

The Berea Baptist Banner

"Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth" Ps. 60:4

Sanctification

By Elvis Gregory
(1933 - 1981)



"To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

"Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.

"For this is the will of God, even your SANCTIFICATION, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

"He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit" (I Thess.

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Working for Christ

By C. Tyree

"Son, go work to day in my vineyard" (Matt. 21:28).

Among those called Christians, there are four leading classes. The first are those who, excepting by the observance of religious rites, do not differ in the least from irreligious. They exalt the church above Christ, its head, and magnify the form of godliness above the power thereof. This class is a great hindrance to the world's conversion; and it were well for the world if it should cease to exist.

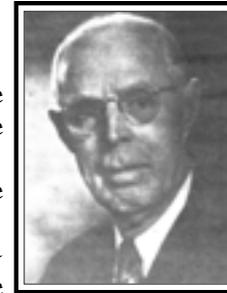
A second class are those who take what has been called the middle walk of Christianity. It embraces those who, besides the belief of gospel doctrines and the observance of gospel ordinances, are, in the main, irreproachable in their conduct. In all churches this is the largest class.

A third class embraces those whose great aim is to be sound in their doctrinal views and joyful in their emotional frames. Their chief concern is to lay well the foundation of their peace with God, and build themselves up in the highest and most experimental views of Christ. They are zealous for a sound creed, joyful frames and an irreprehensible life.

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Serious Thinking As To The Minister and His Message

C. D. Cole
(1885 - 1968)



"Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God" (I Cor. 4:1).

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine" (I Tim. 4:16).

The ministry is a glorious undertaking--nothing comparable to it among the professions of men. The highest and noblest of human aspiration is to be a good minister of Jesus Christ. When Felix Carey turned

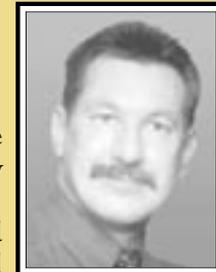
from missionary work to accept the post of ambassadorship from the king of England, his father said, "Felix has dwindled into an ambassador." Under God, the ministers of Christ have made the greatest contribution to the welfare and happiness of mankind.

The ministry is also a serious and solemn undertaking. Of all the tasks committed into the hands of men, that of the ministry most requires divine

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Search the Scriptures

By Frank James
of Cobbitty, Australia



1. THE BIBLE

"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they that testify of me" (John 5:39).

How wonderful and remarkable that God would give a record of Himself and of His will for mankind. This record is found in the Holy Bible or in the Scriptures. The term "scriptures," literally means that which is written down. Therefore, the Bible is the very Word

of God written down. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (II Tim. 3:16).

The religious Jews to whom Jesus was speaking greatly esteemed the Word of God, especially the books of Moses. They did not however truly search the Scriptures regarding matters of eternity. Their trust and hope was in

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Immersed in Christ

By Todd Bryant
of Northport, Alabama



"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (I Peter 3:21).

Perhaps no verse in the Bible has been more misused than the one before us. No doubt, billions have been deceived into believing that they were saved by passing through the waters of baptism. One group in particular has made a habit of quoting "baptism doth also now save us" while leaving the rest of the passage alone. But, these words and even this whole

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Are You Prepared and Fit for Heaven?

By Paul Stepp
of Indore, West Virginia



My text today comes from Romans 9:21-26. "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews

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However small a bush, it casts its shadow.

Everybody has some influence. Everyone can render a little help in the hour of need.

"And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men" (Colossians 3:23).

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

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

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Sanctification

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3:13; 4:1-8) (emph. EG).

The doctrine of sanctification is a vast field, for it begins in eternity and ends in eternity. There are two extreme views held as to sanctification. There is the view that sanctification is the eradication of the old nature, permitting the believer to live in this life incapable of committing sin. The other view, which is just as unscriptural, is that sanctification is merely a setting apart, and has no moral value to the child of God other than an external setting apart.

But the Scriptures abound over and over, as it does in our text, that sanctification is a present reality in the life of the children of God, yet it does not mean in the least that we are enabled of the Lord to live apart from, or above, sin. The Greek word "hagios" is found ten times in the English New Testament. Five times it is translated, as it is here twice in our text, "sanctification" and twice, as it is here, "holiness." The other grammatical forms of the word are found many times. One of these forms is "sanctify," found twenty-six times. Another grammatical form of this word is rendered "saints"--saints that are in Christ Jesus. So the word "sanctification" in the original, means "to set apart by God for a sacred use." In other cases, it means "to sanctify," or "to cleanse" or "purify"; "to adorn," or "to beautify."

So, beloved, sanctification has various meanings, yet they are vitally related one to another, but where that difference is, I should like to deal with it in four aspects, realizing that it is a vast subject, and one that most folk have little knowledge of.

SANCTIFICATION IN RELATION TO GOD'S ELECTION

"Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are SANCTIFIED by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ" (Jude 1:1) (emph. EG).

Jude is saying that the children of God to whom he is writing, had been sanctified by God the Father in the past, and kept for Jesus Christ, and now being addressed as the called---those that had been effectually called to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. So here, sanctification means to be set apart by God the Father for Jesus Christ. Therefore, in the real sense, sanctification is vitally related to the doctrine of God's election.

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love" (Eph. 1:4).

By God's sovereign choice, a certain number of Adam's race are to be made trophies of His divine grace. Here sanctification is a setting apart for something, and in that sense, it is vitally related to the doctrine of God's election.

"But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation THROUGH SANCTIFICATION of the Spirit and belief of the truth" (II Thess. 2:13) (emph. EG).

So, beloved, election is vitally related to sanctification and vice versa.

The word "predestination" comes from the word "prorosio," which means "to mark off before time, beforehand." John Carter (and he is a great scholar) used to say that in the original it literally meant "to draw that mark completely around that individual that is predestinated unto salvation."

So in predestination God's own were marked off, or encircled, by God's sovereign choice, and predestinated unto salvation. In essence, they were set apart by God.

SANCTIFICATION IN RELATION TO REDEMPTION

One cannot read or scrutinize the Scriptures without realizing that in the covenant of redemption, God the Father gave to Jesus Christ a certain number to be saved, or atoned for, by His death, and also to be divine gifts to the Son.

"But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not. All that the Father giveth me SHALL COME TO ME; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:36-37) (emph. EG).

So in the covenant of redemption, individuals in Adam's race were set apart by God the Father, and given to the Son in the covenant of redemption.

"As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that HE SHOULD GIVE ETERNAL LIFE to as many as thou hast given him" (John 17:2) (emph. EG).

So beloved, the doctrine of sanctification has its beginning in God's sovereign choice of His people, thus predestinating them to be conformed to the image of God's Son.

Another aspect of sanctification in relation to the atonement made by Jesus Christ was when He died on the Cross of Calvary and ascended into the heavenly Holy of holies, there to represent you and me.

The Bible declares of God the Father:
"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and SANCTIFICATION, and redemption" (I Cor. 1:30) (emph. EG).

So Jesus Christ is made unto us our sanctification. From beginning to end, it is all of grace, even our sanctification.

We find that the death of Christ freed those given to Him of the Father, of their sins. He set them free.

"By the which will WE ARE SANCTIFIED through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb. 10:10) (emph. EG).

"For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are SANCTIFIED" (Heb. 10:14) (emph. EG).

Beloved, those for whom Christ died on the Cross of Calvary are made perfect because of that one perfect offering made there, and given in behalf of the people to God in redemption.

Christ and the elect---that is, the Sanctifier and the sanctified are all one.

"For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren" (Heb. 2:11) (emph. EG).

Jesus Christ is our sanctification, for we were set apart in the atonement of the Lord Jesus, and that, of necessity, is limited.

"For verily he took not on him the nature of angels" (Heb. 2:16).

Literally, He did not take upon Himself the sins of the fallen angels, but He took upon Himself the sins of the seed of Abraham not the sins of Adam's race, but the sins of the seed of Abraham.

So in His atonement, every one for whom Christ died was sanctified by this offering, once and for all, and it is finished; we are sanctified now.

SANCTIFICATION IN RELATION TO THE NEW BIRTH

There are those who define sanctification as that which begins or commences at regeneration and consummates in glorification. But if justification is a fact, and if the glorification of God's people is a fact, then the sanctification of God's people also is a fact and a reality.

The Bible states that all are sinners.

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).

"For the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23).

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12).

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (I Cor. 15:22).

All the human race is in Adam, so we are dead in trespasses and in sin. Not all of Adam's race, though, are in Christ, for in Adam all died.

"Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Eph. 2:3).

In light of the fact that even those who were chosen by God the Father and predestinated to be saved, and those for whom Christ paid the sin debt, were children of wrath, even as others---In the light of this great truth even though one is chosen of the Father, and had his sins atoned for by the Lord Jesus Christ, what is it that has to be done to that individual

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Sanctification

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in time that makes him acceptable to God? That is found in the words of Jesus, when He declared:

“Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3).

In this day in which we live, it is still imperative that a man be born again if he is ever to see, or understand, or enter into the kingdom of God. So the relation of sanctification to the new birth is that one must be sanctified by God the Holy Spirit.

We would ask the question then, how is one born again? It would be rather amusing if it were not such a tragedy, to hear some individuals try to explain to a sinner what he must do in order to be born again. Nowhere did Christ tell Nicodemus how to be born again. He stated an emphatic reality---**“Ye must be born again.”**

“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit” (John 3:6-8).

Now where did He tell Nicodemus to do this, and that, and thus and so, and you'll be born again? Beloved, that is the prerogative of the Holy Spirit of God to quicken, or make alive, whomsoever He will; that He will make alive those who have been chosen of the Father and sanctified by the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus said:

“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him” (John 6:44).

“It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63).

So it is still the Spirit of God that imparts life to the dead, alienated sinner. If that doesn't happen, then you remain dead in trespasses and in sin.

“But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ” (II Thess. 2:13-14).

There is the necessity of the sanctification---the setting-apart work of the Holy Spirit of Almighty God.

“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the

blood of Jesus Christ: grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied” (I Peter 1:2).

Beloved, a sinner must be born again before he is ever acceptable in the sight of God, and before repentance and faith shall ever come where he shall be justified before Almighty God. The new birth then is brought about by the agent of the Holy Spirit of God using the instrument of the Word.

“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit” (Titus 3:5).

“Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you” (I Peter 1:20).

“Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures” (James 1:18).

So, beloved, in relationship to the new birth, the Holy Spirit of God was sent to sanctify, and set apart the sinner unto Almighty God in the imparting of the divine nature, and that one is born of the Spirit of God and walks in the realization of his sins paid for before God, and is given faith to embrace Christ, that is preached and presented in the Gospel.

SANCTIFICATION IN RELATION TO THE PRESENT LIFE OF THE CHILD OF GOD

We cannot read God's Word without realizing that sanctification is a present reality in the lives of God's children. Paul, in writing to the church at Corinth, says:

“Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us” (II Cor. 1:10).

Justification is a reality, and it is past tense to us who are saved. If glorification is a fact and reality that is anticipated by all the children of God, then sanctification is a present reality in the life of God's people.

We sometimes thank God for what He has done for us, and for what He is going to do for us. The question is, what is your salvation doing for you now?

“Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform (finish) it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 1:6).

No one can read the New Testament without realizing that sanctification is more than a fact in our experience of grace, but that it is a present work. The child of God is being saved moment by moment, and day by day, from sin's power and pollution in his life, by the sanctifying work of the indwelling Holy Spirit, applying the Word.

My text says, **“For this is the will of God even your sanctification.”** If that were true of all the members of the church at Corinth, I am made to believe that it is true of all God's people that are members at least of true New Testament

churches.

“For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness” (I Thess. 4:7).

Beloved, we have let the Pentecostals take the words “holiness” and “sanctification” and run afieled with them, and we are scared to death we'll preach Bible holiness. Beloved, it is as much a part of one's salvation as any other Scripture.

“Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity” (II Tim. 2:19).

So the children of God are sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

Then there is the teaching that is rampant in the land today that after one is saved, later on he is made to believe that he ought to seek the Holy Spirit. But my text says, speaking of God, **“who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.”**

All of God's children have been quickened and made alive by the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit is not to be sought after, but in reality He dwells, or is called upon, to walk along side of the children of God.

“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever” (John 14:16).

We find that God has also given us the earnest of the Spirit.

“Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts” (II Cor. 1:22).

“Now he hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit” (II Cor. 5:5).

“In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory” (Eph. 1:13-14).

Beloved, these Scriptures declare emphatically that the Holy Spirit of God is God's gift to the believer. It is God's guarantee to the believer that He will finish the work that He has begun, until the redemption of the purchased possession, even the redemption of the body when you shall not only be saved from sin's penalty and power, but even from sin's presence.

So all the children of God have the Holy Spirit.

Every child of God is admonished by the Scriptures not to grieve the Holy Spirit.

“And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption” (Eph. 4:30).

“Quench not the Spirit” (I Thess. 5:19).

God's children are not to quench the Spirit but on the contrary, they are to be

filled with the Holy Spirit. So the children of God presently are being sanctified by the indwelling Holy Spirit of God.

Also we are sanctified by the Word.

“Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you” (John 15:3).

“Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word” (Psa. 119:9).

So the children of God are sanctified by the Word as it is applied by the Holy Spirit of God. This is the reason that we need to exercise every effort and take every opportunity to fellowship around the Word of God, or read the Word of God, or to talk the Word of God, and to pray that we might understand the Word of God, for therein is our sanctification.

As Jesus prayed to the Father, He said:

“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth” (John 17:17).

So the children of God are sanctified by the Word, and the Word of God sets apart the children of God unto the service of the Lord.

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (II Tim. 3:16-17).

I say then that the death of the Lord Jesus Christ was for the moral purification of His people. A salvation that will not save from sin's power is a salvation that will not save from sin's penalty or presence.

I close with these words:

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. Brethren, pray for us” (I Thess. 5:23-25).



Serious Thinking

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enablement. No man, of himself, is at all equal to such a task. It involves a tremendous responsibility. It is a work before which the noblest saints of earth have hesitated. Jeremiah, when called, demurred, saying, **“Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.”** And it was only after God had said, **“I am with thee,”** that he dared to speak. Isaiah was so filled with the sense of his unworthiness, that it was not until one of the seraphims took a live coal from off the altar and put it upon his mouth, saying, **“Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sins purged,”** that he said, **“Here am I; send me.”** the apostle Paul, in the face

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Here Are Several Kinds of Professing Christians

By Roy Mason
(1894 - 1978)

There are different kinds of professing Christians among those who claim to be saved people. The same different types are found wherever churches and professing Christians are found. Let us list some of these types:

THE PROFESSED CHRISTIAN WHO DOESN'T FOLLOW CHRIST IN BAPTISM AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.

In New Testament times 3,000 were saved on Pentecost and the same number were baptized that day. Often nowadays we hear of people---a whole group making profession during a revival---then maybe a third of the number never show up for baptism. It is very doubtful if such persons have been saved (John 8:31).

THE PROFESSED CHRISTIAN WHO IS BAPTIZED, THEN NEVER SHOWS ANY FURTHER INTEREST IN THE THINGS OF GOD.

We think of the great numbers who were baptized following a certain revival. Many of those baptized never came back to church. Evidently they thought that they were now safe from Hell---so why bother any further with religion? Such is often the fruit of unsound evangelism, where "rake 'em in" methods are used.

THE PROFESSED CHRISTIAN WHO WANTS TO USE CHRISTIANITY FOR SOME SORT OF PERSONAL GAIN.

(See Acts 8:18-23). Simon mentioned here, wanted to make money out of religion. Many have joined a prominent church hoping for profit to their business or social standing thereby. Many are in a church for what they can get out of it. They want attention---they want notice---they want to be visited and coddled, and if they don't get it, they are mad and become critics. "I am among you as one TO BE SERVED" is their attitude, rather than having that of Christ, who said, "**I am among you as one that SERVETH**" (Emph. RM).

THE PROFESSING CHRISTIAN WHO IS CONTENT TO RIDE WITH THE REST OF THE CHURCH.

There are many such. They are willing for others to pay all the bills and render all the service, while they drop in for an occasional visit. No one should belong to anything unless he is willing to bear his share.

THE PROFESSING CHRISTIAN WHO HAS TO BE "WARMED



OVER"
FREQUENTLY.

This is the kind of person who gets all heated up during a revival. They shed crocodile tears---they go forward and reconsecrate themselves---they show great interest, but when the revival is over, they cool off in about a couple of weeks, and then it is "goodbye" until the next revival.

THE EVERGREEN CHRISTIAN.

(See I Cor. 15:58) He is the fellow who is saved and who follows in baptism and church membership. He starts in attending the services and he is eager to learn the Bible. He grows and thrives as a Christian. He readily serves in any capacity. He starts right in putting his money into the cause of Christ. He permits the Word of God to correct his life of any habits not pleasing to Christ. He doesn't have to be "pumped up" like a leaky tube---he continues steadfast, proving by his life, service and behavior that something vital has taken place in his life. One Christian like this is worth a dozen mere professors. Note some things about him.

He doesn't have to be put to work. He FINDS work, as the Lord leads him. Much of the activities around a church are like the government W.P.A. work of depression days. It is artificially made work. The theory is that everybody should be kept busy---even if it is at doing something which the Bible does not authorize at all. Any Christian who wants to do something worth while can get busy at soul winning.

He isn't spasmodic---he is right on the job all the time. People who attend church spasmodically are not worth much as a rule. Between "spasms" they do nothing.

He is a fervent Christian. (Rom. 12:11) Enough Christians of that kind make for a live church. Things are not draggy and mopes around a church where there are enough people "fervent in spirit." Fervency and stiff formality can't get along together. Fervency disgusts formalists, and formality worse than disgusts fervency.

The "evergreen Christian" keeps his experience up to date. He isn't forever going back to his conversion for an experience to relate. He has a daily experience. It takes daily contact with God---daily dependence upon Him---daily help from Him, to lead a vital, fervent, Christian life.



These Baptists that I Have Met

By Milburn Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)

I have been a Baptist preacher for many years, and over the years I have met a number of different kinds of Baptists. In this article I want to list them and what they remind me of.

First, there are Buzzard Baptists. These only come to church when some person dies. Like Jacob and Esau they only gather at death.

Second, I mention Polecat Baptists. These are the people who keep a stink going all the time in the church with their long tongues (Prov. 6:16-19; 22:10; 26:20; I Tim. 5:13; James 1:26; 4:11). Even their mouth stinks (Mark 7:20-23).

Once I heard of a Polecat Baptist who came to the pastor and said she wanted to lay her tongue upon the altar and rededicate her life to the Lord. The pastor told her not to lay her tongue upon the altar, for it would hang off on all four sides.

Third, I mention Idiot Baptists. These are willingly ignorant of the Word of God (II Pet. 3:5; Isa. 1:3-4). Some of them have been converted so long that they ought to be teachers of others, but they have never learned "**the first principles of the oracles of God**" (Heb. 5:12-14). One little girl said to her mother, an Idiot Baptist: "Mother, if the Bible is God's book, let's give it back to Him. We never read it any way."

Fourth, I call to mind Bulldozer Baptists. They push and shove every person who gets in their way. A good number of preachers and deacons fit into this group. Such Baptist rule or ruin; they destroy everything in their path (Acts 8:3). Some of these are like Queen Jazebel and try to destroy God's preachers (Ps. 105:15).

Fifth, I ask you to consider the Driftwood Baptists. They just drift along with the tide. They follow the crowd. They are far more concerned with the path of convenience than the path of conviction. They will not stand up for the truth when it is under attack (II Tim. 4:16).

Sixth, there are Tightwad Baptists. Some of these use their money to pressure the preacher to do what they want him to do. Others in this group steal God's money like Judas did (John 12:1-6). They are totally unlike many of the early Christians who gave their all to the church (Acts 4:37).

Seventh, there are Deadhead Baptists. These are the backsliders who might as well be dead so far as the church is concerned (Rev. 3:1). Most of these profess salvation but do not possess it. They are nothing but dead weight around the church's neck.

Eighth, there are the Mooneyed Baptists. Down South we called a person "mooneyed" if he had bad sight. Hence these people see no need of missionary work or witnessing for Christ (Rev. 3:18). They cannot see any thing which the church needs. They have their eyes completely closed to the white harvest fields of lost souls (John 4:35).

Ninth, there are the Smart Aleck Baptists. They are the know-it-alls of the church. They know what every verse in the Bible means. The preacher could learn much from being taught by them. They think they are as smart as God and getting smarter ever day. They think themselves to be something when they are nothing.

Tenth, there are the Fence-Straddling Baptists. They are unstable in all their ways (James 1:8). You think sometimes they are all out for God; then at other times all out for the Devil. They pride themselves in being able to serve both God and mammon (Matt. 6:24). Like Reuben of old, they are as "**unstable as water**" (Gen. 49:4).

Eleventh, there are Grasshopper Baptists. When the preacher preaches a sermon which they need and send it toward them, they jump out of the way. They see the failure of others but never their own. Often they leave the church after a powerful message saying, "If old so-and-so had been here today the preacher would have told him off."

Once upon a time one of the Grasshopper Baptists was the only one who came to church due to bad weather. The pastor let him have it. This time it was not easy to jump out of the way. When the Grasshopper Baptist got ready to leave he said to the pastor, "I know that you are supposed to feed the sheep, but you gave me enough today to feed the whole flock."

Twelfth, there are Smallfry Baptists. These are the babes in Christ who desire the milk of the Word (I Peter 2:2). Physical age has no bearing upon this class, for they are among the young and old. They require a lot of the preacher's attention. He must change their diapers often and keep a good bottle of the milk of the Word in their mouth.

Thirteenth, there are the Toad Frog Baptists. They are always puffed up about some word that a brother has said or a statement by the preacher. They carry a chip on their shoulder because a wooden block is higher up.

Fourteenth, there are Scarecrow Baptists. They are the hypocrites in the church. Because they hold membership people stay away from church (Rom. 2:24; Matt. 23:13). They do great harm to the church of the living God.

♦ (Continued on page 145)

These Baptists that

(Continued from page 144) ♦

Fifteenth, there are Strip Tease Baptists. They go around without enough clothes on their bodies. They wear modern apparel rather than modest apparel (I Tim. 2:9-12). Some cows are better dressed. Some do not wear enough clothes to make a Jay Bird a pair of socks!

Sixteenth, there are Beer-Guzzling Baptists. These are the social drinkers in the church. They are often filled with alcohol, but not with the Spirit of God (Eph. 5:18).

Seventeenth, there are the Bible-believing Baptists. Thank God for these! They believe every word in the Bible and do their very best to practice it at all times. These keep the preacher encouraged in his work and carry on the work of the church. If it had not been for these most pastors would have quit preaching long ago. Oh, may the Lord fill our churches with Bible-believing Baptists and rid us of these undesirable Baptists!



Serious Thinking

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of such an undertaking, cried out, **"Who is sufficient for these things?"** and his spirit was not quieted until he could say, **"Our sufficiency is of God."** James says, **"My brethren, be not many masters (teachers), knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation"** (James 3:1). The ministerial office carries with it tremendous possibilities in either of two directions. There is the possibility of hearing Christ say, **"Well done, good and faithful servant,"** or the possibility of a greater condemnation. With some such feeling Paul said, **"I keep my body and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway (disapproved)"** (I Cor. 9:27).

THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE GOSPEL MINISTRY

The seriousness of our task is seen

when we consider to whom we are to preach. We are not commissioned to preach to the elect angels, who have been confirmed in holiness and who delight to do God's will. Our ministry is not limited to the sheep, who hear the Shepherd's voice and follow Him. But, we are to preach to men, who, by nature, are at enmity with God; men who are void of understanding, and to whom the things of the Spirit of God are foolishness. We are to preach to men who are blinded by the god of this world, and taken captive by him at his will.

And, again the bigness of our task is seen when we consider who we are to whom the gospel has been entrusted. God's ways are not our ways. We would have sought agents for such a task who excelled in strength and wisdom. We would have committed such a task into the hands of the mighty angels. But God has deposited the gospel treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of men (II Cor. 4:7). As our Lord took not on Him the nature of angels for man's redemption, so neither does He employ angels for man's conversion.

Our success, therefore, is not due to any natural love men have for God and the gospel, nor to any power or excellency in the preacher, but to God alone who riseth up the dead and quickeneth them. **"Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase"** (I Cor. 3:5-6). Somebody has said that it proved the divinity of our holy religion that it survived the preachers. We are, indeed, poor tools for such a task, and unless He had said, **"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world,"** we might well despair. Every saved person is a miracle of grace. Conversion is a miracle. In that it is not natural, but supernatural; it is of grace in that it is not an obligation from God to the sinner.

SOME QUALIFICATIONS FOR A SUCCESSFUL MINISTRY

1. The minister must be a good man. We are told that Barnabas was a good man, and that much people were added.

"Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil" (I Tim. 3:7). Nothing will take the place of practical godliness and piety in a preacher. God uses weak instruments, but they must be clean.

2. The preacher must have courage. I do not mean he should be a worldly bravado, but he must be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. His must be a supernatural strength---a moral and spiritual stamina that will overcome all temptations to compromise. Pastor Oncken was the Baptist pioneer in Germany. He suffered much, in his younger days, for the truth's sake. He was fined and imprisoned. One day the Burgomaster of Hamburg held up his finger and said: "Do you see that finger? So long as that can move, I will put you down." "Sir," said Pastor Oncken, "I see your finger, but I also see an arm that you cannot see, and so long as that arm is stretched out you cannot put me down." He endured as seeing Him who is invisible. God pity His preachers when they lose sight of His mighty arm, and are nothing but a human finger. Hugh Lattimer was ordered by Henry VIII to apologize for a too plain sermon he had preached. But, with the consciousness that he was sent by a higher King, he repeated the sermon.

3. The minister of Christ must always be a student (II Tim. 2:15). Whenever a preacher quits studying, he immediately takes the dry-rot. He begins to decay. Here are the words of B. H. Carroll to a certain young preacher: "My son, you are in great danger. You have been complimented so much for the fire of your off-hand, maiden sermons that you have quit studying. You have no library, and do not read. You have already contracted the habit of preaching over your first dozen revival sermons. The first time such a sermon is a juicy roast, the next time it is only warmed over, next time it is hash, and next time it is only soup out of the bones." Booker T. Washington often told of his experience in the rebuke of a Negro church for violation of their contract in not paying their pastor. He was completely silenced by a remark of one of the sturdy members: "We done paid for them sermons last year." Though Timothy had known the Holy Scriptures from a child, Paul told him to study, and to give himself to reading.

4. Faithfulness is another essential to a God-honoring ministry. Ministers are stewards of the mysteries of God, and it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful (I Cor. 4:1-2). Faithfulness to the Word of God is the best way to be loyal to Jesus Christ. Of what account is a brilliant ministry if it is unfaithful to the once delivered faith? Culture and refinement are poor substitutes for loyalty to the Truth. Sad the day when the ministers are educated "to think above that which is written." What was it that

characterized the true Prophets of God in Old Testament times? Was it courage? No, for Elijah, one of the greatest, fled from a woman. Was it cheerfulness? No, for they were often despondent and cast down. But they were faithful to God's Word. Every one of them was possessed of the spirit of Micaiah, who said, **"As the LORD liveth what the LORD saith unto me, that will I speak"** (I Kings 22:14). They delivered God's message. Sometimes they would proclaim God's Word and then run, as did Elijah. They might deliver it and then cry and complain, as in the case of Jeremiah. But, the point is, they spoke God's Word. God commands us to **"Preach the word"** (II Tim. 4:2). Too much of the truth is held as mere private opinion.

PREACHING vs. PRIESTCRAFT

The minister of Christ is primarily a preacher. The ministers in New Testament days were neither priests, nor popes, but missionaries of the cross. In Romanism worship is complete without a sermon. The preacher is belittled and the priest enhanced. If you push back the pulpit, by the same act you push forward the altar. The whole of Christian history is a conflict between the preacher and the priest. It is the difference between evangelism and sacerdotalism.

It is the difference between preaching and performing. It is the difference between the "Bread of Life" and the magic of the Mass. The preacher proclaims a God on His throne; the priest creates his god in a wafer. The writer recognizes, and rejoices in, the New Testament priesthood of believers. But it is individual and not official. Christ is our High Priest and every believer belongs to the **"holy priesthood"** (I Peter 2:5).

PREACHING vs. ORATORY

The Christian preacher is not the successor to the Greek orator, but of the Hebrew prophet. The orator comes with an inspiration: the prophet comes with a revelation. The orator's object is to secure his audience: the preacher's object is to secure the Gospel. The orator would persuade men to do something: the preacher would urge them to trust Somebody and renounce themselves for Him. The orator inspires self-confidence: the preacher convicts men of their sin and need of God (*The Baptist Examiner*, July 29, 1968).



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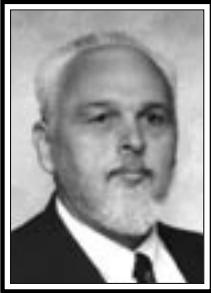
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Forbidden Scriptures #4

By Curtis Pugh
of Poteau, Oklahoma

Here is test #4:

Read the verse below and try to remember when you last heard a sermon on it. Probably you never have. Because such verses contradict popular ideas most preachers will not preach on them, except to explain them away, assuring their hearers that they do not really mean what they say. So read this verse and decide if you and your preacher and your church really do believe all that the Bible says.



“The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it” (Luke 16:16).

Jesus said that something ended with John the Baptist and something began with him. The Old Testament legal system ended with John. The Old Testament age did not end either when Jesus was nailed to the tree or on the famous Day of Pentecost that followed, regardless of what you have been told. It ended with the ministry of John the Baptist! Jesus said so! But something also began with the Baptist. It was the preaching of the Gospel. The Bible says, **“In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”** (Matt. 3:1, 2). This is God’s message to man – repent! After John was imprisoned, the Lord Jesus Christ began to preach the Gospel – the same message at first preached by the Baptist. The Bible says, **“Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee... From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”** (Matt. 4:12, 16). Jesus took up preaching John’s message. He preached the need for repentance! True repentance is brought about only by broken heartedness over sin or what the Bible calls “godly sorrow” (See II Cor. 7:10). This is not a popular subject. Do not let anyone fool you: repentance is not just making a decision! If all that is required is making a decision, would not God have plainly said so? God requires more than a decision in the matter of salvation!

Some try to say that the Baptist’s message and his baptism ended, having been replaced by another gospel and something they call “Christian baptism.” How can this be? John’s baptism is the only baptism that Christ’s Church had

– all His disciples were baptized by the Baptist. John’s was the only baptism that Jesus had! Are we to believe that Christ and His Church did not have Christian baptism? We would be happy if someone could show us in the Scriptures where this new gospel and this “Christian baptism” began and who was sent by God to initiate them. (The Baptist said that it was God that **“sent me to baptize”** in John 1:33.) The Bible makes it clear that Jesus and His apostles continued both John’s message and John’s baptism for no other is known in the Scriptures to be valid. John’s baptism is still valid today! Man-made baptisms are not! You might want to consider whether or not your baptism is valid in God’s eyes or is it a man-made one. But back to John’s gospel: When Paul was nearing the end of his ministry he said that his message (gospel) to both Jews and Gentiles was the same. He went everywhere, **“Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ”** (Acts 20:21). His was a message requiring real repentance! Paul wrote these words: **“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God”** (Gal. 5:19-21). These last two texts prove that Paul preached the same message of repentance as did both Christ and the Baptist before Him. Do you not see that in order to be saved you must repent of your sins? Godly sorrow brings about repentance and faith that result in a changed life! Jesus said, **“..except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish”** (Luke 13:3, 5). Do not be deceived! Neither praying a magical prayer nor making a decision nor any other religious experience will save you other than the new birth! May God be pleased to show you your awful depravity, work godly sorrow in your heart, and grant you repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus.



Search the Scriptures

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their heritage; in the fact that they were Jews and the descendents of Abraham. Furthermore, they greatly esteemed their religious works and their “good” deeds and believed these would assist them in obtaining eternal life. The words of Christ: **“for in them ye think ye have eternal life:”** are a critical rebuke. Their flawed view regarding the Scriptures made them **“think”** that they had eternal

life, while in reality they did not possess it. This is clearly manifested, not only by their ignorance as to who Jesus Christ was, but also by their open rejection of Him as the promised Messiah: the only Savior of sinners.

No doubt there are many today who have fallen into this same error. Perhaps they, too, are trusting in their relationship to a religion, or to someone or something religious. All the while hoping that in the end their good works will outweigh their bad, and thus eternal life will be gained.

Jesus Christ says of the Scriptures: **“they are they that testify of me.”** The word **“testify”** is a strong word that bears the idea of one giving testimony under oath in a court of law. In this case, God the Father, who cannot lie, bears witness to the truth of who Jesus Christ is and what He has come to accomplish. The central theme of the Bible is: **“and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins”** (Matt. 1:21).

Thus, the Bible is not a testimony as to what men must do to be saved, but a declaration as to who Christ is and what He has done to accomplish the salvation of sinners. Dear Reader, do you know what your standing is before the God of heaven and earth? Have you searched the Scriptures for yourself? To leave such matters of eternity unattended is the greatest of folly. **“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him”** (John 3:36).

2. WHO ART THOU

“Then said they unto him, Who art thou” (John 8:25)? The question, **“Who art thou** (Jesus)” is eternally important. The confusion manifested by those who asked this question still exists today among multitudes of people. However, all is made clear when the Scriptures are searched or examined. For in them God has clearly identified the person of Jesus Christ. As His name Emmanuel indicates, He is God manifested in the flesh (Matt. 1:23). In the books of Isaiah and John, He is described as the Everlasting Father, the Creator of all things that exist (Isa. 9:6; John 1:1-3). He is the Almighty, the First and the Last, the Self-existent One, the Ever Present, All Powerful, and All Knowing God, the Ruler of Heaven and Earth (Isa. 40:3; John 8:58, 10:30; Rev. 1:17-18). He is properly JEHOVAH Jesus (Isa. 26:4). These are only a few of the many Scriptures that make known the person of Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, His name Jesus, which means “Savior,” declares that He is the true and promised Messiah, the only Savior of sinners. This truth manifests that Jehovah’s coming into this world in human form was for a specific reason. That is, to **“save his people from their sins”** (Matt. 1:21). Scripture further

reveals that this great work has been secured by the sacrifice of Himself as an atonement for sin (Heb. 9:12). Now having risen from the dead, He is ascended into heaven where He presently sits at the right hand of the Father, declared to be **“King of kings, and Lord of lords”** (Acts 5:30-31; I Tim. 6:14-16).

His great work now involves the calling of sinners unto Himself through the message of the gospel. Because of who He is and what He has done, Jesus Christ now commands everyone, without exception, to repent and believe the gospel (Mark 1:14-15). This is not a mere offer or request, but a direct command from the Ruler of the Universe. Ultimately, it is to Him that we must each give an account. **“And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead”** (Acts 17:30-31).

Thou Art the God

*Thou art the God, the great Divine,
Who created all, and all is Thine.
Thou art the God, whose wisdom and might,
Speaks of a glory, and a glory bright.
Thou art the God, whose works are known,
All praise to thee, and to thee alone.
Thou art the God, who reveals through grace,
The wonders of heaven, and a heavenly place.
Thou art the God, the great Divine,
Who created all, and all is Thine.*

C. James

3. “UNCLEAN UNCLEAN”

“And the leper in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, Unclean, unclean” (Lev. 13:45). Sin like a loathsome disease has corrupted every facet of our make-up as human beings. From the top of our heads to the bottom of our feet, there are only wounds, bruises, and putrifying sores (Isa. 1:6). None are exempt from this terrible plague, and just as the plague of leprosy typifies sin in the Scriptures, we are all unclean in the sight of God. Furthermore, sin has affected our innermost being, so that even our mind, heart, and conscious are defiled. Indeed, nothing truly good or profitable can be produced by us that is acceptable in the sight of God. No matter how sincere our effort, our worship is vain, and our “good” works are as filthy rags before Him (Isaiah 64:6). As the leprous man was required to remain outside the camp of Israel, even so, sin renders us wholly unsuited for fellowship with God, and unfit for His habitation.

Yet, in the midst of this black reality, there is a great proclamation of good news. For the gospel declares that there is healing for sin in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, upon the merits

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Search the Scriptures

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of His precious blood.

“Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts” (Isa. 6:5).

“Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise” (Jer. 17:14).

How is our nature marred by sin!

Nor can it ever find

*A way to make the conscience clean,
Or heal the wounded mind.*

**In vain we seek for peace with God,
By methods of our own;**

**Jesus, there's nothing but thy blood
Can bring us near the throne.**

Watts

4. WELL WITH THEM THAT FEAR GOD

“Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him” (Eccl. 8:12). Violence, dishonesty, theft, and covetousness are only a few of the many evils that can be named as prevalent characteristics of our time. Sinners seem to boldly trample upon the law of God as if it were completely irrelevant. It can even appear to some that God doesn't care and is unable or unwilling to do anything about it.

However it is a great mistake to make assumptions based only upon appearances. This is the message that is conveyed to us in the above text. Though it may seem to some that God doesn't observe or care what happens among men; the Scriptures declare otherwise. **“The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good”** (Prov. 15:3). Likewise, while it may seem as though God allows people to “get away” with sins committed against Him and His law, the Scriptures once again teach otherwise. **“For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil”** (Eccl. 12:14). Hence in the end, it will not be well with the sinner seeing that none can escape the judgment of God.

On the other hand, a life lived in the fear of the Lord is one of wisdom and understanding. This is because a true fear of God is the acknowledgement of God Himself and of His authority over all things. **“Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God”** (Prov. 2:5). This reverential fear directs sinners to flee to Christ as the only refuge for the guilty. It is only in Him that a sinner can find cleansing and pardon from sin. Thus both in this present life and in the life to come, it shall be well with them that fear God.

“The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death” (Prov. 14:27).

Fear is a grace which ever dwells

With its fair partner, love;

Blending their beauties, both proclaim

Their source is from above.

Let fear and love, most holy God,

Possess thy soul of mine;

Then shall I worship thee aright,

And taste thy joys divine.

Needham

5. NONE GOOD BUT GOD

“And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God” (Mark 10:18). This reply of the Lord to the rich young ruler (in the form of a penetrating question) exposes a common misconception. That is the belief or opinion that all human beings are basically good. From our viewpoint, we might see ourselves as “a good person” or in general as “good people.” However, God sees us as we really are. For the Scriptures declare concerning all people by nature: **“They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one”** (Rom. 3:12). This is due to the corruption of all mankind by sin, which has rendered us defiled in the sight of God (Rom. 3:9-12). A polluted well cannot bring forth clean water. Likewise, it is impossible for any person by nature to do good, being corrupted by sin. **“Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil”** (Jer. 13:23).

This truth then creates an unsurpassable problem for all of mankind. While efforts regarding religion and attempts at accomplishing “good” may be much appreciated by others or even ourselves, they are completely useless and vain in securing eternal life. This is because no matter how diligent and sincere the effort, we always come short of what God requires.

A perfect righteousness and a sure standing for the sinner before God can only be found in the person and work of Jesus Christ, through the righteousness of faith apart from all works. **“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast”** (Eph. 2:8-9).

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound,

That saved a wretch like me!

I once was lost, but now am found,

Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,

And grace my fears relieved;

How precious did that grace appear

The hour I first believed!

John Newton

6. CHRIST LIFTED UP

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up” (John 3:14). The Lord Jesus Christ, by relating to a past

incident in Israel's history, sets forth the absolute necessity of His own crucifixion. Indeed, it is the emphasis of the gospel message itself (I Cor. 2:2). If sinners are to be saved and their sins forgiven, then the matter of sin must be dealt with. For God in His perfect holiness and absolute righteousness cannot simply excuse sin. All sin and every sinner must be judged and punished. Righteousness and truth must prevail before mercy and grace can be bestowed to undeserving sinners.

How then does God accomplish these requirements? Through Christ and Him crucified! He “must” be lifted up to suffer and die, as there is no other means by which sin can be put away. Herein we learn that the crucifixion of Christ was no mere martyr's death, but a substitutionary one. Having no sin of His own, He bore the judgement for all of the sins of all of His people, thereby securing reconciliation for sinners unto God (II Corinthians 5:19-21). The gloriousness of this precious truth is seen in the next verse following our text: **“That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life”** (John 3:15).

As Moses lifted up the brazen serpent upon a pole, likewise Christ was nailed to a tree and lifted up publicly and in full view at Calvary. Sinners that are burdened under the weight and guilt of sin, and find themselves under the sentence of death, need only to look by faith unto this crucified and risen Lord. He continues to be lifted up before the world, through the proclamation of the gospel, as the only Savior of sinners. Thus the true gospel message is one of glad tidings of great joy.

“Lifted up” was He to die,

“It is finished,” was His cry;

Now in Heaven exalted high:

Hallelujah! What a saviour!

P.P. Bliss

7. NO MAN CAN COME

“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6:44). The word “can” in this text has reference to ability and not permission. All men have permission to come to Christ; there to find pardon and peace (Rev. 22:17). However, the Lord emphasizes in the above statement that none (in and of themselves) have the ability or desire to come to Him. Thus the boast of the natural mind that says, “you can do anything if you just put your mind to it,” is here exposed as error. Fallen man of his own free will and ability can no more come to Christ than he can jump over the moon or leap the Pacific Ocean in a single bound.

Therefore if sinners are ever to come to Christ, God the Father must draw them to Himself. He alone accomplishes this by His grace and power. Only God can change the heart of sinners and make them willing in the day of His power (Ps.

110:3). He effectually calls sinners unto Christ, drawing them by the chords of love (Jer. 31:3).

This truth then effectively places salvation completely out of the reach of man and into the hands of God alone. **“Salvation is of the LORD”** is the proclamation of the gospel (John 2:9). This indeed is a hard saying and few can bear the weight of this simple truth (John 6:65-69). However, its practical effect should be to direct our attention away from our own self and our own ability to the risen Savior, who alone is able to save.

With melting heart and weeping eyes,

My guilty soul for mercy cries,

What shall I do, or whither flee,

To escape the vengeance due me?

Does not thy sacred Word proclaim,

Salvation free in ‘Jesus’ name?

To him I look, and humbly cry,

“O save a wretch condemned to die!”

-Gadsby Hymnal-

8. THE AUTHORITY TO FORGIVE SINS

“And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee. And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone” (Luke 5:20-21)?

It is evident that the Scribes and Pharisees thought Jesus was a man like you or me, instead of who He really is: God manifested in the flesh. Yet in their criticism, they stated the Scriptural truth that God alone has the power to forgive sins. The reason this is so is that all sin is against God and against His law. Therefore, it is to Him that we are all individually accountable.

Moreover, the Scriptures reveal that this power or authority to forgive sins has never been delegated to anyone or anything else. No man, no matter how lofty his title or exalted his position, can forgive sins. Nor can any religious body, ceremony, rite, or sacrament accomplish this feat. Yet the forgiveness of sins remains our greatest need, in that **“all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God”** (Rom. 3:23). Furthermore, sin cannot be forgiven apart from its penalty having been paid to the fullest (Rom. 6:23).

Hence the forgiveness of sins can only come about from one who is able to put away sin. Jesus Christ has accomplished this through the sacrifice of Himself (Heb. 9:26). This is surely good news for guilty sinners and is the central theme of the gospel message (Acts 13:38). **“But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins”** (Luke 5:24).

He was sent from the Heavens on high,

Lived perfectly and for sins did die.

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain,

Death's overcome and forever He'll reign.

◊ (Continued on page 148)

Search the Scriptures

(Continued from page 147) ♦

C. James

9. SIN'S BONDAGE

"Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin" (John 8:34). The meaning here of "servant" is a bondservant or slave. We generally think of such an one as being bound to a master and required to work against his own will. Yet the institution of slavery is an ancient practice, and in some cultures there have been generations of people who have known no other way of life. To them, servitude is a normal and natural lifestyle.

Similarly, all of us by nature are in bondage to sin, because all of us practice sin in our lives. **"For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not"** (Eccl. 7:20). Since it is normal to do so, we do not fully recognize sin for what it is. In our society it does not surprise us when we see idolatry, lying, stealing, selfishness, greed, jealousy, hate, murder, adultery, etc., because this is who we are and how we live. It is our normal and natural way of life. Yet sin is a harsh taskmaster. While it promises pleasure, profit, and peace; it ends in misery, death, and destruction.

The Scriptures however proclaim deliverance for the captive through Christ's precious blood. It was shed as the ransom price for sin, so that sinners could be set free not only from the power of sin's bondage, but also from its guilt and punishment. **"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed"** (John 8:36).

*Saved by the blood of the crucified one!
The Father He spake, and His will it was done;
Great price of my pardon, His own precious Son;
Saved by the blood of the crucified one!*

S. J. Henderson

10. WHO SHALL STAND?

"If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand" (Ps. 130:3)? If the Lord kept a record of all of our sins and iniquities, could any of us stand before Him guiltless? The very first commandment requires that we love the Lord with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30), and if we are honest with ourselves, we have to confess that we have fallen far short of this requirement. Is there any among us who can say that we have never lied, stolen, hated, lusted, or coveted? And what of our sins that we have committed in ignorance? All of these heaped together form a mountain of offences against God and His law.

God sees and knows our every transgression (Heb. 4:13), and the Scriptures teach that every single sin, no matter how small or great, cannot go unpunished (Eccl. 12:14; Matt. 12:36). Our sins therefore condemn us to a

miserable and desperate condition before God.

Yet there is grace and hope for the guilty sinner. The verse following our text states: **"But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared"** (Ps. 130:4). This forgiveness is based upon the fact that Jesus Christ suffered the due penalty for sin. On the tree of Calvary, God the Father spared not His only begotten Son Jesus Christ, but poured out judgment for sin upon Him, so that pardon and forgiveness might be bestowed to undeserving sinners (Isa. 53:12).

This then should invoke a reverential fear in the hearts of men. For if God spared not His own Son who was incapable of sin, how much more sure is His judgment towards us who are guilty of a multitude of transgressions.

Therefore the gospel admonishes the guilty to flee to Christ, trusting in the merits of His grace alone. He is the only refuge for the soul, where God proclaims: **"I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more"** (Heb. 8:12).

*My hope is in the Lord, who gave Himself for me,
And paid the price of all my sin at Calvary.*

No merit of my own, His anger to suppress

My only hope is found in Jesus' righteousness.

And now for me He stands, before the Father's throne.

He shows His wounded hands and names me as His own.

His grace has planned it all, 'Tis mine but to believe.

And recognize His work of love and Christ receive.

Norman J. Clayton



Working for Christ

(Continued from page 141) ♦

This class is genuinely religious, as far as it goes, but falls short of the gospel model.

A fourth-class, in addition to their soundness in the faith, the genuineness of their experience, and the correctness of their deportment, are zealous of good works. As firmly as any others, they cling to the doctrines of grace, rely alone on Christ for acceptance with God, search the Scriptures, pray in secret, and strive after holiness but they also exert themselves to spread the empire of Christ. In their estimation, doing is as essential a part of gospel religion as believing. The first great question they ask, after their conversion and baptism, is, "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" While their faith induces love, gratitude, humility and obedience, it also as legitimately takes the form of effort to honor Christ and save others. Now, this fourth class is evidently the only one that comes up to the New Testament model of a Christian, and this is the type of religion I wish in this discourse, to urge you to cultivate and develop. This is the kind of religion that the world, above all

things else, needs. It is not only attainable, but infinitely desirable.

Who can estimate the amount of undeveloped moral power there is in the churches of Christ? We talked of the latent power of steam, till Watt evoked it, and made it impel huge engines over land and sea; of the latent power of the skies, till science climbed their heights, seized the spirit of the clouds, and made it abolish both space and time, and flash our thoughts across rolling seas, to distant continents. But what are these to the moral power that lies sleeping in the churches of God? As a man once stood by the cataract of the Niagara, as the waters of a hundred lakes rolled over, with the roar of a hundred thunders, in stead of being filled with sublime admiration, he was amazed at the immense loss of water power. But who can estimate the loss of religious power there is in the Zion of God? If all the latent religion in the professed friends of Christ were acted out, the world would be speedily and thoroughly converted: and can nothing be said to induce us to shake off stupidity and arise to normal action? My single object is to excite you to shake off inactivity, and exert yourselves for Christ and souls.

1. Active religion is God-like. The greatest of all workers is God. Said Jesus, **"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."** He is momentarily engaged in doing good in the universe. In every world, in every land, in every household and in every heart He is perpetually occupied in bestowing blessings. With a ceaseless industry, He is universally employed in warming mankind with His sun, refreshing them with His air, sustaining them with His food, clothing them from His wardrobe, teaching them with His word, and sanctifying them with His spirit. Wherever there is life, He ministers animation; wherever there is righteousness, He produces it; wherever there is wickedness, He controls it; wherever there is death, He dismisses the soul to Hell or Heaven. Now, would we have the high honor of being imitators of God, as dear children, let us fill up the measure of our days with a holy religious industry.

2. Active religion is Christ like. No one else ever did as much as Christ did in so short a life. He was continually about His Father's business. Mankind were ignorant, and He taught them; depraved, and He reclaimed them; miserable, and He comforted them; diseased, and He healed them; oppressed, and He delivered them; lost, and He saved them. He is not sit down in Jerusalem and require all who needed His help to seek Him out and wait His convenience. "He went about doing well." He lived an itinerant, migratory life, that He might seek and bless the bodies and souls of men. Nothing could divert Him from His journeys of love. Now we see Him

on the Mount, teaching the people the transforming effects of His religion. Then, from the Galilean lake, unfolding, in parables, to the eager throng that lined the shore, the nature of His kingdom. Here, taking little children in His arms and blessing them; there, hearing the blind beggar that sat by the wayside, and pouring daylight upon the sightless eyeballs. Today, raising to life the only son of a widowed mother; tomorrow, visiting the afflicted family at Bethany, and speaking into life a brother who had been dead four days. Oh, how much He said and did for the world's good during the three years between His baptism and death! Never before, nor since, has one walked our earth who was so zealous of good works.

Now, to make our claim to the Christian character, we must not only trust Christ's atonement alone for pardon, and resemble Him in His passive virtues – such as His meekness, gentleness, patience and prayerfulness – but we must also follow Him in His habits of self-denying goodness. In this respect He has left us an example, that we should follow His steps. Here many disciples have greatly erred. They have supposed that, if, in the main, they were contented, unresisting, prayerful and unworldly, as Christ was, (and far be it from us to intimate that His example in these respects was not set to be imitated) they have acted out the conditions of discipleship. But let it be proclaimed from every pulpit, and announced to every candidate for baptism, that Christ as much requires His people to be like Him in His deeds of goodness, as He does that they should be holy and resigned under the bereavements and trials of life. In going about doing good He as much claims to be our pattern and model as He was in His baptism, prayerfulness and humility. With Christ's example of self-denying beneficence shining before Him, can that professor be in a saved state who hugs his ease and remains idle in the vineyard? I have read the Scriptures of Christians who had many slips and some falls; but in all the book of God, I have never read of an indolent, actions less Christian. You are essentially unlike Christ if you do nothing for His glory.

3. This type of religion is Christian-like. It is not only accordant with the precept and example of Christ, but also with that of the primitive Christians. It is granted that they had their doctrinal errors and personal imperfections and faults; but they had one excellence that made them preeminent among their brethren who have succeeded them; and that was their active consecration to Christ. They were singularly militant, zealous and aggressive. How rightly has the principal book in the divine canon, that describes their character and work, been entitled, not the creed, or resolution,

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Working for Christ

(Continued from page 148) ♦

or joys, but "The Acts of the Apostles." What sort of acts? Not attempts to reform the governments of the world, not deeds of blood; but religious acts, so united, vigorous, continuous and self-denying that they did more to spread the cause of their Master than has been done since their day. Not the apostles only, but private Christians of both sexes, and of every condition, in obedience to the last great command of their ascended Lord, devoted themselves, personally and collectively, to the work of spreading Christianity over the world. Without our books and means of travel, and combined action; with a world to convert just as depraved as it is now; with no greater measure of divine influence that is promised to us; with dungeons, gibbets and martyr fires in their path, they exerted their powers of Christ, mortal and immortal, till they filled the whole Roman empire with the sound of salvation. So intense was their love for Christ, that, when defeated at one point, instead of returning to Jerusalem, discouraged, they proceeded to another more distant field, and still another and thus onward, all doing the work of Christ, till, ere the lapse of sixty years after the day of Pentecost, they had formed churches throughout all the dominions of the Caesars, extended the kingdom of Christ from the Jordan to the Thames, and from the snows of Scythia to the burning sands of Africa. Oh, had the mantles of these New Testament Elijahs fallen on succeeding Elishas, long ago this revolted world would have been won back to the divine throne!

Who, now, are the lineal successors of these apostles? Who most strikingly represents these primitive Christians? Were Christ and His first disciples to reappear on earth, with whom, among the sects, would they affiliate? We have, in the light of our subject, and answer that should forever calm the tempests of denominational disputes. That people are the true church who, after having believed in Christ, are doing most for the world's conversion. We, as a people, lack one thing to make good our claim of being the only representative of the apostolic churches. That we are the only denomination that keeps the ordinances in their proper mode, subjects, design and connection, there can be no doubt. But in some other respects, equally as important, many in our churches are most unscriptural and unapostolic. Do not the Scriptures as clearly require us to work for Christ, as they do that we believe and be baptized? Oh, if our churches were zealous workers in the vineyard as they are sound in their Baptist faith, how much mightier we would be in converting the world to Christ and to our peculiar view.

4. Working for Christ is the most acceptable return we can make to Him for the blessings of redemption. He has a right to us, derived from His dreadful sufferings on the cross. In the highest sense, He is our Owner and Master. Every faculty of our nature, every fraction of our possessions and every moment of our time has been with His tears, His thorny crown and death agonies on Calvary. Christian, think of the evils from which He has delivered you, the blessings He secures to you, and at what cost to Himself, and then answer, "How much owest thou thy Lord?" What does He require in return for all He has done for you? You respond that you believe in Him. Yes, He is worthy of your unquestioning, immediate, life long trust. You tell me that we should obey Him. By all means, we reply; promptly, affectionately and impartially. You say you owe Him love. True; you are under obligations to love Him more than father, mother, gold, fame, or life itself. You say you owe Him gratitude. Most assuredly, the warmest gratitude that ever throbbed in the most affected heart should make Him its scope and aim. You tell us He deserves praise. Certainly, praise as sweet as the breath of love and loud as the echo of His fame, should be sounded through the earth.

But all this, though vital to gospel religion, comes short of the return Christ demands of those He has redeemed. The religion that wastes its energies in dreamy raptures and private contemplations is as unacceptable to Christ as it is useless to the world. Our love to Him is spurious unless, like His love to us, it takes the form of selfdenying exertions to save the perishing. Our gratitude is not well pleasing to His sight, unless it prompt to thanks-living as well as thanksgiving. Hear it, men and brethren! The religion that is most like Christ, that most honors Christ, and, consequently, most pleases Him, is the religion that embodies itself in the winning deed of love, and moves about among men in efforts to make them better and happier. He who, with prayerful heart, and liberal hand, and earnest step, goes forth to work for Jesus, elevates his divine Master in the esteem of others, rolls off reproach from his character and religion, adds gleam after gleam to his glory, heightens his joy and uprears his banner. All that shines above and blooms beneath glorifies Jesus infinitely less than one earnest worker in His vineyard.

5. Activity in His service is the great end of all that God has done and is doing for His people, by His Word, His Son, His Spirit, His servants, His ordinances and His providences. He designs their call, regeneration, justification and personal holiness to be means to an end; and that end is a life of active goodness. He never meant any servant of His, of any grade, in any kingdom, to be idle, much

less those whom He has redeemed by the blood of His Son. Let this important position be proved, by the unmistakable utterances of His word. The Scriptures declare working for Christ to be the end of our conversion, expressly and with the strongest emphasis. What is the import of the saying, "**For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them**"? And what is meant by Christ giving Himself for us, that He might purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works? And why, above all, does Christ, in His description of the last judgment, make deeds of kindness to His people the test and touchstone of the eternal destiny of the race? Prophets and apostles, and, louder than all, Christ Himself, commend and command activity. Hence it follows that he who is spiritually indolent comes short of the very end for which God made him a subject of His grace; and if so, can the idler be saved in that day? Judge ye.

6. And still another potential plea for personal activity in the vineyard is, that in no other way can Christianity advance in the world. Two things God has decreed: one is, that His religion shall fill the world; and the other is, that it is to be spread over the earth, instrumentally by the efforts of His people. That this is God's plan for converting the world, is clear from the teachings of His Word and from the history of religion. In what age or country was Christianity ever diffused but by the earnest endeavors of its friends? Did ever a church prosper, internally and in the addition of such as will be saved, that was not active? I have known some soils to produce crops without cultivation, and some sick men to get well without taking medicine, but I have never known a church to prosper that did not work for Christ. It follows, then, that the world's conversion lingers or goes forward just in proportion as God's people are supine or active. If Zion works, souls are converted and saved; if she is indolent, souls remain unconverted and sink to Hell. Can we admit this and longer hug our ease?

Nor can anything else compensate for personal activity. You may be strong in faith, sound in creed, earnest in prayer and holy in life; and infinitely important as these are in their place, in order to get good and do good, yet, unless they take the form of active beneficence, the world's conversation spreading His religion, and should forthwith be adopted by every lover of Christ. Other causes, no doubt, keep back the conquest of Christ, and should be removed speedily; but in vain may we bring into operation all other appliances to extend the Redeemer's kingdom, unless the doctrines of our holy religion, at the same time, assert themselves in corresponding exertions to save souls.

Would you, then, make the most of this brief life? Would you, before you go hence, be useful on the largest possible scale? Would you win the greatest number of souls to Christ, and in the most efficient way help saints heavenward, and thereby give the church and your generation the greatest reason to bless God for your existence, after you are gone? Then make doing well your chief business beneath the sun. Were your chief businesses beneath the sun. Were I to make choice of a pastorate, of a church of twenty poor, yet earnest workers for Christ or of a church of a hundred learned, wealthy, yet inactive members, I would prefer the former, with the conviction that I should do infinitely more for Christ and for souls.

7. Working for Christ is the best means of improving our own Christian characters. Two plans have been proposed to promote personal religion. One is, to shut ourselves out from the world and spend life in the abstract duties of the closet; to read, meditate and pray. This was the plan of the recluses and pietisms of other ages, and is still the plan of a large class in this day, who aim to pursue their own solitary way to Heaven regardless of the mighty multitude who go down unwarned to perdition.

The other plan is, to connect the devotions of the closet with efforts to benefit the bodies and souls of others; to go out in the wide, evil world and work to save souls from death. Now, the latter was the plan of Christ and His apostles; and its advantages over all other plans to foster and develop full grown, vigorous Christians, is manifest. The Scriptures and observation both show that the best way to strengthen the religious affections and powers is, not to sit down in the shady recesses of religious enjoyment, but to go into the vineyard and bear the heat and burden of the day till life's sunset. He who works to impart grace will grow in grace. He who prays, gives and toils to dispel darkness from other lands and other minds will most effectually dispel darkness from his own mind. In caring and doing for the good of others, the mind is enlarged and the heart becomes pure. It is with the Christian as with the physical man, exercise gives health and strength. As he who rises early and spends the hours of the day in athletic exercises, increases his strength by exerting himself, even so the most vigorous piety is that which is busiest in doing good to others. He who has his hands full of good works has neither time nor room for evil; aiming to do great works for God and man, he can promptly dismiss every temptation with Nehemiah's answer, "I have a great work to do and cannot come down."

As a matter of fact, who are our most eminent Christians? Who are freest from avarice, pride, and all the impure

♦ (Continued on page 153)

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. When we die and go to Heaven, will we know our loved ones who have gone before?
- Tennessee

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Yes, I believe that we will know those who have gone before that are near and dear to us. I Corinthians 13:12 declares: **“For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.”** In the heavenly state it appears from this verse that we will have a greater knowledge of spiritual things. We also will have knowledge and an affinity with our companions in Heaven. Certainly this would include our saved loved ones and friends.

It will be a joy to reunite with saved loved ones and friends when our earthly pilgrimage ceases. However, that is not what I am especially looking forward to. I long to see the One who loved me and gave Himself for me, the Lord Jesus Christ. I long to see Him with glorified eyes and take my place with all the other saints who have been washed in the blood of the Lamb to offer praise, thanksgiving, and worship. Earthly relationships are wonderful, but we will be taken up with the worship of the One who is Altogether Lovely. Abiding in His presence with no sin to mar our fellowship will be our greatest source of joy. Jesus Christ will be the center of attention. We will join the other saints in Heaven saying: **“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created...Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing”** (Rev. 4:11; 5:12).

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This is one of the most sensitive, and the touchiest questions that could be asked, because feelings run deep in people that have lost their loved ones they miss

so dearly in this life. So, I hope I can be sensitive to their feelings concerning this question.

The first Scripture that comes to mind is II Samuel 12:23: **“But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.”** I believe by the following reasons I shall give, that we will know the people in Heaven that we have known in this earthly life. But let me state before I continue, I do not believe we will see our pets we have had here on earth. I would like to believe I would see my beloved dog, Babs, in glory but there are no Scriptures I know of that indicate that will be the case. Also, there are many that teach, and songs have been written, that when we die, the first ones we are going to want to see are our loved ones, parents, spouses, children, etc., but the one I want to see, as should be for every born again believer, is our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. His is the face I want to see, the One who died and shed His blood for me, the One Who made it possible for me to be there in the first place. I hope that is the desire of the readers as well.

As we can tell by the above Scripture, David seems to know without doubt that he will see this child once again but it will not be in this life. So it would seem that we will know to some degree.

Also in Matthew 17, Moses and Elijah were recognized immediately by the disciples. The rich man in Hell recognized Lazarus in the bosom of Abraham. The disciples recognized the Lord Jesus after His resurrection, and in I Thessalonians chapter 4 we are told that we shall be caught up **“together with them”** (them being our loved ones who have died before us).

The only thing that I am not sure of is; will we know who they were to us? In other words, will I know that my wife was my wife here on earth, will I know that my mother was my mother? Or will we simply know that we knew them as fellow Christians while we were here on earth, I don't really know.

If we are to have glorified bodies and be as He is (Jesus Christ), will an infant still be an infant? The infant, as we knew it, will be like Him in the new glorified body. The last time I saw my Grandmother, who was 96 when she died, was old looking and wrinkled--she couldn't hear or see anymore. Is that how she will look in glory? I don't believe she will, but that is my opinion and I don't know that for sure, so I can't be dogmatic at the same time. I do

know she will have perfect hearing and perfect vision. Imagine people who were born without sight or hearing like Helen Keller and Fanny Cosby. Who do you think they are going to want to see with their perfect body?

I know that the questioner and the reader are going to want to see, Mom, Dad, and Aunt or Uncle so and so, and even that child that has died before them. I, too, have those that I am anxious to see, if they are there, because I am not sure if they were saved or not. I have a grandfather, uncles, and my biological father who I witnessed to but never knew if the Lord saved them, because they never made a profession of faith. But again, the person that I am focusing on to see when I leave this life is Jesus! Oh what a day that will be, when I see Jesus standing there, praise the Lord. God Bless!

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“For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known” (I Cor. 13:12). I am not the sharpest knife in the drawer and the other brethren may have better answers than I on this subject.

Someday the children of God will have understanding as God has understanding of the children of God. Henceforth I say, yes we will know each other in eternity. The exciting thing about it is, the eternal love I have for my Saviour will be the same eternal love for the Elect of God and we won't need to be introduced to one another.

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This is a good question. Sometimes we make assumptions, but we should ALWAYS be able to go to Scripture and prove our doctrine! I was talking to an elderly lady once that had buried two godly husbands of many years and she was concerned about which would be her husband in glory, if one would be left out, or not. I assured her that Christ will be the focal point of all Christians and that marriage (among us newly converted immortals) will

be insignificant in His presence. The pertinent passage being Matthew 22:25-32. In this scenario presented by the Sadducees, of the woman with seven husbands---Christ clearly states that **“in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.”** But He doesn't end there. He continues with an amazing statement that becomes our text verse in the above question! **“But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.”**

Isn't that AWESOME! And it is our hope of seeing and knowing our loved ones gone before! The Great I AM **“... is not the God of the dead, but of the living.”** I think we, deprived mortals that we are, put way too much emphasis upon death. I've often defined “death” to my congregation at Big Creek as “separation.” That's the clearest and simplest definition I know! As so many funerals preach to us---we haven't “lost” our loved one, we KNOW where they are! And our hope to see them again is grounded in Scripture! I Thessalonians 4:13-18, **“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. ...Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words”** (Emp. TMS). The “we that remain” will be reunited with “those that sleep” and “we TOGETHER” will be with the Lord forever! We've NEVER been dead (or separated) to/from God! He's the God of the Living! I John 3:2, **“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.”**

These old mortal eyes shall put on immortal eyes, but as Job testifies **“For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me”** (Job 19:25-27). His eyes still have the same memories and will still be looking for that Precious One despite the miraculous change in his flesh. Oh yes, still flesh, just like Adam was created! Immortal flesh, pure and holy!

Another example, albeit not such a happy one is in Luke 16:23, **“And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments,**

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. Why is Mary Magdalene, along with the other Mary asking in Mark 16:3, "Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre," very early in the morning when in Matthew 28:1 it said they had already seen Jesus previously "In the end of the Sabbath" or evening? – Washington

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"In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulcher" (Matt. 28:1). First of all, I would like to point out that this verse says nothing of the two Mary's seeing Jesus at all. Next I will point out that this verse is not speaking of the evening, but as it clearly points out, is describing the dawn of the first day of the week, Sunday.

Matthew 28:1-8, Mark 16:1-8, Luke 24:1-8, John 20:1-10: all of these descriptions of the same exact event are seen by different eyes, and heard thru different ears, and written by different hands, but all were still inspired by the one Holy Spirit of God. Notice that all the instances of the same event are very sure to tell us that it was Sunday they visited the sepulchre

As for the very early in the morning in Mark 16:3, we have to understand the Jewish reckoning of the 24 hour day which was evening and the morning. We look to the creation for this timing of the day as the Jews did. The description by the writers of this blessed event are not speaking of different times of the day, but are describing the same time in different ways.

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This question has caused much study through the ages. Were there several visits to the tomb? Are there any discrepancies in the Gospel accounts? I personally want to thank the questioner and the Berea Baptist Banner for causing me to have to study this out. Below is the chronology that I believe is consistent with Scripture and logic. (Scripture is ALWAYS logical!)

First, I believe Christ was in the

tomb 3 days and 3 nights. Based on a Wednesday evening (approx. 6PM) burial, that would mark His resurrection at approx. 6PM on Saturday evening/Sunday AM (in Jewish reckoning). The stone was not rolled away then, as that was not necessary for the resurrection of Christ's glorified body (or His gravity-defying pre-crucifixion body, either!) But the stone will be rolled away later for the necessary viewing of the arriving women.

It is not likely that there were two visits to the tomb. No Gospel account mentions two. (C. I. Scofield has an interesting thesis on two stages of a one-party visit.) But all four Gospels have the ladies arriving in the early pre-dawn hour, while it was yet dark. They arrive wondering how they would remove the stone, but witness upon their arrival the "rolling away of the tombstone," most clearly recorded in Matthew, but again, mentioned in all four Gospels.

Two angels were used of the Lord. One rolled away the stone and struck fear in the hearts of the keepers (fell as dead!) and the women (Matt. 28:2). He reassures the ladies concerning the Christ they seek, as does the one in the tomb (Mark/Luke). They exhort them to return to the waiting apostles and inform them of the risen Saviour! The ladies are very fearful and still reluctant to do this (Mark 16:8), except for Mary Magdalene. (John 20:2) She rushes to tell Peter and John and they run to the tomb to verify this astonishing, yet predicted fact.

After the men depart, Mary Magdalene remains. The angels (now both in the tomb) appear to her weeping eyes and unsuccessfully try to console her. It takes the Word of the Lord Himself to finally bring the joy back into her heart! "Mary!" (John 20:16) She obeys His command and returns yet again to tell the unbelieving apostles (this time) of her sighting of the Master.

After meeting with Mary Magdalene, our Lord finds the other women have also resolved to tell the disciples of the empty tomb and reveals Himself unto them (Matt. 28:9) and they continue on to tell the church that they have seen Jesus with their own eyes.

The rest of the events of this first day of the week finds Jesus walking on the road to Emmaus with Cleopas and another disciple (Luke 24:13), then revealing Himself to ten of the eleven apostles (minus Thomas) in the closed

upper room (John 20:19), berating them for their hard-hearted unbelief despite all the reports coming in of Christ the risen Saviour! (Mark 16:14)

No one Gospel mentions everything, but then that's the purpose of four Gospels writers. Each relates the narrative in his own manner; utilized by the True Author of Scripture, the Holy Spirit. The fact that Matthew alone mentions the earthquake is proof that it happened. Only Luke mentions Joanna---but she was there in all accounts (other women). John wrote his twentieth chapter mostly from the perspective of Mary Magdalene, and we get her most personal account thereby. But Mark confirms she saw the Lord first (16:9). Each testimony verifies parts of the others, and each reveals new facts and personal aspects. But none of it is contradictory. All is Scripture---that we believe first and foremost! Thereby any lack of continuity or understanding is simply our lack of the total quantity of the facts. But the marvelous brevity of Scripture does nothing but further the marvelous fact of its truth. Truly, only God could have written the Bible! Selah! Think about it!

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Matthew 28:1 says: **"In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre."** The Jewish sabbath was generally considered to be over sometime after sunset on Saturday evening. The Jews did not call the sabbath Saturday or the first day of the week Sunday. They measured their days by the sabbath. The end of the sabbath would be the time frame after sunset all the way to the dawn of the first day of the week. Mark 16:1 describes the same time frame by saying **"when the sabbath was past."**

The verse in Matthew actually intimates that they were approaching the tomb when it began to dawn. Nor does it specifically state they had seen Jesus in the verse. They were walking toward the tomb very early on the first day of the week. They were conversing among themselves on the way there when they said **"Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?"** meaning they had not yet arrived when they said this. The conversation in Mark 16:3 had to take place before they arrived at the tomb. They did not know that an angel had rolled away the stone and caused the soldiers to lose consciousness from fear. It was not until they arrived at

dawn that they saw the stone had already been rolled away.

John Gill gave the following comment on Mark 16:3:

"And they said among themselves... Either before they set out, or as they were going along: who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? Which they saw was placed there by Joseph or his orders: this was the only difficulty they had that they were aware of; for they seem to know nothing of the sealing of the stone, and of the watch that was set to guard the sepulchre: things which were done on the sabbath day, on which they rested: for had they, in all likelihood they would never have attempted to have gone to it; the guard of soldiers would have been a sufficient discouragement: but all their concern was, how, and by whom, the stone should be rolled away, that lay of the door of the sepulchre..."

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Let me first say the question sure made me take a hard look at these two Scriptures, actually all four Gospels. At first glance I thought it was a trick question, but I soon discovered it wasn't. I am not sure that we will be able to answer the question well enough to satisfy the questioner and the reader but we will try none the less.

A closer look at Matthew 28:1 has revealed to us that the second half of the question **"as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week"** tells us that the Sabbath had ended and the first day of the week, dawn, had begun, in which our Saviour would have risen, the first day of the week, the Lord's Day.

I have no doubt that all four writers are correct, let the reader remember God never took away their individual personalities, so they would express themselves or tell the story the way they had seen or viewed it, by the leadership of the Holy Spirit of course. Time and space will not allow a full explanation of the meanings and language used by the Jews and how they viewed the end of one day and the start of another. But I would encourage the questioner and the reader to read what John Gill has to say about Matthew 28:1, he brings it out in a much better way that will give you a better understanding than I could ever attempt to do. Or if you have a study Bible you can read the notes about these verses, sometimes they can be of no use, but I think in this case they might assist in the

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Forum #1

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and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." If the rich man in his eternal state could recognize both Abraham (whom he had never seen before in mortal lifetime) and Lazarus, how much more easily will the sons and daughters of the King be able to rejoice with each other concerning God's marvelous grace unto them! And that's how we'll spend eternity, sitting around the throne of God together, telling our individual stories of grace! **"But God... hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus"** (Eph. 2:4-7). You see that word **"together"** used twice? That's our loved ones and us! Yeah, we'll know them! Praise God! May God bless these words to your heart.

MATTHEW STEPP



Forum #2

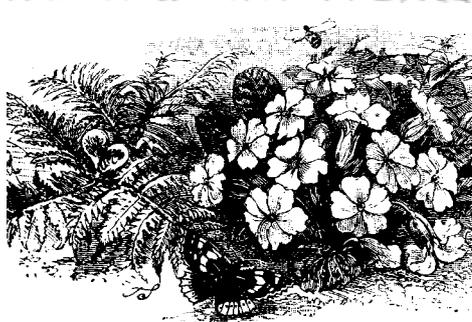
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quest for the answer.

I do believe it was very early when these women went to the tomb, how early is hard to tell. I have been up early especially if I have been camping and have seen the stars in the sky and yet see that the sun has started to come up, depending on what is in your line of sight. Being in the woods or on the beach or mountain top would give you a different view for sure, I have seen all three.

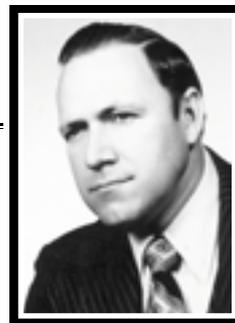
In closing, let me say I am confident, and again have no doubt, that there is absolutely no contradiction with Matthew and Mark. In fact I think all four Gospels compliment each other. For me, that is why the Scriptures are written in such a way, for us to study that much harder. Isn't that just wonderful, and doesn't it fill your heart with joy when God reveals things to us through study? **"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth"** (II Tim. 2:15). God Bless!

ROGER REED



From the Pen of a Country Preacher

Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)



Evangelism: Biblical, and Also, the Modern Variety

"Evangelize" means "to spread the Gospel of Christ, to preach the good news of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ to every creature." In plain words, evangelism means to gospelize the world. It is not persuading a person of one faith to embrace another faith, nor is it to get members in your particular church or denomination. True Scriptural evangelism does not set a goal for a certain number of converts, and then work to reach that goal. Scriptural evangelism does not seek to bring a person to a little decision for Christ, nor does it try to make the world Christian. It is far more than this.

True Scriptural evangelism is the preaching of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ under the power of the Holy Spirit to the hearts of sinners and leaving the results in the hands of God as to whether any one is saved or ever will be saved.

THE CHURCH HAS LOST SIGHT OF HER MISSION

The chief business of the church is to publish the gospel to guilty sinners. The commission did not say send or support, rather it said go preach the gospel to every creature. According to modern day interpretation of the great commission, Matt. 28:19-20 should read, "Go ye, therefore, and organize churches wherever you can, line them up with your group, teach them to support all the work, especially the colleges and seminaries (I liked to have said cemeteries), and, lo, you will be a good missionary, and you shall have praise from the leaders at headquarters." But the commission did not say that, it said that all the church was to go preach the gospel. It is said of the Jerusalem church that they **"went everywhere preaching the word,"** and this is what a church must do to carry out the great commission. Is your church carrying it out?

I fear the church lost sight of its main business centuries ago when it surrendered its prerogative right of preaching the gospel to an outside association or mission board and became a collecting agency for the denomination. The Scriptures teach that every New Testament church is a sovereign, independent, autonomous body. A church does not have to belong to an association or convention to be Scriptural, nor are such organizations essential to a church doing mission work. The burden of a lost world should rest upon a born again church and

pastor, not some outside agency.

The primary duty of a church is not establishing a seminary, or a hospital or an orphanage---needful as these are. It is giving out the gospel to a lost world.

The church is not just an organization; it is an organism. So then the church is not a social club. Neither is it a place of amusement to satisfy the carnal desires of men. Nor is it a house of merchandise for the sale of indulgences or other commodities. Neither is it a reform bureau to save the bodies of men. Neither is it the church's duty to strive for the dignity and freedom of men by putting on marches, demonstrations and social projects. The source of all the evils in the world is sin, and the only way to eradicate sin is to regenerate the human heart. So preaching the gospel is the church's main business. Any time a church seeks the help of congresses, legislatures, federations, and reform societies she loses her spiritual power and becomes helpless as a redeeming force.

The church is not to preach a social gospel; she is not to legislate goodness into the lives of people. Christ never used the power of the state to clean up the lives of men. Neither He, nor His inspired Apostles, ever took part in the political affairs of this world. They never started any legislative movements to stop prize fights, gladiatorial combats, chariot racing or the liquor traffic. The only Scriptural way for Christians to combat these things is to preach to men the gospel. This is the Bible's way, although it may seem ineffective to the wisdom of men.

It is high time that we stop witnessing about how we can sing, or preach, or what type of program we have, or how many members we can get to join our church. Let us tell men of Christ and Him crucified, for this is the business of the church. Let us stop worrying about salvation from poverty and ignorance and begin to worry about the salvation of lost souls. My, how we need to return to the old paths of compassion for the lost, the old landmarks of Scriptural evangelism!

THE CHURCH A RIPE FIELD FOR EVANGELISM

Most of our churches are filled with lost people. Preachers are lost in many cases too. **"Like people, like priest!"** (Hos. 4:9). Some people just got stirred up emotionally and joined the church,

but they didn't get anything, just an old wet shirt, just a religious experience with the Devil. Anyone with one eye and half sense can see that there is something drastically wrong with the average church.

Look at the average church. They have a robed choir, their cut and dried program and their intellectual preaching. They have all the organization and beautiful rituals one could ask for, but in most cases it is Spiritless. We have never faced such before in our generation. We have form without reality; we have organization without power. We have the ritual without Christ. We have religion without life. In the average church there is constant wrangling, gossiping, backbiting, lying about each other, and a constant uproar among the members. It takes nine-tenths of the preacher's time trying to keep them pacified and trying to keep the church together. Most churches want a young preacher who can keep the church together.

I once heard of a church that had set a goal for forty additions during their revival. The last night of the meeting they had fallen short of their goal. During the invitation the pastor gave this proposition. He said, "Come on and join the church, so we can reach our goal. You can be saved later." There is what is happening today! That is why we have so many lost people in the church. I personally watched one of our so-called outstanding preachers read John 3:16 to a boy and ask him if he believed it. The boy said that he did. Then the preacher said "You are saved, son. You should join the church." That is not Scriptural evangelism. Paul never practiced such!

Some of our would-be personal workers tell sinners to repeat the sinner's prayer. Then they tell them they are saved and take them into the church. The result is that these people are twofold more the child of Hell than before they joined the church. These lost church members are usually trouble-makers in the church who live sinful lives. Some should say that they had so many additions, not so many souls saved.

Our revivals have been turned into campaigns to get members into the church who will help with the church budget; so the old members can waste more of their money. Near the end of the church year, the pastor of a church begins to think about his annual report, and as a result, he puts on a week or two weeks' annual revival meeting. Of course, this is just an effort to get new members into the church to make a report to the association. We do not seem to have time to wait upon the Lord to send an awakening. Most of the time a church now days announces that it is going to have a revival beginning one Sunday and closing the next Sunday. The evangelist comes and tries to imitate some big evangelist in his methods to

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Evangelism

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induce people to come into the church. From what goes on, one might think that Christ is only where the preacher is, and that responding to his proposition is part of the process of being a Christian. Multitudes are being deceived by this method. Children, when very young, are being led by this practice to think such is the way of salvation.

We ignore the Scriptural way to have a revival. When we plan a series of meetings, we arrange our committees: the advertising committee, the entertainment committee and the transportation committee. We get a big preacher as our evangelist. But we neglect the most important thing, the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. The results---sounding brass and tinkling cymbal.

We can plan our big meetings, get our big crowds, get our big preacher, organize our members, but unless the Spirit of God is present, it will be in vain.

In the average revival meeting there may be emotions stirred up, a confession of sins, a cleaning up of lives, and folks coming to some great religious experience; but as a rule, sinners are not broken and brought to repentance. Yes, beloved, in most cases the emotions of people are aroused by intellectual oratory, but as soon as the emotions die away, they settle down in a worse condition than they were in before. It seems the evangelist took the revival and the converts home with him.

We do not have any prodigals coming home. Sinners are dry-eyed and unmoved. There is an absence of the breaking up the human heart in which to plant the Word of Truth. We need a more pungent conviction of sin which can only come through the brooding work of the Spirit.

THE SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM

We must stop substituting social life for the presence of Christ. We do not have to organize ball games, swimming clubs, etc., and we do not have to turn our basement into a moving picture show or a dance hall to hold the young people. We need to go back to the Bible, back to Bethel, back to the old path of Scriptural Evangelism. People are won to Christ by the foolishness of preaching, not by ball clubs, religious movies, or big suppers. Let us throw away the denominational program that molds our church life after worldly standards.

May we offer the wicked world the gospel only. I do not have anything else to offer those who come to hear me preach. I have no silly jokes. I have nothing but Jesus only. Let us preach the gospel. If it does not save men, nothing else will.

A sinner is not convicted of the mind for salvation; he is convicted of the heart.

The sinner does not believe with the mind but with the heart. Before any man can believe with the heart for salvation, he must be cut to the heart by the Spirit. A mental conception of Christ is not enough. Neither is believing the Word of God, nor understanding the way of salvation. It is not knowing about Christ that saves one; it is personally knowing Christ.

Dear friend, were you ever awakened to the fact that you are a sinner? Was there a time when you took your place as a Hell-deserving sinner before God and acknowledged in your heart that you were lost? If not, then something is wrong. You need the new birth. You may have been a church member for years; you may have been in Bible classes, under preaching services and have gone through what they call revival meetings year after year, but have you ever come to know that you are a lost sinner?

I was once far away from the Savior. . . . And vile as a sinner could be. . . . I wondered if Christ, the Redeemer. . . . Would save a poor sinner like me. . . . I wandered on in the darkness. . . . Not a ray of light could I see. . . . And the thought filled my heart with sadness. . . . There's no hope for a sinner like me. . . . but then in that lonely hour. . . . A voice sweetly whispered to me. . . . Saying "Christ, the Redeemer, hath power. . . . To save a poor sinner like thee. . . . I listened and lo! 'twas the Savior. . . . Who was speaking so kindly to me. . . . I cried, I'm the chief of sinners. . . . Thou canst save a poor sinner like me. . . . Fully then trusted I in Jesus. . . . And oh, what joy came to me. . . . My heart now is filled with His praises. . . . For He saved a poor sinner like me. . . . No longer in darkness I'm walking. . . . For the light is shining on me. . . . And now unto others I'm telling. . . . How He saved a poor sinner like me.

Christ can save a poor sinner like you.



Working for Christ

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affections which war against the soul? Who are most exempt from harassing doubts? Who enjoy most freedom in prayer, and understand the Scriptures most clearly? In a word, who are most like Christ? Those, we affirm, who do most for Christ.

My brethren, it is my deepest conviction that there is a radical defect in our plans to improve the piety of our churches. We teach Christianity too much as an insulated, selfish system. We stifle and repress the religious principle of our members by too much centering their cares and efforts on themselves. Never will our brethren become strong in faith and holy in life – never will they make full proof of the sanctifying, strengthening, enlarging power of the gospel – never will our churches enjoy a genuine internal

prosperity, till they can be induced to go out of themselves in efforts to convert a lost world. In vain, without this, will be all our censures, scolds and lectures on the evils of worldliness. Let us induce each once to occupy some post of labor in the vineyard; then their deadness to the world, their love for each other, their liberality, their personal holiness, their compassion for souls, their insight into the Scriptures and their spirit of devotion, will be greatly increased. Then will apostasies and exclusions from our churches be unknown. Then will Zion become as fair as the moon, as clear as the sun, and as terrible as an army with banners. Then will revivals be frequent, widespread, and as lasting in their effects as eternity; the world's conversion will move forward with primitive speed; the sun of heaven will rise on the earth, and the waves of spiritual knowledge will roll from land to land like the waves of the mighty deep.

8. Once more: Of all others, the working Christian is the happiest. God has decreed that idleness, whether physical, mental or spiritual, and misery shall go together hand in hand. The happy Christian is the useful Christian. The sad, gloomy Christian misrepresents his religion and does harm; and we are sad and gloomy because we are idlers in God's vineyard. We owe it to the world to be serene and joyful, and yet none are so but Christ's workers. The only happy people in this world of misery are those who toil for God. Every blow struck in Christ's vineyard is attended with a glow of pleasure. There is often unspeakable joy in the mere exercise of the beneficent principle. Look at facts. Said Andrew Fuller:

There was a period in my ministry marked by the most systematic and pointed efforts to comfort my people, but the more I tried to comfort them the more they complained of doubts and darkness. I knew not what to do, for I had done my best to comfort the mourner in Zion. At this time it pleased God to direct my attention to the claims of the perishing heathen in India. I felt that we had been living to ourselves, and not caring for their souls. I spoke as I felt. My serious people wept over their past inattention to the subject. They began to talk about a Baptist mission. The females, especially, began to collect money to spread the gospel. They met and prayed for the heathen; met and did what they could; and while all this was going on their lamentations ceased, the sad became cheerful and the desponding calm; and I, instead of studying to comfort my flock, was comforted by them. They were drawn out of themselves – that was the real secret. God blessed them while they tried to be a blessing.

Look at George Boardman. While studying at Andover, he was happy in anticipation of proclaiming the gospel

to the heathen. He gladly leaves country, home, and friends for his distant field. The roaring gales and sounding billows are music to his ears, as they waft him on to his labors of love. When from the deck he saw emerging above the waters the scene of his toils, tears of joy suffused his cheeks. His field is joyfully entered. He breaks through the barriers of a barbarous language, and with a face beaming like that of an angel, he commenced rearing aloft the banner of Calvary. At length hundreds of converts crown his labors. Meantime, his health has failed. Enfeebled and dying, he is borne, full of seraphic joy, to a mountain stream, to see another lay in the baptismal wave those he had won to Christ. With a fading yet beaming eye, he looks on. It is done, and, Simeon-like, he utters anthems of joy, and, while yet in the arms of the natives, he falls asleep in Christ, and, with one glad shout of victory, his spirit mounts to its home on high and hears the Master for whom he had fought and triumphed say, "Well done, good and faithful servant." Oh, my brethren, would you have all your harassing doubts and corroding fears leave you, and open in your bosom a fountain of pure joy that will flow on when the heavens are no more? Then tear the world from your hearts, rend the veil from your eyes, shake off apathy as you would the chills of death, and arise to life and action.

9. Finally, he, above all others, lives for eternity who works for Christ. Is there, after death, a heaven for the redeemed? The Scriptures, with sunbeam clearness, tell us that the righteous enter the bright home of life immediately after they cease to breathe. Has our manner of life in this world any connection with our rewards in the life to come? There is the same relation between what we are and what we do in time and the rewards of Heaven that there is between sowing and reaping; and if so, is there any one way to spend our Christian life that, more than any thither, will augment our peace in death and class in eternity? There is; and it is self-denying exertions for the world's Redeemer. The results of human doings, as to their authors, at least, either terminate at the grave or follow them into eternity as sources of pain. The deeds of this busy world transmit no good influence for their authors into eternity. But the worker for God and souls he converts will be a star in his crown of rejoicing. Amid an assembled universe, he will hear from the judge the plaudit, "Well done;" because his was a life of well doing. Every blow he strikes in his Master's vineyard will brighten his crown and enhance his bliss.

Behold in death the idle professor! He has done many things, and done them well; but left undone the very thing for which he was redeemed and left for years in the world. The dawning light of

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Working for Christ

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eternity reveals to him the guilt of having done nothing for Christ. He is filled with the deepest gloom. He may have a faint hope of being saved; yet he greatly desires to live. Not that he may tarry with the dear weeping ones that cluster around him; not that he may superintend the education of his children, and complete their settlement in life; but that he may, if possible, retrieve the past, and do something for Jesus before he is ushered into His presence. And when, **“so as by fire,”** he has entered Heaven, and receives his starless crown, if anything could induce him to wish to re-enter his body and relive in this world of woe, it would be to enjoy the privilege of working for Jesus.

But see in death God’s worker. Without alarm or misgiving, he lays his dying head on the bosom of his Savior. Having borne the heat and burden of the day, how calmly his sun sets in the west of a glorious, happy death, to rise in the undying splendor of a blissful immortality. He is blessed; he rests from his labors, and his works will follow him.

Of all who shine and sing around the divine throne, none will stand so high and be as happy as he.

And now, all things urge you to work-- work for Christ. Why? God makes angels work; death works, devils work, Hell works, and Heaven works. Work where? In your family, in your community, in the Sunday school, in your church, and in the wide world? Work how? From principle, continuously systematically, cheerfully and urgently. Remember, the saints on earth have one privilege above the saints in Heaven; it is the privilege of working for the good of souls. The privilege of working for the good of souls that are plunging into a dreadful eternity, uncleansed by the blood of Christ. Each succeeding wave of time bears off thousands to the endless damnation of Hell. Nine hundred drop into Hell hourly. Can you know this and ever be indolent again? Then, **“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.”** (*The Baptist*, Dec. 20, 1873; Jan. 3, Jan. 10, 1874).



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.

BACON TO HIGH? QUIT BUYING GAS!

Everyone has noticed the high cost of groceries at the supermarket these days. What you might not know is that it’s your own fault. Yes, your fault. Every time you fill up your tank with ethanol enriched gas you’re raising the price of foods based on grains (eggs, milk, bread, meat, etc.). Currently 40 percent of this nation’s corn crop goes to producing ethanol – fuel out of food.

A few years ago a bushel of corn sold for \$2.40. Today its price is around \$7.40, a triple increase.

Consumer Growth Partners recently reported that food prices have climbed 6.5 percent since the first of the year.

So why is my bacon higher? Simple, ethanol subsidies. Ethanol subsidies are about \$1.45 per gallon. At present, government subsidies for ethanol production total \$7 billion a year, which makes it more profitable for farmers to grow corn for ethanol than for human or animal consumption. The reduced production of corn for such consumption raises the price. The math is simple: Because corn is used to feed chickens, cows, and pigs, these higher prices translate directly into higher prices for chicken, beef, pork, milk,

cheese, and so on.

GOP analyst Thomas Segal said that what is most disheartening about the current “food for fuel” mandate is “when we realize that ethanol has only increased our energy independence by 1.1% and reduced our greenhouse emissions by 1/19th of 1% — and for that reduction [we] have paid an extra \$3.6 billion for gasoline at the pump.”

With the continuing and increasing pressure on the price of commodities due to the weakening dollar, wasteful ethanol subsidies, and other events negatively impacting the production of foodstuffs, it is all but certain that the sticker shock in the grocery store will continue, and perhaps get much worse, for the American family.

STUDY LINKS EDUCATION TO RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD

(WNS)--Fathers with a college education are more likely to get married, have better jobs, and spend more time with their children, a recent Pew study reported. Only 13 percent of fathers with at least a bachelor’s degree had children outside marriage, compared with 51 percent of those with high school diplomas and 65 percent of those who didn’t finish high school. The divide also

exists along ethnic lines. Black and Hispanic fathers were more likely to have children out of wedlock—72 percent and 59 percent, respectively—compared to 37 percent for white men. Pew also concluded that men with a college education spend more time with their children, about 6.5 hours a week, but some less-educated fathers who struggle to provide for their families are more likely to become estranged.

PERRY: ABORTION A “U.S. FOREIGN EXPORT”

(WNS)--Texas Gov. Rick Perry accused the Obama administration on June 6 of transforming abortion into a U.S. export. He faulted President Barack Obama for reversing the “Mexico City policy” that banned giving federal money to international groups that performed or provided information about abortion. Obama struck down the policy during his first week in office, saying it was too broad and undermined family planning in developing countries. “Our federal tax dollars can now be used to fund abortion all over the world,” Perry said. “With the stroke of a pen, abortion essentially became a U.S. foreign export.” Perry accused the Obama administration of ignoring “the overriding responsibility of every government—that is to protect citizens at every stage of their lives, especially those who cannot protect themselves.” They are “turning the remains of unborn children into nothing more than raw material.”

APPEALS JUDGE SAYS WALKER WAS FIT TO RULE ON PROP 8

(WNS)--Chief U.S. District Judge James Ware on June 14 upheld former Chief Judge Vaughn Walker’s ruling on California’s Proposition 8, noting that his fellow jurist could not be presumed to have a personal stake in the case just because he was in a long-term relationship with another man. The ruling does not settle the legal fight over Proposition 8. The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals is considering whether Walker properly concluded that denying homosexuals the right to marry violates their rights to due process and equal protection. Walker had issued a ruling to strike down California’s constitutional amendment defining marriage as being between one man and one woman. Traditional family supporters maintained that his ruling should be overturned because he failed to divulge his own marital intentions before throwing out the voter-approved measure.

APPELLATE COURT SAYS NO PUBLIC SCHOOL SPACE FOR WORSHIP SERVICES

(WNS)--The 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in June that a public school could bar a church from renting its space after hours, while other groups could rent the space if they weren’t using it for worship. The court said the school wasn’t discriminating against “religious points of view” but simply banning a “type of activity—religious worship services.” “The Establishment Clause is being

misunderstood to mean that you cannot accommodate religious private speech as opposed to other private speech,” said Jordan Lorence of the Alliance Defense Fund, one of the lawyers for the Bronx, N.Y., church that sought to rent from a local middle school. “They have their dance recitals, Boy Scout meetings, union meetings, worship services. Nothing is transformed. The meeting doesn’t work some architectural alchemy on the building.” Lorence said the decision could be overturned by the full circuit court (this ruling was from a three-member panel) or go to the Supreme Court.

NBC’S APOLOGY ISN’T ENOUGH

(WNS)--NBC apologized to offended viewers after omitting “under God” from the Pledge of Allegiance during the U.S. Open June 19. The national golf championship began with a patriotic feature, which included schoolchildren reciting the Pledge of Allegiance mixed with clips of soldiers raising an American flag. The audio of the pledge played twice, both times omitting the phrases “under God” and “indivisible.” Angry viewers immediately responded on social media, with some tweets demanding a boycott of NBC. Later in the broadcast, NBC apologized to viewers who may have been offended by the editing of the pledge. NBC’s apology resulted in further outrage among offended parties. Tim Wildmon, the president of the American Family Association (AFA), sent a letter to supporters describing the editing of the video as a “hatchet job,” NBC’s apology as “evasive,” and the entire feature as a “grossly unpatriotic act.”

NORTH CAROLINA DEFUNDS PLANNED PARENTHOOD

(WNS)--On June 15, the North Carolina General Assembly voted to override Governor Bev Perdue’s veto of a budget that would cut state funding for Planned Parenthood. Planned Parenthood is the largest abortion provider in the nation. Gov. Perdue objected to the bill, not because it cut Planned Parenthood, but because it cut education spending. The House voted 73-46 to override, and the Senate voted 31-19. The North Carolina Family Policy Council (NCFPC) supports the decision. “For too long, organizations that support and even provide abortions have been given taxpayer dollars to further their work,” said Bill Brooks, president of NCFPC. “We are glad this is no longer the case in North Carolina.” North Carolina is the third state to cut funding for Planned Parenthood, following Kansas and Indiana.

MOST AMERICANS STILL PREFER TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE

(WNS)—A recent poll sponsored by the Alliance Defense Fund asked 1,500 American adults if they agreed with the following statement: “I believe marriage should be defined only as a union between one man and one woman.” Sixty-two percent of the respondents agreed. Included in

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that number were 53 percent who “strongly agreed.” Greg Scott, a spokesman for ADF, said, “It is not surprising that Americans answered in the same way they answer in polls.” So far, no state has voted to define marriage differently than between a man and a woman. The poll was part of a larger effort by ADF to understand American marriage views. “ADF was prepared to find results we did not agree with,” Scott said, although he admits the results were encouraging.

CHURCH PLAYS ROLE IN TEEN'S ASPIRATIONS

(WNS)--A new Barna Group study shows that most young people have clear ideas of what they would like to do, and their faith plays a role in their decisions. The most common goal among teens is to work in medicine or the health care field (mentioned by 23 percent of teenagers). Overall, more than half of the students express interest in some type of scientific or applied science career. One-fifth of the students are attracted to creative vocations, including arts or music, graphic arts, culinary arts, and fashion or interior design. Students with an active faith (defined as reading the Bible, attending church and praying in a typical week) are more likely to be interested in arts and music, ministry, journalism and law. Young Protestants are comparatively more interested in physically demanding careers such as construction, agriculture and the military, while young Catholics express above-average interest in journalism and education.

LESBIAN MINISTER RECEIVES SUSPENSION

(WNS)--Rev. Amy DeLong, of the United Methodist Church, was found guilty of marrying a homosexual couple. She was not found guilty on the charge of being a “self-avowed practicing homosexual.” The not-guilty verdict was based on the fact that DeLong declined to comment in court about whether her relationship involved sexual contact. The possible penalties ranged from suspension to defrocking. The jury chose to suspend DeLong, starting July 1, but to not remove her from the ministry. “The suspension is for spiritual discernment,” the jury’s ruling said. The goal is “to restore the broken clergy-covenant relationship.” The jury also demanded that DeLong draft and present a document outlining issues that harm the United Methodist Church’s clergy covenant. If she doesn’t comply she’ll be suspended for another year starting in June 2012.

OPPONENTS OF N.Y. GAY MARRIAGE LAW SPEAK UP

(WNS)--Supporters of traditional marriage have not held back in expressing their disappointment with New York’s new law legalizing same-sex marriage. The new

law was passed by New York legislature on June 24. Archbishop Timothy Dolan and the bishops of New York released a statement in response to the decision. The statement read, “The passage by the Legislature of a bill to alter radically and forever humanity’s historic understanding of marriage leaves us deeply disappointed and troubled.” Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council, says the people of New York should have voted on the issue. “A clear majority of the people of New York oppose counterfeit ‘marriage,’” said Perkins. “But Gov. Cuomo and anti-family lawmakers have shown that their allegiance is to a small but vocal minority seeking to redefine marriage and family.” Brian Brown, president of the National Organization for Marriage, agrees. “We never lost a public vote on marriage in any state,” he told the Associated Press. So far, six states have legalized same-sex marriage. Minnesota is set to vote on a constitutional amendment to preserve the traditional definition of marriage next year.

GOVERNOR CHRIS CHRISTIE CONTINUES TO DEFEND LIFE

(WNS)--For the second time this year, New Jersey Gov. Christie vetoed a bill that would provide state taxpayer funding for Planned Parenthood. “Given the growing laundry list of Planned Parenthood’s misdeeds, it is unfathomable that anyone who truly cares about women’s health would continue to push funding for these clinics,” New Jersey Right to Life (NJRTL) president Marie Tasy told LifeNews. “We applaud Governor Christie for once again standing up for the integrity of New Jersey taxpayers.” Christie’s pro-life sentiments are no secret in New Jersey. Christie ran for governor in 2009 as an openly pro-life candidate against incumbent Gov. Jon Corzine.

MICHIGAN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION BAN RULED UNCONSTITUTIONAL

(WNS)--A federal appeals court on July 1 struck down Michigan’s 2006 Civil Rights Initiative. It said the law, which forbids preferential treatment on the basis of race or gender, is unconstitutional under the 14th Amendment. In a 2-1 decision, a panel of the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said the law violates the Equal Protection Clause because it places a burden on racial minorities that want affirmative action. The court was also concerned about how the affirmative action ban was created: Because voters passed it as an amendment to the state constitution, it could only be changed with another statewide vote.

PROTECTING CLERGY NOT ENOUGH IN NEW YORK SAME-SEX MARRIAGE LAW

(WNS)--New York conservatives were thinking through their next steps after four Republican state senators on June 24 joined Democrats in a 33-29 final vote that made New York the sixth state in the nation (plus the District of Columbia) to legalize same-sex marriage. The new law, which takes effect

on July 25, will double the number of people now eligible for same-sex marriage in the United States. For now, the 1996 federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which defines marriage as between one man and one woman, protects states from being forced to recognize same-sex marriages sanctioned by other states. Thirty-seven states define marriage that way, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures, but the law is the target of court battles. In February President Barack Obama called DOMA “unconstitutional” and said he would no longer allow the Justice Department to defend it—setting the stage for same-sex marriage to figure prominently in presidential election debates.

DEBT’S NOT ALL, FOLKS

(by Robert Knight, WNS)--Over the past 90 years, a relentless campaign has unfolded to overthrow Judeo-Christian morality and replace it with an amorality that says desires in and of themselves validate choices.

This campaign has been advanced largely by hijacking the rubric and moral capital of the black civil rights movement and misapplying it to volitional behavior. The changes, which move us closer to barbarism, are enforced via a media that pounces on even the slightest hesitation to embrace the new immorality.

In earlier days, people who opposed the pornification of culture were denounced as “prudes” until they finally gave up or were seduced by the dark side. People who opposed abortion were falsely accused of wanting to harm women. And people who opposed unilateral divorce were smeared as lacking compassion for those in unhappy unions.

The current target of this unholy campaign is the perversion of marriage. For the first time, a Republican-controlled state Senate chamber provided the margin of victory for a state law redefining marriage away from the man-woman requirement. Soon, there will be no bride needed, or no groom, for a New York marriage license. Meanwhile, liberal judges all over the country are ruling that preference for traditional morality is animated solely by “hate.”

This radical advance is occurring partly because of the ongoing media propaganda that suppresses any serious discussion of the consequences of sexual dysfunction. But it’s also occurring because of the economic drama unfolding in Washington. The Left does not waste crises that it purposefully creates.

Some major Republican figures have floated the idea of a “truce” on social issues while expanding the “big tent” to include the sin lobby. According to Webster’s, a truce is: “a suspension of hostilities, as between armies, for a specified period, by agreement.”

If only one side declares a truce while the other side keeps fighting, it’s not really a truce, is it? It’s a surrender.

The Left is not about to call a truce in the culture war. Sensing disarray, the Obama Administration has stepped up its attacks on the moral order even while it runs our economy off a cliff.

Part of the problem is that Tea Party and Republican leaders, in correctly diagnosing that Americans are terrified over the economic crisis, are concentrating on fiscal issues. Fair enough. That’s what’s on everyone’s mind. But it is not enough, and it’s short-sighted.

A free, self-governing republic can work only if a nation has a self-renewing supply of social capital, which comes primarily from strong, intact marriages and families.

As Ken Blackwell and Ken Klukowski write in their new book, *Resurgent: How Constitutional Conservatism Can Save America*:

“You cannot stop a decades-long march toward a socialist and authoritarian state if the family breaks down. Those who say we need to maintain a laser focus on government spending miss the forest for the trees, or refuse to accept what the Founders embraced. If we balance the budget and rein in government but do not rebuild and protect families, then the popular will for government intervention will irresistibly grow over time.”

Surveys show the vast majority of Tea Party members are also socially conservative. Yet, most major Tea Party leaders have bought the idea that breathing a word about Obama’s titanic assaults on the moral order will cost them independent support. Never mind that addressing this with confidence could bring tradition-minded Hispanics, blacks and other minorities into the conservative camp.

The political Left has long been at war against sexual morals for strategic reasons. People conditioned to think as short-term opportunists instead of as members of the family tree with long-term moral obligations are easier to manipulate. Given the false promise of a painless future free from individual responsibility, they are less likely to recognize, much less oppose, trespasses on their liberty, such as Obamacare.

Eventually, they don’t even notice that the Constitution, which is supposed to be a check on government, has turned into a blank check for statists. Can you imagine an earlier generation of Americans nodding meekly while the government, under threat of force, dictates that they can buy only poison light bulbs?

The marriage-based moral order has been in the bull’s-eye of socialist activists since the French Revolution. Strong families interfere with that vision by inculcating personal responsibility, faith and different loyalties.

In his 1884 opus, *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Karl Marx’s co-author Friedrich Engels argued for “free love” as a byproduct of the advance of communism:

“With the transfer of the means of production into common ownership, the single family ceases to be the economic unit of society. ... The care and education of the children becomes a public affair; society looks after all children alike, whether they are legitimate or not. This removes all the anxiety about the “consequences” ... Will not that suffice to bring about the gradual growth

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of unconstrained sexual intercourse and with it a more tolerant public opinion ...?"

Who knew that a commie philosopher like Engels could probably make a living today as a Sex and the City scriptwriter?

It's not too late to save what's left of marriage and to re-order public policies to strengthen rather than corrode the sanctity of the home. There are efforts underway in several states to add to the total of 30 with Constitutional marriage amendments. The abortion industry is losing public support. And many young people are discovering that the hook-up culture is a dead end.

A great reservoir of sentiment for the permanent things is waiting to be tapped. What's needed first is moral leadership from those who purport to be leaders.

OBAMA SUPPORTS BILL TO REPEAL FEDERAL GAY MARRIAGE BAN

The White House recently threw its support to overturning the Defense of Marriage Act. The Obama administration has already said it won't defend the Defense of Marriage Act in court because it concludes it's unconstitutional.

Press Secretary Jay Carney went further, saying President Obama is "proud to support" the Respect for Marriage Act to overturn the 15-year-old law. The president has long called for a legislative repeal of the so-called Defense of Marriage Act, which continues to have a real impact on the lives of real people, our families, friends and neighbors.

Senator Feinstein, who is a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee and sponsor of the Respect for Marriage Act, said she is under no illusion that overturning the ban will be easy, but she does think the public is ready for a change. "I think eyes have opened. More and more people across this land know people who are gay, who want to have a lasting relationship, who look at marriage as an economic agreement as well as an emotional agreement."

Feinstein is now one of 27 co-sponsors, none Republican, supporting repeal. She said with a GOP-dominated House, she understands repeal may not happen anytime soon. "If we don't succeed this session, we will try again next session. Believe me, we will continue this effort until the battle is won."

CALIFORNIA GOV SIGNS LANDMARK LAW TO TEACH GAY HISTORY

California has become the first state in the nation to require public schools to add lessons about gay history to social studies classes, after Gov. Jerry Brown (D) signed the landmark bill.

Democratic state Sen. Mark Leno of San Francisco, the bill's author, has said that teaching gay history in public schools will teach students to be more accepting of gays and lesbians.

"In the past, history taught about what people did, what they accomplished," says

Brad Dacus, head of the Pacific Justice Institute. "It didn't focus on their sexuality and what they did in the bedroom. Yet that is what this legislation will impose on every public school in the state of California dealing with heterosexuality, homosexual role models, transgender role models, all the way down to the kindergarten level. It's California tax dollars from parents who are paying for this kind of indoctrination that's being put into public schools. That demeans them, their family, and their relationships."



A Dose of Reality "Common Sense Comments"

by Joseph Harris

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Israel's Right to Exist in Her Land

(Historically and Biblically)

Introduction

Concerning the situation in the Middle East, my contention is that as a whole, those who are called Palestinians, have no historical or Biblical right to a separate Palestinian Arab nation, at the expense of a Jewish state, and especially on the historical land of the Jews. No Arab Palestinian nation has ever existed. Horrible and murderous attacks have been perpetrated against the Jewish people in this land and the Jewish people have retaliated many times. Has Israel always done right in every act? Probably not, because in acts of defense and war, extreme measures are often taken, but though Israel may not always be right, she is still God's covenant people and no amount of twisting any New Testament Scripture and replacing Israel with the church will negate the everlasting, unconditional covenant God made with His people through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In other words, though I may be sympathetic with Israel, I do not try to justify every act of the Israeli nation, or any group among the Israelis, yet it is impossible to ignore the Abrahamic covenant God made, and His promises to bring His people back into fellowship with Him, and complete His plan begun millennia ago.

The fact is, the Jews are far more likely to be tolerant of non-Jews in their territory, allowing them to live and worship among them, than Arabs, if the situation were reversed. There are those who call Israel the land stealers, but if you will do a thorough search, you will find it is the Jews who have been stolen from, slandered, robbed, beaten, persecuted,

massacred and driven out consistently, by Arab countries and groups. Jewish dhimmi's are a historical fact in the east and have been for the past 1400 years.

The Palestinians' "ancient" claim to the land.

Some claim these Palestinians are simply in their birth land and their ancestry in the land goes back for generations. At this point in history, many of them have been born in the land, at least in the last 80 years, but it is a fallacy to believe that the land has been heavily populated by Palestinian Arabs for hundreds of years. Most today erroneously believe that with the major dispersion of the Jews, after 70 A.D., neither hide nor hair of a Jew has been in the land, at least until the late 1800's. Though the majority were dispersed, some Jews have always lived in the land. Their history goes back further than any so called Palestinian's heritage in the land.

Think of all the Biblical history dating back thousands of years verifying the Jewish existence in the land. We keep hearing about the West Bank. From a Biblical perspective, this area stretches into old Judea and Samaria. This is part of the area, promised by God to Israel, and conquered by Joshua around 3500 years ago. It is also the place where David was crowned king in Hebron. There are numerous Bible events in Hebrew history that took place in what is now called the West bank.

Anyone serious about learning the truth on this subject must, for starters, read the 600 page book, "From Time Immemorial" by Joan Peters, otherwise, they will not have all the facts concerning the modern day "ancient" Palestinian people. If anyone relies on the modern media for information, they will receive a one sided, pro-Arab view. The following facts and statements, excluding my scriptural proofs, come primarily from this book.

The majority of Palestinians now in the land either came just prior to 1948 or their parents did. They are of Arab descent from many different countries. Notice the ethnic make up of the "Palestinians", according to Joan Peters whose information came from United Nations records:

"The chauvinist Arab version of history, then--so important to the current claim of "Palestinian" rights to "Arab Palestine," which Arab Palestinians purportedly inhabited for "thousands of years"--omits several relevant, *situation-altering facts*. (Author's emphasis) History did not begin with the Arab conquest in the seventh century. The people whose nation was destroyed by the Romans were the Jews. There were no Arab Palestinians then--not until seven hundred years later would an Arab rule prevail, and then briefly. And not by people known as "Palestinians." The short Arab rule

would be reigning over Christians and Jews, who had been there to languish under various other foreign conquerors --Roman, Byzantine, Persian, to name just three in the centuries between the Roman and Arab conquests. The peoples who conquered under the banner of the invading Arabians from the desert were often hired mercenaries who remained on the land as soldiers--not Arabians, but others who were enticed by the promise of the booty of conquest.

From the time the Arabians, along with their non-Arabian recruits, entered Palestine and Syria, they found themselves added to what was "ethnologically a chaos of all the possible human combinations to which, when Palestine became a land of pilgrimage, a new admixture was added." (Richard Hartmann, *Palestina unter den Arabern*). Among the peoples who have been counted as indigenous Palestinian Arabs" are Balkans, Greeks, Syrians, Latins, Egyptians, Turks, Armenians, Italians, Persians, Kurds, Germans, Afghans, Circassians, Bosnians, Sudanese, Algerians, Motawila, and Tartars." (Peters, pp 155,156).

Arab propaganda has now convinced the majority of the world that the Jews began crowding back into the land they had been absent from for 2000 years, through the European Zionist movement, displacing the Palestinian Arabs from the land they had possessed from time "immemorial." When rumblings began for the establishment of a national homeland for the Jews from around the world, guess where the most likely place was? The land of the Jews, known as Palestine, named by the Romans after *Palestina*, a derivative of *Philistia*. In renaming the land in 120 AD, the Romans were trying to erase every vestige and remains of connection of the Jews with their rightful land. Arabs, and others from Arab countries began flooding into the land, displacing what few Jews there were in the land and outnumbering the Jews through illegal immigration. The plan of the Arab nations was to stop the establishing of a Jewish state. Winston Churchill said in 1939:

"....So far from being persecuted, the Arabs have crowded into the country and multiplied till their population has increased more than even all world Jewry could lift up the Jewish population" (Page 230).

When the plan failed and the Israeli state was born in 1948, these "refugees", as they became known, were not allowed back into their own (Arab) countries and became a tool of the Arab leaders. To quote Ralph Galloway, former director of the United Nations Relief and Work Agency, he said as early as 1958:

The Arab states do not want to solve the refugee problem. They want to keep it as an open sore, as an affront to the

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A Dose of Reality

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United Nations, and as a weapon against Israel. Arab leaders do not give a d----- whether Arab refugees live or die" (Page 23).

Even the Arab leader, King Hussein, said in 1960:

Since 1948 Arab leaders have approached the Palestine problem in an irresponsible manner. . . . They have used the Palestine people for selfish political purposes. This is ridiculous and, I could even say, criminal" (Page 23).

The Balfour Declaration and The League of Nations' Palestine Mandate

The problem with the Jews being hoodwinked out of what was rightfully theirs precedes the illegal migration of Arabs in the 1930's and 1940's. This migration swell resulted from the result of the Balfour Declaration in 1917 which established a "Jewish National Home."

The League of Nations along with the British, designated the land called Palestine as this national homeland. Their description was:

".....east and west of the Jordan River from the Mediterranean to Arabia and Iraq, and north and south from Egypt to Lebanon and Syria" (Page 235).

It is a well established fact that in the times of the Old Testament and the New Testament, the land of the Jews extended well on to both sides of the Jordan River. In approximately 1920-21, Britain, through political pressure, withdrew everything on the east side of the Jordan of the land that was supposed to be a national homeland for the Jews, and established the area of Trans-Jordan, known today as Jordan, establishing a king on the throne. This area was three fourths of the land, leaving only one quarter of the original mandate, but including everything west of the Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea, which definitely included what is known now as the West Bank. The original mandated land area (including Trans-Jordan) was small in comparison to all the land of the Arab countries surrounding it, including Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq. The British felt that surely the Arabs who truly hated the Jews with a passion, and still do, would be satisfied, but they were wrong. So the British cut out Trans-Jordan leaving a small strip of Jewish land and the "Palestinians" immediately began crowding in to claim it and displace the Jews, thereby reducing it even more. There has been bloodshed and I'm sure, rights and wrongs on both sides. It still remains, however, that the Jewish people hold more rights to the land historically and scripturally, than any other one group of people.

Every Descendant of Abraham?

Then there is the issue of the land

belonging to the descendants of Abraham, and some are quick to point out that Palestinians and Arabs are descended from him. The Bible identifies who these descendants are, specifically. They are the children of promise, or the descendants through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. According to Paul in Romans 9 and Galatians 4, Ishmael was a child of the flesh and Isaac the child of faith, or the promise.

Notice in Hebrews 11:17, Isaac is called the only begotten son of Abraham. No mention is made of Ishmael. Then notice in Genesis 22:2, God told Abraham: "And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah."

Yet, at this point, Ishmael was alive and older than Isaac, being technically his older half brother. As far as God was concerned, Abraham had only one son through whom He would bless Abraham and fulfill the promises he had previously made. The difference was, Ishmael, the son of the flesh, was born to ABRAM, the man of flesh who tried to fulfill God's promises to him by using Hagar to bear a son, whereas, Isaac was the son of faith, born to ABRAHAM, the man of faith who trusted God to work out his divine plan in His own divine way.

The Promised Seed of Abraham

Remember the promises God gave to Abram who, as he grew into the father of the faithful, had these promises confirmed and reconfirmed, culminating in his status as God's covenant man of faith, reflected in his name changed to Abraham, incorporating part of the name of God, Jehovah into his own name, AbRAHAM.

"And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing" (Gen. 12:2).

"And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever" (Gen. 13:14-15).

"In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: the Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites" (Gen. 15:18-20).

"And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God" (Gen. 17:8).

"And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish

my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation" (Gen. 17:19-20).

Yet, the blessing on Ishmael was not the same as the promise through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

"...For they are not all Israel which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, (Ishmael) these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise (Isaac) are counted for the seed" (Rom. 9:6-8).

Conclusion: Scripture and history prove the logic of this position of who has more of a rightful claim in the world's longest running land dispute. Volumes more could be said, but this is the argument in a nutshell.



Immersed in Christ

(Continued from page 141) ♦

verse are part of a greater context. To rightly understand I Peter 3:21, we must look at this entire passage.

We are given the main theme of this passage in verse 18, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit". The remainder of this passage rests on this theme. If we ever stray from this subject, we are missing the main point of this passage. By the work of Jesus alone, we are brought into fellowship with God. Our faith must never be founded on any work, including baptism. Our confidence must always rest in the person and work of Jesus Christ. He suffered for our sins. He paid the debt that we could not pay. He alone is the Way to the Father (John 14:6). He was "put to death in the flesh" to give His people eternal life. Yet, He rose from the dead three days later as proof that His sacrifice for our sins was accepted by God. And surely, we are accepted by God through Him (Eph. 1:6). This is the great theme of I Peter 3:18-22.

During the interval between His death and resurrection, Jesus went to the lower parts of the earth (Eph. 4:9) to empty Abraham's bosom. He informed His elect children that He had finished the work of redemption. He had done what no other was worthy to do - He had paid the sin debt of every one of God's elect children. He "preached" to these, His children. Let us not forget, there was another place in the lower parts of the earth. This was a place of torment.

These two abodes were separated by a great gulf that no one could cross (Luke 16:26). However, they could converse back and forth as we see in the case of Lazarus and the rich man (Luke 16:19-31). Jesus not only preached to those in Abraham's bosom, but also to those in torment. This was not done to give them any so-called "second chance." This was merely done to proclaim that God's Word was true, and that He had bruised the head of the serpent (Gen. 3:15).

These spirits in torment were "...disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing..." (I Peter 3:20). Though Noah had preached faithfully for 120 years that God's judgment was coming, these had refused to believe. They continued to carry on with normal life without taking any precautions (Matt. 24:38). As a result, when the flood came, it destroyed them all. Since that time, they have been dwelling in the same torment that the rich man found himself in after this life. No doubt, billions alive today will find themselves in just such a place.

Though these "disobedient" souls died in the flood, God miraculously saved Noah and his family. I Peter 3:20 informs us that "...eight souls were saved by water." This is an extremely important phrase in this passage. This statement sets up what we are to learn in our text verse. Let it be stated plainly, Noah and his family were NOT saved "by" water. A mere casual reading of Genesis will clearly point out that they were saved "through" the water. The water is what Noah and his family was saved from. The flood waters were God's judgment on that evil age. However, God had given Noah clear instructions on how to escape that judgment. Noah was to build an ark by following a specific design. As we all know, this ark kept Noah and his family safe through the flood waters.

Perhaps we should remind our readers of the subject of this passage at this time. The theme of this passage is the meritorious work of Jesus Christ in the place of His sheep. Why then did God inspire Peter to pen anything about the flood? The answer is simple. The ark is a type of the work of Jesus Christ. As the ark bore the judgment of God while keeping those inside safe, so Christ bore the judgment of God in His body and kept those safe who died in Him. He is our Ark! Praise the Lord, we are safe from the judgment of God in Christ. He died as our Ark, taking all that we deserved while we escape the wrath of God. This is what happened with Noah physically during the flood and this is what happens spiritually for the believer in Christ.

Knowing this, we will now attempt to show the meaning of our text verse. I Peter 3:21 reads, "The like figure

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The Backside of the Desert

Brief Devotional Thoughts from Scripture by Joseph Harris

Words of Power

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (Rom. 1:16).

“I hope I never see you again.”

“You are the most gorgeous thing I have ever seen.”

“You’re the dumbest person in the world.”

“She is so talented.”

Words are powerful! They can build up or they can tear down. You have probably heard or used some of the preceding statements. Words like these can bring laughter or they can bring tears.

Words can also empower and motivate someone to begin and complete a task. The Word of God imparts power to the believer. The previous Bible text, speaking of the gospel, tells us that the gospel **“is the power of God unto salvation.”** The word for power in verse 16 is a Greek term from which our word “dynamite” is derived. Now look at the verse like this: “The gospel is dynamite! It is the explosive power of God.” How powerful is the gospel? Consider also how in the book of Hebrews, the Word is called powerful. With a little sanctified imagination, and applying this thought to all of the Word of God, we can draw parallels.

1. Like dynamite, the Word removes obstacles. Dynamite can blow stumps out of the ground and clear

boulders out of the way. It can gouge holes in mountains or even remove mountains. God’s Word can also remove obstacles. A sinner’s rejection of Christ from false doctrine and a wrong understanding of salvation can be changed by the Word of God. Scripture can remove obstacles that stand between an individual and the cross.

2. Like dynamite, the Word destroys existing structures. Sometimes construction crews find it necessary to destroy an old building for a new one to be built. Old bridges may have to be blown up and removed piece by piece to make room for progress and growth. The Word of God can dynamite old structures that hinder spiritual growth. Habits and lifestyles that are firmly entrenched can be removed by the Word of God, even after willpower and good intentions have failed. It can also destroy traditions that may hinder growth.

3. Like Dynamite, the Word can be used in warfare. Alfred Nobel (originator of the Nobel Peace Prize) invented dynamite in 1866. Since then, it has been used in warfare around the world. The dynamite of the Word of God is also a weapon to be used in spiritual warfare. When all else fails in fighting temptation, and all else will fail, the Word of God is powerful enough to blow up the enemy and strengthen the believer.



into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” The word translated “figures” here is the same Greek word as the one we are now considering. In this verse, there are obviously not two types. The temple on earth was a type of the real temple in Heaven. The temple in Heaven was the antitype of the temple on earth. Considering the definition of the Greek word as well as the normal New Testament usage, it seems that “antitype” is a good representation of the Greek word *Antitupos*.

The second confusing term isn’t quite as obvious. Oddly enough, the second confusing term is the word, “baptism.” We often assume that every use of the Greek word *baptizo* (or similar) is a reference to New Testament water baptism. But, this is not true. The Old Testament saints are said to be “baptized unto Moses” (I Cor. 10:2). Surely this is not a reference to New Testament baptism. More importantly, Jesus spoke of a baptism that He would be baptized with in Matthew 20:22-23. Jesus said, **“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?”** This is definitely not speaking of New Testament water baptism. Jesus was speaking about the judgment of God which He was about to be immersed into. Moreover, He was about to bear this judgment for us as He acted as our Ark. This baptism...this immersion of Christ into the judgment of God...saves us. It is this baptism that I Peter 3:21 speaks of.

With these two confusing terms having been clarified, we can easily see that I Peter 3:21 is not speaking about water baptism at all. The baptism (immersion) that is spoken of is Christ’s immersion as our Ark into the judgment of God. This is, no doubt, the antitype of the previous verse as it relates to Noah’s physical salvation from the flood waters by the ark. Noah’s physical salvation pictured our spiritual salvation. The ark of gopher wood surely pictured the real Ark of God that bore the necessary penalty of our sin. He was immersed into the judgment of God for us.

Some may ask what the meaning of the parenthetical part of the verse is – **“(not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God)”**. This part of the passage is further proof that water baptism is not part of this verse. Peter is acknowledging that this “baptism” is nothing external. There is nothing ceremonial in the passage. Water baptism is not under consideration here. A good conscience before God is to be sought in one thing – the meritorious work of the risen Savior. The purchase of God’s elect is proven to be sufficient **“by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”** Surely a child of God should follow his Lord in New Testament baptism. Baptism is important. Baptism even pictures the

death, burial and resurrection of Christ. But, water baptism is simply not the “immersion” being spoken of in I Peter 3:21. This passage from start to finish is speaking of the work of Jesus Christ as our all-sufficient Savior.

I pray that the Lord uses this short treatise on this ever important passage. If you have ever believed that baptism had a part in saving your soul, I pray you now have been shown differently. If you’ve had a difficult time with this passage, my hope is that you may now be better able to explain it. More than anything, I pray we have all been reminded that the only way into fellowship with the Father is by the work of the Son as He, acting as our Ark, bore the price of our sin as He was immersed into the judgment of God on our behalf.



Are You Prepared

(Continued from page 141) ♦

only, but also of the Gentiles? As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.” Today I want to ask you a question: “Are you prepared and fit for Heaven?”

In discussing on my subject, I suppose that we could spend all of our time talking about how that Jesus Christ – His person, His work, and His righteousness have made us fit for Heaven. And I suppose that we could talk about how His Word and His Spirit have prepared us for Heaven. By the Grace of God, and through the work of Jesus Christ, and as a result of the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the children of God are made ready and set apart for the eternal ages in Heaven. This is entirely the work and the jurisdiction of the gracious and sovereign God that we serve. He alone is the Author and the Master of salvation.

But, I want us to think about our preparation and our fitness for Heaven from a practical standpoint. In other words, are you currently prepared for Heaven? Are you currently fit for Heaven? Is Heaven your goal, your desire, your hope, and your prayer? Are you constantly consumed with a desire to see and know and experience Heaven, and the presence of your Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?

If you are not anxious and eager for the place called Heaven, then you are either not saved, or you have become enthralled by the things of this earthly realm. If you have no desire for Heaven – and you can’t remember ever sensing that eager anticipation for the presence of Jesus Christ, then I encourage you to

♦ (Continued on page 159)

Immersed in Christ

(Continued from page 157) ♦

whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” One can easily see the importance of keeping this verse in context. If this passage is showing that the work of Christ is sufficient to save all of God’s elect, then verse 21 is clearly not teaching that baptism adds to that work. Knowing the true meaning of this entire passage, we can easily see that many have yanked this verse out of the clear context and misused it. Baptismal regenerationists have used this verse to teach the exact opposite of what this passage is saying. That said, many good Bible believing Baptists have had

difficulties with this passage themselves. Hopefully, we can lay some of those problems to rest in this small treatise.

There are two confusing terms in this passage that need to be explained. The first is, **“The like figure.”** The Greek word translated thusly is *Antitupos*. Strong’s defines this word as, “A thing formed after some pattern” or “a thing resembling another, its counterpart”. This word does not mean “another similar type” as is often employed. **“The like figure”** refers to the antitype of the previous type. That is, the words that are about to follow are the fulfillment of the type represented in Noah and his family being saved by the Ark. This word is used one other time in the Greek New Testament. In Hebrews 9:24 we read, **“For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but**

Are You Prepared

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repent of your sins, and seek the favor and the forgiveness found only in Jesus Christ. If you are saved, but you know that your desires for Heaven are not what they should be, then I encourage you to join me at the throne of God and seek the leadership and the guidance and the inspiration of the presence of the Holy Spirit of God. May we seek His power to sustain us! May we seek His love to direct our paths! May we seek His presence to even now prepare us, and make us fit for Heaven!

What I want to do is to ask you a series of questions. Your answers to these questions will determine whether or not you are currently – in a practical and realistic way – prepared or fit for Heaven. Again, I know that Jesus Christ has satisfied the demands of justice on our behalf. And I know that the earnest of the Spirit has been imparted to each of us that are saved. But, even the saved ought to examine our lives and see if we are sincerely ready for Heaven. And, of course, the unsaved in our midst need to be reminded right now, that if Christ were to return the next instant, you would not be a recipient of the grace of God, and the everlasting presence of Jesus Christ.

DO YOU LOVE GOD'S HOLINESS?

Do you love God's holiness? I mean, do you love the righteousness and the perfection and the goodness that the Scriptures relate to us concerning our God and our Saviour? I want to tell you that Heaven is a holy place. If you do not love holiness, then Heaven is not the place for you. For, how can you be happy in a holy place, if you have no desire and no love for holiness in this life?

This is a challenge for all of us: I myself will admit that I am often the least of all the saints of God in my desire and love for holiness. But, we need to remind ourselves that in order to be prepared for Heaven, we must be ready and prepared to partake of holiness. Peter instructed his readers this way: **"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy"** (I Pet. 1:13-16). It is our duty – it is our great privilege to pursue holiness in this life; this is our calling and our eternal fate – to be holy. Paul said, **"But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made**

free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:17-23).

Who is it that we follow? Who is it that is our example? Where does our allegiance lie – with God and Heaven, or with men and mortality? The very familiar verse in the book of Hebrews tells us, **"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord"** (Heb. 12:14). Without doubt, holiness will reign in the presence of God throughout eternity. If this is so, and if it is also true that you and I would seek to enter that place of holiness; then shouldn't we be found holy in this life? Shouldn't our desire and hearts be after holiness?

I ask you again, "Are you prepared for Heaven?" Well, if you are, then you must have a love for holiness, and a desire to be found holy. Your life should reflect your attempts at holiness, though you may fail from time to time, the overall perception of your life should be that you love goodness, righteousness, and holiness after God.

DO YOU LOVE GOD'S WORD?

Secondly, I want us to think about the love that we ought to have for God's Word. Consider this: The Word of God is established forever. The Word of God will rule in Heaven to come. Are you fit and ready for Heaven? Well, I want to advise you that in Heaven, there will be no rule, but God's rule. And, in Heaven, only the Word of God will be exalted as the theme and the rule of men's lives. So, if you want to enter into Heaven, and if you want to be properly prepared, then it would behoove you to express and manifest a love for the Word of God in this life.

It is obvious to anyone that would care to examine these things, that the vast majority of so-called Christianity couldn't care less about the Word of God. The world at large has grown to scorn God's Word and the teachings found in It; and too many that profess the name of Christ have exhibited the same characteristics. In reality, I think too many of the people that inhabit the churches of Jesus Christ have grown callous in their regard for the Word of God. This ought not to be! The children

of God in this life should manifest a thirst and a desire for the Word of God! This is the Word that did lead us to salvation! This is the word that does guide us safely through this life! This is the very Word of God that will be exalted throughout eternity!

Are you fit for Heaven? Are you prepared to enter Heaven and bask in the supremely glorious glow of that Word for all eternity? How can you be fit, when you do not love the Word as you should! Believe me; this thought strikes deep at my heart as well. I know those that are unsaved are unfit for the realms of Heaven; and I know that they have no regard for the blessed Word in this life. But, sadly, you and I that are saved have probably not loved the Word like God would expect us to. Remember, in Heaven we will love the Word and we will continually seek to It. So, if this is our destiny, and if this is our eternal destination, we should spend more time, in this life, seeking out the Word of God. We read in Psalms 119:9-16, **"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word. With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. Blessed art thou, O LORD: teach me thy statutes. With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth. I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches. I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word."**

In the New Testament we have the Jews of Berea as an example to us of those that studied the Word of God, and sought out Its treasures: **"And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so"** (Acts 17:10-11). The Bereans understood that the Word of God was valuable as a guide and as teaching from God. Therefore, they studied the Scriptures and sought to abide by their teachings. This should be our attitude as well. We should love to read, study, and grow in the Word of God. I remind you again, that much of Heaven will be spent proclaiming those same teachings, and that same Jesus Christ, that is presented to us in the Word of God. If this is so, then we should manifest a love for that same Word in this life – or else we are not properly prepared for Heaven.

DO YOU LOVE GOD'S PEOPLE?

Next, let me bring to your attention this thought: Do you love the people of

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BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 6-1-2011 to 6-30-2011

Beginning Balance\$5,614.56

RECEIPTS:

Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS225.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY100.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY100.00
.....425.00
TOTAL6,039.56

EXPENDITURES:

Radio Time 670.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES670.00
.....\$5,369.56
Interest + .00
.....5,369.56
Less Corbin, KY des.-1,643.72
ENDING BALANCE\$3,725.84

CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance\$1,843.72

RECEIPTS:

TOTAL 1,843.72

EXPENDITURES:

WCTT200.00
ENDING BALANCE\$1,643.72



BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 6-1-2011 to 6-30-2011

Beginning Balance\$1,675.33

RECEIPTS:

Amazing Grace B. C., Stockdale, TX25.00
B. C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL 49.68
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS429.08
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL60.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX 50.00
Bible Believer's B. C., Naples, ID 100.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV313.45
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY150.00
Carol Willett, Edgewater, FL 50.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL 25.00
Faith M. B. C., Lynn, AR 25.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY100.00
Grace B. C., Winston-Salem, NC50.00
Grace M. B. C., Marion, IL50.00
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK35.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV 100.00
Judy Cook, Seffner, FL 16.05
L. H. Farrell, Des Allemands, LA95.00
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM100.00
The Lord's Church, Goose Creek, SC 50.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH100.00
New Testament B. C., Bristol, TN 10.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN 50.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL100.00
Portland B. C., Plumersville, AR50.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS 25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX 30.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA25.00
Subscriptions186.00
Dividing checks150.00
Anonymous \$2,541.00
Sub Total\$5,240.26
TOTAL\$6,915.59

EXPENDITURES:

Printing 581.00
Postage 791.98
Supplies 35.31
Wages 2,510.00
FICA 175.96
Dividing checks 150.00
Total Expenditures \$4,244.25
ENDING BALANCE\$2,671.34

Are You Prepared

(Continued from page 159) ♦

God? Are your best friends, and your dearest loved ones in this life, the people of God? Or, do you love the persons and vanities of this life? Consider that the people of this world that reject Jesus Christ, will not enter into Heaven. Consider that the vain persons and the beautiful and the wise in this life, will not enter into Heaven, without Jesus Christ. If this is so, then why should we spend so much time and effort in the friendship of this world?

Surely, those persons that find their pleasures in this life, would not find any pleasure in the place of Heaven. Those persons that find happiness and contentment – at least in some mortal measure – in the possessions or pleasures of this life, would not be happy at all in Heaven, where mortal possessions and pleasures are not present at all. So, if those persons will not be in Heaven, then why should they draw so much of our attention in this life?

Dear brother and sister in Christ, in the eternal Heavens, we will stand side by side and worship Jesus Christ. In the eternity that is Heaven, we will, side by side, fall on our faces and worship before the Lamb of God. And, if this is grievous for you to do in this life, then how can you claim to be in the least prepared or fit for Heaven?

Just remember, God did not save us from our sins so that we could be friends with the world, or friends with those that besmirch the name of Christ. Jesus once told His disciples, **“Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man’s foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me”** (Matt. 10:34-38). And then, a couple of chapters later in this same Gospel account, Jesus said, **“While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and**

sister, and mother” (Matt. 12:46-50). I am not saying (nor was Jesus saying) that we must always forsake our families after the flesh. But, I am saying (as Jesus did say) that the people of God are our immediate family now.

When you combine these two passages that we just read, you find out that God expects us to have difficulties in our physical relations during this life. There is no doubt that our pursuit of holiness and God will cost us dearly in our physical relations. (We should spend a lot of time praying to God on behalf of our family members that God would save them, and draw them to serve Him faithfully in this life.) But, look at how much more we gain! Look at how many saints of God are now our brothers and sisters and family! **“And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel’s, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life”** (Mark 10:29-30).

We should spend our time in this life, loving and being associated with the children of God. These will be our eternal soul-mates in Heaven. Peter said, **“Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently”** (I Pet. 1:22). Are you fit for Heaven? Then show your fitness and your preparedness by loving the people of God as God Himself has loved you.

DO YOU LOVE GOD’S CHURCH?

Finally, I want to close with the thought of the love that we ought to have for the church of Jesus Christ. Do you realize that Jesus Christ has such love for His church that He gave Himself for it? (See Eph. 5:25.) Do you realize that Jesus Christ has a place set aside for His church, wherein she shall be His bride

for all eternity? (See Rev. 21:2-9.) These last thoughts are directed towards those of us that are members of the churches of Jesus Christ. If you are a member of any church of Jesus Christ, then I encourage you to consider the great love and the high esteem that Jesus Christ has for His church. Are you prepared for Heaven? Do you realize the high place that the church will hold in Heaven? Are you prepared to give the church that same high esteem in this life? Consider that throughout eternity in Heaven, the church will be the bride of Christ. Think of all that this entails! Think of the pomp and the circumstance and the glory that shall surround the church! The weddings and the royal families of this life – even were they all gathered together into one grand ceremony – would be nothing in comparison to that wedding in Heaven, and the glory that will cling to the bride of Christ! Are you prepared for this glorious scene and these glorious happenings? Have you honored and loved and labored in the church in this life as you ought? Paul said, **“Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen”** (Eph. 3:21).

I want you to know that it shouldn’t be a drudgery or a chore or a menial thing for us to gather together, and for us to assemble in the pursuit of heavenly holiness; studying Heaven’s Word; fellowshiping with Heaven’s people; worshipping Jesus Christ in the church which will glorify Him in Heaven. This shouldn’t be difficult for us, because this is our goal and our objective – this is even our destiny – to live and worship for all of eternity in Heaven. If we are fit and prepared for Heaven, then we ought to enjoy these things and exhibit these characteristics, in this life. In fact, I think it is safe to say that our mortal lives that we live, are just a preparation for the eternal life that we are yet to live. Come, let us prepare ourselves, and make our mortal lives more fit for the realms of Heaven.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The New Testament Baptist Church of Goshen, IN is looking for a pastor. Their previous pastor, Elder Mike Aman has resigned. Any interested brother should contact Elder Medford Caudill at medcthebbaptist@msn.com or write to him at the church address, 22111 C.R. 38, Goshen, IN, 46526.

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

The Bethel Bible Baptist Church, PO Box 85, Mansfield, LA is in need of a pastor. Any interested Elder should call Connie McMellon at 318-872-1647.

The Landmark Baptist Church of Collinsville, IL is in need of a pastor. Any interested Elders may call (618) 288-4236 for more information.

The Windsor Baptist Church at Windsor, IL is searching for a Sovereign Grace pastor. Any one interested may contact Larry Rawlings at (217) 665-3643, or cell (217) 620-4675, or by mail at PO Box 194, Bethany, IL 61914.

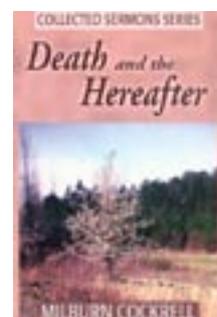
The Grace Baptist Church of Winston-Salem, NC is in need of a pastor. The church believes in the Doctrines of Grace, the local church, and is Pre-millennial. Interested brethren should contact Deacon Cletus Snyder at 336-788-5753.

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

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