used both as a religious symbol and as an ornament, from the dawn of man’s civilization. Various objects, dating from periods long anterior to the Christian era, have been found, marked with crosses of different designs, in almost every part of the old world. India, Syria, Persia and Egypt have all yielded numberless examples, while numerous instances, dating from the later Stone Age to Christian times, have been found in nearly every part of Europe. The use of the cross as a religious symbol in pre-Christian times, and among non-Christian peoples, may probably be regarded as almost universal, and in very many cases it was connected with some form of nature worship. (*The Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th ed., 1910, Vol. 7, pg. 506). Since the cross as a symbol predates both Christianity and the Roman Empire, it cannot be of Christian

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origin. That is certain! It does indeed symbolize something, but not the death of Christ!

There is no doubt that the cross is an idolatrous or pagan symbol, found universally around the world. It is even found in the pagan symbolism of Native American "Indians" before contact with Europeans. So how did this pagan symbol become associated with the death of Christ? In about the third century, practicing pagans, having been sprinkled, were accepted into Catholic churches. They brought with them many idolatrous ideas. In order to make these pagan converts and keep them happy in their newly found "Christianity," the Catholics borrowed all sorts of their pagan customs and practices. They brought these things into their "worship." Later, many of these pagan things, such as the cross, were brought over into Protestantism by the so-called Reformers. Unhappily, a great many Baptists have succumbed to this deception from their Catholic and Protestant neighbors. Does it matter whether or not Baptists understand that the liturgical "cross" is God-dishonoring paganism? Does it matter whether Baptists understand that there is no Biblical evidence for the liturgical cross of the Catholics? We think it does. More importantly we believe God thinks it matters for He warned us about the very real danger of idols of all sorts. And to give the unscriptural cross a prominent and honored (venerated) place in our meeting houses and in what is supposed to be the purely spiritual matter of worship we think is nothing less than evil. Surely the children of God who know the Word of God – God's "precepts" – will say with the Psalmist, **"Through thy**

precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way" (Ps. 119:104). We can only wonder at professing Christians who love false ways, especially when the truth and worship of God is concerned. **"Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen"** (I John 5:21).



"This Do in

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importance in our lives would be much different – yea, much less – than they are now. The purpose of a memorial is to preserve and stir up remembrance. That which the Lord's Supper memorializes is the death of Jesus for you and me. **"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come"** (I Cor. 11:26). The Lord's Supper reminds us of the fact and the meaning of Jesus' death. Why did He die?

▪ He was **"delivered for our offences"** (Rom. 4:25).

▪ **"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly"** (Rom. 5:6).

▪ **"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures"** (I Cor. 15:3).

Jesus' death was the only acceptable sacrifice for sin, by which the debt of your sins is paid and the price of your ransom from death is satisfied. Jesus' death is His making atonement for your sins so that you might be reconciled to God through Him. Jesus' death is the only way through which you might have spiritual life, if you believe on Him with all your heart.

Let us note that Jesus' death is only effectual to the saving of them that believe in Him.

▪ **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"** (John 3:16).

▪ **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life"** (John 6:47).

▪ **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation"** (Rom. 10:9-10).

▪ **"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned"** (Mark 16:16).

We could refer to many other passages of Scripture; but these should suffice to show that none are saved by the death of Jesus for sin except those who believe in Him for salvation, forgiveness of sins, and eternal life. We know that if a man were to determine and provide a cure for some disease or illness, none would be cured save those who partook of that which was provided as the cure. The doctor may prescribe medicine for that which ails you; but you shall not be whole until you take the medicine. In a far greater sense, you cannot be saved, have your sins forgiven and be righteous in God's sight, except you believe on Him who died for sins, was buried, and rose again, which is Jesus Christ, God's Son. **"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins"** (John 8:24). **"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him"** (John 3:36).

Now beloved, Jesus is the One who saves. The Lord's Supper is a

memorial of Him who saves sinners and that which He did in order to save sinners from their sins. The memorial of that which Jesus did does not save you from sin, or have a part in saving you from sin. When we look on the memorials of those who fought in war, we do not think that the memorial fought, that the memorial suffered loss, that the memorial won battles, or that the memorial is the reason we have liberty. Why do people believe that a memorial of Jesus' death gives them spiritual life, freedom from Satan, forgiveness of sins, and a relationship with God? Jesus gives those who believe in Him these things. His blood was shed for sins, and the cup is only a memorial thereof. We ought therefore not to ascribe to the memorial that which is only true of Him and His blood. We ought to use the memorial of His blood for the purpose for which He gave it, to remember Him and the price which He paid for our sins. **"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot"** (I Pet. 1:18-19). Jesus did not say to drink of the cup in order to have your sins remitted, but that His blood was shed for the remission of sins. **"For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins"** (Matt. 26:28). Was His blood literally in the cup? Is His blood literally in the cup today, as the Roman Catholics teach? Nay, beloved, but this is a memorial of Him and His sacrifice for sin, a picture to show and remind us of Him who truly saves sinners who come to Him by faith. A picture is good in order to

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remind us of something important, of someone we value and love. A picture is no good if you do not truly know the One whom the picture represents – it has no true meaning for you, no matter how much meaning you ascribe to it in your vain imagination. No doubt many will try to say that they are trusting in Jesus when as yet they are trusting in a picture of Him. Such is madness! If a man tried to carry on a relationship with a picture of his wife, all would rightly call him mad. You are mad, you who trust in a representation, a reminder of something else, but do not have the real substance, which is Christ! You who say, "I am taking my communion, and therefore I am going to Heaven," know you not that you are doomed as long as you believe such and trust not in Christ alone? If a fireman came to rescue you from a burning house, you would not be satisfied to have the picture of the fireman, or the fireman's memorial: no, you would want the fireman, and you would have nothing else! Why will you abide in the house of your sins clinging to your communion cup, when as yet Christ saves all who trust in Him and His shed blood upon the tree of the cross? Have no more of pictures and memorials until you have the substance; and when once you have Christ, you will find you truly had no picture or memorial of Him at all, but a vain and cheap imitation. And you will be able, when once you have Christ and are following Him, to learn how to rightly observe the memorials which He left His kind of church.

The value of the Lord's Supper is not in itself, but in that which it reminds us of: **"this do in remembrance of me."** The world's

religions decry true Christians for not giving value to the Lord's Supper, for the world's religions worship it (or rather a distortion and perversion of it), and ascribe saving power to it, when as yet we ought to worship Christ who alone has saving power. The world's religions have copied and imitated the Lord's Supper, and the other church ordinance of baptism, because man loves rites, ceremonies, rituals, and performances, and substitutes these for the truth. Ask a person if he is saved, and you will likely be told about the church he attends, the time he was "baptized," or about his communion taking. He has many things, but he lacks one thing, which is Christ. The Ethiopian eunuch who heard Philip preach Jesus, was told he must have Jesus before baptism. **"And the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God"** (Acts 8:36-37). When we rightly observe the Lord's Supper in remembrance of Jesus and His death, we give the ordinance its proper value. The value of the bread is in that which it serves to picture, the body of Jesus broken for sinners. The value of the wine is in that which it represents, the blood of Jesus shed for the putting away and cleansing of sins. We ought to be reminded over and over of these things because they are the greatest things ever made known unto man! Here in these things, the body and blood of Jesus, is a way opened for the vilest of sinners to be justified in God's sight. Here in these things is a manifestation of God's love for sinful men, women, boys, and girls. Here in these things is power to make a child of wrath into a child of God. When we preach we ought to seek to plainly make known the

facts and meaning of Jesus and His death, for in these there is more value than in all other things in all the world. **"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God"** (I Cor. 1:18).

Having noted these introductory thoughts, let us pass on to note (1) the keeping of this ordinance: **"this do in remembrance of me;"** then (2) the teaching of this ordinance, which is the substitutionary death of Christ; and finally (3) the purpose of it, which is to memorialize the Lord's death in the minds and hearts of His saints.

First, we see that there is to be a keeping of the Lord's Supper. Every Baptist church has the same privilege and responsibility of observing this ordinance as Christ delivered it to the first church, the apostles being the charter members. The first reason we have for keeping this ordinance is that Christ commanded that it should be kept: **"this do."** We cannot say we love Christ, whom we ought to love first, when we do not the things which He commands. Nothing can be plainer than, **"If ye love me, keep my commandments"** (John 14:15); and again, **"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me"** (John 14:21). Men make light of keeping Christ's commands today; but Christ makes much of it, and He has His eye upon each one of His churches. His eyes are as a flame of fire, and He says, **"I know thy works"** (Rev. 2:2). The members of this church ought to have but one heart, and that for doing those things which please Him. He is **"the head over all things to the church"** (Eph. 1:22); and the only way we truly honor our head is by being obedient unto Him. Do we love the Lord? Then

we ought to keep His Supper, the memorial which He gave us of Himself. We ought to keep it in the way He instituted it, using the same elements – unleavened bread and fermented wine of grapes; for the same purpose – to commemorate and proclaim His death; and within the same context – the local, visible, New Testament church made up of known members, they only observing the ordinance while assembled together as one body of Christ.

The teaching of this ordinance is the very heart of the gospel, the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ for sinful men, women, boys, and girls. **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"** (Rom. 5:8). **"And he is the propitiation [atoning sacrifice] for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world"** (I John 2:2). Jesus **"took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you."** He gave Himself for us. He said in another place, **"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep"** (John 10:11). He took the place of sinners upon the cross, the place of sin-guiltiness before God and condemnation. **"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many"** (Heb. 9:28). **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit"** (I Pet. 3:18). This was illustrated by the breaking of the bread. Jesus **"likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."** His blood was shed for our sins. Upon Calvary's cross Jesus took my place and suffered the wrath of God

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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.

COLORADO WOMAN CONVICTED OF ASSAULTING MOM, BUT NOT MURDERING BABY

(WNS)--A Colorado jury convicted 35-year-old Dynel Lane on Feb. 23 of attempted first-degree murder for her brutal attack on Michelle Wilkins, 27, who was seven months pregnant with a baby girl. Last March, Lane lured Wilkins to her home with a Craigslist post advertising free maternity clothes. Once in the basement, Lane pinned Wilkins to a bed, strangled her, and cut her baby out of the womb with two kitchen knives. Wilkins lived, but her unborn daughter, Aurora, did not. Lane was also found guilty of unlawful termination of a pregnancy, but prosecutors did not have legal grounds to charge her with murder in Aurora's death. One of 12 states that do not allow prosecution for fetal homicide, Colorado has been a battleground for pro-life advocates.

GOSPEL FOR ASIA SUED FOR FRAUD

(WNS)--A Dallas-based law firm filed a class-action lawsuit on Feb. 8 against Gospel for Asia Inc. (GFA), alleging the Texas-based international ministry has engaged in fraud and racketeering. GFA has claimed that hundreds of millions it has received in donations have gone to help the poor and preach the gospel. The lawsuit, though, alleges that ministry leaders were "covertly diverting the money to a multi-million dollar personal empire." Gospel for Asia officials did not immediately return phone calls and emails requesting comment. The lawsuit, filed by the Stanley Law Group on behalf of Matthew and Jennifer Dickson of Rogers, Ark., asks a U.S. District Court to order money returned to unwitting donors whose well-intentioned contributions were, according to the lawsuit, misappropriated.

"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (I Tim. 6:10).

JUDGE ORDERS CALIFORNIA PREGNANCY CENTERS TO GIVE ABORTION INFO

(WNS)--A federal judge refused to grant a preliminary injunction on Feb. 12 against a California law that forces pro-life pregnancy centers to advocate for abortion. Under the law, pro-life pregnancy centers must give information about abortion even though they exist to offer abortion alternatives, Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) attorney Matt Bowman argued during a Jan. 28 hearing. The National Institute of Family and Life Advocates (NIFLA) has sought an injunction with ADF's help since October. NIFLA includes 1,350 pro-life pregnancy resource centers, including 115 in California. But Judge John A. Houston refused to put the law on hold while the lawsuit proceeds, becoming the third federal judge to do so. He indicated during the hearing that he thought the required information was necessary for women to make "an informed decision."

EXCHANGING HUGS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

(WNS)--As President Barack Obama met with Southeast Asian heads of state in California in mid-February, religious leaders from many of the same countries gathered in Taiwan to discuss persecution in the region. In contrast to the smiles and pleasantries exchanged at the Sunnylands summit, the participants of the inaugural Asia Pacific Religious Freedom Forum spoke solemnly about human rights and religious liberty violations in their home countries. In some cases they lamented

how little the U.S. has done to help.

NEW STATE LAWS COULD CLOSE FETAL TISSUE 'DONATION' LOOPHOLE

(WNS)--Idaho has joined two other states considering legislation to ban donations of aborted fetal tissue and close the donation-for-reimbursement loophole used by Planned Parenthood. The Idaho Senate State Affairs Committee voted along party lines on Feb. 19 to introduce the Idaho Unborn Infants Dignity Act, which would criminalize donating fetal tissue from abortions. It also prohibits research centers from conducting experiments using aborted fetal tissue, a ban under consideration in three other states. Lawmakers introduced the bill after the Center for Medical Progress exposed Planned Parenthood's fetal tissue "donation" program. Although federal law bans the sale of aborted baby body parts, Planned Parenthood claims it is free to charge collection and processing fees for the trouble of packaging up tiny hearts, lungs, and livers. Pro-lifers note there is little difference between an agreed on donation fee and a sales price.

THE MAKING OF AN ABORTION MARKET MONOPOLY

(WNS)--The U.S. Supreme Court will hear arguments March 2nd in one of the most important abortion cases it has considered in years. At issue are two provisions in HB2, a bill former Texas Governor Rick Perry signed into law in July 2013. The bill requires abortionists to have admitting privileges within 30 miles of a hospital and mandates all abortion facilities meet ambulatory surgical center (ASC) standards. The law also bans abortions after 20 weeks (with certain rare exceptions, not including rape) and adds restrictions for chemical abortions. The plaintiffs in Whole Woman's Health v. Cole contend the new regulations cause "undue burdens" that place "substantial obstacles" on women seeking abortion. Perhaps more important to the plaintiffs, though, is the consequence of laws like HB2, which "burden" their abortion businesses with costly requirements. But thanks in part to a seemingly endless supply of taxpayer money, Planned Parenthood—the nation's largest abortion provider—is spending its way out of state

regulations and expanding its market share in the process.

"Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil" (Eccl. 8:11).

NORTH CAROLINA LAWMAKERS VOW TO KILL CHARLOTTE ANTI- BIAS BILL

(WNS)--North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory vowed to "correct" a sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) ordinance passed in Charlotte, calling it a "misguided government regulation." One year after city representatives defeated a similar ordinance amid contentious debate, the Charlotte City Council on Feb. 22 expanded the city's nondiscrimination ordinance by adding sexual orientation and gender identity as protected classes. Under the leadership of newly elected Mayor Jennifer Roberts, council passed the changes 7-4. The expanded ordinance forbids discrimination against LGBT persons in all public accommodations, even allowing biological males and females to use the public bathroom and locker rooms of the gender with which they identify. Opponents are turning to the state legislature to abolish the law.

"...Male and female created he them" (Gen. 1:27).

TEXAS NOW REQUIRES BIRTH CERTIFICATES TO PROVE STUDENT ATHLETES' GENDER

(WNS)--Student athletes at Texas public high schools must show their birth certificates as proof of gender identity under a policy change adopted overwhelmingly in February by school superintendents. LGBT activists say the change is unfair to transgender athletes but supporters note attempts to erase biological gender are an untested social experiment with far-reaching and unforeseen consequences. "You start needing to check birth certificates when you have a breakdown of honesty, integrity, or, in this case, worldview," said John Stonestreet, president of the Colson Center for Christian Worldview. "But requiring a birth certificate is not the issue. What is going on now is a social experiment. The concept of gender being

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detached from biological, sexual reality is brand new." The University Interscholastic League (UIL), the state's governing body for high school sports, said the requirement will systematize advice the league has been giving to superintendents. The policy change, adopted by a 586-32 vote, goes into effect Aug. 1.

DEMOCRATS BATTLE REPUBLICANS OVER FETAL- TISSUE PROBE

(WNS)--The first hearing of the House Select Investigative Panel on Infant Lives on Mar. 2 revealed a deep partisan divide between pro-abortion lawmakers claiming Congress has better things to do, and pro-life House members concerned about the morality of an industry harvesting baby body parts from abortions. Republicans came to the hearing armed with exhibits and prepared lines of questioning to get to the bottom of what is happening in an alleged fetal-tissue-for-profit industry involving abortion provider Planned Parenthood, which was exposed by undercover videos released by the Center for Medical Progress last summer. Committee chairwoman Rep. Marsha Blackburn, R-Tenn., made her intentions clear from the start: "This is ... about bioethics. We did not invite our guests here to debate election year politics or journalism ethics or whether this select panel should be funded." But that did not stop Democrats from attempting to undermine Blackburn and other GOP members of the panel.

BEHEADINGS, IMPRISONMENT MADE 2015 WORST YEAR FOR CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION, REPORT FINDS

A recent report from Open Doors USA says beheadings, imprisonment and eviction from ancestral homelands made 2015 the worst year on record for persecution of Christians, with North Korea topping a list of 10 otherwise Muslim nations as the most dangerous places for followers of the Gospel.

Driven by ISIS' violent reign in the north and west, Iraq was the second most dangerous place for Christians last

year. The terrorist organization, which has a large presence in Iraq, Syria and Libya, has made beheading of Christians its bloody hallmark, even as it cleanses large swaths of the Middle East of all religious minorities. The number of Bible followers there has fallen to an estimated 275,000, from 1.5 million in 2003. Some experts in the international community believe that the Middle Eastern country could see its Christian population completely gone within five years. The dwindling numbers are due to genocide, flight and forced conversions at the hands of ISIS jihadists.

Third on the list is the African nation of Eritrea, where Christians are systematically imprisoned for their faith by an authoritarian regime.

Also in the top 10 were Afghanistan, Syria, Pakistan, Somalia, Sudan, Iran and Libya.

"Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter" (Ps. 44:22).



"This Do in

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which I deserved as a sinner before God. He did not die for those who deserved His love or desired it; He died for sinners. All men are sinners by nature, by practice, and by choice; and Jesus' blood is the only thing that will make an atonement for your soul and cause your sins to be put away never to be remembered or called to mind by the Lord.

The Lord's Supper teaches that the substitutionary death of Christ is effectual to those who believe. Those who ate the unleavened bread and drank the fermented wine showed that they had a part in what was being pictured, Christ's death for sin. They showed that they counted His death as being for them. They showed that they identified themselves with Him as their Saviour and Lord. A person's eating of that bread and drinking of that cup pictures his or her own

personal faith in Christ. Jesus said on a different occasion, **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day"** (John 6:53-54). These words did not mean that they should literally eat His Person, but that they should believe on Him as the God-sent Saviour, and believe in Him for life eternal: as He said just prior to these things, **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life"** (John 6:47); and, **"I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst"** (John 6:35). We eat literal food in order to have physical life. You must believe on Jesus Christ who died for sin, was buried, and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures in order to have spiritual life, life toward God.

The purpose of the Lord's Supper is to keep those who are saved and members in a true Baptist church in remembrance of His death: **"this do in remembrance of me."** We need to be reminded of His death because of what He accomplished in it, namely our redemption from sin and death. We are to remember that by His death we have been reconciled to God. We are to be constrained by His love, and judge that if He died for us, we ought to live for Him who died for us and rose again. Nothing can be more profitable to us than a right remembrance of Jesus' death. A right remembrance of His death will cause us to humble our hearts before God, in that we have nothing in which to glory except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. A right remembrance of His death will urge us to reckon ourselves dead

indeed unto sin, and live no longer as the servants of sin, but rather as the servants of righteousness. A right remembrance of His death will fan the flame of missionary zeal in our hearts to preach the gospel unto every creature. A right remembrance of His death will prompt us to love the brethren more sincerely, seeing that Christ died for them. **"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren"** (I John 3:16).



The Two Natures

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the greatest mysteries of the Bible.

The Scriptures teach very distinctly that Jesus Christ was all God and all man. In the one Person of Jesus Christ there are two natures, each in its completeness and integrity. Therefore, theologians call Him the God-man.

HIS HUMAN NATURE

The reality of His human nature is taught in numerous passages in the Scriptures. The Bible plainly says that Jesus Christ was a true man. He possessed all the elements, faculties, and powers essential to humanity. Those who deny this, as the modern Christian Science Movement, destroy the Christian faith and deny the Scriptures, just as much as those who deny His deity.

A MAN IN OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY

The humanity of our Savior is taught in the Old Testament prophecies. The Messiah was to be the Seed of the woman (Gen. 3:15). He would descend from the family line of Abraham and David. Unless the Messiah was a literal man, He could not inherit

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The Two Natures

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the literal throne of David (Isa. 9:6; Luke 1:31-33).

Isaiah had reference to the humanity of the Messiah when he wrote: **"Unto us a child is born."** He even revealed that this child would be born of a virgin from the family of King David (Isa. 7:14). In another chapter he spoke of Him as **"a man of sorrows"** (Isa. 53:3).

HIS HUMAN BIRTH

The humanity of the Savior was well attested by His human birth. He had a human mother and entered the world through the same portals that other human beings did. Luke tells us: **"And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger"** (Luke 2:7).

That Christ was a man can be seen from His human development. As the Son of man He nursed at His mother's breasts. He had to learn to walk and talk. Luke informs us: **"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man"** (Luke 2:52). This holy Child sat among the doctors of the law, **"both hearing them, and asking them questions"** (Luke 2:46). The Scripture says that He "learned obedience by the things which He suffered" (Heb. 5:8).

HE IS CALLED A MAN

Jesus Christ expressly called Himself a man when on earth. John records Him saying: **"But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth"** (John 8:40). He seemed to delight in calling Himself **"the Son of man."** This title fell from His lips 82 times in the Four Gospels.

The inspired New Testament writers declared His humanity. On the day of Pentecost Peter said: **"Jesus of Nazareth, a man**

approved of God among you" (Acts 2:22). The Apostle Paul wrote to the church at Rome: The **"one man, Jesus Christ"** (Rom. 5:15). To the Corinthians he wrote: **"By man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead"** (I Cor. 15:21).

TEMPTED AS A MAN

God cannot be tempted with evil (James 1:13), but the man Christ Jesus **"was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin"** (Heb. 4:15). The Son of man was **"forty days tempted of the devil"** (Luke 4:2). The writer of Hebrews informs us that Christ **"suffered being tempted"** (Heb. 2:18). To be tempted of the Devil the Second Person of the Trinity had to become a man.

The Redeemer overcame every temptation of Satan by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. The Second Adam whipped the Devil as a man, demonstrating that every redeemed man has enough heavenly resources to defeat Satan.

LIVED AS A MAN

All during His earthly life He manifested truly human qualities. God never gets tired (Isa. 40:28). Yet the Bible tells us that the man Christ Jesus suffered fatigue: **"Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well"** (John 4:6). He had a body of flesh and frailty, for He became tired.

The divine Being is never hungry, but Jesus Christ experienced human hunger. Mark writes: **"And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry"** (Mark 11:12). Matthew adds: **"And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered"** (Matt. 4:2). This could only be said of a true man.

The eternal Son never needs sleep (Ps. 121:4), yet the Son of man

was subject to sleep. **"And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep"** (Matt. 8:24). He is said to sleep to show that He was really and truly man, subject to the sinless infirmities of our nature.

The shortest verse in the New Testament is the strongest on teaching the humanity of the Savior. It is written in John 11:35: **"Jesus wept."** The Son of man was possessed of a true human soul, susceptible to the impressions of joy and grief. Here we see Him as **"the man of sorrows."**

The God-man experienced compassion: **"But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them"** (Matt. 9:36). He was acquainted with anxiety: **"Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared"** (Heb. 5:7).

DIED AS A MAN

The eternal God could not die, but the man Christ Jesus did suffer and die. He could not be the sinner's substitute unless He became flesh and blood. Jesus Christ suffered the bloody sweat (Luke 22:44). The mob spit in His face (Matt. 27:30) and plucked out His beard (Isa. 50:6). The power of Rome put Christ on the cross: **"And they crucified him"** (Matt. 27:35). Men could not do these things to God. These things could only be done to Jesus Christ Who came in the flesh.

The human body of Christ was buried in Joseph's tomb (Mark 15:43-46). The angel rolled away the stone to permit the glorified human body of Christ to come forth (Matt. 28:2). The resurrection body of the Lord consisted of **"flesh and bones"**

(Luke 24:39). The disciples felt of his body (I John 1:1).

Jesus Christ is the ideal man; He is all that man ought to be. He is the perfect example to us (I Pet. 2:21). The Second Adam was more than the first Adam ever was. He was the greatest man Who ever lived in this world. The goal of redemption is to conform the elect to the image of Christ (Rom. 8:29).

PERPETUITY OF HIS HUMANITY

The Messiah never gave up His humanity. He forever assumed a human nature. If He ever did lay His humanity aside, He would cease to be **"the Son of man."** The appearances of Christ after His resurrection gave full proof that He possessed a literal yet glorified body. The epistles insist upon the perpetuity of the Lord's incarnation (Rom. 4:24; 6:3-5; 8:11; I Cor. 15:3-8, 20, 23; Eph. 5:20; Phil. 3:20-21; I Thess. 4:14; Heb. 2:14-16; 13:8).

The very basis for our bodily resurrection is the glorified humanity of Christ (Rom. 8:11; Eph. 5:30). I Corinthians 15:45 reads: **"The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit."** I understand by **"spirit"** here, not the Holy Spirit or even Christ's divine nature, but His total Divine-human. The last Adam is the progenitor of the new race of redeemed men. The glorified Son of man is our life-giving spirit (John 6:63).

The humanity of the Savior is the groundwork of His high priestly work (Heb. 2:17-18). Christ can fully help us because He is a true glorified man Who experienced human trials on earth. If He did not sit at this hour in a literal body at the Father's right hand, He would be disqualified from acting

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The Two Natures

(Continued from page 22) ♦

as our Intercessor. Thank God! At the right hand of the Majesty on high there sits **“the man Christ Jesus”** (I Tim. 2:5).

The return of Christ is the coming of **“the Son of man”** (Luke 21:27). If Christ does not possess a literal body, it would not be possible for Him to return bodily and visibly to the earth as the Bible declares. Zechariah discloses the body of the returning Christ will still have visible wounds for the Israelites to see (Zech. 12:10; 13:6).

THE DEITY OF CHRIST

The deity of Jesus Christ is obvious to those who read the New Testament and believe the divine record. Angels, men, and demons declared Him to be the Son of God with power. No one denies this but an infidel.

The incarnation did not diminish the deity of the Second Person of the Trinity even during the period of His humiliation and suffering. The eternal Son laid aside the manifestation of glory when He became a man, but He never emptied Himself of His divine nature and attributes. The Son was not only all man; He was at all times all God.

STATEMENTS FROM THE SCRIPTURES

The Lord from Heaven claims to be equal with God. **“But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God”** (John 5:17-18). There is not a shadow of doubt that Jesus did claim absolute equality with God. The Jews understood Him to mean such on this occasion. If

Jesus Christ is not God, then He is a deceiver and self-deceived.

In New Testament times men called Him God. Thomas addressed Him as **“My Lord and my God”** (John 20:28). Every attempt to weaken the force of this testimony to the deity of Christ is broken before the perfect clearness of these words of Thomas.

The Apostle Paul wrote of Christ: **“Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever”** (Rom. 9:5). This emphatic assertion of the deity of Christ seems too plain to admit controversy. If Christ is God at all, He must be God over all, for the Bible knows nothing of a secondary, minor God.

In Titus 2:13 there is a direct, definite declaration of Christ's divinity **“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.”** The second coming of Christ will be the coming of **“the great God,”** for Jesus Christ is God.

I Timothy 3:16 says: **“God was manifest in the flesh.”** The Savior was not a man-made God, but God made a man. The One manifested in the flesh was God, the eternal Word.

The Deity of Christ is set forth in I John 5:20 where He is called **“the true God, and eternal life.”** Christ is as much the true God as is the Father. Of Christ, Jude penned: **“To the only wise God our Savior”** (Jude 25).

HE HAS ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

The attributes of God are ascribed to Jesus Christ. The Son of God was the source of life: **“In him was life”** (John 1:4). **“For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given the Son to have life in himself”** (John 5:26). The Lord from Heaven was self-existent; He

had **“the power of an endless life”** (Heb. 7:16).

Our Lord is said to be immutable: **“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever”** (Heb. 13:8). He possessed absolute holiness. Peter called Him **“the Holy One of God”** (John 6:69 ASV). Christ was the embodiment of truth: **“I am the . . . truth”** (John 14:6). These terms cannot in the absolute sense be said of a mere man.

As God is eternal, even so is Christ: **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God”** (John 1:1). The eternal Word existed **“before all things”** (Col. 1:17). As God is omnipresent, even so is Christ. The Lord Jesus promised His church: **“I am with you alway”** (Matt. 28:20). As God is omnipotent, even so is Jesus Christ. He aid: **“All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth”** (Matt. 28:18). He also declared: **“If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it”** (John 14:14),

The omniscience of the Son of God is well attested in the Four Gospels. Observe certain expressions in the Gospels: **“Jesus knowing their thoughts”** (Matt. 9:4). **“Jesus . . . knew all . . . for he knew what was in man”** (John 2:24-25). **“His disciples said unto him. . . . Now we are sure that thou knowest all things”** (John 16:29-30).

The supernatural knowledge of Christ is discovered by His discernment of Peter (John 1:42; 21:19; Matt. 26:34), His finding of Philip (John 1:43), His recognition of Nathanael (John 1:47-50), His consciousness of the woman of Samaria (John 4:17-19, 39), His awareness of the multitude of fish (Luke 5:6-9; John 21:6), His sensibility of the death of Lazarus (John 11:14), His realization of the whereabouts of the ass's colt

(Matt. 21:2), and the upper room (Mark 14:15), and His perception of the fall of Jerusalem (Matt. 24:2).

HE DOES THE WORK OF GOD

The very works of God are ♦ (Continued on page 24)



BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 2-1-2016 to 2-29-2016

Beginning Balance \$2,351.04

RECEIPTS:

Amazing Grace B. C., Stockdale, TX	100.00
B. C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL	25.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	300.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL	60.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX	50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV	313.45
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	150.00
Carol Willett, Edgewater, FL	50.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL	25.00
Earnest Kramer, Carthage, NY	60.00
Emmanuel B. C., Oldtown, KY	100.00
Faith B. C. Lynn, AR	12.50
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
Thomas Hinson, Choctaw, OK	14.00
Michael Sherman, Ashland, KY	30.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH	100.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN	50.00
Parkway L. B. C., Springfield, OR	200.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	100.00
Portland B. C., Plumersville, AR	50.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS	25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX	60.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	25.00
Subscriptions	128.00
Anonymous	1,225.00
Dividing checks	150.00
Sub Total	\$3,807.95
TOTAL	\$6,158.99

EXPENDITURES:

Printing	490.00
Postage	693.55
Wages	2,300.00
FICA	175.96
Supplies	122.25
Bank Charge	13.00
Dividing checks	150.00
Total Expenditures	\$3,944.76
ENDING BALANCE	\$2,214.23

BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 2-1-2016 to 2-29-2016

Beginning Balance \$7,552.04

RECEIPTS:

Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
Calvary B. C., Everson, WA	200.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	100.00
TOTAL	525.00
TOTAL	8,077.04

EXPENDITURES:

Radio Time	754.98
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	754.98
TOTAL	7,322.06
Interest	+0.06
ENDING BALANCE	\$7,322.12

The Two Natures

(Continued from page 23) ♦

ascribed to Jesus Christ. He is said to be the Creator: **“All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made”** (John 1:3). **“For by him were all things created”** (Col. 1:16). Christ is also said to be the Sustainer of all creation: **“By him all things consist”** (Col. 1:17). The writer of Hebrews tells us that Christ upholds all things by the word of His power (Heb. 1:3). The Lord from Heaven is the principle of cohesion in the universe, making it cosmos instead of chaos. The universe derives its life from Him.

The Son of God has power to raise the dead and to judge men. This can only be said of God. The voice of the Son of God will raise the dead (John 5:28-29). He has **“authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man”** (John 5:27).

No one but God can forgive sins, yet Jesus Christ said to Mary Magdalene: **“Thy sins are forgiven”** (Luke 7:48). Nothing is plainer in the Four Gospels than the fact that **“the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins”** (Mark 2:9). It is only because this is so that we can go out and preach **“repentance and remission of sins”** in the name of Christ (Luke 24:47).

WORSHIPPED AS GOD

The Savior was worshipped on earth by His disciples. The wise men **“worshipped him”** (Matt. 2:11). The woman of Canaan **“worshipped him, saying, Lord help me”** (Matt. 15:25). After His resurrection the disciples **“worshipped him”** (Matt. 28:9). At the ascension they are again said to have **“worshipped him”** (Luke 24:52). This was an act of blasphemy unless Jesus Christ was

very God of very God.

The angels of Heaven worship Jesus Christ. When the Father brought the first-begotten into the world, He said: **“And let all the angels of God worship him”** (Heb. 1:6). The redeemed saints in Heaven worship Jesus Christ (Rev. 5:9-14).

CONCLUSION

All men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father; for the Son is **“the great God.”** To reject Him is to dishonor the Father Who sent Him (John 5:23). At the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue should confess that He is Lord to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:11-12). No person can be saved unless he believes in his heart and confesses with his mouth the Lord Jesus (Rom. 10:9).

*Fairest Lord Jesus,
Ruler of all nature,
O Thou of God and man the Son,
Thee will I cherish,
Thee will I honor,
Thou my soul's glory, joy, and crown.*



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sister Annabell Schuetz went to be with her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ on Tuesday, March 1st, 2016. Annabell was the lovely wife of Pastor Keith Schuetz. They were married almost sixty-

nine years. She spent many years through thick and thin beside her husband in the mission field. She was a devoted wife and mother who loved her Lord first. Annabell spent her last years in Stockdale, Texas with her husband as he pastored the Amazing Grace Baptist Church.

“.. and thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty” (I Sam. 20:18).

The Big Creek Baptist Church of Wayne, WV, and pastor Matthew Stepp would like to announce Revival Services April 25th thru 29th. Service time is 7:30 p.m. nightly.

Scheduled speakers are Elders Joe Collins (Monday), Tom Hysell (Tuesday), Roger Reed (Wednesday), Bob Patton (Thursday), and John Fry (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 April 30th. Scheduled

speakers are Elders Doyal Thomas, and Nathaniel Hille.

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

All are invited to attend.

The Philadelphia B. C. of Decatur, AL and Pastor Doyal Thomas would like to announce their Summer Revival Meeting for June 15th - 19th. Service times are Wednesday thru Friday at 7:00 p.m., Saturday 10:00 a.m., and Sunday 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

The primary speaker will be Elder Timothy Works. Elder Enrique Cantu will be the additional speaker on Saturday which is the Quarterly Fellowship. A noon meal will be provided Saturday.

All are invited to attend.

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 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.

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