

## Spiritual Resurrection

By Milburn Cockrell  
(1941 - 2002)

"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1).

In chapter 1 of the Book of Ephesians the Apostle Paul had mentioned how the quickening power of God was exerted on Christ to raise Him literally from the dead (1:19-20). Now he shows that this same quickening power was exerted on the Ephesians to raise them spiritually from the dead. He mentions this spiritual resurrection again in verse 5: "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened



us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)."

Here in my text we see a history of spiritual life. It reverses the order of natural life. Instead of a funeral procession to the grave, there is a resurrection gladness as the dead spirit of a man is raised to life eternal by a powerful and sovereign act of God.

### THE AWFUL FACT

The reason why man's spirit needs a resurrection is because it is dead. Man in his unrenowned condition is not pictured as sick and in the hospital. He is said to be dead and in the cemetery. Neither did Paul say some are deader than others. There is no such thing as dead, deader, and deadest. The unregenerate is as dead to the spiritual world as a dead man to the physical world.

In what sense is the unregenerate man dead? He is not dead in the sense that he

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## Christ Is All in All

By Hanserd Knollys  
(1598 - 1691)

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1. The great need you have of Christ may move you to prize Him and set a high esteem of Him. Christ is the only thing necessary, and therefore the titles given Him in the Scripture are such that declare His necessity to believers, for He is our Life; our Light, our Bread, Water, Milk, Wine, His flesh our meat indeed, His blood our drink indeed. He is our Father, our Husband, our Brother, our Friend, our King, Priest, and Prophet. He is our Justification, Sanctification, and Redemption. He is our Peace, our all. We have no acceptance with God without His mediation, no acceptance with God without His intercession (Rev. 8:3-4). We cannot resist the next temptation, neither can we overcome the next corruption,

nor shall we be able to suffer with patience the next persecution, or endure any tribulation, unless we have renewed strength from Christ. Believers cannot have increase of grace by Christ (John 15:1-2). Lord, increase our faith said the disciples, neither can they persevere in grace unless they be preserved in Christ (Jude 1). To conclude, we are nothing, have nothing, can do nothing without Christ. "... **for without me ye can do nothing**" (John 15:5); that is to say, you cannot in your own strength nor in the strength of any grace received, do any thing to please God or to glorify God, without Me; unless you abide in me, and have renewed ability and strength, you can do nothing that God my Father will own or crown with acceptance or reward. But yet we, who are believers, have all and abound (Phil. 4:18), can do

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## If You Will Take One Step Toward God

By Curtis Pugh  
of Bocs, Romania

A statement often made to lost men and women in our area goes something like this: "If you will take one step toward God, He will take two steps toward you."

The point of such a statement is that you must take the first step toward God. This is what is preached to lost people. They are told that their eternal destiny is in their hands. They are told that their will is the determining factor in salvation. They are told that they can and must take the initiative – the first step – in their salvation.

But is this the truth? It is assumed to be so. Some even think that such a statement is to be found in the pages of

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## Gentleness

By John Harvey

*'Some minds are temper'd happily, and mix'd  
With such ingredients of good sense and taste  
Of what is excellent in man, they thirst  
With such a zeal to be what they approve,  
That no restraints can circumscribe them more  
Than they themselves by choice, for wisdom's sake;  
Nor can example hurt them.'*

That gentleness is a link in the golden chain, or another important element in the Christian character, is clear from the declarations of Scripture. There are many passages in the New Testament which not only point out, but commend and inculcate this disposition.

Paul when writing to the Ephesians says: "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." The apostle Peter urges the cultivation of the temper of mind now under consideration: "Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous." The spirit of religion and the spirit of the world are in wide contrast. The former breathes kindness, sincerity,

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## Points About Prayer

By Milburn Cockrell  
(1941 - 2002)

Read Matthew 6:5-13. Now read again verse 6. The Savior does not here condemn public prayers, but He does condemn public prayers by the spirit of ostentation. Also here He teaches the need of secret prayer. Prayer is the conscious communion of the saved soul led by the Holy Spirit, in the Name of Jesus Christ, with God our heavenly Father. Prayer is not making a speech to

God; it is not merely a flood of words; it is not merely a form for a display of piety.

The Christian has no greater privilege than to approach God. But how is it possible for a mere man to approach God and to gain His attention? Do our prayers actually ascend to Heaven? The answer to the first question will be answered later. But here and now I want to answer the latter. Our prayers do ascend up to Heaven. In II Chronicles 30:27 we read: "Then the priests the Levites arose and

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**If we look into the mirror and see ourselves as a christian but the world can't tell the difference; Then maybe it's time for a new mirror, The Bible!**

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3. To spread the whole counsel of God's Word.
4. To encourage God's preachers and to strengthen His churches in the most holy faith.
5. To motivate God's children to a closer fellowship around His Word.
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9. To make the Devil and his demons as mad as possible.

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## Christ Is All in All

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all things through Christ that strengthens us (Phil. 4:13), can suffer the loss of all (Phil. 3:7-9), yea and conquer all, nay be more than conquerors through Christ (Rom. 8:35-39). Oh, consider your need of Christ and learn to prize Him, let Him be exalted highest in your hearts, as the pearl of great worth, as the one thing necessary which you most of all need, let Him be all in all in your communication and conversation.

2. Use. Seeing Christ is all and in all in the new man, let every one examine whether Christ be in him (II Cor. 13:5). Examine yourselves, know you not that Christ is in you, etc. This clearly concerns you, beloved, for if you have Christ, you have all. Christ is all but if you lose Him you lose all; you will lose your hopes, comforts, and all your duties, yea you will lose God, Heaven, and soul, and all. It matters not what you have if you want Christ, no gifts, duties, reformations, qualifications, or other things whatsoever, will make you happy without Christ; and if you enjoy Christ it is not material what ever you want, for my God (says the apostle) **"shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus"** (Phil. 4:19). Therefore make sure that Christ's riches are yours.

Some would ask this question, How shall I so examine that I may know assuredly that I have Christ? I answer, you must bring your hearts to the touch of the Word of God, and cast them into the balance of the sanctuary and weigh them there. And to this purpose, I shall propound one Scripture of truth for your examination and trail, to wit, II Corinthians 5:17: **"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."** That is to say, he is new born, born again, or born of God (John 3:3,5,7-8). **"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," "he cannot enter into the kingdom of God"** (John 3:5). Now every one who is a new creature in Christ, all things are become new in him, or all things are made new. . To wit; first he is made a new man (Eph. 4:21-24; Col. 3:10-11) and has put on the new man where Christ is all in all. Secondly, he has a new heart: **"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you"** (Ezek. 36:26). That is a new will and a new affection, yea and a new spirit will I put within you. That is (Eph. 4:23) to be renewed in the spirit of our mind, to wit, a new judgment or spiritual understanding in the knowledge of God's will (Col. 1:9). Thirdly, he walks in newness of life (Rom. 6:4). That is, the conversation of a new creature should be such as becomes the gospel (Phil. 1:27).

To wit, humble, harmless, and holy (I Pet. 1:15-16). And thus God has promised in the everlasting covenant of grace that all and every one of His people shall walk: **"And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them"** (Ezek. 36:27). Examine your selves. Are you a new creature? Such of you as have not put off the old man, but still have your old hearts, and your old sins, and walk in your old ways, and fulfill the old lusts of your sinful natures, you are not a new creature, you are not in Christ, nor Christ in you.

But some may thus say within themselves, I hope my soul is in a better condition. I am not so wicked and carnal as some others are, neither am I so vile a sinner as I have been formerly; but I am somewhat reformed, and have forsaken my sinful courses, and have begun to delight to hear sermons, and I pray with my family. To this I would answer, although your condition be not so desperate as others, who have lived long under the ordinary means of grace, and yet are not at all wrought upon, I must tell you, professors may (through strong convictions, horror of conscience, and fears of Hell) leave the acts of some sins, and may customarily perform some religious duties, yet be not regenerated. Professors may have leaves like the unfruitful fig tree and lamps like the five foolish virgins, they may seem to be religious, and have a form of godliness; and not be a new creature, or creation. I might instance many such in Scriptures. Herod: he heard John gladly, and did many things (Mark 6:20). Saul was turned into another man, and had another heart, yet unconverted (I Sam. 10:6-9). So you may be another man, and not a new man, may have another heart, but not a new heart.

But I speak not this to add sorrow to the afflicted, nor to break the bruised, for though some may deceive themselves herein; Yet such of you as are born again or born of God, though but new-born babes, who have put on the new man, have a new heart and walk in newness of life, are in Christ and Christ in you.

3. Seeing Christ is all, and in all in the new man, let it serve for the consolation of every true believer, Christ is yours and all things are yours (I Cor. 3:21-23). All are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. Christ is your life, your light, your food, your all, and by union with Christ, you are one in God (John 17:21). God is your God Father (John 20:17). All that is Christ's is yours---His wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, faith, love, humility, etc. All in all fulness was in Him, and dwells in Him for His people, to communicate to them (Eph. 4:7). Are you full of spiritual wants? You may have supply from the fulness of spirituals in Christ. Do you want wisdom, faith, love, etc.? Whatever you

want, go to Christ for that grace. There is enough in Christ to satisfy the most hunger-thirsting souls in spiritual things (Eph. 1:3). God has blessed us with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly things in Christ in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2:3). Do you want power against corruption? Go to Christ for strength. His grace is sufficient for you (II Cor. 12:8-9). There is an all sufficiency in Christ. Christ is all says the text; therefore the apostle having Christ, said, I have all, I can do all through Christ (Phil. 4:13, 18). And know for your further consolation, that Christ is in all the new man, or in every believer.

He is in you: **"Christ in you, the hope of glory"** (Col. 1:27). Christ lives in me says the apostle (Gal. 2:20). Christ is and lives in a true believer by participation of His Divine nature (II Pet. 1:3-4). By incoation of His Holy Spirit (Gal. 4:6) and by communication of His saving grace (Eph. 3:17), Christ is in your hearts, in your graces, in your duties, in all, by Whom you find acceptance of your persons and services with God your heavenly Father (Eph. 1:6). Christ is with you and in you in all conditions, in all relations, and in all afflictions (Isa. 63:8-9). And to conclude this use, know for your increase of joy that Christ Who is all, and in all in you will abide with you for ever. Nothing shall be able to separate Christ and your souls (Rom. 8:35, 38-39). Christ is the strength of your heart and your portion for ever (Ps. 73:26).

4. Seeing Christ is all, and in all in the new man, suffer a word of exhortation which will concern every one present to hearken to. Both such as are in Christ, and out of Christ, and I am sure every one of you are in one of these two estates, either you are in Christ, or without Christ. The first branch of the exhortation shall be to you, who are believers and sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints, seeing, **"Christ is all,"** in all, let Him be all in all in your justification. Take heed you bring not any righteousness of your own, nor any grace or work of His in you, to join with Christ and His righteousness in point of justification (Phil. 3:9). This glory Christ will not give another. He is our justification, or righteousness (I Cor. 1:30-31). Christ will not permit any coadjutor, concause, or cooperator whatsoever in the justification of sinners.

Consider this you who will not believe, unless you could see yourselves so holy and so humble, except you can first have such a sin subdued, you will not believe any of your sins are pardoned, until you find and feel in yourselves a soft, a broken heart, a praying spirit, a mourning spirit, you cry out you are not justified. Oh, say you, if I could pray, mourn for sin, profit by the means as such and such do, then I would believe. But, alas, I have a hard heart, a blind mind, a perverse

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# Christ Is All in All

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will, carnal affections, etc. I cannot, dare not, I will not believe that my sins are forgiven. Thus most professors would bring in (if not their own righteousness) some grace or work of God in them, to join with Christ in their justification, not considering that God justifies the ungodly (Rom. 4:5) and that Christ is all, and in all in the justification of sinners.

Secondly, let Christ be all, in all in the gifts of the Spirit and graces of sanctification for, as you heard, He is the Author, the Preserver, and the Finisher of them all. Therefore let Him have the preeminence above all set in high esteem of every gift and grace of God, account a little grace better than all the riches, honors, pleasures, and creature-comforts of this world. But you ought to prize Christ far above all His own gifts and graces in us, for He is the life of them all, the marrow and substance of them all. What is all knowledge, unless you know God in Christ (I Cor. 13:2)? Nothing. What is all faith, except Christ be the object of it? (I Cor. 13:2). Nothing. Patience, temperance, and all other virtues, what are they but either natural qualities, or moral habits unless Christ be the root of them. Natural education and acquired gifts of art may produce the like, yea the same, in heathens. But Christ is the luster and beauty of each spiritual gift and grace that believers receive from Christ and those rays that come from this Sun of Righteousness upon their graces, makes them shining saints, beautiful and all glorious within. Hear this you poor in spirit, you newborn babes in Christ, who have the persons of believers (especially preachers) in admiration and set them upon high in your hearts, and extoll them with your tongues: because you discern so much humility, love, patience, faith, and other gifts of the Spirit, and graces of sanctification in them. Should you not rather admire Christ, exalt Christ, and extoll Him, Who is the Purchaser, the Owner, the Donor, and the Author of all these spiritual gifts and graces, for we have nothing but what we have received, by His grace we are what we are, and all the grace we have, from His fulness we received it (John 1:16). Therefore let him receive the glory of all, and let Him have the preeminence in all, for His is all in all.

Thirdly, let Christ be all, in all your affections, words, and actions. Set your affections on Christ. Oh, let the discoveries of that superlative excellency and glorious beauty of Christ, which are made out to your souls by the Spirit and Word of God, draw you to set your affections on Him (Col. 1:12). Love every one and every thing that God hath put the name of Christ upon, for His sake, but chiefly set your affectionate

love upon Himself. Love Christ in His saints, love Christ in His messengers, in His ordinances, and this will quicken your desires to enjoy more of Christ, more of Christ in His saints, ministers, ordinances, and in your own heart. Oh, let Christ be chiefest in your affections. **“He is altogether lovely”** (Cant. 5:16). Let Him have your dearest love. He is the well beloved of His Father and yours (II Pet. 1:17). Let Him be your well beloved. Christ bears you in His arms, everlasting arms of mercy, yea in His bosom (Isa. 40:11; 63:9). Do you bear Him in your hearts, and let Christ be exalted higher there. Again, let the absence of Christ be the chief occasion of your sorrow and mourning (Matt. 9:15). Cry after Him, inquire for Him, give Him no rest until He return. This was the practice of the Spouse (Cant. 3:1-4; 5:4,6,8). Oh, how her affections were set upon her Beloved! **“Tell him I am sick of love”** (Cant. 5:8). Though there be many other just occasions for mourning to the saints, yet this is the chief. If a loving wife cannot think of the departure of her dear husband without sorrow, how much more sorrowful will a gracious heart be in the absence of Christ? Like Mary who wept, and being asked the reason by the angel answered: **“Because they have taken away my Lord”** (John 20:11,13,15-16). And as Christ should be all in your affections, so let Him be in your words and actions. Speak for Him, do for Him, suffer for Him, let Him be the matter of your communications and conferences, that you may minister grace to the hearers. What ever you do in word or deed, let all be done to the honor of Christ, for He that honors the Son, honors the Father also.

The other branch of the exhortation, is to such as are in their natural condition, without Christ, seeing Christ is all and in all, be exhorted to seek Christ. Paul preaching on Mars’ hill to the Athenians, tells them, God made of one blood all nations of men, that they should seek Christ (Acts 17:22,27-28) and there be many exhortations in holy Scripture to this purpose. **“Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD...”** (Isa. 55:6-7). The Apostle Paul in his speech to Simon Magus (Acts 8:20-23) told him his heart was not right in the sight of God, that he was **“in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.”** And he exhorted him to repent and pray to God (v. 22). Not that any man in his natural condition can of himself come to Christ, desire Him, or seek to enjoy Him, for none can come to Christ except the Father draw him (John 6:44). It is God that works in us to will and do according to His good pleasure (Phil. 2:13). So then, says the apostle, it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God

that shows mercy, only know this, God requiring poor sinners to use the means He has appointed is pleased to make that means, effectual for their conversion and salvation. For if God have purposed to show mercy, and confers His grace upon your souls, He will cause you to seek unto Him (Ezek. 36:26-27, 37). A new heart will I give you, and I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes. **“Thus saith the Lord God; I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them”** (v. 37). God’s gracious and free promises do not exclude the means He has appointed to attain the mercies therein promised. It pleases Him to tie His creatures to the use of means, when He affords it them, though He will sometimes work without it. Now the ordinary means which God has in His infinite wisdom appointed to convert sinners, and also to build them up in Christ, is the Word preached (Rom. 10:8,17). This Word of the gospel God would have preached to every creature in all parts of the world (Mark 16:15). None are exempted or prohibited from hearing the gospel preached, but every one that has an ear is required to hear (Rev. 2:7). And let such as neglect the hearing of the Word of God (preached by such as are called and sent of Christ) consider what the Lord says (Prov. 1:20-32). But albeit some of you see it is that which you ought to do, and that you had need to do, to wit, to seek the Lord; assenting to what you heard in the first use of the doctrine, that there is much worth, beauty, and excellency in Christ, and that poor, lost, undone sinners stand in need of Him. Notwithstanding now to obey Christ you know not as yet. Let me tell you, God offers you Christ upon gospel terms, which are these three.

First, God in the dispensation of the gospel propounds Christ to lost sinners, as the only necessary and all-sufficient means of salvation (Acts 4:12). Neither is there salvation in any other, and Christ is the all-sufficient means of salvation, so that we need none but Him. He is able to save them to the uttermost (Heb. 7:25).

Secondly, God does offer Christ to lost sinners without respect to price or person. He invites them, that have no money, to come, and buy wine and milk (that is to say, Christ) without price (Isa. 55:1). And any one, that will, are invited to take Christ freely (Rev. 22:17). **“And whosoever will, let him take the water of life (that is, Christ) freely.”**

Thirdly, God requires, that those, who do receive Him, shall depart from iniquity (II Tim. 2:19), live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world (Tit. 2:11-15). And that they shall sell all, lose all, and have all for the sake of Christ, and take up the cross and follow Him.

You will say to me, Alas, here is my misery, to wit, although God propound Christ upon good terms to poor sinners,

to me among others, I have no power of my self to receive Christ, to believe in Him, and accept of Him. True, it is not (as said) in him that wills, nor in him that runs but in God, Who shows mercy (Rom. 9:16). It is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward, who believe, which must be put forth in your hearts, to make you believe also, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised him from the dead (Eph. 1:19-20). And you ought to wait on God in the diligent use of means until the day of His power come upon you, and then you shall be willing, a believing people (Ps. 110:3). I may exhort you to repent of your wickedness, profaneness as Peter did (Acts 8:22). But God must give repentance unto life (Acts 11:18). It is my duty to preach the gospel to you, and to exhort you to seek Christ (Acts 17:22-27), but it is the mere mercy and free grace of God to drive you to Christ, which nothing but His everlasting love can move Him to do (Jer. 31:3). You ought to seek, and wait, ask, and use all the means which God has appointed, and afforded you, both secret, private, and public (Rev. 2:29). But God must make the means effectual (Acts 16:14). And therefore I must say, it is not in me, I cannot draw you to Christ, that is the Father’s work (John 6:44). But I have exhorted you to seek Him in the use of means. There I must leave you to wait on God for the moving of His Holy Spirit where you must lie and continue like the poor impotent man at the pool of Bethesda for healing. As though as he did, so you may see many a lame, blind, deaf, dumb, naked-leprous soul, get healing and go away rejoicing and praising God, and you remain still so impotent, that you cannot get into the Fountain, set open for sin and for uncleanness, nor have any that can help you in, that you may be cured: yet be not disheartened, as Christ came suddenly and unexpectedly, and healed the impotent man after long waiting; so Christ will come according to His promise to your souls that seek Him. **“The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come. . .saith the LORD of hosts”** (Mal. 3:1).

*Editor’s note: This article came from a little booklet entitled: Christ Exalted: A Lost Sinner Sought and Saved by Christ, pp. 1-14. This was a sermon preached by Hanserd Knollys in Suffolk. The book was printed by Jane Cob in London, England, in 1646. Study it carefully, for it was an “evangelistic” sermon as preached by Baptists in the 1600s. Much can be learned from this sermon.*



# Points About Prayer

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**blesSED the people: and their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to his holy dwelling place, even unto heaven.”**

Notice now  
**THE PERIOD OF PRAYER.**

Our Savior said: **“When thou prayest. . .”** In that statement Christ presupposes that Christians are praying people. As soon as Saul of Tarsus was converted, it is said of him: **“Behold he prayeth.”** The Bible tells us that Christians are **“instant in prayer”** and that they pray **“always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit”** (Eph. 6:18). Luke, the beloved physician said: **“Men ought always to pray, and not to faint”** (Luke 18:1). If prayerless, then graceless. I would just as soon expect to find a living man without breath, than a quickened soul who never prays to God.

Christ does not here specify the times we should pray in secret. This probably was because He desired that His religion should be voluntary. There is no better test of piety than a disposition to engage in secret prayer. Had He have specified the times when we are to pray, this would have tended to make religion formal and heartless. The seasons of secret prayer vary so much that it would have been hard to fix rules when this should be done.

Although Christ gave no specific times, the Scriptures seem to suggest that there can be stated times of prayer by the Lord’s people. The psalmist said: **“Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.”** The Scripture tells us Daniel prayed three times each day. We should call upon God in times of embarrassment and perplexity. Let us cry unto Him in the hour of temptation and the hour of prosperity. May we pray when the Spirit prompts us to pray; when we feel like praying; when nothing else can satisfy the soul but prayer. At such a time the Christian’s heart is full; the soul tender; the Son of Glory shines with unusual splendor; no clouds intervene; the Christian rises above the world and enjoys unspeakable things.

Now observe  
**THE PLACE OF PRAYER.**

Christ said: **“Enter into thy closet.”** Every Jewish house had a place of secret

prayer. Over the porch, or the entrance of the house, there was frequently a small room of the size of the porch, raised a story above the rest of the house, expressly appropriated for the place of retirement. Here, in secrecy and solitude, the pious Jew offered his prayers, unseen by any but the Searcher of hearts. It is to such a place the Lord referred to when He said: **“Enter into thy closet.”** This place was often called the **“upper room”** in the New Testament.

Instead of praying in the **“synagogues”** and in the **“corners of the streets,”** we Christians are to enter into some place of privacy and retirement.

I now call attention to  
**THE PRIVACY OF PRAYER.**

Jesus said: **“In secret. . .”** Secret prayer is to be performed in retirement where we may be unobserved, and so may avoid ostentation; undisturbed, and so may avoid distraction; unheard, and so we may use the greatest freedom. Therefore, let us find a place where we can be alone with God, a place where no ear will hear us but His ear and no eye can see us but His eye.

In the Bible there are numerous examples of secret prayer. When Samuel received word that God had rejected Saul as king, **“He cried unto the LORD all night”** in secret prayer (I Sam. 15:11). It is written that Isaac **“went out to meditate in the field at the eventide”** (Gen. 24:63). It is said of the Prophet Daniel that **“he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God”** (Dan. 6:10). Jesus Christ is the greatest example of secret prayer. In Mark 1:35 we read where Christ rose up **“a great while before day,”** and went out into a solitary place and prayed. In Luke 6:12 it is written **“that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.”** In the garden of Gethsemane Christ withdrew a stone’s cast from Peter, James and John and **“kneeled down, and prayed”** (Luke 22:41). If Christ felt the need of secret prayer, how much more should we weak and frail creatures who are but unprofitable servants?

We need to pray in secret because our Father **“seeth in secret.”** The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show Himself strong in behalf of those who call upon His great

Name. You will remember that Christ told Nathaniel: **“Under the fig tree, I saw thee”** (John 1:48). The Lord saw Paul in prayer at the house of Judas on the street called Straight. By secret prayer we give God the glory of His universal presence.

Now I solicit your attention to  
**THE PERSON OF PRAYER.**

Our Lord said: **“To thy Father.”** Only those who actually have God as their Father can truly do this. God is not the Father of the masses of mankind; they are of their father the devil and the lusts of their father they will do. If the Spirit of Christ in us cries **“Abba, Father,”** then we can approach the throne of grace in confidence. We can pray to the great God as a son would talk to his earthly father. Our heavenly Father is ready to hear and answer our prayers. He is willing to help and succour.

The Scripture nowhere admonishes us to pray to the virgin Mary as some believe we ought to do. Neither are we taught in the Bible to have a human priest to pray for us. Instead the Scripture teaches that each believer is a member of a “royal priesthood” and can boldly approach the throne of grace when he so desires. We do not need a human mediator, for Paul said: **“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus”** (I Tim. 2:5).

Now notice the  
**PROMISE OF PRAYER.**

It is said that our heavenly Father shall reward us openly for praying in secret to Him. Sometimes this reward is the answer to our prayer. At other times it is not, but all true prayer will ultimately be rewarded, for God is **“a rewarder of them that diligently seek him”** (Heb. 11:6). We will be rewarded when we appear before the Great Intercessor. Let the hypocritical Pharisees have their reward “before all the town,” for true Christians shall have theirs before “all the world,” angels and men. Our secret prayer shall be a **“weight of glory”** in the eternal age.

Oh, may the words which I have spoken move each child of God to **“Pray without ceasing”** (I Thess. 5:17).



## Gentleness

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affability, and gentleness: but the latter frequently evinces hatred, duplicity, irritation, and acrimony.

Gentleness, like every other fruit of the Spirit, is a heavenly principle implanted in the heart, and sheds a blandness and tranquility over the whole conduct. Self-possession and a vigilant culture of this amiable virtue are necessary to maintain an unimpeachable reputation. Inspiration enforces it. **“Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life”** (Prov. 4:23).

Gentleness is not only an important

characteristic of Christ, but is also one of the properties by which the wisdom from above is distinguished. The apostle James, in his admirable description of heavenly wisdom, says, it **“is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.”** In explaining and illustrating gentleness as a fruit of the Spirit, we will notice---

**I. IN WHAT IT CONSISTS.**

It consists---

1. *Of a fixed principle in the heart.* It is not dictated by nature, nor found in the researches of philosophy, nor gleaned from historical records; it springs not from the attainment of worldly wisdom, nor a studied politeness; for many who have been favored with a refined and liberal education are very coarse, stingy, morose, and uncourteous in their manners. Others, in order to appear to advantage on certain occasions, assume an affected gentleness; they dress in a garb which is not their own, and therefore they act the hypocrite. A person may pass through the schools of literature, philosophy, and science; he may graduate in the university, possess a fund of classic lore, and be dignified with academical honors, and yet be destitute of this fruit of the Spirit.

The Christian gentleness is not a shadowy, superficial thing, floating only on the surface of the conduct, but is the result of a heart renewed by grace, the evidence of a divine principle; the development of a moral virtue; and the fulfillment of a delightful promise. **“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes.”** (Ezek. 36:26-27).

We cannot lay too much stress on, or exaggerate, the importance of a proper government and regulation of the heart, for it is the pivot on which the conduct turns. **“Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.”** The conduct is a comment on the state of the heart, an infallible sign of our moral and spiritual condition. **“For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he.”**

The Saviour taught the same doctrine. **“But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart.”** We might as soon expect the branch to flourish when riven from the vine, the sunflower to unfold its beauty on the snow of ‘Greenland’s icy mountains’; otherwise, look for the lily and the rose on the Arabian sands, try to find a rain drop on the bosom of the ocean, or a glow-worm on the disk of the sun, as expect pure and holy deeds from a corrupt heart; the one is contrary to nature, the other inimical to religion.

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## Gentleness

(Continued from page 384) ♦

**“Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?” “Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? Either a vine, figs?” “Neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit” (Matt. 7:18).**

2. *Mildness is included in Christian gentleness.* Not a sullen stupidity or malicious silence, but a tenderness and caution which involves the sacrifice of no principle of religion. That there are many bold and profane attacks made on the profession and principles of religion, must be obvious to all who are capable of discernment; the rude sons of Belial make repeated attempts to provoke the followers of Christ and excite them to anger and retaliation, and when they succeed in their malignant work it affords them cause for rejoicing. Neither is Satan backward in efforts to stir up resentment and to disturb the tranquility and courtesy by which the children of God are distinguished.

But Christians must be mild, circumspect, and conscientious; for such conduct comports with their creed, and is compatible with the religion they profess. The mildness which they are to cultivate is not a passive tameness, nor a stoical insensibility which submits and surrenders to every invader, but it retains its consistency in every trial; it is a rational and intelligent gentleness. It shrinks not in danger, it yields to no evil insinuation, concedes to no flattery. Some subjects are more easily comprehended when viewed in contrast, such, for instance, as storm and calm, rudeness and gentleness.

What a contrast is often observed at sea! How interesting to stand on the shore, gazing at the ships gliding on its expansive and unruffled surface! But how altered is the scene when the tempest rises! The heavens are darkened, the lightnings flash, the thunders roll; huge vessels are borne high on the ascending waves, then go down again into the depths, engulfed between fluctuating hills or foaming mountains; the sails are riven into shreds, the masts give way and plunge into the agitated element; sailors, seized with the utmost consternation, stagger, and are at their wits end; hope is fled; anon they are struck by the frowning billows; they shriek, and disappear.

And how great is the contrast between the mild Christian and the wild barbarian! How amiable the former! How pitiable the latter! The religion of Christ exerts a transforming influence on the minds of its possessors. It has turned the savage into a saint; changed the Indian's wigwam into a peaceable habitation; the sable African's kraal into a Bethel; and the ferocious cannibal of New Zealand into a gentle and submissive subject.

Numerous instances of individual conversions which have taken place in Africa, and in the Islands of the Great Pacific, are illustrative of the power and efficacy of the Gospel. Take, for instance, the following cases, which may be found in *“Moffat's Missionary Labours and Scenes in Southern Africa,”* and in *“Pritchard's Success of the Gospel in the Pacific.”*

Africaner was a great persecutor of the Christian cause, a man of great prowess, a notable robber, a murderer. He was denounced as an irreclaimable savage, a firebrand, one of the accursed sons of Ham. He was regarded as a dangerous neighbor and the common enemy. He was a terror and an outlaw. One thousand rix-dollars had been offered for his head. His name carried dismay into the solitary wastes. “Look,” said a wandering Namaqua chief, pointing to Africaner, “there is the man, once the lion, at whose roar even the inhabitants of distant hamlets fled from their homes! Yes, and I” (patting his chest with his hand) “have for fear of his approach fled with my people, our wives and our babes, to the mountain-glen or to the wilderness, and spent nights among beasts of prey, rather than gaze on the eyes of this lion or hear his roar.

But when he became a convert to the faith he was meek, docile, sympathetic, charitable, and pious; and would have laid down his life, if necessary, for his missionary. He accompanied Mr. Moffat to Cape Town. On their way thither, Mr. M. informed a certain farmer, to whom the name of Africaner was familiar, that he was “a truly good man”; to which the farmer replied, “I can believe almost anything you say, but that I cannot credit. There are seven wonders in the world; that would be the eighth.” But being assured of the fact, and seeing Africaner standing before him with a smile on his countenance, he lifted up his eyes, and exclaimed, “O God, what a miracle of Thy power! What cannot thy grace accomplish!” When he arrived at Cape Town many who had heard of his dark and cruel deeds were struck with the gentleness of his demeanor. Before he died, “My former life,” said he, “is stained with blood: but Jesus Christ has pardoned me, and I am going to Heaven.”

Mahime, a heathen chief and a distinguished warrior, was not only a terror to all on the island where he lived, but also to those on the neighboring islands. After his conversion to God, he took great interest in instructing the rising generation, was steadfast, diligent, meek, and humble as a little child; and died happy in God.

Makea, of Rarotonga, was an idolator, a cruel tyrant, and a great cannibal. But he became a convert to the faith, assisted Mr. Williams when building his missionary vessel, was useful in the church of Christ, manifested a Christian spirit in his deportment, and fell asleep

in Jesus.

Maoae, whose office it was to rally dispirited warriors, spend whole nights in going from house to house stimulating the people, and giving them assurances from the gods of success in approaching war, embraced the Gospel, and held fast his confidence to the end. On being questioned respecting the foundation of his hopes of future happiness, he answered, “The blood of Jesus is my foundation; Jesus is the best King; He gives a pillow without thorns.” When asked whether he was afraid to die, he replied, “No, no: the ship is in the sea; the sails are spread; she is ready. I have a good pilot, and a good landing place before me. My outside man and my inside man differ. Let the one rot till the trumpet shall be blown; but let my soul go to the throne of Jesus.”

Such conversions are worthy of record and reiteration. They are the result of missionary toil, and a proof of the transforming influence of the religion of Christ. **“If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.”** Another requisite part of Christian gentleness is---

3. *Inoffensiveness.* **“He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city”** (Prov. 16:32). The possessors of this heavenly virtue are wishful to avoid every thing that would wound the feelings, or inflict injury on their fellow man, provided it involves not the omission of any duty affecting their moral responsibility. When W. Clowes, one of the most successful home missionaries England ever produced, was once preaching in Lincoln, some one threw a stone, which brought blood from his face. The manner in which he bore the insult, and prayed for the insulter, led to the conversion of a respectable tradesman.

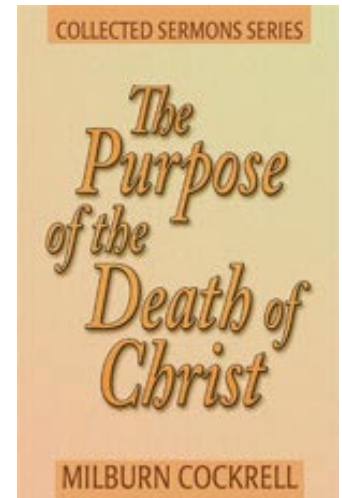
One great and prevailing evil of the present day is backbiting; and we fear there are many who even make a profession of religion who are guilty of this abominable practice. Such instigators and retailers of slander injure the character of others, and often the innocent, **“Whose lips are spears and arrows, and whose tongue is a sharp sword.” “If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.”**

But a true Christian will not stoop to low and cunning deeds, nor try to disguise his intentions. He answers to the Psalmist's description of a sincere citizen of Zion: **“He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.”** It also comprehends---

4. *Affability.* And what is more desirable in the intercourse with our

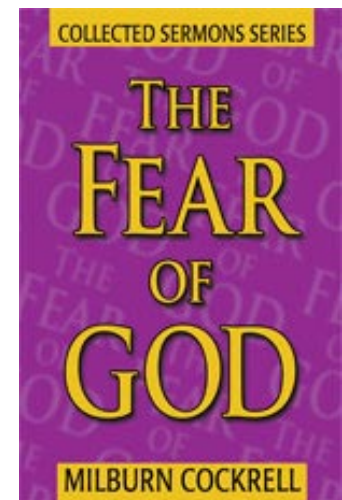
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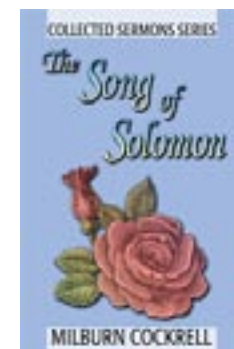
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# Gentleness

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fellow-creature than the manifestation of brotherly kindness and civil behavior? A harsh, blustering man always seems in a turbulent atmosphere, in a state of confusion. Others are so reserved, distant, and sullen, that is requires a considerable pressure to unclasp their minds and reach the thoughts of their hearts; and not a few are so pompous, and have so much affection or assumption, that they are disagreeable associates, and lack common civility.

On the other hand, there are many persons who make no profession of religion who are nevertheless remarkably kind and obliging; their actions, frankness, and urbanity, are truly characteristic of an affable disposition. In this respect, some uncouth professors and boisterous officials in the church would do well to follow their example.

*"Oh! if they knew, who walk the earth,  
Mid sorrow, grief, and pain,  
The power that Christian kindness hath,  
Twere paradise again."*

As Christians, we are not to be influenced by the customs and manners of the world, or by those who profess religion, unless their conduct is in accordance with the Word of God. We must be courteous and conciliatory, and in our conversation endeavor to promote personal, social, and domestic happiness. Gentleness renders the character attractive, wins the admiration of the wise, and widens the circle of friendship.

This principle was exemplified in the conduct of Paul, when Festus charged him with insanity; but he modestly replied, **"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness."** King Agrippa, attracted with his manner, and perhaps his theme too, said unto Paul, **"Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds"** (Acts 26:28-29). Furthermore, to be gentle is to be---

5. *Unassuming.* **"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."** An unrenowned heart is the fountain of impurity and the seat of pride. It was pride which occasioned the expulsion of Lucifer from Heaven--Adam and Eve from paradise. Look at the cases of Haman, Nebuchadnezzar, and Herod. Pride leads to haughtiness, self-will, and undue assumption. Some estimate character according to the number of talents possessed, the degree of learning acquired, the amount of influence exerted, and the titles and offices sustained. But we can only make a prudent and correct estimate from that which constitutes our moral character

and Christian attainments. We must not think too highly of ourselves, but be meek and lowly in heart, and profit by the voice of the apostle, **"I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith"** (Rom. 12:3).

We are not to glory in wisdom, might, or riches; but in our knowledge of, and interest in, the one living and true God. **"Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD"** (Jer. 9:23-24). Notice---

## II. BY WHOM, AND ON WHAT OCCASIONS, THIS EXERCISE OF GENTLENESS IS NECESSARY.

The manifestation of this virtue is desirable in general; but it is looked for especially in the conduct of Christians. It was a prominent trait in the character of Christ, conformable with ancient prophecy: **"He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young"** (Isa. 40:11). The same prophet also remarks, **"He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench."** Again we read, **"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass"** (Zech. 9:9).

It is not only a subject of prophecy, but was also manifest in the life of Christ. **"I Paul beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ"** (II Cor. 10:1). It shone in the doctrine He taught, in the miracles He wrought, and in the invitations He uttered. We must imitate His spirit, and emulate His example.

1. *It must be exercised by ministers and officials in the administration of church discipline.* Every legally constituted society has its rules or laws by which its members are governed, and which require strict obedience. The necessity and utility of national laws must be admitted; without them a nation would be in a perpetual ferment and confusion. Equally necessary is the discipline of the church; its laws and discipline should be in accordance with the New Testament, and uniform with the law of Christ. It is a violation of the principles and spirit of the gospel that the priesthood has assumed

so much authority and arrogated to itself the prerogative of imposing fines, penalties, and bodily mortifications. The members of the church are of course amenable to the laws by which the whole body is governed; but neither priestly tyranny nor lay despotism ought to be tolerated. A Scriptural course should be adopted before censures are inflicted or excommunication takes place. The steps to be taken are clearly pointed out for our guidance. **"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican"** (Matt. 18:15-17). Also, the spirit or frame of mind in which this business is to be conducted must be observed. **"If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness"** (Gal. 6:1). **"And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will"** (II Tim. 2:24-26). It must be exercised by heads of families---

2. *In the parental capacity.* It was said of Abraham, **"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"** (Gen. 18:19). Every parent holds a responsible office; placed at the head of a family, his conduct may either prove a curse or a blessing to his children. The former, we fear, is too often the case. Are you parents? Remember your example may exert an influence over the eternal destinies of your offspring. Lay no barrier in their way to Heaven, give them no cause to curse you in eternity, but train them in the way they should go.

Christian parents, impressed with a consciousness of their responsibility to God for the manner in which they have discharged their parental duties, feel deeply anxious **"that our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace"** (Ps. 144:12).

Let all correction be done in love and gentleness. Avoid the appearance of anger and passion, or you will counteract by example what you desire to accomplish by correction. What a ridiculous figure some make in what

they call correcting their children! What a distorted performance they make of it! What extravagant language! What austerity and burning passion! And what a violation of good manners! But the wise are self-collected. They reprove tenderly, admonish discreetly, correct cautiously, and counsel affectionately. **"Let all things be done decently and in order."** This disposition should be manifested by teachers,

3. *In communicating instruction to the young.* Much depends upon the manner in which instructions are given to the young, not only to make them scholars but to lead them to the Saviour; for that we regard as the most important part of education. A mere secular education, without the influence of holy example, is sadly defective. Hence the necessity of pious instructors. There are many thousands of children in this kingdom receiving instruction in the Sabbath-schools connected with the different sections of the church of Christ; and if all who are engaged in teaching the young were the subjects of saving grace, what a mighty moral influence would be brought to bear upon this mass of immortal mind! And how that influence would be extended if all who are employed in daily tuition were converted to God!

Lack of success, the carelessness and stupidity of the children, are instances which test the patience and the gentleness of the teachers. **"Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and the latter rain."** Wisdom, perseverance, sympathy, and affection are necessary to secure success; for, although children are imitative beings, some are slow to apprehend; but they must be convinced that you love them. In communicating instruction every symptom of an ungovernable temper should be avoided, and a sweetness of disposition, graceful conduct, and earnest solicitude for the children's welfare should be manifested. It should be maintained---

4. *By those who engage in discussion and controversy.* What clashing of sentiment and what different opinions are held at the present day on almost every subject, whether religious, political, scientific, or social. Persons professing godliness hold very opposite views, not only in reference to ecclesiastical polity, but also on the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. Differences of opinion on church government, on the mode of conducting religious service, or the form and dimensions of the buildings where those services are conducted, and the talents and garb of those who are appointed to officials---whether ministers should preach in lawn sleeves or a cloth coat; whether sermons should

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## Gentleness

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be read or delivered extempore; whether one person should be paid to say Amen, or whether such response should be general and gratuitous; whether they should sing hymns, chant anthems, or have no singing at all, are minor matters and scarcely worth notice. But when those points of doctrine and duty essential to our happiness and eternal safety are denied, and our fellowmen are in danger of being seduced from the simplicity and faith of the Gospel, it is high time to arise and defend the truth.

Popery, Infidelity, and Latter-Day Saintism, forsooth, have sent forth their champions to attack the Bible and prove that Christianity is false, and its adherents in error. The former extols the decrees of councils and traditions of the fathers; the second points you to the book of nature; and the latter comes forward with a new revelation, as singular as it is modern. On matters the most important, and on subjects the most weighty, we are not to rely on mere human authority. The Bible must be the standard of appeal. Neither the antiquity of Popish traditions and perversions of truth; nor Secularism, a new name for old infidelity; nor the delusions of Mormonism, must be our guides in matters of religion. **"To the law and to the testimony; if any man speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in him."**

Although public debates and platform controversies are not at all desirable, yet there are times when such discussions appear necessary, to expose the fallacy, and refute the arguments of the enemies of the Bible. Instance the contests of Campbell and Owen, Cumming and French, Cooke and Barker, Grant and Holyoake. Some controversialists have damaged the cause they have defended by the spirit they have manifested. Instead of dispassionately proceeding, and exercising that gentleness which the importance of the occasion required, they have raved and stormed, and hurled abusive epithets at their antagonists in tones of thunder and bursts of indignation. To such the remarks of Solomon are appropriate: **"He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls"** (Prov. 25:28). Christians must at all times manifest conduct worthy of the cause they espouse; and while **"ungodly men, are turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ"** (Jude 4), we are exhorted to **"earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints"** (Jude 3), 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"** (I Peter 3:15).

## The Path of Life and Way of Death

**"He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail"** (1 Sam 2:9).

**"The LORD preserveth the strangers; he relieth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down"** (Ps. 146:9).

**"Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not"** (Ps. 17:5).

**"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it"** (Matthew 7:13-14).



**"Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction"** (Ps. 73:18).

**"The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble"** (Prov. 4:19).

**"Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore"** (Ps. 16:11).

5. *Gentleness is desirable in all who exercise authority.* Whether kings, emperors, presidents, governors, rulers, magistrates, officers, or masters. However distinguished or elevated the position of men, whatever may be the extent of their wealth, influence and power, a spirit of gentleness and respectful behavior ought to characterize their intercourse with others. Their authority, when properly exercised is to be regarded by those who occupy inferior stations in life. Paul, in his directions to Titus, points out the duty of servants and Christians in general. **"Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things."** **"Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men."** The apostle Peter takes a similar view of the subject: **"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by Him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle,**

**but also to the froward."** But while we render civil obedience to the powers that be, we must not fail to render the homage of the heart which is due to God alone. If then Christian gentleness be necessary to ministers and office-bearers in administering church discipline, to heads of families in their parental capacity, to teachers in communicating instruction to the young, to those who engage in religious controversies, to all who occupy seats of power, and Christian professors in general, let us---

### III. URGE ITS CULTIVATION AND OFFER A FEW DIRECTIONS FOR ITS ATTAINMENT.

This may be done on the ground of its worth and beneficial results. We urge the cultivation of this fruit of the Spirit on the ground---

1. *Of its worth.* By what rule, in our moral arithmetic, can we calculate, or what method of investigation will conduct us to a correct estimate of its value? Its price is above rubies. We argue its importance from the fact, that it is a fruit of the Spirit of God, which is a sufficient guarantee of its price; for everything connected with the existence, operation, and effects of that Spirit is sublime and precious. Every unit or part of religion is momentous and indispensable. Many there are, it is true, who discover no beauty in it that they should desire it, and why? Because they are in darkness, gross darkness they have eyes, but they see not. If a blind man treads on jewels, or stumbles on

diamonds, they no more attract his notice than the pebbles by the way side; he sees not, he knows not their worth. So with the morally blind, until the irradiations of the gospel come in contact with their spiritual vision; they see no excellency in the graces of the Spirit, or in the religion of Christ.

But as intelligent Christian views religion from another stand-point, and in a different light from the men of the world, and is therefore more competent to estimate its value. **"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."** Those who suppose they can be religious without a properly regulated temper and conduct in every point, are mistaken. **"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all"** (James 2:10). We also urgently commend the cultivation of this virtue on the ground---

2. *Of its tendencies.* We derive great spiritual benefit from the possession of Christian gentleness, and others are more or less favorably impressed by its exercise. **"Many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord."** It enables us more efficiently to fulfil the requirements of the Gospel, to exercise a proper control over the passion and affections, and maintain propriety, uniformity, and becoming conduct. Where this interesting feature of religion does not exist, there is often disorder and strife, which is incompatible with our fellowship and communion with Christ: but when this grace exists in the heart, it adds materially to our spiritual enjoyments and devout aspirations.

"Let this amiable temper," says one writer, "influence all our conduct: let nothing of sternness, sourness, or unkindness appear at any time: but on the contrary, the greatest courtesy, affability, meekness, gentleness, humility, and love constantly maintain the Christian spirit and temper; let us be universally conscientious and uniformly pious."

*"The kind intent of Christian love  
All rude attire disdains,  
Blends courtesy with faithful truth,  
And soothes where'er it pains."*

Let us offer a few directions to aid its acquisition. Observe---

1. *Temptations must be resisted.* These may be various and powerful, but the wiles and darts of Satan must be resisted and overcome. The enemy is skilful in the art of seduction, and fertile in expedients to accomplish his designs. He attacks the imagination, through which he frequently gains access to the mind. He presents dazzling pictures to the eye, to draw the heart from God. Eve was tempted with the idea of elevation and great intellectuality. **"Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil;"** --- David with the notion of a populous empire: **"Number those men, and dwell with delight on thine own greatness."** He exhibited a map of the world to the

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# Gentleness

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Saviour, as an inducement to idolatry; from **“an exceeding high mountain he sheweth Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them.”** And also suggested to Judas Iscariot the opportunity of making money by selling his Lord. Judas adopting the suggestion, covenanted or made a bargain with the chief men of the Sanhedrin for **“thirty pieces of silver,”** or sold his Master for thirty pieces of silver. **“And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat.”** And **“we are not ignorant of Satan’s devices;”** nor can we expect exemption from temptation. But **“when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him”** (Isa. 59:19). How explicit, full, and encouraging is this declaration: and how consoling the Divine agency engaged on our behalf, when contending with the prince of darkness.

*“My soul, be on thy guard.*

*Ten thousand foes arise,*

*And hosts of sins are pressing hard*

*To draw thee from the skies.”*

2. *There must be a constant adherence to God.* In this respect the conduct of Hezekiah is worthy of our attention; for, amidst the idolatry of the people over whom he reigned, it is recorded of him that **“he clave to the LORD, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses”** (II Kings 18:6).

When Barnabas visited Antioch, and saw the grace of God in the conversion of sinners, he was glad, and exhorted them all **“that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.”** Such advice was judicious and seasonable, and is equally important to believers at the present day.

To cleave unto the Lord is a Divine requirement, and implies an adherence to His truth and to His ways; and to attend properly to this duty we must come out from amongst the ungodly, shun the evils that are in the world, and manifest a decided preference for the things which belong to our peace.

We must cleave unto the Lord amidst opposition, calumny, and temptation: amidst privation, affliction, and death; for He is our helper in trouble, our guide in difficulty, our friend in need, and our refuge in danger. **“Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.”**

3. *The standard of religious character must be maintained.* Many professors lower the tone of an evangelical piety by a partial application of the powers of the mind to the subject of religion; whereas it requires a full and total dedication

of body and soul to God. Others by inconsistent deeds, and conformity to the maxims of the world, lower the standard of religion, a fact which accounts for the lack of Christian gentleness in the conduct of many professing godliness.

To remedy this defect, personal piety and holiness unto the Lord must characterize their deportment. **“Be diligent, that ye may be found in Him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”**

Are any of you grieving over the imperfection of your character, or mourning on account of the lack of the fruit of the Spirit I have endeavored to explain? Did you once possess this amiable virtue, but are now deploring its loss, as you exclaim, **“O that it was with me as in months past, when the candle of the Lord shone upon my head, and when by His light I walked through darkness; while as yet the Almighty was with me?”** If such be your experience and lamentation, give yourselves afresh to the Lord, humble yourselves before Him, and attend to the instructions given, that you may be enabled to attain to the privileges and enjoyments you once possessed.

Satan will try to displace your affections, and beguile you with his charms; but you must resist him, and he will flee from you. Cleave unto the Lord; live to His honor and glory; and lift high the Christian standard. Be on your guard, like the sentinel in the garrison, or the watchman on the tower. Guard your thoughts, looks, actions, and conversation. **“Pray without ceasing.”** Prayer tends to refine the taste, promote gentleness, and prepares the soul for its departure to immortality and glory. **“Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!”** (Num. 23:10).

---“*You see the man; you see his hold on heaven, Heaven waits not the last moment; owns its friends On this side death; and points them out to men--- A lecture silent, but of sovereign use, Life, take thy change---but O for such an end.*”



## If You Will Take

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God’s holy Word, but no such statement can be found in the Bible – nor can anything like it be found there. Is man capable of taking the first step toward God? What is the teaching of the Bible on this all-important subject of God’s salvation and how to obtain it?

Charles Haddon Spurgeon was a famous English Baptist preacher of another era. He preached to multiplied thousands of persons in huge meetings in London and other places. Mr. Spurgeon opposed the idea that man is able to take the first step toward God telling the following story to illustrate his point.

“This preposterous idea of the sinner taking the first step reminds me of the Catholic claim that one of her ‘saints’ had his head cut off in battle. The man then picked up his head and walked 3,000 miles back to Rome.” Spurgeon continued, “I would have no problem at all believing such a story, *if the man could have taken that first step!*”

Is that not the truth about man and salvation? If a man can take the first step, can he not take all the others required to save himself? What need has he of God coming to him if he is capable of traveling toward God? Is it not reasonable to think that if man has the ability to rise and walk, spiritually speaking, he can continue the journey he started?

But we do not base our belief or teaching on the reasoning of men or interesting legends or even the sermons of godly preachers. The eternal destiny of your soul is far too important to rest upon men’s ideas, regardless of how clever or reasonable they may sound. Only the Word of God can settle the matter and guide our understanding aright. What saith the Scriptures? Is man able to take that all-important first step toward God? And will God be pleased with man’s first step, if he can make such a step? And will God respond to that human effort with salvation? Let us search the Scriptures and learn from them!

First of all: Is man able to take a first step toward God? Of course we speak of a “spiritual step” since no man can physically travel to where God dwells in Heaven. But does man have the spiritual ability to begin such a journey from his lost condition?

Notice that the Scriptures teach that lost men and women are dead in their sins. Thus we read Paul’s statements: **“And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins... Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)”** (Eph. 2:1, 5). What do you suppose the Holy Spirit who inspired these words meant for us to understand by **“dead?”** What do we normally understand about the abilities of a dead person? Of course we understand that one who is dead is unable to do anything. He has no power or means to do even one thing himself! Is not this the evident meaning of the Holy Spirit in these verses? Does He not intend for us to understand that, being dead spiritually, we cannot take even one step toward God? What other thing could He design for us to understand?

The Bible is clear that if men are to be saved, they must come to Christ in a spiritual manner. They must come to Him for salvation. However, the Bible is equally clear that lost men and women cannot come to Christ on their own initiative. Consider the plain words of the Lord Jesus Christ in John 6:44: **“No man can come to me, except the Father**

**which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.”** Notice that this verse is clear on three things: (1) No man has the ability to come in a saving way to Christ, (2) but also notice that there are some that the Father draws. (3) This verse also clearly teaches us that all those whom the Father draws will be raised by Christ: so you cannot try to say that the Father draws or attempts to draw all men unless you also say that all men will be raised by Christ. It is important to see here that those whom the Father draws, Christ will resurrect because those whom He draws come to Christ. Thus it is given to some to come to Christ as Jesus said in John 6:65: **“And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.”**

Thus far we have demonstrated from the Bible, God’s Word, that men are dead in sins and that being dead in sins, none of them can come to Christ apart from a work of God first taking place in them. In these things we must say that it is God who takes the first step toward man. There is no hint here that man takes the first step toward God.

Let us understand that we are not talking about the responsibility of men, but the ability of men! Just as a drunk man lacks the ability of driving a car in a safe manner even though he is responsible to do so, so God holds men and women responsible for their actions and commands them to come to Christ. The fact that men are dead in sins and unable to come to Christ is not the doing or fault of God, but is because of the sin of man. But we have seen that God does not leave all men in their awful helpless condition! He draws some men and women to Christ and thus they come in a saving way to Him.

But, are there other passages in the Bible that teach us that man is unable to take the first step toward God or are there only the two we have quoted above? Yes, there are many. Consider some of them as follows.

I Corinthians 2:14 says: **“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”** Here we are taught that lost people (1) will not receive the things of the Spirit of God because they seem foolish to him in his dead and spiritually blind condition. But we also learn here that (2) lost people cannot know or understand spiritual things because such things are only known by the Spirit of God in a man and lost people do not have the Spirit of God. So the Bible teaches that lost people (1) will not and (2) cannot receive spiritual things because they lack spiritual life, which is the Spirit of God in them. That is why the Lord Jesus Christ said to lost people during

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# If You Will Take

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His ministry, **“And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.”** (John 5:40). Men, apart from the working of God in them, “will not” come to Christ. Their will is against God’s will and thus against coming to Christ in a saving manner.

This is not to say that lost men and women are not religious! Many lost men and women are very religious! They often devote their lives to the furtherance of religion. Many times their lives are filled with religious activities. Sometimes they serve their religion at great personal sacrifice. But their motive is self-serving in that they most often think to obtain heaven or some reward for their religious activity. They think to please God by their works, but the Bible says: **“For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”** (Rom. 8:5-9). Please notice especially the underlined portion of these verses. The carnal or natural or un-regenerated mind of man is not and cannot be subject to the law of God to the extent that unsaved people **“cannot please God.”** This passage not only teaches that lost men and women do not want to be subject to God’s holy law, but they **“cannot.”** It is not within their power to do so because they are spiritually dead, un-regenerated, and lacking the Spirit of God in them. This is what Jude said of lost men in verse 19 of his letter: **“These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.”** So then, we ask, if lost men and women cannot please God, what hope do they have of “taking the first step” so that God will be induced to take steps toward them? We think the answer is clear: they have no hope of pleasing God because they cannot!

Consider also John 6:53 where Jesus told lost men **“ye have no life in you.”** This Christ said to men unless they appropriated Him, came to Him, and so were saved by Him. Men and women, apart from the work of the Holy Spirit in them have no life in them: they are dead spiritually. Such people are not able to hear and understand in a spiritually profitable way the Word of God. Jesus said that Himself in John 8:43. His words were: **“Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.”** In this place the Lord Jesus made

it clear that lost men and women are not able to hear His word – they cannot with spiritual profit understand the word of God. It is, as Paul said, foolishness to them. God must take the first step and regenerate men and women so that they can “hear” (receive in a spiritually profitable way) the Word of God!

And consider the indictment Paul brought against lost men and women in Romans 3:10-12: **“As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.”** In spite of these Spirit-inspired words, lost men and women think themselves good in some measure. They think they can seek after God when the Bible says none do! They think themselves able, at their whim, to come in a saving way to Christ. They think their will can determine their salvation. They think that they can decide to be saved or born again and that based on that act of their will, God will regenerate them. This they believe in spite of the plain words of the Bible in John 1:13: **“Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”** And so believing that they can do something that will cause God to save them, they do not trust fully in Christ, but rather trust in what they have done. They trust in what they think will cause God to save them. They think they have taken the first step toward God and that He must save them because of their works – their first step. Do you see, reader, that such trust is misguided faith and is not really trusting Christ at all?

The new birth or regeneration does not come about because of man’s will or any act of his will! Regeneration is bestowed on lost men and women according to the sovereign will of God! So then, just where does that leave lost people? Obviously they are without any ability to save themselves or to take the first step toward God or salvation! Lost men and women can only cast themselves on the mercy and grace of God. There is nothing they can do to merit God’s attention or to obtain His salvation. Lost friend, if you see your helplessness in spiritual things, remember also the ability of God to save! Remember the Gospel – **“..how that Christ died for our sins according**

**to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures”** (I Cor. 15:3, 4). That is your only hope!

Do you seek after righteousness? Being sensible to your own unrighteousness, would you have the righteousness of Christ put down on your account? Hear the promise of the Lord Jesus Christ: **“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled”** (Matthew 5:6). Do you have such an hunger? Would you follow after righteousness? Listen to the prophet Isaiah who calls on you to consider your sins and your awful and helpless condition apart from the work of God. He wrote: **“Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged”** (Isa. 51:1). Dare you to boast that you are able to take the first step toward God? Do you think that you initiated your own salvation? In the light of the Word of God, how can you honestly think that you have any ability to do anything regarding your own salvation?

But, you say, God commands repentance and faith. Does this not mean that lost men and women possess the ability to do these things – to come in a saving way to Christ? May I suggest to you that God has commanded obedience knowing full well that men and women have no ability to do what God commanded! Two instances shall be sufficient to prove this. Consider: God gave the law to Israel knowing full well they could not keep it. But He gave the law just the same. Why? Because, **“..by the law is the knowledge of sin”** (Rom. 3:20). There was nothing wrong with God’s law! Knowing that man would repeatedly fail in keeping God’s holy law, God gave it so that men would see their lost condition – so that they would see their utter lack of ability to please God. The second instance is this command of the Lord God: **“..Be ye holy; for I am holy”** (1 Pet. 1:16). Has any man the ability to be holy as God is holy? Obviously not, and yet God commanded that men are to be holy as He is. Why? So that lost men and women would run against this solid wall and see their awful hopelessness. So in this way they might come to understand what it really means to be lost! And so to those whom the Lord brings to see their lost condition and in whom He creates a hunger and a thirst after righteousness – these are those to whom the Spirit of God and the Gospel come. The Spirit comes in regeneration and the Gospel comes which brings **“..life and immortality to light..”** (II Tim. 1:10). But the Gospel and the true work of God in a person does not allow any man or woman to “take the first step toward God!” The Gospel is to be believed, but not with a

human or intellectual faith. Saving faith is a matter of the heart (Rom. 10:10) and is a gift (Eph. 2:8-9) and is something that is “obtained” as we learn from Peter in II Peter 1:1 where he addressed his letter to saved people – **“...to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”**

Oh reader, do not think your own ability has brought you or can bring you to the Lord Jesus Christ in a saving manner! You must come, but you cannot. So you must not think that your own repentance and self-produced faith can save you! You must repent and you must believe, but you can do neither by your own will or ability. Remember, you **“cannot please God!”** But there is One, the Lord Jesus Christ, who perfectly pleased the Father by His life and in His death. He gave His life as a payment for the sins of His people in such a way that really cleanses from sin. John wrote about those who walk in the light of His truth that: **“...the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin”** (I John 1:7). Cast yourself on Him, trusting Him and you will find Him dependable as He said in John 6:37: **“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”**

## Spiritual Resurrection

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has no animal life. He breathes, walks, and acts in the realm of carnal things. His body may be strong and healthy. He may build a house or drive an automobile. He has self-conscious life in common with the beasts of the earth. This animal life may seem to hide the scene of spiritual death, but it cannot destroy it. There is spiritual death in the midst of natural life: **“But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth”** (I Tim. 5:6).

Neither does the apostle mean that men are dead in a mental sense. The unrenewed man may think and act in the mental realm. He can think all kinds of carnal thoughts. He may devise all sorts of earthly things. He might even have an I. Q. of 180! But these tremendous mental powers are limited to the realm of natural intellect. Though intellectually alive to all worldly interests, he is dead to the interests of the kingdom of grace.

Men are dead in a moral and spiritual sense only. They are dead in Adam in whom they all sinned, for the Scripture says that **“through the offence of one many be dead”** (Rom. 5:15). They are **“alienated from the life of God”** (Eph. 4:18). They are without Christ, Who is the Giver of spiritual life (John 10:28). They are **“sensual, having not the Spirit”** (Jude 19). The moral image of God is in them is in a state of deformity. That

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## IS THIS GOING TO BE YOUR LAST ISSUE?

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# The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

According to Matt. 19:28 the apostles will sit on twelve thrones, but with the addition of Matthias and Paul there are 13. Which one will not sit on a throne, Paul or Matthias? – Tennessee

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**“And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel”** (Matt 19:28). I will have to take my Savior’s words and rest wholly upon them to answer a question such as this. A throne is a place of judgment hence “judging the twelve tribes of Israel”. We understand from this passage the Apostles are being informed of their particular place in the golden age of our Lord who will rule and reign for a literal thousand years. I have no time for those who will spiritualize away the true meaning of Gods inspired Word (Revelation 20:2-7).

There are those who say these thrones will be in the perfect age after the earth and heavens have been cleansed by fire and regenerated. My question is, if they are on thrones what are they going to make judgment of? **“And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life”** (Rev. 21:27).

As for the thrones being twelve in number, I will have to refer to my opening sentence that says the Lord’s words are most worthy of notice. Are there twelve literal thrones? Yes. Were there twelve literal Apostles? Yes. Were all the apostles that were present to receive a throne? No, for one of them was a devil (John 6:70). Therefore eleven of these twelve were to receive a throne.

The addition of Mathias and Paul is no easy task to discern between the two as who will receive that twelfth throne. At first glance it is a little intimidating to say the least but as the study goes along it is quite evident as to who will ascend that twelfth throne.

In the Acts of the Apostles chapter one vs.15-26, which seems to me to be titled incorrectly and should read the Acts of the Churches, we are informed of the Lord’s Church voting between two men who fulfilled the requirements to be a witness of the resurrection of our Lord (vs. 21,22). The lot or vote fell upon

Matthias, and was numbered among the apostles. The interesting thing about this is we no longer ever hear of Matthias again, of course there are others of the twelve we do not hear of, but they were not chosen by a vote of the church, in fact, neither were the original eleven. The book of Acts chronicles the spread of the Lord’s churches thru the link succession of churches, not the link succession of voted in apostles. Was Matthias numbered among the apostles as a witness of the resurrection of Christ? Yes. If yes, then Matthias was an apostle just like Paul the apostle, right? No. The apostle Paul was never voted in by man or by a Church, **“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God”** (II Cor. 1:1). He was made an apostle by the will of God. **“Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;)”** (Gal. 1:1, also in I Tim. 1:1) not by a church or by another apostle or by himself but by Jesus and the Father.

The apostle Paul will occupy that twelfth throne the apostles are promised. Does that mean Matthias will not sit on a throne? No. For all those who have repented of sins to God for the breakage of His law and have faith towards Jesus Christ will rule and reign with Him for a thousand years, and that’s a promise, not from me, but God Himself. **“Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years”** (Rev. 20:6). **“Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come”** (Rev. 4:8).

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This is a question which has been asked many times. I’ll be brief and to the point. I see nothing wrong with the voting in of Matthias to replace Judas. It was prophesied that this would be done and it seems to have been done properly by a vote of an authorized church (Acts 1). Matthias, in my opinion, was as much an apostle as any of the other original apostles. He was baptized by John the Baptist. He had followed Christ while

He walked on Earth. I believe Matthias will sit on the throne. There’s no Biblical reason to think that he wouldn’t.

Paul was the apostle which was **“born out of due time.”** (I Cor. 15:8). He wasn’t baptized by John the Baptist. He wasn’t saved until after Christ was resurrected and had ascended to the Father in Heaven. Paul had seen Christ, but, only on the road to Damascus. He did not daily follow Christ as Matthias did. Paul was used mightily of God, but, there’s no reason to think that he “replaced” Matthias. There’s simply no Scripture to cause us to jump to that conclusion. Paul didn’t enjoy many of the benefits of being an apostle and it is my opinion that he will not enjoy the benefit of sitting on a throne with the others.

This is a debatable subject which the Bible doesn’t specifically touch. Therefore, we cannot be dogmatic and argumentative.

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I hesitate to try an answer for this question. I know of no hint in Scripture to answer this question. The business meeting of that first church, recorded in Acts 1, when it is evident that the Lord made a choice, would give credence to Matthias. However, that’s the last we hear of Matthias, and Paul takes the scriptural limelight. But neither do we hear of the other Apostles after the gospels, other than Peter, James, and John, so the silence becomes a mute argument.

Paul certainly is seen as a valid Apostle, but in I Corinthians 15:8, **“And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time,”** the language would tend to speak of a “pre-mature” birth rather than a “late” birth,” and Scofield’s comment, “...was an illustration or instance before the time of the future national conversion of Israel” also has certain credence.

I suggest that if the Lord thought it any of our business, or necessary for us to know, He would have given us the information. Compare here, Matthew 20:21-23, **“And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the**

**one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father”** and John 21:20-22, **“Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.”** (Emphasis mine.)

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Matthew 19:28 declares: **“And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel”**

We have no clear declaration of Scripture indicating who will be the apostle that will sit on the 12th throne. We know it will be either Matthias or Paul. Since Matthias is only mentioned twice in Scripture (Acts 1:23, 26) and Paul plays a prominent role in the New Testament after his conversion, my opinion would be that Paul would sit on the 12th throne. However, this conclusion is simple conjecture that cannot be dogmatically embraced and affirmed.

TOM ROSS





# The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

Briefly explain and list chronologically the events of the end-time, beginning with the rapture to the eternal ages. - Tennessee

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I think this question can be answered quite briefly. There are really only a very few events that can be specifically placed in order in the eschatological program, as far as we are given information. I think there is too much time and hurtful emphasis and debate placed on trying to place every eschatological event in a specific chronological position. In a forum such as this we can only briefly touch on any of these events. For all practical purposes, there are only four events.

First, the rapture. Of the many references we can go to, I will only mention three.

In type, we see that Lot must need be first taken out of Sodom before the Angel can bring on the destruction. **"Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar"** (Emphasis mine). **"For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ"** (I Thess. 5:9).

Second, after the letters to the churches (Rev. 2 & 3) and the call to John to **"Come up hither"** (Rev. 4:1), there is no more mention of the church. From then on the gospel is being preached by 144,000 (Jews), the two witnesses, and an angel. (Rev. 7:2-8; 11:3-7; 14:6-7).

The third reference is Revelation 19:7-9, **"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God"** all preceding the final return of our Lord to destroy the armies of the Antichrist and set up His kingdom.

Second event, Armageddon (Rev. 19:11-21). This involves the return of our Lord with His saints (v. 14), the defeat of the forces gathered at Armageddon (Rev. 16:13-16; 19:20-21), the defeat of the beast and false prophet (19:19-20) and the binding of Satan for 1,000 years (20:1-2).

Third event, the Millennium (Rev. 20:5). This involves the earthly reign of Christ (sitting on the throne of His earthly and prophetic father, David, (Isa 9:7; Jer 17:25; 22:4). I think it is necessary here to point out that this "millennial reign," like the six days of creation, is a specific time, having a specific starting and ending point.

Fourth event, the final rebellion and judgment (Rev. 20:7-15), involving Satan's last attempt to fight with God (20:7-9), Satan's final sentence to the lake of fire (v. 10), and the Great White throne judgment (11-15).

And finally the fifth event, the New Heaven and New Earth, (Rev. 21:1-2).

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The next event on God's prophetic calendar is the rapture when the saints shall be called out prior to the Great Tribulation. We hold that the Judgment Seat of Christ (the judgment of believers relative to their service) will occur at this time. Some time after this (we are not sure how long), there will be a peace treaty signed between the nation of Israel and her enemies. This will begin the Tribulation period. The Antichrist will make this deal with Israel and will break it around the middle of the Tribulation period. The Scripture seems to imply that the Antichrist will be Satan incarnate during the last 3 ½ years of the Tribulation. At the end of the Tribulation, Satan will be bound for 1,000 years. Christ will actually end the Tribulation when He returns to set up His Millennial Kingdom. Christ will reign with His saints for 1,000 years. At the end of the Millennium, Satan will be loosed for a short season and will try to overcome Christ. He will fail and will be eternally cast into the Lake of Fire. The lost will be judged at the Great White Throne Judgment at this time and will be found guilty and cast alive into the Lake of Fire. The Earth will be purified and the Eternal Ages will set in at this point. What all will occur throughout eternity, we cannot know for it is not recorded in Scripture. We do know that it will be wonderful and glorious to be with Christ and the saints.

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1. Since the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ we have been living in what is commonly referred to as the last days. (cf. Heb. 1:1-2, I Pet. 1:20, I John 2:18) A good description of the last days is described in II Timothy 3:1-5 & 13.

2. The Rapture, or the catching away of the living saints, will coincide with the resurrection of the just and will occur prior to the seven year Tribulation Period (I Thess. 4:16-18, I Thess. 1:10, Titus 2:12-14). The Rapture will be a secret coming of Christ in the air for the saved who are alive at the first phase of His coming where He will also glorify the bodies of all the saints who had previously died prior to His coming.

3. Immediately following the Rapture of the saints will be the seven year Tribulation Period where the wrath of God will be systematically poured out upon the earth (Matt. 24:21, 28-29). It is also known as the Time of Jacob's Trouble (Jer. 30:7), Daniel's Seventieth Week (Dan. 9), The great day of the Lord (Joel 1:15, Zeph. 1:14-15, 18). The seven year Tribulation Period is graphically described in Revelation chapters 6 through 19. There are certain events that will occur during the Tribulation that are significant:

a) The revealing of the Antichrist to the world (II Thess. 2).

b) The abomination of desolation (Dan. 9:27, Matt. 24:15) will occur at the midway point of the Tribulation period. The Antichrist will break his peace pact with Israel and set himself up as God in the Temple (II Thess. 2:4). This will coincide with the public slaying of the Two Witnesses (Rev. 11:3-12).

c) The judgement of spiritual Babylon (the Roman Catholic Church) and commercial Babylon (Rev. 17-18) will also take place towards the end of the Tribulation Period.

d) A series of battles will culminate in the Battle of Armageddon at the end of the Tribulation Period (Rev. 16:16-21 cf. Rev. 19:11-21).

4. The Revelation of Christ will signify the end of the Tribulation Period and the beginning of the 1000 year reign of Christ with His saints upon the earth (Matt. 24:29-30 cf. 25:31-41).

a) Satan will be bound in the bottomless pit at the beginning of the Millennium and will remain there for 1000 years (Rev. 20:1-6).

b) Elect Israel will be spiritually restored to God by looking to Christ as their Saviour (Zech. 12:9-11).

c) The Judgment of the Nations will occur at the beginning of the Millennium where the unsaved survivors of the Tribulation Period will be judged and purged from the earth (Prov. 2:21-22 cf. Matt. 25:31-41).

d) At the end of the Millennial Reign of Christ with His saints upon the earth, Satan will be loosed for a season only to be finally judged (Rev. 20:7-10).

5. The next major event after the Millennium will be the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:11-15) where the wicked dead will be judged to determine their place in the eternal Lake of Fire.

6. After the Great White Throne Judgment will come the Purgation of the Universe, the revealing of the New Jerusalem which will be the dwelling place of the Bride, and the commencement of the Eternal Ages (Rev. 21-22).

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The rapture will occur suddenly, Christ will come as a thief in the night (I Thess. 4:16). Notice that Christ comes by Himself and those that are the Lord's, who are in the grave, Christ will raise first, and then those who are alive and remain will be caught up to meet Him in the clouds.

The judgment of the saints will occur at the judgment seat of Christ (II Cor 5:10), not the Great White Throne of Judgment which is before the lost are consigned to the lake of fire. In Revelation 20:11, 12, God is very specific upon the difference of the two.

While the judgment of believers is occurring in heaven, on earth a covenant will be made with the children of Israel by the Antichrist who has risen into power after the rapture of the Church. For three and a half years this covenant will be kept (Isa. 28:15).

During the first three and a half years of the tribulation there will be unparalleled suffering in which the world has never before seen. The seven angels with seven trumpets will one by one sound their trumpets and the events in which God has determined to occur will be experienced upon the earth and those

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## Forum #2

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who inhabit it (Rev 8:6-11:19).

The next great event to take place is the war in heaven between Michael and his angels against Satan and his angels. Satan loses, of course, and is cast out of heaven, and no place is left for him except the earth in which he displays his great wrath upon the inhabitants of the earth (Rev 12:7-12).

This being the mid point of the seven year tribulation, the image of the beast is to be worshipped. Those who will not worship the image will fall under the penalty of death (Rev. 13:1-18).

The vials or bowls will be poured out upon the earth during the second half of the seven year tribulation. During this time the events that take place in the first half of the tribulation during the sounding of the trumpets will pale in comparison to the vials (Rev 16:1-21).

Next is the battle of Armageddon (Rev 16:13-16). They that gather to make war with Christ are crushed and overcome by Him (Rev 19:17-21).

Satan is bound and put into the bottomless pit in preparation for the millennial kingdom. (Rev 20:1-3). In Zechariah 14:4 describes the second advent of Christ when He sets foot upon the Mount of Olives which in turn will bring about the judgment of the nations (Matt 25:31-46 ).

For one thousand years Christ will rule with a rod of iron over the nations of the earth (Rev 20:4-6).

If we continue to read on from Revelation 20:6 we see the “rest of the matter at hand” which indeed is very specific and very enlightening for the child of God.

I have in no way given a full and concise list of all the events of the end times, but I pray that it will help in some way to strengthen your understanding upon the subject at hand. This verse of Scripture following is extremely helpful to me when studying the book of Revelation to understand its wondrous treasures within, remember... **“And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy”** (Revelation 19:10).

MIKE DEWITT

## Spiritual Resurrection

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wills, affections, and understandings are centered in things **“earthly, sensual, devilish”** (Jas. 3:15).

There are certain points of similarity between natural and spiritual death. The dead have all the organs of sense, but

no sensibility (Ps. 115:5-6). Even so the spiritually dead have no susceptibility in regard to the things of God. They know not God. They see no beauty in Christ that they should desire Him. The dead in the natural realm are cold as the grave that covers them. Likewise the spiritual dead have no warmth of Christian love for either God or man. Those naturally dead cannot contribute to their bodily resurrection. Likewise those spiritually dead cannot contribute to their resurrection.

### THE CAUSE OF THIS DEATH

The physical dead are surrounded by the shroud, the coffin, and the grave. So likewise those who are spiritually dead are surrounded by **“trespasses and sins.”** These two expressive terms indicate the circumstances of the death that the apostle describes. Those spiritually dead are destitute of a life that recognizes God because they have given themselves up to trespasses and sins.

First, there are positive **“trespasses”** in which men go beyond the bounds of God and what is forbidden. The Greek word for **“trespasses”** suggests a landmark fixed by God, which He has commanded men not to pass. Yet men have passed that landmark and have trespassed upon God’s posted ground. What God had reserved for Himself out of the trees of the garden in Eden, Adam and Eve trespassed upon. They ate the forbidden fruit. Ever since that time men have again and again trespassed upon God’s reserved territory.

The word **“trespasses”** also suggests the idea of a barrier which God has placed in our way and told us not to force our way through it. I refer to the terrible barrier of the law, the violation of which involves awful penalties and His fearful curse (Gal. 3:10). Men have broken through the barrier again and again. There is also the barrier of conscience which God has put in all men, yet men break down this barrier again and again.

Second, there is the negative **“sins”** which means that men miss the mark of God’s standard of right and wrong. They fail in their duty and omit what they know they ought to have done. The word “sins” points to the sinful movements of the soul, such as sins of thought and purpose, as trespasses point to the various developments of the sinful nature. Sins are the fruit of the depravity which has its seat in the heart of a man. These sins may be of omission or commission. Men are dead in sin by every mercy they despise and by every duty they neglect, as well as by every positive transgression of the divine law.

The Apostle Paul in Ephesians 2:1 looked upon the world of his day and saw it full of intellectual stir and full of human activity. But as he gazed upon it from the spiritual stand point he saw the masses as one great graveyard. He saw living corpses--people alive naturally

but dead spiritually. On every tombstone there was written the same inscription. They all died of the same disease: “Dead through sin,” as the original more properly means.

### WHAT THIS DEATH IMPLIES

First, the term **“death”** implies a state of separation. Physical death is a great separator. It separates a man from bread and air so necessary for living. It cuts him off from the cause and source of natural life. Spiritual death means a person is separated from the cause and source of spiritual life. The Bible says such persons are **“alienated from the life of God”** (Eph. 4:18) and that they **“know not God”** (I Thess. 4:5). Their **“iniquities have separated”** them from God (Isa. 59:2).

Second, it implies a state of insensibility. A corpse is insensible to the objects which are around it. It sees not, and hears not, and feels not. The dead are neither charmed nor alarmed by anything said or done in their presence. The same is true of the spiritually dead. They have no fears nor tears concerning their trespasses and sins. They have no alarm as to their future state. Neither the law nor the gospel moves them. They have no interest in the things which pertain to their everlasting peace. They have no more concern in these things than a dead man does in the world around him.

Third, it is a state of helplessness. We don’t expect anything from a dead man. The dead can never rise from their graves. Silent, stiff, and cold dead souls cannot quicken themselves. Even as a dead body struggles not against the mound of dirt heaped over its grave, even so a dead spirit struggles not against the burden of sin or the curse of the law. They are without Christ and **“can do nothing”** (John 15:5). Spiritually they are **“without strength”** (Rom. 5:6). Men cannot quicken one another, nor can a man quicken himself.

Fourth, it is a state of incapacity. The dead have nothing in common with the living. We bury our dead out of our sight because their bodies would soon become repulsive. The dead are unfit to fellowship with the living. Even so dead men from the spiritual stand point are unfit for communion with God and the saints. Sins and trespasses have rendered all functions of spiritual life inactive. They cannot understand nor obey God (Rom. 8:6-8). Therefore they are totally incapacitated.

Fifth, it is a state of deterioration. A dead body only gets worse and worse. Likewise it is with the spiritually dead. **“...evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being**

**deceived”** (II Tim. 3:13). They often will **“increase unto more ungodliness”** (II Tim. 2:16). They are rotting to corruption by sin.

### THE AUTHOR OF SPIRITUAL RESURRECTION

The verse begins: **“And you hath he quickened. . .”** The words **“hath he quickened”** are supplied from verse 5, but not improperly, by our translators. To be quickened is to be “made alive” or “made to live.” It means that they experienced a spiritual resurrection. This is said in relation to their previous deadness. The idea is that they were dead up to the time when the Holy Spirit quickened them.

There is nothing higher in kind than spiritual life, and there is nothing more dreadful than spiritual death. Man shares with the lower creatures the life of conscious activity. Unlike animals, man has a capacity for a higher life---a life of personal communion with God. But until God quickens a man he is only alive to animalism, alive to lusts, alive to passion, alive to earth, but dead to the highest and noblest of realities.

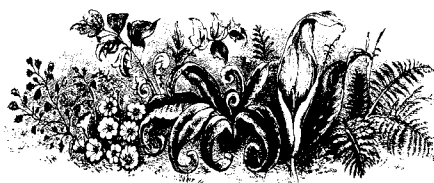
As God is the only source of natural life (Acts 17:25,28), even so He is the only source of spiritual life (Ps. 36:6). Just as He gives natural life to as many as He wills, likewise He gives spiritual life to as many as He wills. John 5:21 declares of Christ: **“...he quickeneth whom he will.”** The giving of spiritual life is something reserved to the sovereign will of God. Christ, the last Adam, is **“a quickening spirit”** (I Cor. 15:45) to all of those who are His seed.

Eternal life was promised to some **“before the world began”** (Tit. 1:2). All of these **“were ordained to eternal life”** (Acts 13:48). In the fulness of time Jesus Christ came and laid down His life for those ordained to life. He said: **“...the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep”** (John 10:11; cf. 6:48-51). Christ came forth into human history **“that they might have life”** (John 10:10). Christ, the Mediator, will give eternal life to as many as the Father gave Him in the covenant (John 17:2). Christ said of His sheep in John 10:28: **“I give unto them eternal life.”** Romans 6:23 reads: **“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”**

This is called spiritual life because it comes from the Holy Spirit. Jesus said: **“It is the Spirit that quickeneth. . .”** (John 6:63). Paul declared: **“...the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life”** (II Cor. 3:6). These words refer to the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit Who alone can convey spiritual life to the soul of a man. This is why He is called **“the Spirit of life”** (Rom. 8:2; Rev. 11:11).

The passage from the natural to the spiritual world is sealed on the natural side. The barrier between natural life

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## Spiritual Resurrection

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and spiritual life has never been crossed by a man of his own ability and power. No change of environment, no mental change, no moral effort, no evolution of character, no progress in civilization, can endow a single human soul with the attribute of spiritual life. A man must be born of the Spirit before he can enter into the spiritual kingdom of God (John 3:3,5). Only the Spirit of God can bear a dead soul across the bridgeless gulf between natural and spiritual.

Spiritual life cannot spring up from a man whose spirit is dead. It cannot develop out of anything that is not spiritual life. All life, natural or spiritual, must come from antecedent life. There is no such thing as spontaneous generation. Neither is there any such thing as spontaneous regeneration. I John 5:12 says: **“he that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”** The person quickened by God’s grace will tell you: **“I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me”** (Gal. 2:20). All boasting of spiritual life apart from Christ is only death masked.

### THE EVIDENCE OF IT

The first evidence of spiritual life is hearing and faith: **“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life”** (John 5:24). The life-giving operation has already passed upon all who hear the Word and believe in God the Father. Life is not given after believing. Rather, life comes first and then a person hears the Word and believes that the Father sent Christ to be the Redeemer. A person believes because God has placed life within him.

I take this position on this verse because of the tense of the verb “have” is present rather than future. It does not say as many try to make it say: “He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, will have everlasting life.” Rather, it says: **“He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life.”** John 6:35 discloses that believing in Christ is the same as coming to Christ. Jesus Christ said: **“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him. . .”** (John 6:44).

A second evidence of being quickened is love for the brethren: **“We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death”** (I John 3:14). Love of the brethren is not the ground of our passing over out of death into life, but of our knowing that we have done so. If there is love for the brethren in your heart, then you may feel assured that you have passed from death

unto life. A want of love for the Christian brotherhood evidences that no spiritual change has occurred.

A third evidence is that a person acts and walks like a man made alive from the dead. **“How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?”** (Rom. 6:2). According to Romans 6:4, the quickened man **“should walk in newness of life.”** He will desire to walk with his risen Lord in that new life which he derives from Him. If a man were physically raised from the dead, he would leave the cemetery and take off his grave clothes. The same is true of a man who has **“risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead”** (Col. 2:12).

A fourth evidence is death to sin. That was the disease that killed them. They cannot be made alive unless the disease be cured. Those who trust Christ died to sin when Christ died: **“For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God”** (Rom. 6:10-13).

### CONCLUSION

1. This text brings to our attention a fearful thing as to man’s condition by nature. They are not sick and in the hospital; they are dead and in the cemetery. They are totally incapacitated in the spiritual realm. They do not need education, or a change of environment, or some church ordinance, or a mourner’s bench, or a decision card to sign. They need and must have spiritual life; otherwise, they are headed for the second death---the making of spiritual death final and permanent.

2. When we attend a funeral we weep with them that weep. How much more ought we to weep and mourn for thousands of dead souls of men who have never been made alive again in Jesus Christ. Rivers of water should run down our eyes as we look upon millions who are dead to spiritual realities. It must be that we do not weep as we should because we find it hard to believe the awful truth of Ephesians 2:1.

3. This awful deadness was not caused by God. Men are the originators of their own miserable condition. Their trespasses and sins have had a killing effect upon them. Death has come because they are under sin. Men have destroyed themselves; they are self-murderers!

4. Only God can raise the dead. The One Who gave us natural life when we were born must also give us spiritual

life when we are born again. No man can make himself alive spiritually. No preacher, however earnest and zealous, can make one hearer to have spiritual life. No parent, however loving and prayerful, can quicken a child to life in God. No Bible teacher, however skilled and tearful, can make a dead soul live. **“You hath he quickened”** is the language of Holy Scripture.

5. If you are a stranger to this divine life, then you had better stop and consider

your condition before God. You will never see the spiritual kingdom of God if you die in this condition. There is no spiritual resurrection after death. God is a God of the living. Unless you are made alive unto Him you cannot be with Him here or hereafter. Remember, I John 5:12 says: **“He that hath the Son hath life.”** Do you have Christ as your personal Savior? Are you looking only to Him for spiritual life and salvation?



## CELLBLOCK TO CELLBLOCK

By David G. Hoffman

Encouragement and thoughts from a prisoner to other prisoners and readers.

**“Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried”** (Rev. 2:10).

## Working for the Man?

This month’s message doesn’t require much exposition from me because the Word is pretty self-explanatory, but I feel this is a subject that I need to dwell on so I’m sure you, dear reader, will be better for the reminder as well.

As many of you know, I’m going through a program for ex-gang-member’s reintegrating from segregation back into general population. The program is going well, my group just graduated to Phase II and have many more privileges than Phase I, but there are also many more obstacles and temptations. I haven’t had a work assignment in six years and although the program is slowly easing me back into work assignment mode, it ain’t always easy remembering Who I actually work for. One of the hardest lessons the Lord has taught me behind these prison bars, and I’m still learning it, is that I don’t work for “the man.”

What? Don’t work for the man? The man is the one who gives out the work assignments. The man is the one complaining when you don’t pick “his” cotton fast enough, or pull “his” weeds fast enough, or mop “his” hallway with enough gusto! What do you mean you don’t work for the man?

Yes, it’s true; the man does all of the above and more as any prisoner can attest. But if you’re a Christian prisoner you work for someone even higher than the director of prisons:

**“Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he**

**receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free”** (Eph. 6:5-8).

As we can see from the Word, whether we’re going out on a line squad every day hitting on the ground for no apparent reason, or picking cotton, or sweeping a hallway, or painting a wall, or slopping pigs, or whatever our prison job happens to be, (or whatever your free-world job happens to be, my dear free-world readers), we are to do all as if working directly for the Lord Himself:

**“Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; 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”** (Col. 3:22-24).

We march happily down to the chapel and sing our hearts out, stand up and give our testimonies, and maybe even share a message from God’s Word that’s touched us recently---but then we go right out and bicker and complain about our work assignments and do just enough to get by. “Oh, but you don’t see how my boss treats me, he hates Christians and takes all of his frustrations out on me. . .” Well dear reader, we’re not responsible for the actions of others but we are responsible to act in accordance with the Word of God:

**“Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward”** (I Pet. 2:18).

As the Apostle Paul instructed Titus to exhort servants, so I exhort you: **“Be obedient unto [those that have charge over you], and please them well in all things; not answering again; not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that [you] may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things”** (Tit. 2:9-10).

Please continue to pray for me, dear

♦ (Continued on page 394)

## Cellblock to Cellblock

(Continued from page 393) ♦

reader, as I go through this program and as I continue to study God's Word and apply it in this column for the encouragement of myself, my fellow prisoners, and my free-world readers alike. Thank you Bro. Cockrell and all of the *Banner* staff for giving me this opportunity, you guys; Bro. Jeff, Bro. Kevin, and many others are in my prayers daily.

Although I cannot receive mail from other prisoners, if some of my free-world readers would like to offer feedback on this or any of my previous articles/columns you may do so at: David G. Hoffman, #809805, 1100 FM 655, Rosharon, TX 77583. (I will respond only upon request.)



### Mini-Edition by Joseph Harris

Chairman of Biblical Studies  
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## Savorless Salt and Covered Candles

In the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5, 6, and 7, Jesus spoke of many things. Above all, the main theme of this sermon is that God's people are to be different from the world in order to make a difference in the world. Just as salt preserves meat from corruption, so Christians preserve society from moral corruption. Also, Christians "flavor" the world with goodness, love, etc., supplying things not provided by the world. The Scripture speaks of salt losing its savor, which is the same as becoming tasteless and losing its preserving power. Can salt really lose its saltiness? Mounds of salt south of the Dead Sea, exposed to the rain and sun, were found to be tasteless, therefore useless. When salt reaches this state, it is therefore good for nothing, as Jesus plainly stated. It has no use or any contribution to make to food, for taste or preservation. Tasteless salt is thrown out and walked upon like the dirt on the street (trodden under foot of men), since it has no value.

A light that is lifted high or set on a hill, radiates and gives light to all below. What good is that light if it is covered with a bushel? A bushel measure was a common object found in most houses in Bible times and when turned upside down, could double as a table. Jesus said that no one lights a candle and then covers it with a bushel basket.

In speaking of salt and light, Jesus did not say that Christians should be the salt of the earth or ought to be the light of the world. He said we already are. Are

you a preserving power in your group of acquaintances or in your family? Are you providing a flavor within your own circle of people, that otherwise might not be provided? Do you add to the morality in your community in a positive way? If your presence effects a better environment, then you are salting your world. I realize that the first priority of Christians is not to make this world a better place, but to bring people to Christ. However, people who come to Jesus make better citizens and neighbors. And as we win people to Christ, being salty makes us more effective and sets a high standard of righteousness, thereby revealing God to the lost.

Years ago, I refused to perform a marriage ceremony in a church setting for two professing Christians who were currently living together. I gave counsel, advising them to repent, and show proof of their repentance by living in separate quarters, then, later I would consider talking with them about a church wedding ceremony. Remember, these were professing Christians and I was not about to allow the bride to march down the church aisle wearing white, straight from a bed of fornication with her live-in lover husband to be. Churches and individual believers have an obligation to hold up a standard of righteousness, which is a picture of the righteousness of God. When righteousness is no longer seen, believers and non-believers begin to think every thing is relative and there are no absolutes of right or wrong. Churches dropped this ball years ago and relativism then crept into society.

Are you a beacon of light, as a lighthouse set on a hill, or a flickering flame that barely lights the way? Light illuminates and reveals God to others. Jesus said the purpose of letting our light shine was to show our good works and reveal the Father in Heaven (Matt. 5:16). Are you a lighthouse, a torch, a match, or an ember? Oh God give us lighthouses to rescue the perishing from the rocks of sin and hell.

**The Rantings  
and  
Ravings  
of  
Brother  
Ritechus  
N.  
Dignation**



## Spoiled Young'uns

I ain't never seen the beat for spoiled young'uns as found today. "Give Up and Give In" is the philosophy of most parents.....and grandparents. Such foolishness has spawned a generation of criminals. By the way, you don't have to

be behind bars to be a criminal. Spoiled means ruined or rotten and I've seen some kids who are more rotten than three day old warm buttermilk.

There's a lot to be said for the good ole days when parents knew how to be parents and deal with kids properly. Remember that old school days poem? "School days, school days, good old golden rule days. Readin' and writin' and 'rithmetic, taught to the tune of a hickory stick" used to be well known. Now days, you'd be singing to the tune of a lawsuit, teacher or parent, if hickory was still the motivator.

There are tons of books on parenting, and ever once in a while, a decent one based on the Bible pops up, but one out of a hundred can't undo the wreckage done by 99 sorry ones. Even at that, no book can replace THE BOOK on child rearing, the Bible. Back in the 1960's, Dr. Spock was the rage, and since then, his descendants have multiplied.

Vance Havner used to quote a little poem in his sermons that went something like this:

*Junior hit the meter man, Junior bit the cook  
Aggressive behaviour thus displayed is found in  
the book.*

*Junior then pushed sister down and made her  
skin her knee*

*The section on sibling rivalry is found in chapter  
three.*

*Then Junior got in Grampa's room and fouled up  
his fishing line*

*Inquisitive behaviour is found in chapter nine.*

*So Grampa took his leather belt and laid*

*Junior across his knee*

*Cause Grampa hadn't read a book since 1963.*

Physical enforcement on children is not only not wrong, it's downright effective. Time after time, I've seen little knee biters kick, scream and cry to get their way, with nary a wet eye, yet their crying sounded real. Time after time, I've heard mothers count to three 10 times only to watch the child dare Mom to do something (By the time Mom gets to three, my wife could have done put 10 stripes on those legs). Oh well, Junior may not mind but, at least he will learn to count, which should come in handy counting the loot when he later robs a bank.

The meanest look you'll ever get from other parents and grandparents is when you take a switch or paddle to your young'un, but you just tell 'um like I once did, "You raise your heathen your way, I'll train mine God's way." *Train up child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.* Proverbs 22:6. Nuff said.



# Rest for the Weary

By Paul Stepp  
of Indore, West Virginia

## THE SEVENTH DAY OF CREATION

We read about a rest that God took in Genesis 2:1-3, **"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."** My title is "Rest for the Weary." In this first point that I want to make, I do not intend to imply that our God is a God that wearies in His Spirit, or that tires or must rest in order to survive. In fact, we read in Isaiah 40:28, **"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding."**

But, it is true that the Lord God did rest after the six days of creation. Maybe we could best describe the rest that He took as "a cessation from work." Indeed, the verses that we have already read from in Genesis 2:1-3, teach us that God did, in fact, rest after the six days of creation. We could also go to the Ten Commandments, and there we will read this 4<sup>th</sup> commandment: **"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it"** (Ex. 20:8-11).

You know, in many ways the Sabbath day is a promise of rest for the people of God. We read in Hebrews 4:9-11, **"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief"** The Sabbath day that is mentioned in the Bible, in a physical way, pictures the spiritual rest that the Lord has promised to His people. And, it is patterned after the rest that the Lord God took, after that He had made the heavens and the earth.

♦ (Continued on page 398)



# 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.

## FEDERAL JUDGE UPHOLDS "IN GOD WE TRUST"

(EP)--A federal judge in California ruled on June 12 that the phrase "In God We Trust" on U.S. currency did not violate constitutional prohibitions against the government establishment of religion. U.S. District Judge Frank C. Damrell Jr. ruled that the words "In God We Trust" are a national motto that "have nothing whatsoever to do with the establishment of religion." Michael Newdow, a Sacramento doctor, lawyer, and atheist who has been involved in several similar lawsuits, said he would appeal the decision against him. Newdow has already appealed a previous case all the way to the Supreme Court. He attempted to have the phrase "under God" removed from the Pledge of Allegiance.

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## SOUTH CAROLINA CURRICULUM STANDARDS QUESTION EVOLUTION

(EP)--The South Carolina Education Oversight Committee ratified high school biology standards June 12 that require students to understand why "scientists continue to investigate and critically analyze aspects of evolutionary theory." While it stopped short of requiring the teaching of intelligent design (ID), Casey Luskin, an attorney and analyst for the pro-ID Discovery Institute, is still calling it a win. "This victory is an important milestone towards improving the quality of science education, by ensuring that students learn the full range of relevant scientific evidence, including the scientific criticisms of evolution," he said. South Carolina is the fifth state to require learning the criticisms of evolution. "This policy helps remedy the problem," Luskin said. "Most biology textbooks today largely ignore scientific challenges to Darwinism."--CitizenLink

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## ATHEIST FORMS FOUNDATION TO FIGHT RELIGION IN MILITARY

(EP)--Attorney Mikey Weinstein is perhaps best known filing a lawsuit against the Air Force Academy for what he called excessive evangelization on the campus. This month, he took his campaign against religion in the military a step further by creating a new group called the Military Religious Freedom Foundation to fight what he calls "coercive indoctrination by evangelical Christians." Weinstein, himself a graduate of the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, filed a lawsuit against the Academy last October, claiming the academy was unconstitutionally

imposing evangelical Christianity on cadets.

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## SUPPORT FOR WAR GROWS FOLLOWING AL-ZARQAWI DEATH

(EP)--A USA TODAY/Gallup Poll released June 13 shows significant improvement in public support for the war effort. The poll was taken just days after the death of insurgency terrorist leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. The new poll found that 48% believe the U.S. will probably or definitely win the war, up from 39% in April. The poll also found 47% of respondents think things are going well in Iraq, up from 38% in March. President Bush himself has also benefited from recent good news from Iraq. His job approval has increased seven percentage points, to 38%, over the last month.

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## MOST AMERICANS BELIEVE IN CREATION

(EP)--Eight out of 10 Americans believe God guided creation in some capacity, according to a Gallup Poll. The Washington Times reported that 46 percent think God created man in his present form sometime in the past 10,000 years, while 36 percent say man developed over millions of years from lesser life forms with God guiding the process. Only 13 percent of Americans think humans evolved with no divine intervention. "There has been surprisingly little change over the last 24 years in how Americans respond," pollster Frank Newport said. Since 1982, between 44 percent and 47 percent have consistently agreed that God created man "as is." The survey found that 56 percent of Republicans, compared with 43 percent of Democrats, said God created humans in their present form. The findings are based on two polls of 1,001 adults, each conducted May 8 to 11 this year and Nov. 7 to 10, 2004, with a margin of error of two percentage points.--CitizenLink

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## PRISON FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM BANNED FROM PRISON

(EP)--Prison Fellowship's InnerChange Freedom Initiative (IFI) has been ordered to shut down by an Iowa judge because of its religious content. Prison Fellowship has been in Iowa's prisons for 6 years, and currently serves 210 inmates. Prison Fellowship founder Chuck Colson and president Mark Early, a former Virginia attorney general, say they will appeal the decision.

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## EPISCOPALIANS TAKE STEPS TOWARD SCHISM

(EP)--In a series of decisions taken at

the Episcopal Church's triennial conference in late June, the church further alienated itself from the mainstream of the worldwide Anglican Communion and likely set the stage for some sort of break between the American Episcopal Church and the worldwide Anglican Church.

The first major decision was the election of Katharine Jefferts Schori, the Episcopal bishop of Nevada, as the presiding bishop of the American church. She is the first female residing bishop in the history of the church. Only Canada and New Zealand have female bishops, and many Anglicans around the world believe that women should not be ordained. Further, she is committed to a larger role for non-celibate homosexuals in the leadership of the church.

Shortly after her election as presiding bishop, she was asked by CNN if it was a sin to be homosexual. She replied: "I don't believe so. I believe that God creates us with different gifts. Each of us comes into the world with a different collection of things that challenge us and things that give us joy and allow us to bless the world around us. Some people come into this world with affections ordered toward other people, and some people come into this world with affections directed at people of their own gender."

The Episcopal General Convention took a second major step when it voted not to temporarily ban non-celibate homosexuals from becoming bishops. The church had been urged to make such a decision by the so-called Windsor Report. The American church's rejection of this temporary ban will likely be seen by many conservative archbishops who provide the bulk of the leadership in the worldwide Anglican Church as a "last straw" in attempts to maintain fellowship.

A compromise resolution was rejected on June 20. The rejected resolution urged "very considerable caution" before any diocese elected a bishop "whose manner of life presents a challenge to the wider church and will lead to further strains" in the worldwide Anglican Communion.

Also on June 20, conservatives put forth a resolution that would have banned any candidate for bishop "who is living in a same-gender union" until "some new consensus in the Anglican Communion emerges." That resolution was defeated as well.

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## PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA) TO ALLOW GAY CLERGY

(EP)--The Presbyterian Church (USA), the nation's largest Presbyterian denomination, voted June 20 to allow local and regional bodies to ordain gays to the church's ministries.

According to Religion News Service, after nearly three hours of debate, delegates voted 298 to 221 to approve a complex proposal that allows local congregations and regional bodies known as presbyteries to bypass the church's current ban on "self-avowed practicing" gay clergy.

Current rules from 1996 that require "fidelity in marriage ... and chastity in singleness" will remain on the books. The

June 20 vote allows local bodies -- called presbyteries -- to allow exceptions to that rule.

The 2.3 million-member church has been debating this issue and the related issue of Biblical authority for nearly 30 years. The more conservative Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), which now has more than 300,000 members and congregations in all 50 states, was organized in the late 1970s in part because of an inability to resolve these issues then.

Just as in the Episcopal-Anglican Church controversy, this decision could cause a worldwide realignment of Presbyterians. Opponents of the decision had argued that it would lead to alienation from Presbyterian churches in Africa and Asia and could cause thousands of Korean members to withdraw from the church and align themselves with the PCA or with other conservative Presbyterian denominations, including the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

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## AS GAMBLING INCREASES, SO DOES THE PUBLIC CONCERN

(EP)--A modest backlash in attitudes towards legalized gambling has taken hold among an American public that spends more money on more forms of legal gambling now than at any time in the nation's history.

Seventy percent of Americans say that legalized gambling encourages people to gamble more than they can afford, according to a new Pew Research Center survey. By contrast, only 62 percent expressed that concern in 1989 when the same question was posed in a Gallup survey.

Similarly, 71 percent of the public today -- down from 78 percent in 1989 -- approves of lotteries as a way for states to raise revenue. Public support for other forms of legalized gambling, such as casino, off-track betting on horse racing and pro sports betting, has either been stable or declined since 1989.

These findings come at a time when gambling has become more pervasive in the popular culture, with a record number of casinos operating across the country, with online gambling gaining fast in popularity (albeit from a small base), with several celebrities going public with their gambling problems and exploits, and with poker tournaments having become a new form of television entertainment.

Despite all this, the survey finds that fewer people now (23 percent) than in 1989 (34 percent) say that they enjoy making bets; it also finds a decline, compared with 1989, in the overall percentage of people who report that they made a bet of any kind in the past year. Betting on horse racing and pro sports, in particular, has dropped off.

However, the survey also finds a sharp increase since 1989 in some high profile forms of betting -- including casino gambling and slot machines. These findings line up with industry reports that show that these forms of gambling have been in a period of rapid growth.

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◊ (Continued on page 396)

# Bible & The Newspaper

(Continued from page 395) ♦

## BIBLE THEME PARK GETS TAX-EXEMPT STATUS

(EP)--Florida Gov. Jeb Bush has signed into law a bill that would grant theme parks that display, exhibit, illustrate and interpret biblical manuscripts the same tax-exempt status as museums. According to Religion News Service, the law is the product of a four-year legal battle involving the Holy Land Experience, a live-action biblical museum in Orlando, developed by Zion's Hope, a nonprofit Christian ministry that oversaw it for its first four years. Orange County Property Appraiser Bill Donegan wanted the park to pay almost \$1 million in back taxes since 2001, when it opened. Donegan refused to give it full tax exemption because he questioned the purpose of the museum. "I think Holy Land itself is religious, but I'm not convinced that it serves a religious purpose like a church. I guess we're going to have to find out the definition of a church. When you charge \$30 for admission, is that a church?" Bill Donegan told the Associated Press. Last year an Orange County Circuit Court ruled that the entire park couldn't be taxed because it is used predominantly for religious purposes, but Donegan appealed the decision.

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## MORAVIANS APOLOGIZE FOR PARTICIPATION IN EARLY AMERICAN SLAVE TRADE

(EP)--The Northern branch of the Moravian Church publicly apologized for its past participation in slavery and vowed to eliminate racism in the church. Representatives of the Protestant denomination approved a resolution June 18 calling slavery "the low point of Moravians in North America." Rooting out racism "will be a major focus of the church for the next four years," the Rev. David Wickmann, president of the council leading the province, told the Associated Press. The church's Northern Province, which meets every four years, includes about 28,000 Moravians in congregations in 12 states, plus the District of Columbia and parts of Canada. Its Southern Province, with about 20,000 Moravians in five Southern states, approved a similar resolution in April.

## TEACHER'S UNION REMOVES ENDORSEMENT OF GAY MARRIAGE

(EP)--The National Education Association (NEA) has pulled a resolution in support of gay marriage after it was highlighted by a pro-family group. The national teachers union posted the following on its Web site: "The Association believes that legal rights and responsibilities with regard to medical decisions, taxes, inheritance, adoption, legal immigration, domestic partnerships and civil unions and/or marriage belong to all these diverse groups and individuals." According to Don Wildmon, chairman of The American Family Association (AFA), once people were made aware of the statement and

shared their displeasure with the union, the NEA removed it from the site — much to the chagrin of gay activists. "Homosexual groups are angry at the NEA because of the action," Wildmon said. "The NEA was trying to sneak this resolution past teachers and administrators, as well as the general public. But they got caught."--*CitizenLink*

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## GRADUATE SILENCED FOR REFERENCING GOD

(EP)--A valedictory given by a Las Vegas high school senior was interrupted when school officials turned off her microphone as she referenced her faith, The Associated Press reported. Brittney McComb, a student at Foothills High School, submitted the speech she intended to present to the school district beforehand, but it was returned heavily edited -- something that upset the straight-A student. "They said it was offensive," she said. "I really think it's free speech; and you're an American and you should be able to handle that." McComb decided to give the speech as originally written, leading to the abrupt ending. Many attending stood in support of McComb. "All of my classmates came up to me and were so happy," she said. "They told me they love me, and I said, 'God's awesome because I couldn't have done it without Him.'"--*CitizenLink*

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## BUSH ISSUES EXECUTIVE ORDER ON EMINENT DOMAIN

(EP)--It has been one year since the U.S. Supreme Court issued an opinion that shocked the country and attacked the fundamental American doctrine, "A man's home is his castle." Now the president is taking steps to preserve that principle.

President Bush marked the anniversary of the *Kelo v. New London* ( Conn.) decision by issuing an executive order barring the federal government from taking private land for someone else's private use.

Specifically, Bush's order said "it is the policy of the United States to protect the rights of Americans to their private property" by "limiting the taking of private property by the Federal Government to situations in which the taking is for public use, with just compensation, and for the purpose of benefiting the general public."

Bruce Hausknecht, judicial analyst for Focus on the Family Action, said Bush's order specifically requires agencies that answer to the president to make sure, when they exercise eminent domain, that people's property is taken only for a public use, such as a road or airport, rather than what *Kelo* allows -- the taking of private property for any use, including commercial development.

Christian groups were concerned about the decision because churches are often located in commercial areas but typically pay smaller taxes than commercial businesses that might occupy a similar real estate "footprint." Therefore, churches and benevolence ministries could potentially be at risk by the *Kelo* decision.

"*Kelo* interpreted the Fifth Amendment to allow state and local governments to

condemn private property for the benefit of private developers," Hausknecht said, "to build privately owned improvements on that property for the hope of a public benefit, such as a higher tax base."

The ruling, cited by family advocates as an example of judicial activism, sprung from a 1997 case in which the city of New London, Conn., allowed the New London Development Corp. to seize Susette Kelo's entire neighborhood for a shopping mall. Kelo and some of her neighbors sued -- and lost.

Sen. John Cornyn (R-Tex.) applauded Bush for taking executive action.

"The protection of homes and small businesses and other private property against government seizure or unreasonable government interference is a fundamental principle of American life and a distinctive aspect of our form of government," Cornyn said.

Cornyn has authored legislation -- The Protection of Homes, Small Businesses, and Private Property Act (S. 1313) -- which puts into federal law for the full government what Bush's order does for the executive branch. His bipartisan bill now has 31 Senate co-sponsors.

A House bill, H.R. 4128, passed the lower chamber with bipartisan support by a vote of 376-38 and is currently in the Senate Judiciary Committee. That bill would restrict federal economic-development funding to states where municipalities engage in eminent domain abuse.

"The Supreme Court's decision last year represented a radical departure from the decisions handed down interpreting that constitutional provision over the last 200 years, and the president's action was an important step toward righting that wrong," the Texas senator said. "But Congress must act soon."

The *Kelo* decision has brought both good news and bad news, according to Steve Anderson, a senior staff attorney for the Institute for Justice. The bad news is that *Kelo* opened up a floodgate of government property seizures.

"We did a study from 1998 to 2002, which showed more than 10,000 instances of eminent domain abuse around the country," Anderson said. "But in the last year, since *Kelo*, over 5,700 properties are being threatened or condemned for private development -- that's nearly triple the yearly average."

The good news, he said, is that the ruling has unleashed a response from state legislatures and grassroots activists.

"The one thing the court got right is that states are free to pass laws that are more restrictive and pass laws that are more protective of their residents," he said. "We've seen that occur in about half the states. About 25 states have passed some kind of reform."

In addition, citizen-driven initiatives are being placed on the ballot in a number of states this fall, including California.

"We've seen an unprecedented grassroots rebellion because of this decision," Anderson said. "Quite frankly, it hits home."

It's ironic, Hausknecht said, that the anniversary of *Kelo* comes so close to July 4, America's Independence Day, because the Founding Fathers were very protective of private property in the Constitution.

"Property rights were near and dear to everything the Founders believed," he noted, "and part of the abuse of rights that England committed against America dealt directly with property rights."

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## FEDERAL EMPLOYEE SUSPENDED FOR SPEAKING ON HOMOSEXUALITY

(EP)--A Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) employee has filed a lawsuit against his former boss, after he was suspended and relocated for expressing his thoughts about homosexuality in the workplace. Lary Dombrowski served the FAA in Louisville, Ky., for nearly 20 years. While there, he spoke with a co-worker who thought homosexuals were born gay. "I indicated to her that my wife and my daughter had gone to a church seminar on homosexuals," Dombrowski said. "And during that time they had guest speakers that were ex-homosexuals. And it was their testimony that homosexuals were not born that way." The co-worker wasn't offended, but relayed the conversation to a manager who suspended Dombrowski for a week and relocated him to Alabama for expressing what he called insulting or offensive views. Dombrowski isn't asking for his old job back, but he does want the allegations against him dropped. Kevin Theriot, an attorney with the Alliance Defense Fund, which filed the lawsuit on Dombrowski's behalf in a district court in Georgia, agreed. A spokesperson for the FAA said she could not comment on the case.--*CitizenLink*

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## OVER 3000 BIBLES DISTRIBUTED AT PORN CONVENTION

(EP)—A Michigan-based organization, Triple-X Church-dot-com passed out more than 3,300 Bibles during the weekend of June 23-25 at a pornography industry conference called "Erotica L.A." The bibles were printed by NavPress after the American Bible Society refused to cooperate with the project, saying that the cover -- which said "Jesus Loves Porn Stars" -- was "misleading and inappropriate."

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## MT. SOLEDAD CROSS SAFE – FOR NOW

(EP)—On July 3, Supreme Court Justice Anthony M. Kennedy granted a temporary stay of an order by a lower court to have a cross removed from Mt. Soledad in San Diego, Calif.

Justice Kennedy's temporary was the latest – and so far one of the most dramatic – developments in the fight to keep a 40-foot cross, part of a veteran's memorial, atop the mountain.

Atheist Phillip Paulson, backed by the American Civil Liberties Union, had said that the cross, on public property, was an unconstitutional establishment of religion. The Thomas More Law Center has been

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## Bible & The Newspaper

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arguing otherwise, but they could not stop District Judge Gordon Thompson's May 3<sup>rd</sup> ordering of the City of San Diego to remove the cross by Aug. 1 or face fines of \$5,000 a day thereafter.

The cash-strapped City indicated that, absent a stay, it would begin plans to remove the cross as early as July 5<sup>th</sup> rather than pay the fines.

Richard Thompson, President and Chief Counsel for the Law Center cautioned, "Justice Kennedy's order granting a temporary stay is welcome news; however, the fight to save the cross is far from over. His temporary stay order can be changed at any time by either himself or the full Court. Thus, we must continue to pursue all avenues to save the cross, not only in the courts, but in the halls of Congress and the White House."

A week earlier, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals refused to stay the lower court order, denying the Law Center's emergency request. This prompted the Law Center to immediately request a stay with Justice Kennedy, the Supreme Court Justice who is responsible for matters arising out of the Ninth Circuit. As a result of Justice Kennedy's order, the memorial cross will remain in its present location until further order of the Court. Presently, the Law Center is directly involved in an appeal in the California Court of Appeals and in the appeal in the Ninth Circuit. It is expected that this case will work its way up to the Supreme Court.

The Law Center's emergency application explained that this case presents a serious question regarding the place of religious symbols in the public life of our nation. Robert Muike, the Law Center Trial Counsel who authored the emergency application, also argued that the Mt. Soledad Cross case would give the Court an opportunity to revisit its Establishment Clause jurisprudence, which many on the Court, including Justice Kennedy, have noted is in need of substantial revision.

Muike further argued, "Should the Supreme Court not issue the requested stay, the Veterans Memorial as it is presently constituted will be destroyed, and a cherished memorial will be lost for all generations, causing irreparable harm to Applicant and many others. Should this Court issue the requested stay, the status quo will be maintained as it has been since 1954. Thus, the balance of equities tips sharply in favor of a stay."

Charles LiMandri, the West Coast Regional Director for the Thomas More Law Center who has spearheaded the defense of the memorial cross, commented, "Justice Kennedy's order shows that this case is far from over. While his stay is only temporary, it is evident that the Supreme Court is interested in this case."

The Supreme Court normally considers three factors when deciding whether to grant a stay, namely, whether there is a reasonable probability that four Members of the Court

will consider the issue sufficiently meritorious to grant certiorari, whether there is a fair prospect that five justices will conclude that the case was erroneously decided, and whether there is likely irreparable damage if the stay is denied.

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### GAY MARRIAGE BAN UPHeld IN GEORGIA, NEW YORK

(EP)--The top courts in two states have upheld their state's gay marriage bans.

On July 6, New York's highest court ruled that same-sex unions are not allowed under state law. On the same day, the Georgia Supreme Court reinstated a voter-approved ban on gay marriage.

According to the Associated Press, the New York Court of Appeals said in a 4-2 decision that the state's marriage law is constitutional and clearly limits marriage to a union between a man and a woman.

Any change in the law would have to come from the state Legislature, Judge Robert Smith said.

"We do not predict what people will think generations from now, but we believe the present generation should have a chance to decide the issue through its elected representatives," Smith wrote.

In Georgia, the state Supreme Court reversed a lower court's ruling that had been roundly criticized by Georgia Gov. Sonny Purdue and pro-family activists. The Georgia court voted unanimously that the ban did not violate the state's single-subject rule for ballot measures. The ban had been approved by 76 percent of voters in 2004.

Massachusetts remains the only state that allows gay marriage, although Vermont and Connecticut allow same-sex civil unions that confer the same legal rights. Forty-five states have barred same-sex marriage through statutes or constitutional amendments.

The New York decision said lawmakers have a legitimate interest in protecting children by limiting marriage to heterosexual couples and that the law does not deny homosexual couples any "fundamental right" since same-sex marriages are not "deeply rooted in the nation's history and tradition."

New York Gov. George Pataki issued a statement after his state's court decision was announced. The statement said, in part, "I am satisfied that today's decision by the state's highest court to uphold our position that marriage is between a man and a woman is the right one."

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### MOST FORTUNE 500 COMPANIES "GAY-FRIENDLY"

(EP)--The pro-gay Human Rights Campaign (HRC) announced in late June that for the first time more than half (253) of the Fortune 500 companies offer health-insurance benefits to same-sex partners and 430 grant special rights based on "sexual orientation." Joe Solmonese, president of HRC, said his group is largely responsible for the trends. "We're not only tracking progress in corporate America, but we're actively involved in making it," he said. "Our Workplace Project has worked with

## Book Publishing Announcement by Elder Tom Ross

Dear Brethren,

I have just completed the second edition of ***Teachings on the Local Church*** that was first published in 1993. The new edition has been enlarged and will be in a different format if I decide there is enough interest to actually print it. It will be a 6 x 9 book that will consist of approximately 370 pages. All Scripture quotes have been highlighted in **bold** print, and all the quotes by other authors are also highlighted by a different print font for variety.

We are taking pre-paid orders until 9-10-2006. **IMPORTANT:** If I do not receive your check or money order prior to 9-10-2006 I am assuming that you do not want a copy of the book. Once the book is printed there will be very few copies available for purchase. I plan on listing the names of individuals and churches who pre-paid in the front cover of the book so when you send your payment please let me know how you want to be acknowledged.

**PAYMENT INSTRUCTIONS & SHIPPING RATES:**

\$16 per book plus shipping, 1 book add \$4 shipping, 2-6 books add \$8 shipping, 7-15 books add \$14 shipping, 16-24 books add \$20 shipping  
\$13 per book on orders of 25 or more with **FREE SHIPPING.**

Send check or money order to:  
Tom Ross, 6339 County Rd. 15, South Point, OH 45680  
(If paying by credit card call this number 740-894-1455. A 4% credit card processing fee will be added to the total of all credit card orders)

From now until 9-10-06 I will be selling my Outlines of Systematic Theology (published in 2001) at half price with no shipping cost when ordered with Teachings on the Local Church. \$5.00 per book.

**Introduction to the Second Edition**

It has been over 13 years since Teachings on the Local Church was first printed. From then until now I have seen and heard of many Baptists who have drifted and departed from the faith once delivered unto the saints. It is alarming and troubling to the soul, but it is also a definite fulfillment of the prophetic Scripture which declares: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils...For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (I Tim. 4:1; II Tim. 4:3-4). Jesus is coming soon just as He promised (Rev. 22:20).

I have enlarged, enhanced, and expanded the present volume to include a chapter where I answer questions relating to New Testament church doctrine and practice that have been submitted to me through the years. My desire is to honor the Lord with a simple and straightforward presentation of all the major doctrines relating to the New Testament church. If there was ever a day in which Baptists need a definitive statement of "church truth" it is the age in which we now live. My hope is that this little volume will help and encourage all seekers of truth to remain steadfast. I love the Lord's church and count it an honor to be a member of Mt. Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church at Chesapeake, Ohio.

I have no axes to grind or debates to win. I simply want to be a servant of the Lord whose sole motive is to glorify God through teaching, preaching, writing, and applying the truths of Scripture. It has been my joy and privilege to be a preacher of the Gospel for nearly 26 years and a pastor of one of the Lord's churches for over 20 years.

A sinner saved by SOVEREIGN GRACE,  
Pastor Tom Ross

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### MOST AMERICANS PROUD OF COUNTRY

(EP)--A Gallup poll released over the weekend paints a fascinating portrait of American patriotism. Ninety-two percent of us are proud of our country, with fifty-seven percent saying they are "very" proud. That patriotism was the highest of any population in 34 other countries in Europe and Asia. But the strong love of country apparently isn't universal among Americans. Seventy-one percent of conservatives said they were

♦ (Continued on page 398)

hundreds of executives and employees over the past year alone, providing on-site training and cutting-edge research to assist employers implementing fair and equal policies." Robert Knight, director of the Culture and Family Institute, said what might seem fair to the gay lobby is manifestly unfair to others. "The real danger here ultimately is to Christian employers. What began as something voluntary will become mandatory," he said. "It's really not about extending tolerance, but about putting corporate American power behind the homosexual agenda, which is aimed directly at the church."



# Bible & The Newspaper

(Continued from page 397) ♦

“extremely” proud of America, while only 40% of self-identified liberals said the same thing.

## TEEN PREGNANCY RATES CONTINUE FALL

(EP)--Fewer teenagers are having babies according to the Kids Count Report, but the study also found no decline in the number of children living with a single parent. The report by the Annie E. Casey Foundation found teen-pregnancy rates fell from 49 per 1,000 females in 1999 to 42 per 1,000 in 2003, the latest year for which data were available. Linda Klepacki, analyst for sexual health with Focus on the Family Action, said it’s part of a longer trend. “We’ve seen a continual decrease in teen-pregnancy rates and teen-delivery rates since 1991,” she said. Klepacki said abstinence education has had the greatest impact. “Research has shown over and over again,” she said, “abstinence-until-marriage education is the factor that has decreased the rate the most.” Unfortunately, the study also revealed that there has been no change in the percentage of children living with a single parent, which has held steady at 31 percent. Wade Horn, assistant secretary for children and families at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, told Family News in Focus that’s an indication that abstinence education still has a ways to go. “The fact that the percent of children living in single-parent families has not also declined,” he said, “suggests that we have done less well at convincing our teenagers that they should also wait until they’re married to have children.”--*CitizenLink*

## BRITISH METHODISTS SAY NO TO BLESSING CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS

(EP)--The Methodist Church of Great Britain has ruled against any formal church blessing of civil partnerships or “gay marriages.” The decision by the church is a response to England’s new Civil Partnership Act, which allows same-sex couples to enter into a formal legal relationship with many of the legal benefits conferred by marriage. The decision, which came on June 27 at the church’s national assembly in Edinburgh, Scotland, said that it would not authorize any form of service for blessing a civil partnership, and Methodist premises cannot be used for any prayers for civil partnerships.

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## INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS PUERTO RICANS SEVER UCC TIES OVER HOMOSEXUALITY

(EP)--The Puerto Rican branch of the United Church of Christ has voted to break from the American church because of “discomfort” over the denomination’s liberal stance on sexuality issues, according to a UCC news release. The Iglesia Evangelica Unida de Puerto Rico voted during its annual assembly June 10 to formally dissolve the union between the two churches, which stretched back to 1961. According to the news release, 75 percent of those assembled

voted in favor of the split.

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# Rest for the Weary

(Continued from page 394) ♦

## THE LAND OF CANAAN

During the process of time, the Lord made known His peculiar care and love for the children of Israel and of Abraham. He made a promise to Abraham, that one day his seed would live in and occupy the land of Canaan. Then, as the children of Israel departed from the bondage of Egypt, He promised them rest in the land of Canaan. Can you imagine, the joy and the hope and the pleasure, with which the children of Israel, would picture that blessed land of rest, to which they traveled?

But, during the travels in the wilderness, the children of Israel were not faithful, and they rebelled against the Lord their God. Therefore, the adults amongst the ones that left the land of Egypt, were never allowed to enter into that rest that was spoken of. We read in Hebrews 3:10-11, “**Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.**” (See also Ps. 95:7-11).

## JESUS CHRIST

We read in the book of Matthew, “**Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 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. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light**” (Matt. 11:28-30). All of the “rests” of the Bible, only picture this ultimate rest. We read in the book of Hebrews, “**For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works. And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest. Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief: Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God**” (Heb. 4:3-9). When the writer to the Hebrews makes reference to the ones that “**entered not in because of unbelief**,” I believe that he is referring partly to the children of Israel who did die in the wilderness and did not enter into the promised land. However, I think

that the primary reference must be had to the descendants of those children of Israel, that were, in the time of the writing of this epistle, fully rejecting the gospel of Jesus Christ, and forsaking that rest that was preached first unto them. So, they rejected that gospel, and did not “**enter therein.**”

But, the rest that was preached still remained. Who was meant to finally enter in? Well, the writer mentions the fact that “**the works were finished from the foundation of the world.**” I think that this is teaching us that there was always a salvation promised, and the salvation was accomplished, in the mind of God, from the “**foundation of the world.**” The rest that that salvation would bring, was also promised, and a certain people were ordained to enter therein. You see, the children of Israel were now making it plain, that at least at this time, and in the case of this particular people, they were not destined to enter into that rest. But, the rest was still there, and it was awaiting a people! Praise the Lord, that you and I have been included in that number! Praise the Lord that blindness was, in part, happened to the Jews, until the Gentiles were entered into that rest!

Let’s read Heb. rews 4:10-11, “**For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.**” I think that it is noticeable in v. 10, that we, as children of God, when we come to our Saviour, do cease from our “**own works,**” and submit to the works of Jesus Christ and the salvation that He has procured on our behalf.

I think that v. 11 also teaches us, that there is a work that we must indulge in after that we are saved. You know, any sort of rest implies that there must have been some period or measure of labour. Just as the Lord God worked for six days, and then rested the seventh. There would have been no rest, if He had not first worked! And, as I have said, we might have laboured long and hard to save ourselves. But, in time, the Holy Spirit came unto us, and directed us to the Lord Jesus Christ, and we rested in Him and His labours.

But, I think that it is important to consider, that after that we are saved, we must labour still – only this time in the Lord. And, as we labour, we may perhaps grow weary from time to time. When this occurs, we can find rest in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And then, ultimately, we shall rest in the Lord for all eternity. But, again, do not forget that the rest that we look forward to does imply that there should be work and labour leading up to that appointed rest.

## THE DANGER OF UNBELIEF

Those that do not believe, will not enter into the Rest that is Christ Jesus.

We read in Hebrews 3:12-4:2, “**Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end; While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom swore he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.**”

The writer to the Hebrews is reminding these folks, that some of their forefathers did not enter into the land of Canaan (which was only a picture of the eternal rest) because of unbelief. Therefore, he is upbraiding them, and exhorting them, lest the same might be said of the Hebrews to whom he is writing. We know that the Lord did condemn those that did not believe on Him during His earthly ministry. We read in John 8:23-24, “**And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. 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.**” Later, the Lord says to the scribes and Pharisees, “**Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?**” (Matt. 23:33). So, the epistle to the Hebrews serves as a reminder, that those who do not believe God, will surely die, and will not enter into rest.

Certainly, unbelief can be said to be the downfall of all of the unsaved. However, sometimes there are some that pretend to believe in Jesus Christ; and sometimes there are some that really might be deceived into thinking that they are trusting in Jesus Christ. But, in either case, in the end, those that do not have real faith, but instead only have “**an evil heart of unbelief,**” cannot enter into the Kingdom of God, and the rest that is promised in Jesus Christ.

I think that we could also say, that unbelief is very often a problem in the lives of the children of God. There was a man during the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, who had a demon possessed son. He brought his son unto the disciples, and

♦ (Continued on page 399)

# Rest for the Weary

(Continued from page 398) ♦

they could not cast out the demon. When you read the context and the parallel passages, you will find that the Lord told the disciples that they could not cast out the demon because of “**your unbelief**” (Matt. 17:20). When the man could not receive help from the disciples, he turned to the Lord. Then the Lord Jesus told him, “**..If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth**” (Mark 9:23). Then we read this in Mark 9:24, “**And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief**.” To make this point even more clear, let’s read about the Lord coming to the eleven, after they had refused to believe the reports of Mary Magdalene, and the two on the road to Emmaus, concerning their encounters with the risen Saviour, Jesus Christ. “**Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen**” (Mark 16:14). Isn’t it pretty amazing, that even the apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ could be said to have “**unbelief and hardness of heart?**”

As we return to the epistle to the Hebrews, perhaps we could say that it is this attitude or condition of unbelief, even in the lives of the saved, that the writer to the Hebrews is alluding to. Perhaps he might be reminding his Hebrew readers, that if God did not allow those unbelieving forefathers to enter into Canaan, what might be the fate of those that today profess to be followers of Christ, but which so often manifest unbelief? Later on, the writer to the Hebrews had this to say: “**For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth,**

**there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people”** (Heb. 10:26-30). Peter told his readers, “**For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?**” (I Pet. 4:17-18).

Now, of course those that are saved cannot lose their salvation; but they can (and most certainly will) face the chastening hand of God if they do not believe Him and trust Him as they should. And, the point that the writer to the Hebrews is making, is, that if in the time of Moses, unbelievers and offenders were slain, what fate, suppose ye, should the unbelievers and offenders in the time of Christ be accounted worthy of? We read a little later in the epistle to the Hebrews, “**And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons”** (Heb. 12:5-8). So, we could say that a danger of unbelief is that we, as children of God, will be subject to the chastening hand of God.

## CONCLUSION

Remember these verses: “**Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief...There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief**” (Heb. 4:6, 9-11). There is a rest that remaineth for the people of God. That rest is found in Jesus Christ. We experience that rest in part in this life; but we will experience it in perfection and completeness in the life to come.



# GLEANINGS



## STUDYING THE OFFICE OF A DEACON

By Grover Laird  
of Dorsey, Mississippi

In the early days of the first church, they ordained seven men to assist the Apostles. It is commonly accepted that these were the first deacons in the first church. Acts 6:1-7, gives us this account. I want to set forth a few thoughts from these verses.

Some feel that most of our smaller churches do not need deacons. The fact that the first church waited until their membership was several thousand before they saw a need would support this belief. The church at Philippi had deacons, but they must have been large since they had more than one pastor (Phil. 1:1). Yet Paul’s reference to deacons in his letter to Timothy sounds like deacons were common and profitable (I Tim. 3:12-13). Yet it surely could be said that a church should move prayerfully and cautiously in setting up this office in their church.

A problem brought the first church to the place of ordaining these men, who surely proved to be a blessing. Notice: “**And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration**” (Acts 6:1). While problems in a church can do much harm, they may drive a church to a greater ministry. That is, if they are resolved by the Holy Spirit’s leadership.

These seven verses in Acts chapter six, tell us what authority a pastor has in the church where he pastors. As God’s overseer of the flock, (I Pet. 5:2) the Lord may enable him to recognize a need before anyone else. He then has the right to call the church together, call the problem to their attention, and give advice concerning the way the church should handle the problem. Notice: “**Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business**” (Acts 6:2-3). Yet this advice was not executed until it “**pleased the whole multitude,**” or the whole church (Acts 6:5). We see this procedure concerning another matter of business some years later (Acts 15:22).

These men were not ordained to be a

board of directors, or an advisory counsel over the pastors and church. They were ordained to minister under the direction of the pastors and church. They were ordained to do those things that they could do as well as the pastors, so that the pastors could do better those things that only they could do. While their office gave them no authority over the pastor or church more than others, their qualifications might cause the church to use them for some special work, more than others.

The ordination of the seven surely resulted in the widows receiving better care. But this was not the greatest blessing that came from this move. The Apostles were free to give their time to praying,

♦ (Continued on page 400)

## BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 6-1-2006 to 5-30-2006

Beginning Balance .....\$7,658.22

### RECEIPTS:

B. C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL .....	26.55
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS .....	458.36
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL.....	60.00
Berea M. B.C., Mansfield, OH.....	50.00
Berea M. B. C., Westpoint, TN.....	150.00
Bethel M. B. C., Pasadena, TX.....	100.00
Bible Believers B. C., Naples, ID .....	50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne WV .....	300.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY .....	125.00
Buffalo Valley B. C., Clay, WV .....	50.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL.....	25.00
Cedar Grove B. C., Millport, AL.....	100.00
Central Avenue, B.C., Tampa, FL .....	25.00
Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME .....	20.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY.....	100.00
Grace B. C., Winston-Salem, NC .....	100.00
Grace M. B. C., Marion, IL.....	25.00
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK.....	35.00
Hillcrest B. C., Winston-Salem, NC.....	50.00
Indoe B. C., Indore, WV.....	100.00
J. L. Sadler, Panama City, FL.....	144.00
Joe Jurzec, Richmond, IL.....	50.00
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM.....	100.00
Leston Farrell, Des Allemands, LA.....	125.00
Lord’s B.C., Goose Creek, SC.....	100.00
Morris St. B. C., Hobbs, NM .....	500.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH .....	100.00
New Testament B. C., Bristol, TN .....	10.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN .....	50.00
New Testament B. C., Leivsay, WV .....	100.00
Ocoonita M. B. C., Keokee, VA.....	40.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL .....	100.00
South Park B. C., Seattle, WA .....	25.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS .....	25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Columbus, MS .....	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL.....	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Wake Forest, NC .....	100.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA .....	25.00
Wayne Huffman, McNeil, AR .....	80.00
Subscriptions .....	166.00
Anon.....	200.00
Dividing Checks .....	125.00
Sub Total .....	\$4,320.49
TOTAL .....	\$11,923.13

### EXPENDITURES:

Printing .....	634.69
Postage .....	1,151.91
Supplies .....	97.00
Wages .....	2,240.00
FICA .....	153.01
Dividing Checks .....	125.00
Total Expenditures .....	4,401.61
ENDING BALANCE .....	\$7,521.52

<b>BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST</b>	
<b>Financial Report</b>	
<b>6-1-2006 to 5-30-2006</b>	
Beginning Balance .....	\$6,476.12
<b>RECEIPTS:</b>	
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY .....	75.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS .....	225.00
Berea M. B. C., West Point, TN .....	50.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY .....	100.00
.....	450.00
TOTAL .....	6,926.12
<b>EXPENDITURES:</b>	
Radio Time .....	400.00
Postage .....	20.10
TOTAL EXPENDITURES .....	420.10
.....	\$6,506.02
Interest .....	+1.44
.....	\$6,507.46
Less Corbin, KY des. ....	-731.52
ENDING BALANCE .....	\$5,775.94
<b>CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT</b>	
Beginning Balance .....	\$931.52
<b>RECEIPTS:</b>	
TOTAL .....	931.52
<b>EXPENDITURES:</b>	
WCTT .....	200.00
ENDING BALANCE .....	\$731.52



## WORLD SCENE

By G. Russell Evans - Norfolk, Virginia

### ***Bush Did Not Violate the Geneva Convention***



Critics say that President Bush is guilty of violating the Geneva Convention. President Bush did not violate the Geneva Convention. He is doing his duty in this time of great peril to America.

Said Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, "The decision about detainees may be a precedent for the future. Certainly, this is a war like no other war in history, and our survival is threatened."

President Bush's decision not to classify the Taliban and Al-Qaida detainees as Polo's is based on the 1949 Geneva Convention.

President Bush has decided that the terrorist detainees are *not* prisoners of war (POW's), but, instead, are unlawful combatants who massacred thousands of innocents on Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> on American soil in an "act of war."

Even so, in this unprecedented war, he is applying the rules of the Geneva Convention to the Taliban soldiers, fighting for the government of Afghanistan, a party to the Convention--but *not* to the Al-Qaida terrorists who are not a party to the Convention. Neither is classified as Polo. Thereby, U.S. officials can interrogate them indefinitely and not have to release them when hostilities are ended.

Immediately, the bleeding hearts came out of the woodwork. Elisa Massimino of the Lawyers Committee on human rights stated "believing in the Geneva Convention principles and actually applying them are two different things. There is no in-between" then, amnesty international's Alistair Hodggett charged the president with "willful misinterpretation" of the Geneva Convention in his "arrogant policy of pick and choose with regards to the laws of war."

The 1949 Geneva Convention codified the international treaty to protect war victims, and was apparently a consequence of the horrors and inhumanity of World War II, particularly the Nazi concentration camps and the Japanese Bataan death march. The four Geneva Conventions now in force are as follows:

- \* Geneva for the wounded and sick (GWS).
- \* Geneva for the wounded, sick and shipwrecked at sea (GWS, sea).
- \* Geneva for the treatment of prisoners of war (GPW).
- \* Geneva for the treatment of civilians (GC).

For POW status, the Geneva Convention (GPW) requires that prisoners or "detainees," meet the following criteria:

- \* wear a distinctive uniform or insignia or dress to clearly identify the combatant as a part of an organized unit.

- \* carry arms openly.
- \* be part of an organization that has a commander.
- \* obey the laws of war.

Specifically excluded from POW status under the Geneva Conventions are unlawful combatants, which is exactly what the Guantanamo detainees are. They don't come close to POWs under the terms of the Geneva Conventions. They don't meet the criteria.

Arguments are made by the bleeding hearts that fighters of the Taliban and Al-Qaida have commanders in Osama bin-Laden or Mullah Omar--a far stretch, as they too are unlawful combatants who disregard the laws of war.

Many of the terrorist detainees have threatened to kill their guards, if they could get to them. Obviously, they are rabid savages, wild animals who, if released at the end of hostilities, could continue terrorist plots to murder Americans--and would do so at every opportunity. They should be tried as criminals.

Militant Muslims, such as Osama bin Laden, see the United States as an "enemy of Islam"--infidels who must be destroyed.

The Muslims holy book is called the Quran or Koran promulgated by the 7<sup>th</sup> century Prophet Mohammad. In Surah 2, verse 193, Allah tells Mohammad to kill whoever rejects Islam: "Kill them until there is no persecution and the religion is Allah."

It should not be surprising for the New York Times to rush to the rescue. Columnist Nicholas D. Kristof boldly compares the 1993 capture of army helicopter pilot Michael Durant by Somali war lords to the U.S. capture of the terrorists, arguing POW status because both cases are similar. Totally

untrue. Durant was a uniformed lawful combatant, openly armed and operating as part of the U.S. Army, Thereby meeting all criteria of lawful combatant and entitled to POW status under the Geneva Conventions.

The captured terrorist detainees qualify as unlawful combatants, not prisoners of war under any stretch of the Geneva Conventions. The justice they receive under the American system with military tribunals, it is safe to say--British, French and German prognosticators not withstanding--will be fair, probably the best they've ever had and the American homeland will have been protected--for the time being.

(Portions of this article were from previous articles of Capt. Evans).



## Gleanings

(Continued from page 399) ♦

studying the Bible, and sharing the Word of God with others (See verse 4). This surely resulted in more dedicated, separated preachers; who preached more Spiritual, uplifting messages. Some of our problems today might have never been if churches had taken this example more seriously.

Surely the best things that came from this move are seen in verse seven--"**And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith**" (Acts 6:7).

The qualifications of these seven men were set forth by the Apostles. They are found in verse three: "**Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business**" (Acts 6:3). None of these qualifications are to be set aside, and caution should be taken in adding on others.

It is a blessing to see a church with their heart set on the right things, (things they were commissioned to do) handling things in the right way, (the Bible way) and end up with such Christ-honoring results as did this church. (*The Revivalist*, May-June 2006, p. 4).



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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Northside Baptist Church, 532 North Main St., Elkton, KY, and Pastor Ervin Cummins will be hosting a Bible Conference August 3-5, 2006.

Services will begin at 7:00 p.m. on the 3rd; at 9:30 a.m., 2:00 p.m., and 7:00 p.m. on the 4th; and at 10:00 a.m. on the 5th.

Scheduled speakers are: Elders Mark Clark Sr., James DuVall, Dan Gordon, Lee Hammel, Nathan Long, Terry Pinex, Peter Santisteban, Garner Smith, Darryl Titus, and Randy Titus.

For more information call (270) 265-9665 or Email [icummins@command.net](mailto:icummins@command.net).

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The Buffalo Valley Baptist Church, on Triplett Ridge Rd, Clay, WV, will host a revival meeting and week-end conference August 9th - 13th.

Pastor Troy Sheppard of Citrus Missionary Baptist Church, Inverness, FL will be the featured speaker. A number of other ministers from around the country will bring God's Word Friday-Sunday. All are invited to attend.

For further information call Pastor John Pruitt at 304-587-4794 or 304-587-2451.

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Bro. Nathaniel R. Hille has accepted the call to pastor the Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Caldwell, KS.

His ordination service will be at the church in Caldwell on Thursday, August 10th, 2006 at 7:00 p.m.

A fellowship dinner will be served prior to the ordination service by the church at 5:00 p.m.

An all invited to attend.

Please be in prayer for the new pastor as he endeavors to feed the flock which the Lord has placed him over.

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The Grace Baptist Church of Rural Hall, NC will host her 27th annual Bible Conference over Labor Day Weekend, beginning Friday September 1st through Sunday September 3rd.

Scheduled speakers are Elders Rick Perdue, David Green, Carl Barnett, Lewis Kiger, Doug Newell III, Doug Newell IV, James Hobbs, Don Pennington, Luther Hilton, Chris Wallace, Al Malo, John Osburn, Kenny Boswell, Justin Meier, Paul Jackson, Troy Sheppard, Missionary Robert Ellis and others as God leads.

Meals will be provided by the ladies of Grace Baptist Church beginning on Friday at 5:30 PM, lunch on Saturday, dinner on Saturday, and lunch on Sunday.

For information or assistance please contact; Pastor Gene Kiger at (336) 377-9808 or (336) 377-2154. Or mail, 143 Cross Baptist Church Road, Rural Hall, NC, 27045 or Email [gbckiger@gbstanleyville.com](mailto:gbckiger@gbstanleyville.com).